

RAPPAHANNOCK COUNTY SCHOOLS PANTHER PRIDE NEWSLETTER

DR. DONNA MATTHEWS, SUPERINTENDENT

RCPS COLLABORATES WITH SHERIFF'S OFFICE AT "SHOP WITH A DEPUTY" EVENT

On Saturday, December 10, Rappahannock County Public Schools supported the "Shop with a Deputy" program sponsored by the Rappahannock County Sheriff's Department to help children in our community who may not otherwise have a special holiday. At 7:00 A.M., volunteers from the Sheriff's Department, RCPS school staff, and community members, met 2 school buses of students and their chaperones at Wal-Mart in Warrenton. Volunteers then assisted the students in selecting presents for themselves and family members. Once the shopping was completed the buses returned the happy and hungry shoppers to RCES for a wonderful breakfast made by the RCPS cafeteria staff. While the children were enjoying a warm breakfast on this chilly morning, another group of volunteers worked diligently to wrap all of the presents the children had selected. The wrappers enjoyed packaging shoes, coats, toys, and even a few winter sleds for those children hoping for snow. Said Sheriff Connie Compton, "Thanks to all of you for helping. This program would not be happening if it weren't for the gracious people that give of their time and money. We were able to help 71 of our children this year."



Enrichment Opportunity: UVA Summer Residential Camp

In conjunction with the Curry School of Education, the University of Virginia has opened applications for its 39th annual summer residential program for gifted and/or high ability students. Students enrolled in grades 4-10 during the 2016-2017 school year are eligible to apply to this twelve day session, where they will spend morning and afternoon engaged in learning experiences designed to foster critical thinking, creative thinking, and inquiry processes.

In addition to the academic component, the residential piece of this program is an integral part of the entire experience. Residential counselors strive to provide a comfortable and safe environment for living and learning, while meeting individual social and emotional needs of the students. Students enrolled in the camp are given the opportunity to build relationships with gifted peers from different backgrounds.

This year, the three sessions will take place from June 18-29, 2017, July 2-13, 2017, and July 16-27, 2017. The applications opened on December 15, 2016. For more information, visit: <http://curry.virginia.edu/community-programs/student-enrichment/sep/summer>.



RCES BAND AND CHOIR WINTER CONCERT

Student musicians usher in the holiday spirit

On Wednesday, December 14, RCES students gathered in the gymnasium for the annual middle school band and choir holiday concert. Spirits were high as the 5th grade band, under the direction of Mr. Brian Raciborski, began the show with beginner-level pieces including “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star,” “Mary had a Little Lamb,” and “Hot Cross Buns,” while the younger students sang along softly. They continued with the Christmas classics, “Good King Wenceslas,” “Jolly Old St. Nick,” and “Jingle Bells.” Solos and duets were played throughout their performance.

Next the 6th and 7th grade band took the stage entertaining the crowd playing as separate grades as well as together. The title “Dragon Slayer” brought excitement to the little ones who enjoyed watching the “big kids play.” “Diary of a Grumpy Elf,” narrated by Maeve Ciuba, was another crowd favorite. The cafetorium was filled with the spirit of the season as the middle school band completed their set.



The finale of the concert was the RCES middle school choir, led by Mrs. Traci Dippert. They started uncharacteristically with an old sea shanty and then moved into the holiday spirit with the song “Littlest Angel.” They closed the concert with a beautiful rendition of “Grown Up Christmas List.” The audience was encouraged to listen to the lyrics as the choir students sang of hope for a peaceful world. The music department at RCES wishes everyone a very happy and peaceful holiday season.



HELPING THOSE WHO ARE HOMELESS

Songs and poems resound throughout the holiday season to elicit feelings of good cheer and warmth in the safety of our family and home; however, not all families are fortunate enough to have stable housing. Most of us fail to stop and reflect on our own risk factors for being in a homeless situation. With 1.3 million children reported by the USED in 2015 as experiencing homelessness, however, this possibility for many of our youth has become a reality. The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program is in place to support educational access, attendance, and success for homeless children and youth by offering school enrollment and stability with support for academic success. Any individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate residence is eligible to receive support through this program, including individuals who share housing due to loss of their home or economic hardship, live in hotels or campgrounds, or live in emergency transitional housing/ shelters. School enrollment not only provides children and youth experiencing homelessness with hope for a better future, but it is also required by law. Additionally, youth not accompanied by a parent or guardian and lacking fixed, regular, and adequate housing are entitled to these same rights. If you lack permanent housing or know of another family who is facing this challenge, please refer them to the McKinney-Vento liaison in their school district. For more information on assistance for students who have uncertain housing, a temporary address, or no permanent physical address in Rappahannock County, please contact Carol Johnson at cjohnson@rappahannockschoools.us or 540-227-0023.



DISTRICT BAND EVENT HOSTED AT RCHS

Students audition for honors

Last Saturday, RCHS hosted the District XIV Band Auditions, welcoming over 500 students from seven school districts, all of whom were looking to secure coveted spots on one of the District Ensembles. Similar to all district teams in athletics, being named to All District Band is a marching band post-season honor that acknowledges exceptional performance.

The purpose of the District Band Audition is for judges to hear musicians and rate them, creating three band ensembles (one middle school and two high school), one Wind Ensemble (typically the best of the best student musicians) and one Symphonic Band. Each student blind auditions before two judges, performing two major scales, the chromatic scale, a prepared selection and a sight reading. Auditions are blind in that judges sit behind a screen and know the auditioning students only by their assigned number. To ensure anonymity, each student performer even has an adult volunteer serving as room monitor, who speaks to the judges for the student in the event of questions.

Putting on such an event requires an enormous amount of volunteers, jobs filled by both RCHS band parents and band members. Beginning with a 6:15 AM meeting early Saturday morning, the Rapp Band and Band Boosters ensured that all audition rooms were ready and then served as facilitators for the event until its end. Their work throughout the day paid off as the event progressed seamlessly. By 3PM the auditions were complete and all the band students had departed, leaving the judges to their task of determining who would make the cut, a task that kept them on site until past 9 PM.



Students who were selected for ensembles will go to Millbrook High School February 3 and 4 for the District Band event. There they will be rehearsing very challenging music with guest conductors all day Friday and Saturday morning in preparation for a Saturday afternoon finale concert.

District Band honorees from RCHS included Taylor Callahan who earned 1st chair Clarinet for Wind Ensemble (a designation which also makes her eligible for all state honors), Ninon Kirchman who earned 3rd chair trumpet for Symphonic Band, Jackson Norris who earned 4th chair trombone for Wind Ensemble, and Julian Cordero who earned 4th chair snare drum for Symphonic Band. Additionally Sophia Hernandez was selected for 5th chair flute for Symphonic Band, Lulu Ashenfelder was chosen for flute alternate for Symphonic Band, and Abigail Berry was awarded clarinet alternate for Symphonic Band.

Congratulations to RCHS Band Director Jason Guira, his band students, and his band parents and supporters, whose combined efforts to host this year's District Band event led to yet another successful community event at RCHS.





Upcoming Events and Announcements

***** THIS IS THE FINAL NEWSLETTER OF THE YEAR. THE NEXT EDITION OF THE PANTHER PRIDE NEWSLETTER WILL BE ISSUED ON JANUARY 13th. WE WISH EVERYONE A VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON*****

- ❖ December 19: Kindergarten performance at RCES 6:30 PM
- ❖ December 19 & 20: RCHS semester exams
- ❖ December 21: Early release for students 12:30 PM
- ❖ December 22-January 4: Winter Break
- ❖ January 5: First day back for students
- ❖ January 9: PTO meeting at RCES library 6:30 PM
- ❖ January 9: Fall Sports Award Ceremony
- ❖ January 26: Family Life Review RCHS library 6 PM

For upcoming athletic events visit the RCPS Sports Page:

<http://rappahannockcountyhs.schoolteams.com/>



Commit to Be Fit check-ins are being held through Tuesday, Dec. 20th. Use this link to schedule an appointment:

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/4090B4BA5A629A3FE3-c2bf1

Or, come to our open check-ins at the School Board Office on the following dates:

Saturday, December 17- 9:45am-11:00am

Monday, December 19- 3:00pm-7:00pm

Tuesday, December 20- 2:00pm-7:00pm

Collectively, as a community working toward greater health and wellness, we are already seeing great results. At our first check-in, we recorded a total community weight loss of 214.8 lbs! Total waist inches lost: 119.15"!

Keep up the great work. We can do this together.



RCPS Vision Statement:

To empower every student to reach his or her full potential.