



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Wildcat Classic tonight

William B. Wade Elementary School will hold the 2016 Wildcat Classic tonight, April 29 at the school at 2300 Smallwood Drive West in Waldorf. The Wade Wildcats Unified basketball team and teachers will play a game to benefit the V Foundation for Cancer Research. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the game starting at 6:30 p.m. There will be halftime games and prizes, a concession stand, a silent auction, an autograph booth, a spirit contest and opportunities for photographs with the players.

Spartan Night Live May 5

St. Charles High School will hold a talent show — Spartan Night Live, or SNL — 7 p.m. Thursday, May 5. The event is a fundraiser for the fine arts department. The school is at 5305 Piney Church Road in Waldorf. The school will hold a choir concert 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 18 and the theater department will stage children's plays noon, 2 and 4 p.m. Saturday, May 21.

Hands-on workshops offered

The Digital Harbor Foundation will offer hands-on workshops for educators who want to learn the foundations of 3D printing and electronics. The workshops are designed for all types of educators, formal or informal, including teachers, afterschool instructors, science center staff, librarians and other educators interested in helping students to "learn by making." Participants receive a kit of physical supplies that they will learn how to use during the course, and then take home to use in their own classroom. In addition, participants have post-workshop access to an extensive collection of online materials that support and extend what they have learned. Workshops usually are held Friday evenings and Saturdays during the school year and mid-week in the summer. Contact Josh Doying at josh@digitalharbor.org or 203-253-5435.



Catching up with Ms. Jones

Sonia Jones, right, principal of Mattawoman Middle School, chats with seventh grader Kyrie Proctor in between classes. Jones was named the Charles County Public Schools 2016 Principal of the Year and is a finalist in the *Washington Post's* Principal of the Year awards program. Jones has been an educator in the county for 11 years. The faculty and students held a celebration for Jones after she was named Principal of the Year. See story on Page 3.

SMECO honors outstanding science, math teachers

Six Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teachers were recently named 2016 Outstanding Math and Science Teacher Honorees by Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) for their accomplishments in the area of mathematics and science teaching. One teacher is selected annually at each level – elementary, middle and high school – for excellence in mathematics and science teaching.

Honored as Outstanding Mathematics Teachers of the Year are Linda Tavares, Arthur Middleton Elementary School; David Wood, Milton M. Somers Middle School; and Adam Frisbee, Thomas Stone High School.

Honored as Outstanding Science Teachers of the Year are Margo Barbone, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School; Amy Arnold,

Somers; and Michelle Schoenbauer, La Plata High School.

Tavares has been teaching at Middleton for the past 11 years and joined CCPS as a teacher in 2005. She currently teaches fourth-grade mathematics, literacy, social studies, speaking and listening.

Tavares has served as a team leader for seven years and coach of the school math team. She also coaches the mathematics, engineering and science achievement (MESA) program at Middleton and presents at elementary-school level professional development sessions for teachers. Tavares has a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in instructional technology.

She also holds an Advanced Professional

See SMECO, page 2



Notebook

On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are employees recognized by the Board of Education at its April meeting. Pictured from left are Andrew Blumhardt, vocal music teacher, Indian Head Elementary School; Rachel Proctor, fourth-grade teacher, Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School; and Quentin Metzgar, testing coordinator, Westlake High School.

Senioritis on the horizon

High school seniors and their teachers are counting down the days until graduation. Commencement exercises will be held at North Point High School in Waldorf from June 2 to 4.

North Point will hold its ceremony 7 p.m. Thursday, June 2. On Friday, June 3, Westlake High School will graduate at 9 a.m., Henry E. Lackey High School will hold commencement at 2 p.m. and Maurice J. McDonough High School will graduate at 7 p.m. On Saturday, June 4, St. Charles High School's first-ever graduating class will hold commencement at 9 a.m., La Plata High School will hold its graduation at 2 p.m. with Thomas Stone High School graduating at 7 p.m. Can't make it to the ceremonies? Each can be viewed at www.ccboe.com.

Online courses

Online professional development course registration from the Maryland State Department of Education is open through May 25. For accounts and enrollment, email msdeblackboard.msde@maryland.gov. For general questions, email onlinepd.msde@maryland.gov.

Follow back Fridays

Stay connected with what's going on with the Charles County Board of Education on Facebook. Go to www.facebook.com and search for the Charles County Board of Education, give the page a "like" to find out inclement weather notices, as well as information about closures, events and what's happening in schools around the county.

Charles County Public Schools also is on Twitter. Follow @CCPS to see pictures of fun stuff going on in the schools, as well as breaking "need to know" information.

Certificate through the Maryland State Department of Education.

Wood has been teaching at Somers for the past eight school years and joined CCPS as a teacher in 2008. He currently teaches Algebra I and works with eighth-grade students.

He has also worked with seventh graders and taught Algebra II and grade-level inclusion classes.

Wood is the math department chair, a position he has held for the past three years.

Additionally, he has sponsored the Lego Robotics club and chess team, and has also coached both the boys' and girls' track teams.

Wood also helps to write curriculum, formative assessment questions and presents at school- and countywide professional development sessions.

He is also enrolled in the CCPS Leadership Extension Application and Development (LEAP) program which supports teachers interested in pursuing administrative opportunities.

Frisbee has been teaching at Charles County high schools for the past six years.

He has been teaching at Stone for the past two school years and previously taught for four years at Maurice J. McDonough High School.

Frisbee works with students in grades 9-12 in Advanced Placement (AP) calculus, pre-calculus and Algebra I classes. He is the assistant outdoor track and field coach and is a senior certified representative for the Education Association of Charles County (EACC) teacher's union.

Frisbee has served as a Maryland State Education Association (MSEA) state delegate and has facilitated high-school level mathematics professional development sessions. He also helps to write curriculum and was a member of the pre-calculus curriculum writing team.

Barbone began her career in education as a fourth-grade teacher with Prince George's County Public Schools.

She joined CCPS in 1996 at Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy. She currently teaches science to students in grades 3-5 and also teaches fifth-grade math.

Barbone has been an elementary-level

science teacher for the past 12 years and also worked as a Title I math resource teacher for six years. At Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy, Barbone sponsors a Lego Robotics team and works with students in the MESA program.

Arnold joined CCPS as a science teacher at Matthew Henson Middle School in 2006.

She has been teaching at Somers for the past four school years and is a seventh-grade life science teacher. She has also taught earth and space science classes and participates in professional development sessions for middle school science teachers. Arnold is also the SeaPerch coach at Somers.

SeaPerch is an underwater robotics program in which students build and operate an underwater remotely operated vehicle (ROV).

A SeaPerch team Arnold coaches was invited to compete at the national level after receiving an overall regional award at a recent regional competition.

Additionally, Arnold is also active in Relay for Life activities and sponsors the group at Somers.

Schoenbauer has been teaching with CCPS for the past seven years, all of which she has served at La Plata.

She currently teaches students enrolled in the Project Lead the Way Biomedical Science program and is the student government advisor.

Schoenbauer has also taught biology and earth science classes at La Plata and serves as the *It's Academic* coach. She also works at the James E. Richmond Science Center.

Schoenbauer has a master's degree in educational leadership and is pursuing a gifted and talented certification through Langston University.

The teachers were nominated for the awards by staff, students and parents.

Each was chosen for their outstanding performance in the areas of creativity, rapport with students, enthusiasm for teaching, professionalism, and for using innovative techniques and teaching methods in the classroom.

They were honored by SMECO at an April 20 reception.

Mattawoman Middle School's Jones named Principal of the Year for 2016

At Mattawoman Middle School in Waldorf, a large banner hangs in the front entrance of the school that reads "Welcome to the Magic Kingdom – Where Dreams Really Do Come True." Students learn that education is key to endless possibilities in classrooms supported by caring and committed teachers. Mattawoman is referred to as the "home of The Magic" and students are eager to learn and excel not only in the classroom, but in additional activities that support a positive school climate.

Leader of this supportive kingdom is Sonia Blue Jones, a five-year veteran Charles County Public Schools principal. New this school year to serving as Mattawoman principal, Jones' leadership mission is to create an environment where teachers love to teach and students love to learn. In her first year at the school, Jones has earned the utmost respect of her staff. Jones' colleagues refer to her as a "glowing example" of a principal who goes beyond regular duty.

Jones is often sought out by students because she is viewed as a leader with a big heart who takes the time to stop, listen and support her students. Jones' magical "glow" extends outside of her school and in to the community she serves. Diana Scott, a Mattawoman teacher mentor, refers to Jones as a "force to be reckoned with" who tirelessly advocates for children. Others see Jones' passion, too, and for this and her commitment to educating all children, Jones was named the Charles County Public Schools 2016 Principal of the Year and finalist for the *Washington Post's* Principal of the Year awards program.

Jones said she is honored to be recognized for doing what she loves to do, each and every day. "This year I was assigned to Mattawoman Middle School. I was grateful for the opportunity to become acquainted with a new staff, students and a new community. I am proud to lead such an energized and devoted family of teachers who are committed to student achievement," Jones said. Her desire to become an educator stemmed from her upbringing. Her mother, Joan Blue, was a teacher and instilled in Jones all of her principles of teaching. "She was passionate, creative and most importantly effective," Jones added. When she first started her career as a teacher, Jones incorporated principles of teaching she learned from her mother in the classroom. She taught for several years at the elementary school level with Prince George's County Public Schools and transitioned to administration as an assistant principal with District of Columbia Public Schools in 2004. "My transition to leadership was born out of a desire to effect change on a larger scale," Jones said. She joined Charles County Public Schools as a vice principal in 2010 at Matthew Henson Middle School, under the leadership of the late Ronald Stup. Jones credits Stup for providing her with several opportunities to hone her leadership skills and passing on his mantra of "leaders grow leaders."

Jennifer Branham is a vice principal at Mattawoman and member of Jones' leadership team. Branham said not only has Jones taught her how to become a strong, positive leader, but has become her mentor and helps her guide decision making and problem solving. "Ms. Jones has had a lasting impact on my style of leadership, and I believe in years to come, I will use her leadership style to guide me as a future principal," Branham wrote in a nomination letter.

Maria Parks is a school secretary at Mattawoman and describes Jones as an exceptional leader who has brought a "breath of fresh air" to the school. Jones appreciates the hard work and professionalism of all staff members and takes time to acknowledge their efforts. She is

visible all over the school, from classrooms and the hallways, to the cafeteria and media center in order to be where the students are and spread positive support. She makes it a point to greet all students each morning at the start of the school day and students respect her for enthusiastic and supportive demeanor.

Mattawoman eighth grader Kadasia Barnes wrote a letter of support for Jones' nomination. In her letter, Barnes said the student body at Mattawoman is grateful to have Jones as its principal because she is a hard worker who makes learning fun. "She is always smiling and excited to come to school and see all of her students. She works hard at her job and is the best principal this school has ever had," Barnes wrote.

Cheyenne Owens also recommended Jones for recognition. The Mattawoman eighth grader wrote a letter of recommendation that details Jones' focus on the safety and security of staff and students. "Ms. Jones acts as a mother, she tries to keep us safe and in a healthy environment. She talks and interacts with us and enforces the rules for our safety," Owens wrote.

Jones first became a principal in 2011 at Henson, following nearly a full school year of serving as the school's acting principal after the death of former principal Stup. Jones jumped in to serving as principal and worked diligently to establish relationships with her school community – students, staff, parents and community members – built on respect, high expectations and consistency. During Jones' tenure at Henson, Charles County Public Schools launched a middle school redistricting to relieve overcrowding at area middle schools. Students from several neighborhoods were rezoned to attend Henson and a negative perception about the school grew in local communities. Comments were made about Henson being an "aging facility" and "under resourced." Jones quickly rallied her staff with a plan of action to change this perception and show off all that the school had to offer.

"When our new families arrived we showed them why we were 'The Best School in the Universe.' We provided excellent customer service through phone calls and emails as well as walk-in conferences with administration. Under my leadership I created a healthy school climate where teachers enjoyed teaching," Jones said.

And her goal of supporting a healthy school climate where teachers enjoy teaching followed her to Mattawoman. Margot Savoy teaches eighth-grade language arts at Mattawoman and recalls a promise Jones made during their first staff meeting. "If you take care of the students, I will take care of you."

Savoy wrote a letter of recommendation on behalf of Jones' nomination and described in it all of the positive changes she sees occurring at Mattawoman. In particular, Savoy mentions an altercation among two students and overhearing their peers talk about staying focused in order to enjoy a positive, behavioral, interventions and supports (PBIS) event Jones coordinated for students who modeled good character. "It's nice to hear the students talk about staff in a positive way. They too are believing in the promise made. I can feel the change in the atmosphere throughout the school," Savoy wrote.

"My leadership mission is and always will be to create an environment where teachers love to teach and students love to learn," Jones said.



Sonia Jones

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Virtual Academy set to open at Stethem Center

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) will launch a Virtual Academy (VA) for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors to provide face-to-face instruction coupled with online classes.

The program, slated to begin at the start of the 2016-17 school year, is housed at the Robert D. Stethem Educational Center. Students are required to come to the center for five consecutive hours from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays. No classes will be held on Fridays.

Former carpentry classroom space on Stethem's campus is being converted for use as the VA, with rooms designated for computer labs. Other rooms will be used for more traditional classrooms, outfitted with smart boards that are compatible with tablets used by students.

The academy will use APEX Learning software, a leader in blended and virtual learning, with initially 30 to 40 students enrolled, said Lynne Arnold, principal of Stethem. "The option for online courses is like online college," she said. "It fits lifestyles and needs. It's more flexible. It's just another way for students to access their education." By attending classes at the center, students will have teacher support and "direct instruction," Arnold added.

"One size no longer fits all," said Amy Hollstein, assistant superintendent of instruction. "The Virtual Academy will allow students flexibility in choosing a time schedule of when to attend the academy. Teachers will be able to personalize instruction

for individual students by using prescriptive features in the online courses, and online tutorials will offer instruction and practice based on individual need. The online courses will also provide real world application of content and skills, preparing students for college and careers in the 21st century."

VA students are those who want a diploma but may not thrive in a traditional school, Arnold said. They might have a job and need a more fluid schedule to work around their hours; they may be a young parent who needs to arrange childcare; or have other issues that make going to other high schools inconvenient or impossible.

Teachers will be hired to work 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and, like students, have Fridays off. Instructors will be needed to teach English, science, math and history. For other subjects, like languages that don't have a designated teacher, a Stethem teacher will be called in to help VA students, Arnold said.

Students will be required to complete the same standards as those at other high schools in the county, but using slightly different means. They still have the same graduation requirements. "Education is changing, our students are changing, our families are changing," Arnold said. "We have to change."

VA graduates will receive a diploma and just like many of their peers, it is expected that many will go to college, Arnold said.

Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.cboe.com/jobs/currentopenings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job openings

Vice Principal for Elementary and Middle Schools — locations to be determined, 11-month positions. A master's degree and three years of teaching experience is required. Demonstrated ability to plan, organize and supervise the work of others, knowledge of appropriate instructional and curricular methodologies, understanding of effective schools research and an effort to implement the research findings into the administration of a school is required. Some of the job functions include participating in recruitment, screening, selection and orientation of instructional and non-instructional staff, assisting with and participating in professional development and staff activities, and assisting with student discipline. Apply by April 30.

Vice Principal for High Schools — locations to be determined, 12-month positions. A master's degree and three years of teaching experience is required. Demonstrated ability to plan, organize and supervise the work of others, knowledge of appropriate instructional and curricular methodologies, understanding of effective schools research and an effort to implement the research findings into the administration of a school is required. Job functions include assisting with coordination and care of school resources including finance, materials of instruction and equipment. Maintaining effective communications with parents, parent groups, civic associations and other community resources and assisting with the supervision of student activities and co-curricular programs during and beyond the school year. Apply by April 30.

Math, Social Studies, English and Special Education Teachers — Virtual Academy at Robert D. Stethem Educational Center,

10-month positions. Teachers will work 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Bachelor's degree and certification requirements established by the Maryland State Department of Education, advanced computer skills, interpersonal skills and ability to work with non-traditional students required. Teachers wishing to apply for a voluntary transfer must meet some requirements. Teachers will be responsible for assessing and assisting students in assigned coursework, plan and provide for appropriate learning experiences and develop, select and modify curriculum on a per student basis, as well as developing alternative options for students. Positions will be open until they are filled.

Extra pay position

Head Varsity Girls Soccer Coach — North Point High School. Call Andy Shattuck, athletic director, at 301-753-1759.