Local teachers earn state bonus awards

A total of 27 local teachers were presented state bonus checks based on the outstanding academic performance of their students for the 2017-2018 school year during the Vance County Board of Education meeting on January 14.

Jennifer Bennett, assistant superintendent for Finance and Business Operations, led the presentations. Superintendent Anthony Jackson and the board’s chairwoman, Dorothy Gooche, congratulated each of the teachers.

The bonus checks are presented each year based on students’ performances on state testing for end-of-grade reading and math in grades 3-8, as well as high school advanced placement courses and Career and Technical Education courses. See Teachers on Page 2

Youth Orchestra begins new year

In early January, approximately 60 elementary students began their participation in the Vance County Schools Youth Orchestra at E.M. Rollins Elementary School. Students from all 10 of our elementary schools are part of the orchestra for this school year. They meet weekly after school in the school’s auditorium and are led by educators with the Wake Forest Youth Orchestra and local music teachers. Some of the students are shown at right as they see their new violins for the first time.
Education certifications. Bennett noted that the 27 teachers received a total of $97,000 in bonus pay. The bonuses range from a little under $1,000 to over $7,700 per teacher.

Those receiving the state awards included: for third-grade reading, Iris Lacson of Clarke, Alona Chiong and Analiz Maghanoy, both of L.B. Yancey, Cheryl Jones of Pinkston Street, Jessie Rice of E.M. Rollins, and Vanessa Lalor of Zeb Vance; for fourth-grade reading, Erica Deal of Dabney, Sharita Jones of L.B. Yancey, Sabrina Vereen of Pinkston Street, and Lacresha Henderson of E.M. Rollins; for fourth-grade math, Fe McCoy of Carver, Estelle Mangum of L.B. Yancey, and Natasha Rubin of Zeb Vance; for fifth-grade reading, Tiffany Manning of E.M. Rollins, and Colleen Tyburski of Zeb Vance; for fifth-grade math, Susan Hughes of Dabney; for sixth-grade reading, Adith Williams-White of Vance County Middle; for seventh-grade math, Kevin Johnson of Vance County Middle, and Charlie Carroll of STEM Early High; and for eighth-grade math, Jinell Cheek of Vance County Middle. Others honored were Career and Technical Education teachers now at Vance County High School. They include Francis Brown, Audrey Brown, Angela Cusac, Grantham Royal and Vanesia Harris. Vance County High teachers Stanford Wickham and Stephen Deck also were honored for the achievements of their advanced placement students.
Freebird McKinney, the North Carolina Teacher of the Year for 2018-2019, visited seven Vance County Schools on January 24, as part of his initiative to visit public schools in each county in the state during this school year.

He is shown in the photo at right as he greets a student in a classroom at STEM Early High School. Kedecia Stewart the 2017-2018 North Central Region Teacher of the Year, is shown standing at far right. Stewart led McKinney on his tour of the schools.

McKinney said his goal is to learn as much as he can about successful educational strategies being used by educators, so that he can share them with colleagues and officials across the state.

He visited E.M. Rollins, Aycock, Early College, STEM, Pinkston Street, Vance County High and Vance County Middle schools.
Vance County Schools fine arts teachers are now working with students to feature their talents in the third annual Arts Alive! Talent Showcase scheduled for Saturday, April 27.

The event again will be held at the McGregor Hall Performing Arts Center in downtown Henderson.

The work of students in our elementary, middle and high schools will be featured with art displays in the McGregor Hall Gallery and performances in the show. Over 200 pieces of art work are expected to be on display beginning early in the day and available for viewing throughout that weekend.

There also will be opportunities for students to attend workshops led by local music and art professionals.

The show for Arts Alive is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. that evening. It will feature at least 20 performing groups that will include our students from the various grade levels. There may even be a few surprises included in the performances.

Andrew Markoch, fine arts director for Vance County Schools, has been working since early in the school year with art and music teachers to plan the event and work with students to create and submit their art work, as well as fine tune their singing, dancing and instrument playing talents for the show.

Markoch is coordinating with the teachers student registration at each school for the show auditions, which will begin February 1 and end on February 10. Once the registration is complete, students will participate in auditions at McGregor Hall. The auditions are scheduled in the facility’s auditorium on Monday, February 25, from 4:30 to 9 p.m., and on Tuesday, February 26, from 5:30 to 9 p.m.

Art teachers are working with students to select their work that will be included in the art displays during Arts Alive at McGregor Hall.

Dress rehearsals for the show will be in the auditorium at McGregor Hall on Thursday, April 25, and Friday, April 26. More information will be shared with performing students about the rehearsals.

Arts Alive again is co-sponsored by Vance County Schools and the Vance County Public School Foundation. An audience of about 1,000 is expected to attend the event.
STEM Sharks participate in Future City event

A group of about 30 students from STEM Early High School participated in the regional Future City competition held at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh on January 27.

One of the STEM teams of students is shown at right with their Future City model at the competition. Students who participated had to develop a comprehensive model for a city in the future, including the infrastructure of the city, its business climate, economy and more. Their projects also included essays, slideshows and oral presentations. The students are wearing the medallions they received for being among the competing teams involved in the all-day activities.

Bullying strategies

Students in grades 3-5 at four local elementary schools attended presentations by representatives of the Poe Center for Health Education, based in Raleigh, on January 16. The presentations were the culmination of work on the school district’s Bullying Prevention Strategies. The sessions were held at Zeb Vance, Dabney, Carver and New Hope elementary schools.
‘Winter Wonderland’ at Clarke draws crowd

Hundreds of students and their family members attended Clarke Elementary School’s “Winter Wonderland” festivities during the evening of January 10.

They poured into the warmth of the school from the cold, windy conditions outside to walk down wintry decorated hallways filled with students’ art work for the season. Many staff members wore winter-time costumes, including snowman and penguin outfits, as they led the families into classrooms where there were arts and crafts, reading time in the media center and a special musical play in the multipurpose room.

The play featured members of the Bulldog Chorus, led by music teacher Jessica Mohr. Principal Jennifer Carraway was thrilled with the turnout and said the event was a great way to bring the school’s families together.
More outstanding ‘Sounds of Season’

As the Christmas holiday neared, more outstanding school musical groups came to the school system’s Administrative Services Center in late December to share their amazing talents with audiences.

The students came in holiday attire, many matching in color and with accessories including elf hats, Santa hats, and reindeer antlers. They were expertly directed by their music teachers and brought lots of holiday cheer to those working in the building and to many visitors.

Dr. Alice Sallins, music teacher at Dabney Elementary School, directed her students in the Royalty Chorus and even recorded their performance with an iPad (shown in the photo at top right). Royalty members, in red and green shirts, sang several holiday tunes.

Jessica Mohr, music teacher at Clarke Elementary School, directed her students, all wearing their holiday head gear, through a very nice holiday play with lots of lively music (shown in the photo at middle right).

Eric Kattes, music teacher at Pinkston Street Elementary School, played electric keyboards as his students wore their Santa hats and didn’t miss a note while singing their songs (shown in the photo at bottom right).
Schools welcome retired educators

E.M. Rollins Elementary School, Vance County High School and Vance County Middle School welcomed members of the Vance County Retired School Personnel Association for special tours on January 17.

Principals at each of the schools led the tours and took the retired educators into classrooms and laboratories, so that they could see the current educational strategies used by teachers to work on a daily basis with their students.

Principal Stephanie Alston showed the group how her staff focuses on science, technology, engineering, arts and math in the year-round school setting at E.M. Rollins. Principal Rey Horner showed them the new Vance Virtual lab at Vance County High School and other initiatives at the new school. Principal Heddie Somerville showed them the changes made at the newly consolidated Vance County Middle School.