



The Buzz

FEBRUARY
2016



Thomas County Board of Education Monthly Newsletter

Jamie Thompson to Become Next Thomas County Middle School Principal

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



Fifth grader Jazmyn Barber explains her assignment to Thomas County Middle School Associate Principal Jamie Thompson who will assume the role of principal as of June 1, 2016.

Thomas County Middle School (TCMS) Associate Principal Jamie Thompson has been appointed principal designee to assume the role effective June 1, following Dr. Kathy Keown's retirement. The Thomas County Board of Education approved the appointment at its meeting on January 12.

Originally from Ochlocknee, Thompson is a graduate of Thomas County Central High School (TCCHS). After graduating from the University of Georgia, he began teaching English in White County, Georgia, in 2000. His career with the Thomas County School System began in 2003 at TCCHS where he taught English/Language Arts. Thompson furthered his education obtaining degrees

in counseling and educational leadership from Valdosta State University. He has completed coursework for his doctoral degree and is currently completing his dissertation. Thompson has extensive experience in education, serving as a counselor at TCCHS and Hand-In-Hand, as well as assistant principal at TCCHS and as associate principal at TCMS.

Thompson considers it an honor to be given the opportunity to lead Thomas County Middle School. He said, "TCMS is an excellent campus with great students and teachers. We enjoy the support of a fantastic group of parents and the best community in Georgia. I want to thank Dr. Dusty Kornegay and the Thomas County School

Board for trusting me with the position. I'm also grateful to the current and past leaders in the system who have given me instruction and guidance." Thompson has been a part of the Thomas County School System for 13 years.

"I hope to continue some of the great traditions of Thomas County Middle School," Thompson said. "Mr. Earl Williams' mantra of 'Hustle and Harmony' still resonates with me from my time as a student at the middle school. More recently, Mr. Van Cowart, Dr. Debra Knight, and Dr. Kathy Keown have worked to make TCMS one of the best middle schools in Georgia."

Current TCMS Principal Dr. Kathy Keown believes the Board of Education could not have made a better choice in naming Thompson principal.

"I knew Jamie Thompson as a student going through our school system, and I've worked with him as an adult in our schools," Dr. Keown said. "Jamie is a strong leader and has a love for students and teachers. I'm excited that he will be transitioning into the principal's job at Thomas County Middle School. Over the years, I've seen so much progress and so many good things develop in our schools and especially at the middle school. I know Mr. Thompson

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Feb. 18 - Science Night, Garrison-Pilcher Gym, 6:00 p.m.

Feb. 18 - TCCHS Chorus Concert, 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 19 - Day to Remember Dance, TCCHS, 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Feb. 26 - FBLA Fundraiser, Round River Drive Concert, BOE Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.



March 1 - Don't forget to vote! (Presidential Primary and ESPLOST)

March 2 - March Moms Day, Hand-In-Hand

March 12 - Hand-In-Hand Lucky Scramble Golf Tournament, 8:00 a.m.

Please visit the school websites for a complete calendar of events.

The Buzz is a monthly 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@thomas.k12.ga.us. The Buzz is available online at www.thomas.k12.ga.us, News and Events tab.

TCCHS Students Win Awards at Academic Competition



Winners in the Andrew College Academic Competition include (first row) Jason Weeks, Cole Donovan, Austin Yeomans, Jane Guo, Sierra Stephens, Brooklyn Reese, (back row) Jacob Hancock, Chandler Watson, C'lee Kornegay, and Maggie Martin. Not pictured are Ben Wilhelm and Jackson NeSmith.

Thomas County Central High School students brought home nine medals and a quiz bowl award from the 12th annual Andrew College Academic Competition.

The competition's purpose is to encourage academic excellence and to prepare students for other academic competitions. Students take tests in their subject areas in the morning and either participate in or watch the quiz bowl competition in the afternoon.

"Our school competing in the annual Andrew College Academic Competition emphasizes TCCHS's proficiency and excellence in all academic subjects because we won medals in each subject," junior Eli Kosciw, who likes competing against other students, said.

Students in grades ninth through twelfth brought home five medals in science. Students were tested on their knowledge of biology, anatomy and physiology, physics, and chemistry.

In ninth grade, Ben Wilhelm placed first. Tenth-grader Jackson NeSmith placed

first and Sierra Stephens placed second. Austin Yeomans placed first and Cole Donovan placed second among twelfth graders in the competition.

Freshman Brooklyn Reese placed first in Social Studies along with junior Maggie Martin. These students were tested on world history, U.S. history, government, and economics.

In math, sophomore C'lee Kornegay earned a second place medal and senior Jacob Hancock earned a first place medal. The math test was made up of questions related to algebra, geometry, trigonometry, statistics, and calculus.

The quiz bowl team placed second in the competition. The quiz bowl team was made up of Cole Donovan, Chandler Watson, Austin Yeomans, Jason Weeks, Maggie Martin, and Jane Guo. The competition consisted of four rounds of questions related to art, history, literature, mathematics, science and social science.

This is the fifth year in which TCCHS has participated in the competition.

NeSmith and Hiers to Lead Thomas County Board of Education

The Thomas County Board of Education held its first meeting of the new calendar year in January. After the devotion and a special program provided by Cross Creek Elementary students, outgoing chair Charles Evans declared the positions of chair and vice chair vacant and asked for nominations.



NeSmith

Board member Kay Streets made a motion that Mark NeSmith be elected chair and that Nancy Hiers be elected vice chair. Derwood Hickey seconded Streets' motion. Evans called for any additional nominations. There were no additional nominations. NeSmith and Hiers were elected to their respective roles unanimously.

NeSmith has managed Rodina Plantation in Boston, Georgia, for 28 years. He is also a self-employed farmer. NeSmith has been a member of the board since 2009. He served as vice-chair during 2015.

"I would like to thank the members of the Thomas

County School Board for the opportunity to serve as chairman for the upcoming year. I am also very excited to have Ms. Nancy Hiers serving as vice chair. In 2016, our board, in conjunction with Dr. Dusty Kornegay and the entire Thomas County School System family, will remain dedicated to the continued growth, opportunity, and academic success of all of our students."

Employed at John D. Archbold Memorial Hospital,

Hiers is a registered nurse who works in the operating room. She began her service on the board in 2007.

She said, "It's an honor to serve with a dedicated board, superintendent, and staff that are continuously implementing thoughts, ideas and tools to better educate the future of Thomas County."

The board also set meeting dates for 2016. The school board meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Thomas County Board of Education, 200 North Pinetree Boulevard.



Hiers

NEED CPR? FIRST AID?

First Aid will be offered on Tuesday, April 19, at Hand-in-Hand from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. Please sign up on PDExpress to attend the training session.

The CPR/AED course for March is full. Please register for the May CPR class.



CPR AND FIRST AID CLASSES



Thomas County Schools Win Awards at Technology Fair



GARRISON-PILCHER CELEBRATES 100TH DAY OF SCHOOL - Students and teachers from Garrison-Pilcher Elementary participated in the celebration of the 100th Day of School by dressing up as 100 year-old seniors. Pictured above are second grade teachers Bridgett Griffith, Kathy Swearingen, Jessica Duncan, and Chasity Hurst.

All of the Region Technology Fair winners pose for a picture after the recent competition in Moultrie.

THOMPSON continued from page 1
will continue that trend as he takes this new leadership role."

Dr. Keown said that she will miss the everyday involvement with students and staff, but she is looking forward to retirement and having more time with her family as a grandmother and a pastor's wife.

"There are so many things I could say about my 32 years in education and especially about my 31 years in Thomas County Schools," said Dr. Keown. "I am so thankful for the opportunities I've had, for the students I've taught, and for the school staff I've worked with during these years."

Dr. Keown added, "Even though my days as an employee of Thomas County Schools are quickly coming to an end, I will always be loyal to the Thomas County School System and look forward to continuing my support, just in a different capacity."

Thompson's wife, Lindsay, is also employed with the Thomas County School System as a math teacher. They have two sons with one currently

at Hand-In-Hand as a Pre-K student, and the youngest to become a future Yellow Jacket.

In announcing Thompson's appointment, Thomas County Superintendent Dusty Kornegay stated, "I want to thank Dr. Keown for her many years of service to Thomas County Schools. I have enjoyed working with her for many years, and I have always respected her work ethic and dedication to our school system. I hope that she will continue to be active in our school system after retirement."

"I have had the privilege of watching Jamie Thompson grow up and blossom as a young adult and school leader. He is an excellent listener and a compassionate and thoughtful leader. I am excited to see how his leadership will build upon the progress of our previous leaders and take the middle school to even higher levels of achievement. I believe that he will be one of our state's great school principals," Kornegay said.

Students from three Thomas County schools put their technological skills to the test and earned numerous medals and a special recognition in a variety of areas at a recent competition.

Forty-five students from Cross Creek Elementary School, Thomas County Middle School and Thomas County Central High School participated in Colquitt County's 10th annual Regional Technology Fair, held Jan. 23 in Moultrie.

Students brought home 15 first place medals, 21 second place medals, and three third place medals.

"All of our students were excellent representatives of the Thomas County School System," Erin Rehberg, instructional technology coordinator for Thomas County Schools and media specialist at Thomas County Middle School, said. "The hard work of our teachers and the superior quality of our technology programs allowed our students to win many awards at the technology fair."

TCCHS tenth-grader Irvin Moore won the McClean Engineering Special Award for Science, Technology,

Engineering, and Math for grades 7-12. His project won first place in Animation; he designed a lip sync animation to the Adele song, "Hello."

"I was actually shocked that I won because I thought other people ahead of me would," he said. "I don't know how, but it fit into the category and the judges loved it. I was happy to do it and enjoyed competing in the technology fair."

There were more than 350 participants in the fair competing in various technology categories and age divisions. Thomas County students were entered in categories including Technology Literacy, Animation, Digital Photography, Graphic Design, Internet Applications, Multimedia Applications, Nonmultimedia Applications, Video Production, and Audio Production.

"Allowing students the opportunities to compete in academic competitions is so very important to their future successes," Rehberg added. "The technology fair allows students to demonstrate their technological skills and complete an interview with judges."



TU BASKETBALL PLAYERS VISIT GARRISON-PILCHER - Thomas University Basketball team members recently volunteered at Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School. The athletes spent time reading with the students. TU Basketball players TJ Rines and Javoris Cooks (L-R) are shown with students Marquez Herbert and Daphne Baldwin, front row; and back row (L-R) Jordan Wynn, Jazlene Smith, Deontavis Cooper, Joel Mendiola, Heaven Bell, Abby Tucker, Ambreal Mills.



TCMS NATIONAL HISTORY BEE QUALIFIERS - Fifteen students from Thomas County Middle School have qualified for the third round of the National History Bee competition. The next round is the Atlanta South Regional Finals and will take place Saturday, February 20, in Jackson, Georgia. These students reached this point by correctly answering questions in the national qualifying exam. Pictured (left to right) are Garrett Mims, Brynna Robertson, Kariana Colon, David Piland, Marshadron Hollis, Zach Goff, Bryson Bennett, Chandler Craven, Ethan Nicoll, Matthew Sherrod, Anna James, Danielle Sauls, Jackson Singletary, and Isaac Swope.



TCMS Math Team Places First in Region Competition



MATHCOUNTS team members include Jalen Williams (L-R), Abby Allensworth, Danielle Sauls, Dayana Clark, and Deep Patel.

The Thomas County Middle School (TCMS) MATHCOUNTS team came in first place at the regional competition at Darton College on Saturday, February 6. The team now advances to the state competition.

Presented by the Georgia Society of Professional Engineers (GSPE), the MATHCOUNTS competition encourages students at the middle school level to strive for excellence in math and science.

TCMS students competed in exciting, "bee-style" contests against other area middle schools. With the highest overall score, TCMS earned first place in the Darton College Region MATHCOUNTS Competition. This was the second year that Thomas County Middle School placed first in the region competition. In addition to the team placing first, seventh-grader Abby Allensworth placed first in the individual speed round.

Allensworth said, "I was surprised about winning the speed round because the questions were very advanced. I like math and really understand it, so being a part of the MATHCOUNTS team increases my confidence."

The team now advances to

the 2016 Georgia MATHCOUNTS competition at Georgia Tech in March. Students will have an opportunity to tour the Georgia Tech campus in addition to competing with other "mathletes" from all over the state of Georgia.

"MATHCOUNTS is one of the club choices available for students at the middle school," said Terry Dukes, Gifted/MERIT Coordinator for TCMS. "Students meet monthly and practice different levels of math problems that range from middle to high school level problems. After taking a test, the team was chosen from the top student scores."

"I'm so proud of these students for a job well done," Dukes said. "The students worked so hard by attending weekly practices to get ready for the competition. As we continue to prepare for the state competition, I look forward to working with this amazing group of students."

The MATHCOUNTS Competition Series is the only competition program of its kind with live, in-person events. At the local, state, and national levels, students win hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarships and prizes every year.

Cross Creek Performs, Evans Honored at January Board Meeting



Charles Evans, far right, is honored with a Centennial Award by Greer Cox (L-R), Kiwanis board member, Leslie Aracri, Cross Creek Elementary teacher and K-Kids Club advisor, and Lisa Williams, Thomas County Schools Assistant Superintendent.

Prior to the January Board of Education meeting, students from Lanie West's and Morgan Taylor's third grade classes at Cross Creek provided a presentation dedicated to Veterans. Outgoing chair Charles Evans requested that the group perform the program for the school board and guests. The performance included a skit, several poems, America's White Table Ceremony, and several songs such as "My Country 'tis of Thee," "God Bless America," and "Thank You, Soldiers."

Following the performance, Charles Evans was honored by the Thomasville Kiwanis Club with a Centennial Award which recognizes a person whose commitment reflects the Kiwanis Family Mission, "Serving the Children of the World."

Greer Cox, Kiwanis board member, presented the award to Evans.

"I am honored

to be here tonight to recognize an individual who has given many years of assistance and support to Thomas County students and teachers," said Cox. "Charles Evans has been a member of Thomasville Kiwanis Club for more than 25 years serving as director, secretary, and lieutenant governor. He helped organize many fund raisers through the years to raise dollars to support our youth."

Cox added, "Mr. Evans is very involved with the Kiwanis Youth Organizations including Key Club, Builders Club, and K-Kids, along with the Eliminate Project. He is committed to the well-being of our youth."



Jenna Guy places a single rose on the table for America's White Table Ceremony skit. The single rose displayed in a vase tied with a red ribbon reminds people of the families and loved ones who keep the faith while waiting for a soldier to return.

Eagle Scouts Donate Activity Tables to Hand-In-Hand



Douglas Klocko recently completed his Eagle Scout project. His project involved making five child-sized picnic tables for the child development program at Hand-In-Hand Primary School. With the completion of the project, he now is able to finish the additional requirements to receive his Eagle Scout badge. Hand-In-Hand is very appreciative of the tables. Students use them daily for outside learning activities. Pictured is Shelley Wilson's Three-year-old class, along with Principal Jeanna Mayhall (L-R), Scouts Carson Mediate, Douglas Klocko, and Braden Hawkins, and teachers Diana Searcy and Shelley Wilson.



CROSS CREEK HELPS OTHERS - Cross Creek Elementary recently held its annual food drive where they donate to the Thomas County Food Bank to help those less fortunate. Students from the teaching teams of Sarah Rigdon and Ivie Stephenson, Heather Butler and Kari Holm, Michele Dechman and Jen Mobley, and Wanda Baggett, Emily Ingram, and Michelle Reed were the top collecting teams. Students collected a total of 1,955 non-perishable items for the needy. Pictured are Madison Nixon (kneeling L-R), Gatlyn Majors, Casyn Croft, Hailey Sadler, Chris Williams, Kingsten Stewart; Kennedy Jester (second row L-R), Michael Gambrel, Heali Patel, Alicia Coston, Jakayla Harrison; and Annalyse Hall (third row L-R), Elias Rodriguez, Wyatt Pritchard, Sariah Mango, Mallory Russ, Shakeem Miller, and Allan Moody.

TCCHS Teachers Learn New Ways to Use Recent Technology



TCMS Media Specialist/System Instructional Technology Coordinator Erin Rehberg leads a SMART Board training session at TCCHS.

Story and photos by Madeline Carson, student reporter

SMART Boards are some of the newest technology in the way of interactive classroom teaching.

Thomas County Central High School recently held a SMART Board training class for teachers to learn about the newest features and tricks the interactive white board (IWB) offers.

Teachers reported to the media center computer lab during their planning period for training.

"I showed teachers how to build activities in SMART notebook that will allow them to make their SMART boards more interactive for students," Rehberg explained. "I also showed them SMART Exchange, which allows teachers to find and share SMART notebook activities. Another part of my presentation included demonstrating how teachers can use the SMART software in order to record their lessons."

It is important for teachers to learn the newest technology because it gives them different ways to teach students.

"I enjoy making games and using them in class," teacher Cindy Carnes said. "I think it helps to engage both

visual and tactile learners."

Another TCCHS teacher who utilizes SMART Board technology is math teacher Louise Phillips. She enjoys using it in her classroom and said the IWB has saved her time "on more than one occasion." She also said IWB lessons "have been a life saver for absent students."

"I think my lessons are better organized and aesthetically pleasing," Phillips said. "The IWB has enabled me to include color, movement, and pictures that 'pop' in my lessons. I can go back and forth during the presentation of a lesson with ease." Many teachers have already started to apply some of the skills taught during the training.

"I think the training went well," Rehberg stated. "I know that some of the teachers have already used the SMART board tips and tricks that I shared with them."



Teacher Ryan Strickland participates in a training session.



TCCHS NHD first places winners are: (front row) Brooklyn Reese, Kelsie Shoup, Kayla Shoup, Sierra Stephens; (back row) Kyle Clark, Kennedy Ward, Gretchen Turnbull, and Jonathan Castillo.

TCCHS Students to Advance to State NHD Competition

Thomas County Central High School held its National History Day competition on Tuesday, Feb. 9. More than 20 students placed or were awarded honorable mentions (see box). Of these, 20 will advance to state competition.

"TCCHS has gained a reputation of succeeding at both the state and national level," NHD sponsor and World History teacher Christine Patton said. "This year's entries seem poised to continue that tradition."

This year's theme is "Exploration, Encounter, and Exchange." Students competed and placed in categories including Group Exhibits, Individual Exhibits, Group Websites, Individual Websites, Group Documentaries, Individual Documentaries, Individual Performances, and Historical Papers.

Freshman Brooklyn Reese was the overall school winner and placed first in Individual Exhibits for her project on Dickey Chapelle, a female war photojournalist.

Projects were judged by retired educators, business people, and other history professionals.

The state NHD competition will be held in late April at Mercer University.

2016 TCCHS NHD WINNERS

Overall School Winner
Brooklyn Reese

GROUP EXHIBITS

1st: Kelsie Shoup, Kayla Shoup
Honorable Mention (HM):
Chelsey Lawler, Cheyenne Little

INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITS

1st: Brooklyn Reese
2nd: Cynthia Ramon
3rd: Katelyn Hancock
HM: Landon Trotter
HM: Taylor Hester
HM: Gabby Schminky

GROUP WEBSITES

1st: Briana Parker, Jonathan Castillo
2nd: Ryan Fitzgerald, Chase Darley

INDIVIDUAL WEBSITES

1st: Kyle Clark
2nd: Ashlan Layton
3rd: Ann Guo

GROUP DOCUMENTARIES

1st: Kennedy Ward, Sierra Stephens
2nd: Eli Kosciw, Steven Tran, Nick Cooper, Daniel Winchester
3rd: Sanny Patel, Riley Jones

INDIVIDUAL DOCUMENTARIES

HM: Anna Beth Raffield

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES

1st: Gretchen Turnbull

HISTORICAL PAPERS

HM: Kaylyn Durwin