

# School News



Where success is measured one student at a time • April 24, 2009 • R-316

## McGraw is Charles County's Principal of the Year

J. P. Ryon Elementary School Principal Virginia McGraw is a believer. She believes all children can succeed. She believes teachers can make a difference in students' lives. She believes students want to learn something new every day. Most of all, she believes in children.



Virginia McGraw

It is that strong commitment to children, and her belief that she makes a difference every day, that earned McGraw this year's title of Charles County Public Schools Principal of the Year. She is the recipient of the *Washington Post* Distinguished Educational Leader award, and a principal her staff calls a strong advocate for students, families and the community.

While McGraw cites belief in children as her career cornerstone, her students and parents say it is the principal's ever-present smile that warms their hearts. "I think my principal, Ms. McGraw, should be the principal of the year because she wakes up every morning with a good attitude and a nice smile," fourth

grader Shaina Cole wrote in a letter of support.

McGraw uses her beliefs to inspire students and staff. Since transferring to J.P. Ryon in 2002 as principal, the school atmosphere and performance has improved and students have reached new heights in academic achievement, personal responsibility and community involvement.

"My mantra is to believe.

Teachers and parents need to believe in their children and if they do, children will succeed. I am proud of the way we all work together as a team and I am proud of the relationships we have with our community," McGraw said.

Parents describe McGraw as an excellent communicator who always puts the best interests of their children first. Kristina Gozzi, a parent and volunteer wrote, "Mrs. McGraw runs her school with her heart, not a time clock. She is for her students and open with parents."

See Principal, page 2

## Shelton is Charles County's Agnes Meyer award recipient

Samantha Shelton has created an extraordinary climate for students in the Life Skills program at Milton M. Somers Middle School. She praises each student for their hard work and often gives them a "high-five" for correctly answering questions. The compassion she has for teaching special needs students is evident by her interactions with each child. She focuses on the talents and capabilities of each of her students and tailors lessons to address their individual needs.



Samantha Shelton

made last school year after teaching English for more than 10 years. She is most noted for the smiles she brings to her students' faces and her passion for teaching special needs students.

It is these qualities, and her ability to help her students succeed, that earned Shelton the 2009 *Washington Post* Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award for Charles County.

Somers Principal Stephanie Wesolowski said Shelton is one of the most respected and admired teachers at the school. "Samantha is

See Shelton, page 2

## Neal to be formally dedicated

Mary B. Neal Elementary School, Charles County Public Schools 21st elementary school, will be formally dedicated in a ceremony at 6 p.m., Friday, April 24, at the school. The ceremony is open to the public.

## County MESA winners

Dr. James Craik Elementary, John Hanson Middle and Thomas Stone High schools were chosen as the overall elementary, middle and high school winners during the countywide Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) competitions held April 2 and 16 at North Point High School. Teams from these schools advance to the state competition, scheduled for April 30 at Morgan State University.

## Board meetings live on web

Board of Education meetings are now available live on the Charles County Public Schools Web site, [www.ccboe.com](http://www.ccboe.com). Users can access the page from a link on the school system home page that will be posted the day of the Board meeting or by going directly to [www2.ccboe.com/boe/live](http://www2.ccboe.com/boe/live). The school system is providing live streaming on the Web site for those who are not able to access the meeting as it airs live on Comcast Channel 96.

## CSM/CCPS jazz festival

Charles County Public Schools and the College of Southern Maryland are holding a joint jazz festival from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Friday, May 1, at the college's La Plata campus. The festival will be held in the auditorium located in the Fine Arts building.



### **Mudd staff receive grants**

Two staff members at Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School recently received grant supplies through the American Library Association and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Carmen Belanger, the school's media specialist, received books and supplies for the "We the People" program, which is part of the national library programming initiative.

Laura Kelly, Mudd's art teacher, received classroom posters for the "We the People" program that demonstrate feature events from United States history and culture.

### **State track champs**

The North Point and Westlake high school boys' indoor track teams were recently named the 2009 Maryland State Champions in the 2A and 3A divisions through the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSA).

### **It's Academic winners**

The La Plata High School *It's Academic* team earned second place in the regional competition against Northwest and Park View high schools held Saturday, Jan. 31. The competition was televised Saturday, April 4 on NBC 4.

### **On the cover**

Pictured on the cover are employees from Mattawoman Middle School. Pictured, from left, are: Clifton Shorter, building service manager; Carla Joiner, instructional assistant, meeting in the middle; Jacob Coon, science teacher; and Sandra Bowman, student data entry accounting clerk.



E. Watson



T. Nissen



B. Linsmeier



T. Emhoff



I. Buter



T. Chase

## **SMECO honors math, science teachers for excellence**

Six Charles County Public Schools teachers were recently honored by the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) for their accomplishments in the area of mathematics and science.

Honored as Outstanding Mathematics Teachers of the Year were: Erica Watson of Mary B. Neal Elementary School; Tamra Nissen of General Smallwood Middle School; and Barbara Linsmeier of Thomas Stone High School.

Honored as Outstanding Science Teachers of the Year were: Timothy Emhoff of Indian Head Elementary School; Ian Buter of Piccowaxen Middle School; and Tim Chase of Stone.

The teachers were nominated for the award by staff, students and parents. They were honored by SMECO April 15 during a ceremony, where each teacher received a plaque and a check for \$300.

### **Principal**

**From Page 1**

Staff members said McGraw demonstrates and encourages creativity and innovation and manages effectively by building a strong team. McGraw has teachers keep and maintain professional portfolios, encourages internal growth and promotes teamwork within grade levels and with the Instructional Leadership Team. She does all this with a personal touch and while looking out for what is best for children.

"Mrs. McGraw also goes out of her way to look out for the most important people in the school, the children. No matter what we are

doing as a school or as teachers, Ginny always asks us how what we are planning will affect the students," Doug Cunningham, a fifth-grade teacher, wrote.

The *Washington Post* each year honors outstanding principals throughout the metropolitan area through its educational foundation. A committee reviews nominations throughout the school system and one principal is chosen to represent Charles County in the program as its Principal of the Year. The *Washington Post* Education Foundation will honor McGraw during a April 29 ceremony.

### **Shelton**

**From Page 1**

proud of her students and her school. She is present at every dance, concert, sports event and assembly to cheer on her students," Wesolowski said in a nomination letter.

Shelton credits the Life Skills team she works with for making her transition into a special education classroom smooth. "The Life Skills team is phenomenal and there is a huge team effort in my classroom," she said.

Although Shelton loved teaching English, she really wanted to work with special needs students. Shelton chose to teach English while she earned a graduate degree and became certified in special education.

Kimberly King, the instructional specialist at Somers, said anyone who visits Shelton's classroom can clearly see her dedication to teaching. "She embraces these children much like a mother would do with their own children; yet, she has very high expectations and

is very firm with these demands," King wrote in a nomination letter.

Somers art teacher Elizabeth Wanzer credits Shelton with positive changes in the Life Skills program. "I have had the opportunity to see a program that was sheltered and kept apart from the rest of the school slowly move towards exposure to and inclusion into all of the opportunities afforded to the rest of our school population. Shelton's sunny personality and winning ways have made this rapid shift in attitudes possible," Wanzer wrote.

The Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award is sponsored by the *Washington Post* Company Educational Foundation. Agnes Meyer was the wife of Eugene Meyer, who purchased the Post in 1933 and was an advocate for public education. The Post will honor Shelton during a May 12 reception and the Board of the Education will honor her June 9.

## In Memoriam

### LeRoy D. Hughes

LeRoy Hughes, a special education instructional assistant at Theodore G. Davis Middle School, passed away Monday, April 13, 2009. Hughes began his career with Charles County Public Schools in August 2007 at Davis. He previously worked for the state of Maryland and as a consultant in crisis management with private companies and hospitals.

Mr. Hughes grew up in the Pennsylvania area and graduated from Central Dauphin High School in 1970. Hughes also attended the University of Maryland, College Park.

Mr. Hughes lived in Clinton with his wife, Barbara, and has two daughters, Lauren and Simone.

Services were held Friday, April 17, at St. John The Evangelist Church in Clinton. Burial followed at Resurrection Cemetery, Clinton.



LeRoy Hughes

### Angelo G. Polly

Angelo Polly, a school counselor at Mattawoman Middle School, passed away Tuesday, April 14, 2009. Polly began his career as a vocal music teacher and choral director at Piccowaxen Middle School in 1977. He transferred to Mattawoman as a school counselor in 1995.

Mr. Polly grew up in the Virginia area and graduated from Norfolk State College with a bachelor's degree in 1977.

Mr. Polly lived in Bowie, Md., and has one brother, Ulysses, and two sisters, Margaree and Mildred.

Services are scheduled for April 24-25 at Springfield Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. Burial will follow at Fort Lincoln Cemetery, Brentwood.



Angelo Polly

## Lifelong Learning Center selected as site for national study on adult education

The Lifelong Learning Center, part of the school system, was recently chosen by the United States Department of Education and the American Institutes for Research as one of five national sites to be included in a study focused on transitioning English as a second language adults to basic education, diploma programs and post secondary education.

Researchers from the American Institutes for Research visited Charles County last month to attend classes, and interview teachers, students, administrative and data entry staff at the Lifelong Learning Center. Students were also invited to participate in a focus group to share their experiences with the researchers and to talk about the programs available.

The Lifelong Learning Center was nominated to participate in the study by the Maryland State Department of Education. Also included in the study are adult educational sites in Maine, California, New Mexico and Texas. The study will be published later next year after an additional six national sites are selected.

Visit [www.air.org](http://www.air.org) for more information.

## Earn graduate, staff development credit through the Leadership Institute

CCPS is looking for educators and vice principals to attend the 2009 Leadership Institute, scheduled for June 22-26, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Thomas Stone High School. Candidates are educators who want to develop leadership skills to help them successfully transition into an instructional and/or administrative leadership position or vice principals who aspire to be principals and want to further develop their leadership skills in order to transition into a principal position.

The Institute is open to all CCPS educators seeking positions such as department heads, Instructional Leadership Team, high school resource teachers and principals. It is designed to engage participants with motivational and participatory experiences, and focuses on five critical areas of educational leadership: vision, accountability, instruction, communication and group dynamics.

Participants can earn three CPD credits from the Maryland State Department of Education. Register by e-mailing [staffdevelopment@ccboe.com](mailto:staffdevelopment@ccboe.com) or call 301-934-7332 for additional information.

Gratz College is also offering three graduate level credits through the Leadership Institute Phase I - Aspiring Leaders at all Levels course for those interested in attending the Leadership Institute for graduate credit. A minimum of 10 graduate credits is required and cost is \$350. Contact Barbara Palko at [bpalko@ccboe.com](mailto:bpalko@ccboe.com) or 301-392-7501 for registration forms.

# Personnel

Apply for positions at [www.ccboe.com/hur](http://www.ccboe.com/hur), or in writing to the personnel office. Positions are open until filled unless otherwise noted. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

## Job Openings

**Language Arts Teacher** – Robert D. Stethem Educational Center, 10-month position.

**Special Education Teacher** – Indian Head Elementary School, 10-month position.

**Counselor, Secondary** – Location to be determined, 10-month position.

**Benefits Analyst** – Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building; 12-month position. Bachelor's degree in business, human resources or related field, and a minimum of five years benefits experience required.

**Long Term Substitute** – High school level Spanish; 10-month position.

**Food Service Manager** – Dr. James Craik Elementary School, six-hour position. Apply by May 1.

**Special Education Instructional Assistant, Hiatus** – General Smallwood Middle School, 10-month position. Apply by May 1.

**Adult Education Leader Childcare Assistant** – Lifelong Learning Center, grant-funded position. Apply by May 1.

**Guidance Secretary** – General Smallwood Middle School, 11-month position. Apply by May 1.

## Extra pay positions

**Westlake High School** has the following opening:

- Head varsity girls' soccer coach

Contact Principal Chrystal Benson, 301-753-1758, to apply.

**Maurice J. McDonough High School** has the following opening for the 2009-10 school year:

- Girls' varsity basketball coach

Contact Principal Jervie Petty, 301-753-1755, to apply.

**Thomas Stone High School** has the following opening for the 2009-10 school year:

- Girls' varsity basketball coach

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

**Henry E. Lackey High School** has the following openings for the 2009-10 school year:

- Head golf coach
- Head varsity boys' basketball coach
- Junior varsity boys' soccer coach
- Junior varsity girls' soccer coach
- Junior varsity field hockey coach
- Girls' cross country coach
- Head girls' basketball coach
- Junior varsity girls' basketball coach
- Junior varsity football coach
- Assistant football coach
- Girls' swimming coach
- Girls' indoor track coach

- Junior varsity wrestling coach

- Junior varsity baseball coach

- Head softball coach

- Head tennis coach

Contact Principal James Short, 301-753-1753, or David Anderson, athletic director, to apply. Application deadline is May 18.

## Staff notes

### Insurance and enrollment rates

Open enrollment for health insurance is May 1 - 15. New biweekly rates are:

	Family	Individual
<b>HMO</b>	\$158.00	\$54.50
<b>PPN</b>	\$223.50	\$80.50
<b>Comp</b>	\$241.00	\$86.00

New rates are effective July 1 and will be reflected on the July 3 paycheck. Only HMO and PPN plans are available for new enrollment. The comprehensive plan was closed to enrollment in 2003. Plan comparison information is available on the Benelogic Web site, [www.ccboe.benelogic.com](http://www.ccboe.benelogic.com). It is not mandatory for employees to log on to the Benelogic site unless they need to make changes to health or life insurance policies. All new employees must complete health and life insurance enrollment within 31 days of employment. Contact the benefits office at 301-934-7459 for more information.

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