

**Good News**  
**About**  
**Gates County Schools**  
**December 2013**

**Buckland Elementary School**

Third and fourth graders are working hard with their classroom teachers and their music teacher, Mrs. Braatz, to prepare for their upcoming Christmas program *The Elves' Impersonator*. The students are having lots of fun learning the songs and practicing their lines. The program tells the story of some elves that learn a valuable lesson on how to treat others.

Buckland School has chosen Peer Mediators for this school year. Seven students were selected to be part of this important program. The peer mediation program works to resolve conflicts by finding peaceful solutions to problems. Peer mediators are trained listeners who do not take sides and do not dole out punishment. Mediators help students work out a plan of action that both kids can agree to. Here are the four girls and three boys who make up this year's list of mediators. Makayla Hathaway, Jordan Mitchell, Alexis Neathery, Jaliyah Riddick, Justin Morgan, Nicholas Stewart, and Ryan Collins.

Our "Special Pals" Program is in the implementation process and will be starting up very soon. The program recognizes students at Buckland who would most benefit spending time with a mentor. Teachers and staff at Buckland pair up with a student and spend quality time with that student throughout the school year.

Buckland held its annual Senior Citizens Luncheon on Monday, November 25. Mrs. Parker's 2nd grade students did an outstanding job helping the Senior Citizens with their food and drinks. Mrs. Branch's 2nd grade students helped provide the entertainment along with our music teacher, Mrs. Braatz. The Senior Citizens gave out a lot of compliments to the second grade class. Dr. Williams and Mr. Gregory attended the event and were very pleased to be a part of this special celebration.

The Kindergarten classes had the privilege of going to the "Teddy Bear Fair" presented by a group of volunteers from Vidant Chowan Hospital. The students learned about healthy foods, dental health, eye care, safety, fitness, proper hand washing, and what doctors and nurses at the hospital do to help us. Each student got a bag of goodies.

5th graders were asked to write a "Principal for a Day" essay. All the essays were very good, but Jordan Mitchell had the best overall essay and was chosen as the winner. She was able to "shadow" Mrs. Goldsby for the day on Friday 8th. She even got her own "ID Badge" and was in charge of the radio and keys!

Students at Buckland were treated to a program about energy. The focus was on the use of natural gas. Two very entertaining actors shared with students how to use and be safe with natural gas. Everyone enjoyed the program.

Susan Parker received a Bright Ideas grant from Roanoke Electric Cooperative. The money will be used to allow her students to participate in the citizen science project "Monarch Watch".

### **T.S. Cooper Elementary School**

T. S. Cooper Elementary teachers and students have enjoyed a month filled with events, which allowed all of us to reflect upon the important things in life -- our harvest, veterans, family, friends, teachers, and school. Our Fall Festival was held on November 1. Students enjoyed lots of games, activities, hayrides, and snacks. Our guest's speakers at our Educational stations were Donald Hendrix as K-2 storyteller and representatives from our Sheriff's Department, Nixon's Fishery, Museum of Albemarle, and Merchant's Millpond.

Report Cards went home on November 5. Third Grade teachers stayed after school so that they could conference with parents.

Benchmark tests were given to students in 3-5. Students in K-2 continued to be assessed with mClass Reading.

Young Readers Week was held during Nov. 5-11. On November 11, we had several community celebrities come to read with our students. Jonathan Jones from the State Employees' Credit Union read Dr. Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham* to Kindergarten classes. Geoff Marrett read Dr. Seuss's *Red Fish, Blue Fish* to First Grade students. Gates County High School students Brandall Riddick and Joshua Cross read to Second Grade students. Dr. Barry Williams read *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka to Third Grade. Monique Hicks read Dr. Seuss's *Oh, the Places You Will Go!* to Fourth Grade.

Two grades Fifth Grade students studied the colonization and beginning of our country. They visited Jamestown, VA and participated in activities to enrich their learning. Third Grade students studied communities and government. They visited Gatesville, NC and took a tour of the Gates County Courthouse.

Finally, students presented an awesome assembly program honoring our veterans and giving thanks. First grade was featured. Each grade performed songs related to Thanksgiving.

### **Central Middle School**

CMS now has an on-line bullying reporting form.

Karen Greene received a 2013 Bright Ideas Grant sponsored by the Roanoke Electric Cooperative. Awards were presented on November 13, 2013 at the East Carolina University Murphy Center in Greenville, North Carolina. The project is called "Picture This!" and will provide a document camera to be permanently placed in each mathematics classroom. Mrs. Stacy White and Ms. Jennifer Dail also assisted Mrs. Greene with this project.

Amanda Hobbs and Krystle Williams will be presenting a session called "Surviving the Weekly Informational Text: OutWIT, Outlast, Outplay" at this year's North Carolina Association for Middle Level Education conference this year! They also received \$925.00 through the Bright Ideas Grant to purchase tablets for their classroom!

Basketball season is underway. Coaches Johnson and Stiles (boys) and Lilley and Lassiter (girls) are looking forward to a successful season after victories in scrimmage games against Conway Middle.

1st nine weeks honor roll students were rewarded with a popcorn treat on November 6th. Students who showed improvement during the first nine weeks received a special treat at lunchtime on November 7th.

During American Education Week, Beta Club members provided a tasty breakfast for the staff at Central. Beta members also collected items for Operation Christmas Child boxes.

Preliminary grade level geography bee and spelling bee rounds were held during the week of November 18th. Over 100 students participated. The school Spelling Bee will be after school on December 10th and the school Geography Bee will take place on December 17th.

Ms. Lassiter has submitted 13 pieces of student artwork to <http://www.ncwiseowl.org/> and it can be seen on that website. Great job art department!

Both Central Middle School and Gates County High School will be participating in the state 12 competition in Durham on December 14th. Students ran a practice round on November 23rd as no other schools in the Northeast Region registered for the competition.

### **Gates County High School**

Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Kittrell's biology classes enjoyed learning to use equipment that would be used in a microbiology laboratory. The students used gel electrophoresis to create a DNA fingerprint of a 'crime scene' sample and the 'suspects'. Students learned to read the DNA fingerprint to solve the crime- "The Case of the Crown Jewels".

Gates County High School is one of only 25 schools across the state to be invited to participate in the North Carolina Science Festival sponsored by PBS. Students in the Earth Science classes will participate in a research project on fracking. Chemistry students will expand their knowledge of nuclear energy. The science department is excited about this opportunity that will allow our students to talk with scientists and see how the material they learn in class can be applied.

The GCHS Library Club recently did some decorating in the Library Media Center. The paint team painted the beams and columns running through the center of the room a deep, dark red to match the furnishings. Members who helped paint were Jacqui Hilts, Rachel Moore, Raechel Guthrie, Rachel Miller, and Brandon Cowan.

GCHS Project Unify would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the Gates County community and beyond for the wonderful support of the 3rd Annual Tread the Mill for Special Olympics. Over 60 walkers participated in the event. Once final pledges are turned in, just over \$5,000.00 will have been raised for the 13-14 year. With the support of the faithful sponsors and dedicated walkers, this year's fundraising has gotten off to a wonderful start.

Congratulations to the HOSA Club for their outstanding accomplishments November 7th at the District 1 competition. Winners were: Nick Fougousse and Chandler Curley, first place CPR/First Aid; Jessica Gunnell and Lindsey Bunch, 2nd place CPR/First Aid; Kaila Brinkley, 2nd place Nursing Assisting; Alexis Vargas, 2nd place Prepared Speaking; Michayla Knight and Maya Fajardo, 3rd place health Career Display; Xavier Roscoe, 2nd place Medical Photography; Christopher Smith, 8th place in Medical Math; Ashley Hall, 4th place Courtesy Corps and Extemporaneous Writing; Hannah Simpson, 4th

place Sports Medicine; Julian Spence, 10th place Research Persuasive Speaking; and Nateson Thomas, 10th place prepared speaking. Serving as District Officers were Hannah Simpson and Morgan Barnes. Both did an amazing job representing our school.

College Application Day was a huge success! Teachers came to school dressed in their Alma mater attire ready to answer questions about college. "Ask Me About It" fliers were posted all around the school, encouraging students to discover more about their teachers and their college experience. To further student curiosity, each student (grades 9-12) was given a College Scavenger Hunt during first period. During the scavenger hunt, students learned what colleges their teachers attended, what extra curricular activities they were involved in, what degree(s) it takes to have a certain career, and some interesting facts like who studied abroad and who juggled at the beginning of their acting class in college. All of these activities took place in support of seniors applying to college. Gates County High School had 50 students participate in College Application Day, that is 41% of the senior class!! That number is up from the 28% that participated last year. These students came together in the computer lab at designated times throughout the day and applied to 150 colleges across the state and started over 50 additional applications to be finished by the end of the week. The atmosphere was electrifying as students asked questions, gathered information, and ultimately focused on hitting the submit button for a better future.

We are proud to announce that Ashley Toti and Madeline Simons were FIRST place winners in the NCSBA "What's Super About Public Schools?" video contest. The award was presented at the NCSBA conference in Greensboro on November 19th. Dr. Williams and several of our Board Members as well as Mrs. Simons and Mrs. Toti were present to find out which finalists would take home first prize. These two young ladies won a trophy and a monetary award for the high school. The link to the video can be found on the school district's website.

Ms. Lucas, new Junior/Senior counselor, is looking for a few students to work on a Habitat for Humanity project over Spring Break. The group will spend one week working with an affiliate group, community and partner families to help eliminate poverty housing in the selected area. Students who would like to go on this trip must be at least 16 years of age and are required to go through an application process. The estimated cost is \$255, but could change depending on the location chosen. Participants will have the chance to improve their hard and soft skills, connect with new people in a new place, put their faith in action, get volunteer hours and make a real difference in Habitat's work of eliminating substandard housing. Applicants should submit a trip registration form (available from Ms. Lucas), resume, one teacher letter of recommendation and an optional essay.

On November 21<sup>st</sup>, Mrs. Purdy's Foods II class served homemade pies and cakes at the Down East Health & Rehabilitation Center. Cakes were not made from box mixes. The class even made piecrusts from scratch and used donated pumpkins for the pumpkin pie filling. Ben Ban and Ricky Dwyer accompanied Mrs. Purdy and her husband and assisted with serving. The cakes and pies vanished before their eyes. The sweet potato pies and chocolate cakes were the clear favorites. Two sugar-free items were offered for diabetic patients. Down East residents made thank-you notes for the students. Approximately seventy-five residents and their family members were served.

Mr. Juan Ayala took a trip with his Spanish students on November 22nd to Three Amigos restaurant in Elizabeth City. Thirty-nine students went to the restaurant for lunch and were required to order and carry on small conversations in Spanish. Students have been practicing how to order food with vocabulary and sentence structure in class. The restaurant provided the group with six waiters who are native speakers and who agreed not to speak any English. The manager also provided a list of useful vocabulary words to assist them. The students enjoyed the meal and experience.

GCHS would like to thank everyone for their support and help with this year's Holiday Bazaar and Arte Faire!! With this event money was raised for the 2014 Junior/Senior Prom, the cheerleaders' Nationals trip, FCCLA and OCS. There were so many beautiful crafts and gifts for sale. The vendors were wonderful and the community so supportive.