

# School News



## One good deed leads to another for vice principal

Benjamin Stoddert Middle School Vice Principal Sue DelaCruz knows one good deed often leads to another. The generosity of Stoddert's students, she said, set off a chain of good deeds on Dec. 22 that ended with the rescue of a mother and her baby in a nearby lake.

As DelaCruz rushed to deliver an abundance of food donations collected by Stoddert students to Children's Aid, her trip was cut short as she watched a sports utility vehicle (SUV) in front of her swerve off the road, down an embankment and into the lake.

Without hesitation, the vice principal stopped, waved another passerby down to call 911, jumped into the lake and swam to the SUV. "I think anyone would do the same. I'm glad I was there to help," DelaCruz said.

When she reached the SUV she found a mother, Lee Ann Lawson, and her infant son in the sinking vehicle. Lawson was able to hand the baby in his car seat through an open window to DelaCruz, who placed the baby on top of the vehicle as she waited for more help. That help arrived when retired police Captain William Saunders reached the car and convinced the stranded women that he could stand and safely carry the baby back to shore.

DelaCruz said she was hoping rescuers would bring a rowboat, but as the vehicle continued to sink, she and Lawson hopped back into the cold, murky lake water and swam to shore.

DelaCruz is not looking for recognition and is a little embarrassed about all the attention. She is even a bit reticent about talking about the rescue. She doesn't want to take the focus away from the students. After all, she says, it was the students' phenomenal efforts to collect food for the needy that caused her to be out of the school at that particular moment. She had taken the first food donations to Children's Aid on Thursday, but had eight more boxes to deliver by noon on Friday before the agency closed. The police took the donations promising to get them to an agency that could distribute them to the needy in time for the holidays.

DelaCruz said the experience was exciting and she was happy no one was seriously hurt. Stoddert's students, one of whom is the baby's aunt, were anxious to hear about the rescue.

It started Dec. 22, DelaCruz said, with Stoddert's students helping others, which put her in the right place, at the right time to help someone else.

## State recognizes six schools for MSA achievement

Six Charles County schools earned recognition in the 2006 Maryland School Performance Recognition Program, which honors schools for achievement and improvement on the Maryland State Assessment (MSA).

William B. Wade Elementary School was honored for overall achievement. J.P. Ryon, J.C. Parks and Walter J. Mitchell elementary schools and Mattawoman and Matthew Henson middle schools were recognized for subgroup improvement. J.P. Ryon was presented a Title I award of \$2,745.82 and the other schools received a certificate of recog-

nition. Only Title I schools receive financial awards.

The School Performance Recognition Program recognizes elementary, middle and high schools for achievement and subgroup improvement based on the MSA. The program provides an incentive for schools to continue to make academic improvement and gives public recognition.

The criteria include the performance of minority groups and special populations, including special education students, limited English proficient students and economically disadvantaged students.

## Payroll announces changes, services

Mileage rates, the Social Security wage base and exempt status all vary with the calendar year. Payroll has released the following updates for employees.

- The mileage rate changes from 44.5 cents per mile to 48.5 cents per mile.

- Employees who have put in tax forms requesting exemption from federal and Maryland taxes must put in new tax forms to keep the exempt status for 2007. Employees who file that they are exempt cannot also claim exemptions.

- Employees are encouraged to sign up for direct deposit for paychecks. Direct deposit ensures an employee's pay will be in the bank on payday despite bad weather, holidays or days off.

- All employees are eligible to contribute to a tax sheltered annuity (TSA) or 457 plans. TSA vendors available for use by Charles County Public Schools employees are listed on the school system web site on the forms page.

- TSA maximum yearly pretax contribution for 2007 is \$15,500. Employees over 50 years old may contribute an additional \$5,000.

- The social security maximum wage base is \$97,500.

## Board plans budget hearing

The Board of Education will hold a public hearing on Superintendent James E. Richmond's proposed fiscal year 2008 budget on January 22, 6 p.m., at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building.

## Notebook

### ***Employee earns honor***

Kathy Andritz, an Advisor/ Assessor at the Charles County External Diploma Program, was named Outstanding Advisor/ Assessor by a committee of her peers from the National External Diploma Program. She was nominated by co-workers and the award was presented at the national conference held in November. Andritz has worked for the program at both the Waldorf and La Plata sites for 22 years. She has helped more than 600 adults obtain their Maryland high school diploma.

### ***Wade receives grant***

Karen Surratt, a counselor at William B. Wade Elementary School, and Joan Simms, reading resource teacher, received a *Washington Post* Foundation Grant in Education for their program "Learning with Prose, Poetry and Puppets." Second-grade students performing below grade level will be included in the program.

### ***Indian Head breaks record***

Students from Indian Head Elementary School were part of an effort on Dec. 13 to break a Guinness World Record. Teacher Jennifer Davis and students gathered in the school library with a passage from the book *Charlotte's Web*. They joined 547,000 readers in 2,451 locations in 50 states and 28 countries to break the record for "The Most People Reading Aloud Simultaneously in Multiple Locations."

### ***Cover photos***

Pictured on the cover are employees from North Point High School. From left: Felecia Johnson, guidance counselor; George Widener, attendance; Beth Stordeur, guidance counselor; Zavonya Covington, secretary; and Linda Stocks, guidance counselor.



### **Students honored**

Three Henry E. Lackey High School students were recently honored by the Board of Education for their heroic efforts to assist a teacher who collapsed in the hallway at the school. The three students are trained in emergency medical procedures and attempted to help Carolyn James Rountree after she suffered a fatal heart attack at school on Oct. 13.

### **Board to elect chair, vice chair at January meeting**

The Board of Education of Charles County has released its agenda for the Jan. 9 meeting. The meeting begins with an executive session at 12 p.m. The public portion of the meeting begins at 1 p.m. at the Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building in La Plata.

**Executive session** -- 12 p.m.

**Call to order** – 1 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – Thomas Stone High School

**Public Forum**

**Approval of minutes**

**Reports of officers/boards/committees**

- Correspondence/Board Member updates
- Education Association of Charles County update
- Student Board member update
- Superintendent's report to the Board
- Policy amendments
- Instructional technology
- Budget update

**Action items**

- Approval of personnel

**Unfinished business**

**New business/future agenda items**

- New business
- Future agenda items

**Recognition**

- Students
  - Kari Cleland, senior; academic

achievement; Henry E. Lackey High School

- Danielle Jackson; fifth grade; personal responsibility; J.C. Parks Elementary School

- Selwyn Hudson-Odoi; fifth grade; career readiness; Mt. Hope/ Nanjemoy Elementary School

• Employees

- Constance A. Federick; Elementary Teacher; J.C. Parks Elementary School

- Kelly J. Glossner; Elementary Teacher; Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School

- Gearleen O. James; Business Education Teacher; Henry E. Lackey High School

- Jill A. Locco; Science Teacher; John Hanson Middle School

• Resolutions

- African American History Month

• Community/School

- Dick Gregory, Waldorf Jaycees

- Sue Delacruz, Vice Principal, Benjamin Stoddert Middle School

**Reports**

- Superintendent's Proposed Operating Budget for FY08

**Election of officers**

**Adjournment**

## Human resources assistants serve as main point of contact for job applicants

*Provide consistent, friendly face throughout the hiring process*

From posting a job opening to explaining contract terms, human resources (HR) assistants are involved in almost every step of the hiring process – a monumental task considering more than 1,000 employees are hired or transfer positions each year.

“From the beginning to the end they see us,” said Ashley Remik, one of three HR assistants. Seeing a consistent, friendly face makes the transition

process easier for employees, Remik added. HR assistants attend some job fairs and assist in recruitment efforts for this reason.

In addition to a friendly face, HR assistants, along with the HR department, take a customer-service oriented approach to working with new and current employees.

To support this approach, the three HR assistants – Remik, Kelly Bryant and Marsha Harrison – do not require appointments. As a main point of contact for the department and the school system, they try to accommodate anyone who visits.

“You have to take it as it comes. By the end of the day you may have only finished one of 20 items on your list,” Harrison said.

HR assistants first become involved in the hiring process when they receive a staffing request for a position. They post the position through the Automated Employment Application System, a new system that allows applicants to view job openings and apply online.

From this point on, it takes about six weeks to complete the job application process.

HR assistants review all applications to ensure the paperwork



**From left, human resources assistants Kelly Bryant, Marsha Harrison and Ashley Remik discuss department goals for the upcoming year.**

work for payroll.

Outside of the hiring process, HR assistants distribute employee intent forms each January. They then generate assignment sheets and work to fill vacancies based on which employees are returning. They assist with document filing and tracking for more than 2,000 employees; prepare payroll documents and process changes; and keep the HR department informed about current HR issues.

The HR assistant position was added last year to support the needs of a rapidly growing HR department and school system. For the upcoming year, Bryant, Remik and Harrison, in addition to their normal duties, will focus on three goals: 1) creating a HR policy handbook for administrators outlining hiring processes and procedures; 2) ensuring compliance with the Family Medical Leave Act and making it easier for employees to understand; and 3) updating the online employee handbook.

One goal that remains constant is helping employees. “Our biggest goal is to work with the employees and let them know they have someone on their side, someone to listen to them and someone to help them through their issues,” Bryant said.

has been submitted properly. They create a list of applicants and mark those they are required to interview to give to the staff member who made the original request.

Next, they schedule interviews and serve on interview panels when necessary. They notify applicants of the panel’s selection and then review the contract as well as benefits with new employees. Finally, they prepare new employee paper-

### *Did you know?*

- All certificated employee applicants must apply using the Automated Employment Application System online in 2007. Access the system by visiting <http://www2.ccboe.com/employment/index.cfm>.
- The Human Resources Department processes more than 600 new employees or transfers during the summer and roughly 50 each month during the school year.
- It takes about six months to fill a vacancy.

## Personnel

Apply for positions at [www.ccboe.com/hur](http://www.ccboe.com/hur), or in writing to the personnel office. All positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted.

### Job openings

**Temporary Secretary** – Nanjemoy Creek Environmental Center; 12-month position.

**Senior Project Manager** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building; 12-month position. Bachelor's degree in construction management or related field required.

**Food Service Worker** – North Point High School; three-hour, 10-month position.

**RPG/JAVA Programmer Analyst** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building; 12-month position. Bachelor's degree in computer science or related discipline.

**Building Service Manager** – Theodore Davis Middle School; 12-month position. Deadline to apply is Jan. 12.

**Building Service Assistant Manager** – Theodore Davis Middle School; 12-month position. Deadline to apply is Jan. 12.

**Interim Individual Sensory Integration IA** – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; 10-month position.

**Instructional Assistant** – Maurice J. McDonough High School; 10-month position.

**Technology Facilitator** – Indian Head Elementary School; 10-month position.

**Mathematics Teachers** – Ten-month posi-

tions available at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, Henry E. Lackey and La Plata high schools, Mattawoman and Piccowaxen middle schools.

**English Teacher** – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center; 10-month position.

**Occupational Therapists** – Openings at all elementary, middle and high schools; 10-month positions.

**Family and Consumer Science Teacher** – John Hanson Middle School; 10-month position.

**Power Reading Teachers** – Positions at General Smallwood Middle School and Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School; 10-month positions.

**Reading Resource Teacher** – Dr. James Craik Elementary School; 10-month position.

**Business Teacher** – La Plata High School; 10-month position.

**Life Skills Teacher** – Gale-Bailey Elementary School; 10-month position.

**Special Education Teachers** – Math/science positions available at Henry E. Lackey High School and Mattawoman Middle School; 10-month positions.

**Special Education Teacher** – Thomas Stone High School; Prep Plus and Local, State and National Government; 10-month position.

**IEP Facilitator** – Eva Turner Elementary School; 10-month positions. Apply by Jan. 12.

**Special Education Teacher** – Dr. James Craik Elementary School; 10-month position.

**Kindergarten Teacher** – Indian Head Elementary School; 10-month position.

**Prekindergarten Teacher** – Indian Head Elementary School; 10-month position.

**Speech Language Pathologists** – Positions at all elementary schools; 10-month positions.

**Reading Recovery Teacher** – Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School; 10-month position.

**Gifted Education Resource Teachers** – Positions at all elementary schools; 10-month positions.

### Extra pay positions

**Thomas Stone High School** has the following position open:

- Head volleyball coach

Call Principal Larry Martin, 301-753-1756, to apply.

**La Plata High School** has the following position open:

- Head varsity football coach

Call Principal Garth Bowling, 301-753-1754, to apply.

**North Point High School** has the following positions open:

- Junior varsity softball coach
- Junior varsity baseball coach

Call Principal Peter Cevenini, 301-885-2012, to apply.

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