

THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

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SEHOME BOYS ADVANCE AT DISTRICT

Lynden falls in first round of 2A basketball tournament **B1**

BEST BETS FOR ENTERTAINMENT

Midnight mystery melodrama, Ferndale cat show **B8**

DRAGON'S TALE

Story breathes with life for Happy Valley kids **A2**



A2 The Bellingham Herald Saturday, February 12, 2011



Author Rosanna Porter tells the story of her book, "Tofu Ling Sets Sail" with her puppet, Dragon, while Western Washington University students wait to perform for third-graders at Happy Valley Elementary on Friday, Feb. 11. The production was part of a program that combines visual art, theater, dance, music, and literary works. More pictures online: [TheBellinghamHerald.com/photo/Philip A. Dwyer/The Bellingham Herald](http://TheBellinghamHerald.com/photo/Philip.A.Dwyer/TheBellinghamHerald).

Event brings book to life for third-graders

Happy Valley students join in 'Tofu Ling' performance

ZOE FRALEY

THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

BELLINGHAM - As a dragon emerged from the blue waves before them, a group of Happy Valley third-graders broke into a measured scream. The students weren't at risk of losing life or limb. The sea was in a classroom, and the dragon was a puppet, but it didn't make it any less fun for the children to scream along. The third-graders provided sound effects and sang as students from Western Washington University acted out scenes from the book "Tofu Ling Sets Sail." The WWU students are elementary education majors in professor Gaye Green's arts methodology course, and the performance is part of the art education department's Bringing Books to Life program. The author, Rosanna Porter, told the tale of the sea-fairing adventures of a mouse named Tofu as the WWU students acted out the story in masks and with props.

"It was really cool," said third-grader Jack Miller. "It was sometimes funny. My favorite character was the dragon." For Porter, who lives in Bellingham and travels throughout the country doing activities with her books, events like this are what writing children's books is all about. "To see children excited about what you wrote is the biggest compliment," she said. "When the kids come in and they're excited, that's the biggest award you could get. It really energizes me. That is the ultimate." This is the fourth book in Porter's Tofu Ling series, and it teaches lessons about friendship. It's a topic Porter discussed with students as she answered their questions after the play. After the event ended, the third-graders ran around the room getting autographs from the WWU students who might someday be their teachers. "I love it, mostly because we have the opportunity to bring



Happy Valley Elementary third-graders including Autumn Taylor, 9, center, Andrea Kelsh, 9, left, Oliver Watson, 8, and Micha Kleppe, 9 making the "swoosh" sounds of water while author Rosanna Porter tells the story of her book "Tofu Ling Sets Sail" at the school on Friday morning, Feb. 11. Philip Dwyer/The Bellingham Herald.

a book alive," said Maria Guzman, an elementary education student who was a seal in the play. "The story is so much more vibrant when it's played out, and I love acting silly." The play provided the students with a chance to get involved in the story and to see the settings of the book come to life. Any time Porter used the word "sea," they would say "swish, swish," making waves with their hands. When

she talked about seals, the students would bark. They'd scream - but not too loud - when the dragon showed up. "I thought it was good," said student Larsen Imus, noting that her favorite characters were the fuzzy seals. "Sometimes when I read a book, I imagine it in my head. This was like imagining the book in my head." Reach Zoe Fraley at zoe.fraley@bellinghamherald.com or call

360-756-2803.



Momma" get ready to perform " Tofu Ling Sets Sail" for a third grade class at Happy Valley Elementary in Bellingham Friday morning, Feb. 11, 2011. The production was part of "Bringing Books to Life" program that combines visual art, theater, dance and music with a literary work.—PHILIP A. DWYER|THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Western Washington University Art Education students Hannah Fast, left as "Uncle Hiroshi," Gina Guariz as "Tofu," and Sarah Humes as "Kenji," during the performance " Tofu Ling Sets Sail" for a third grade class at Happy Valley Elementary in Bellingham Friday morning, Feb. 11, 2011. The production was part of "Bringing Books to Life" program that combines visual art, theater, dance and music with a literary work.—PHILIP A. DWYER|THE BELLINGHAM HERALD



Western Washington University Art Education student Kylan Boddie waits to perform as "Flower Pot Island in " Tofu Ling Sets Sail" for a third grade class at Happy Valley Elementary in Bellingham Friday morning, Feb. 11, 2011. The production was part of "Bringing Books to Life" program that combines visual art, theater, dance and music with a literary work.—PHILIP A. DWYER|THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Western Washington University Art Education students Sarah Humes, left, as "Kenji" and Gina Guariz as "Tofu" after the performance "Tofu Ling Sets Sail" for a third grade class at Happy Valley Elementary in Bellingham Friday morning, Feb. 11, 2011. The production was part of "Bringing Books to Life" program that combines visual art, theater, dance, music, with literary works. PHILIP A. DWYER|THE BELLINGHAM HERALD



Western Washington University Art Education students Pamela Cremin, left, Rosalie Smith and Jo Anna Nelson wait to perform "Tofu Ling Sets Sail" for a third grade class at Happy Valley Elementary in Bellingham Friday morning, Feb. 11, 2011. The production was part of "Bringing Books to Life" program that combines visual art, theater, dance and music with a literary work.—PHILIP A. DWYER|THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Western Washington University Art Education student Miranda Savory gets in character as a seal in "Tofu Ling Sets Sail" before a third grade class at Happy Valley Elementary in Bellingham Friday morning, Feb. 11, 2011. The production was part of "Bringing Books to Life" program that combines visual art, theater, dance and music with a literary work.—PHILIP A. DWYER|THE BELLINGHAM HERALD



Author Rosanna Porter tells the story of her book, "Tofu Ling Sets Sail" for a third grade class at Happy Valley Elementary in Bellingham Friday morning, Feb. 11, 2011. The production was part of "Bringing Books to Life" program that combines visual art, theater, dance and music with a literary work.—PHILIP A. DWYER|THE BELLINGHAM HERALD