



The Buzz

JANUARY
2018



Thomas County Board of Education Monthly Newsletter

School-Based Health Clinic Opened January 12 at TCMS



Chelsea Vinson, LPN, left, and Rachael Lackey, FNP, are looking forward to seeing students, faculty and staff members in the School-Based Health Center located at the Thomas County Middle School.

The Thomas County School System, in partnership with Primary Care of Southwest Georgia, Inc., will now provide medical services for students, faculty and staff. The School-Based Health Center opened on Friday, January 12.

Located at Thomas County Middle School, the health center has a separate front entrance and is open to all students regardless of which school they attend. Transportation will be provided from other Thomas County Schools to the health clinic for students who need to be seen.

Rachael Lackey and Chelsea Vinson will see patients at the health center Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Rachael Lackey is a Board Certified Family Nurse

Practitioner and originally from the Thomasville area. After graduating from Valdosta State University, Rachael attended Samford University in Birmingham, AL, and received a Master's of Science in Nursing degree. Rachael is trained to provide primary care and preventative health care for patients of all ages. She has five years' experience treating pediatric and adult patients in a primary care setting.

Rachael recently moved back to the area after living in Lake City, Florida for eight years. She has three children and enjoys spending time with family, being outdoors, hunting, and Georgia football.

Chelsea Vinson is a Licensed Practical Nurse who graduated from Southwest

See Health Center on Page 2

MAKE *every day* COUNT

Happy New Year! The new school year started out in fine fashion with a well-organized professional learning experience conducted largely by our own teachers.

I was so excited to attend last Friday's Techno-Expo held at Thomas County Central High School. I would like to thank the high school for hosting the event; Erin Rehberg, Wes Davis, and the entire technology and digital learning departments for planning and organizing it; the many presenters for preparing relevant and interesting presentations; and all who participated with an eager spirit to learn. As I walked the hallways at TCCHS Friday morning, I was very proud of our school system. Thank you all for making this a very special professional learning event that will pay dividends many times over for our students.

The second half of the year is filled with many exciting activities and opportunities to see the fruits of our labor. Since I, like several others of you, will retire at the end of the school year, many have asked me if I have "counted the days" left before I retire. I honestly haven't; I am afraid to! I have so much that I want to get done before I leave that

I am more concerned about making my days count than I am about counting the days. I am glad that there is still time to make a difference.

As the second half of the school year begins, it is tempting to all of us to starting counting down the days. I encourage you to resist that temptation and instead to focus on making every day count. We have many lessons yet to teach and many standards to meet. There is still time to prepare students for a banner year of academic achievement, time to win academic, athletic, and fine arts competitions, and time to make the school year memorable in more ways than we can imagine.

Best wishes in the new year as we work together to make every day count.

The Buzz is a publication of the Thomas County Schools. Send suggestions or comments to Melanie Hester, 200 North Pinetree Blvd., Thomasville, GA 31792; 229.225-4380, ext. 115; mhester@tcjackets.net.

The Buzz is available online at www.tcjackets.net, News and Events tab.

The Thomas County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin, sex, or disability.



TCCHS ART PROGRAM HOLDS OPEN HOUSE - Thomas County Central High School Art program held a special open house event Friday, Jan. 5. Student created pieces from every level of study and class were included: drawing and painting, ceramics, visual composition, and Advanced Placement studio art. Artwork displayed ranged from Coptic stitch sketchbooks and charcoal drawings to ceramic totems. Instructor Shelby Young even spent some time throwing a piece of clay on the pottery wheel. Teachers and other visitors were invited to stop by the art studio to view the creative content produced by Young’s students. Each display included a placard that explained the assignment and its curriculum standards. Young said the open house was a chance for people outside the art studio to view the unique creations her students work hard to design and construct. Pictured above is TCCHS inclusion teacher Cindy Beethe talking with art instructor Shelby Young during the open house.



SYSTEM-WIDE TECHNO EXPO A SUCCESS - On January 5, the Thomas County School System held its annual “Techno Expo.” Held at TCCHS, the Techno Expo was a district-wide event giving all teachers the opportunity to learn how to integrate technology into their classrooms. The event allowed teachers in Thomas County Schools to share their knowledge of various instructional technology tools so that fellow educators will be able to use more engaging strategies during instructional opportunities. There were 38 sessions ranging from information on how to become Google Certified to how to create Digital Escape Games. Other sessions were on digital learning tools such as Naiku, HyperDocs, Plickers, NearPod, Kahoot!, Quizlet, and Swivl. There were also outside presenters from Apple, Georgia Public Broadcasting, and from Southwest Georgia RESA. Pictured is Digital Learning and Media Services Coordinator Erin Rehberg helping TCCHS teacher Leigh Barwick with Google Calendar at the 2018 Techno Expo. Annette James and Lacey Howard, Cross Creek teachers who led the session, circulated the room to help others.

TCMS Wiggins Earns Georgia Power Grant



Pictured is Joseph Wiggins, left, eighth grade science teacher, receiving a \$1,000 check from Fred Rudbeck, Area Manager of Georgia Power. TCMS Principal Jamie Thompson, right, celebrated Wiggins receiving a New Teacher Assistance grant to help him purchase materials and supplies for his classroom.

A Thomas County Middle School teacher is being recognized by the Georgia Power Foundation.

Joseph Wiggins, a recent graduate of Valdosta State University and a first-year teacher in the Thomas County School System, received a \$1,000 New Teacher Assistance grant from the Georgia Power Foundation.

The purpose of the grant is to encourage Georgia's best and brightest new teachers by helping them purchase materials

and supplies for their classroom.

"We received some funds to use for things that we can't usually purchase and that we normally wouldn't be able to get from the school warehouse," said Wiggins. "The items I purchase will help to enhance student learning and student achievement."

Candidates for the grant are in the top 25 percent of their graduating class academically and must have shown a high aptitude for teaching while in college.

Health Center Cont. from Page 1

Georgia Technical College in 2012. She has worked in busy primary care practices and specialty clinics in the Thomasville and Americus area over the past five years providing nursing care for patients of all ages. Chelsea enjoys spending time with her family and pets. Her hobbies

include hunting, fishing, and being outdoors.

Primary Care of Southwest Georgia, Inc. will provide quality healthcare regardless of ability to pay via a discount program. The center accepts Medicare, Medicaid, most commercial insurance plans, Mastercard, and Visa.

CPR and First Aid will be offered from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Hand-In-Hand Primary School on the following dates:

January 23, 2018 First Aid

February 20, 2018 CPR

Please sign up on PExpress to attend!



Ashley Henderson Named New TCCHS Head Coach



TCCHS Principal Trista Jones, Head Coach Ashley Henderson, BOE Vice Chairman David Dawson, and BOE Chairman Derwood Hickey talk about the upcoming football season after the recent board meeting.

The Thomas County Board of Education has approved the hiring of Ashley Henderson as Thomas County Central High School's head football coach. Henderson will officially begin work on Thursday, February 1.

Henderson comes to the Thomas County School System from Valwood School in Hahira, Georgia, where he served as

head coach for six years. While a coach at Valwood, he led the team to state championships three times and celebrated being region champs five times.

"I'm very excited about becoming the head coach for Thomas County Central High School," Henderson said. "Thomas County Football has

great tradition and a standard of excellence that we want to build on. I'm looking forward to getting to know the guys and putting in the work to build on this rich tradition. Thomas County Central is a special place, and I'm proud to be a part of the Thomas County family."

Henderson has been coaching for 15 years. Prior to serving as head coach at Valwood, Henderson served as offensive line coach at Valdosta High School and served as running backs and kickers coach for Valdosta State University. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Education, Master of Instructional Technology, and Education Specialist of Coaching Pedagogy all from Valdosta State University.

Growing up in Valdosta, Henderson played high school football for Coach Nick Hyder at Valdosta High School. He played college football at Georgia Tech with Thomas

County Central standout Joe Burns.

"My first impression of Thomas County Central many years ago was a good one. I used to drive Joe Burns home from Georgia Tech, and former Head Coach Ed Pilcher embraced me and treated me like part of the family. I realized then and still believe that the school and the football program are first class. It is something I feel honored to be a part of."

Henderson said, "When the position came open at Thomas County Central, I knew it was a place I would like to move and set up roots there." Henderson and his wife, Megan, have been married for seven years. They have two sons, Charlie, who is 4, and Jack, who is 2.

"Thomasville is a beautiful place and a great community to raise a family," Henderson added. "Megan and I look forward to making it our home for a very long time."

Hickey and Dawson to Lead Thomas County Board of Education

The Thomas County Board of Education held its first meeting of the new calendar year Tuesday January 9. After the devotion, outgoing chair Nancy Hiers declared the positions of chairman and vice chairman vacant and asked for nominations.

Board member Charles Evans made a motion that Derwood Hickey be elected chair and that David Dawson be elected vice chair. Mark NeSmith seconded Evans' motion. Hiers called for any additional nominations. There were no additional nominations. Hickey and Dawson abstained and were

elected to their respective roles unanimously.

Hickey owns B & D Insurance Agency, Inc. in Meigs, Georgia. He is an independent insurance agent with more than 38 years of experience in his field. He has served on the Thomas County Board of Education for four years.

"Each year the chairperson and vice chairperson change in January; however, the

dedicated members of the Thomas County Board of Education will continue to work together and make Thomas County School System the best," Hickey said. "As one board member has shared with me several times, everyone has room for improvement. We must never allow ourselves to be satisfied with what we have accomplished. I look forward to working with the other board members."

Dawson, who has served on the board since January of 2013, serves as Director of Master Files and Reporting for Flowers Industries where he has worked for 19 years.

"Thomas County Schools has given so much to our children and our family that it is an honor to serve on the board to be able to give back," Dawson said.

The board also set meeting dates for 2018. The school board meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Thomas County Board of Education located at 200 North Pinetree Boulevard.



HICKEY



DAWSON



CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS AT WORK - Hand-In-Hand students worked collaboratively on a problem-solving project in the media center. A computer science and robotics curriculum is introduced in kindergarten at Hand-In-Hand.



AQUA AVENGERS ADVANCING TO SUPER REGIONALS - Thomas County Middle School's FIRST Lego League team, the Aqua Avengers, won two top awards at the regional competition in Albany this past Saturday. The theme for this year's competition was Hydro Dynamics in which students were required to identify a problem within the human water cycle and come up with a solution to that problem. The competition consisted of three parts: robot game, project, and core values. The Aqua Avengers won the top awards in both the Robot Game and Core Values. The Robot Game award was for scoring the most points out of three robot rounds. The Core Values award, which the team is especially proud of, embodies the true meaning of Lego League. The core values include working hard to find a solution, teamwork, team spirit, "coopertition," and "gracious professionalism." The team will advance to Super Regionals which will be held at Columbus State in January. Pictured is the Lego League Aqua Avengers including Joshua Williamson (front row, left to right), Charlie Emmett, Kyleigh Murphy, Morgan Loper, and Keaton Stephens. On the second row is Samantha Sturran (left to right), Phoebe Estra, Ashley Dodge, Brady Whatley, and Kim Simmons. On the back row is Allison Miller, left, and Bishop Jackson.

Thomas County Central Announces GHP Nominees



TCCHS Governor's Honors Program nominees are: (left to right) Zach Goff, Nathaniel Bellamy, Zachary Sharpe, Brooklyn Reese, Caleb Moore, Joshua Stephens, Stephen Sykes, Eric Webb and Benjamin Wilhelm. Not pictured is Emily Owens.

Thomas County Central High School has taken the first step toward a select group of its students being included in a prominent summer education program.

The school held a special reception to recognize its 2018 Governor's Honors Program in December.

"GHP is a unique opportunity for students who are able to attend," TCCHS Assistant Principal Dr. James Rehberg said. "They get to meet and study among the state's best and brightest, adding their unique perspective and learning others' while making life-long friendships and connections. I believe all of our nominees are well-equipped to join the state's finest students and contribute to the GHP experience."

Earlier this year, teachers were asked to nominate deserving students who showed exceptional talent and interest in their class.

TCCHS students selected for GHP consideration are Nathaniel Bellamy in communicative arts; Emily

Owens in mathematics; Zach Goff in science; Caleb Moore in music (brass); Brooklyn Reese in social studies; Zachary Sharpe in social studies; Joshua Stephens in science; Stephen Sykes in theater; Eric Webb in music (woodwind), and Benjamin Wilhelm in science.

A reception was held following the recognition for nominees, their families and their recommending teachers.

Now that TCCHS has selected its nominees, these students must complete the rigorous GHP application process. Semi-finalists are expected to be notified January 26 and interviews will be held at Berry College in February. Finalists and alternates should be announced March 30.

"Over the coming weeks, we'll be doing our best to prepare them for the application submission and interview process in anticipation of them becoming finalists," Rehberg said.

GHP will be held June 17–July 14 at Berry College.