

THE LEARNING Curve

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Your weekly guide to students, schools, teachers and triumphs in Bibb County's Public Schools

Central High Academic Team Wins State Title

Looks to community to help it get to national competition

After a year of success across the state and nation, Bibb County Public Schools has another great opportunity to shine in the national spotlight. Earlier this spring, the Central High School Academic Team won the state title for Georgia in Academic Team competition. Doing so qualified them to compete in the National Academic Quiz Tournament in Chicago the weekend of June 2 - 4.

They need your help, though, in raising enough money to get there. The students and school will need to raise more than \$2,000 to help pay for the hotel, travel, and tournament registration fees.

This is the first year the school has competed in Class AAAA competition since the Georgia High School Association reclassified the school. Previously, Central won the state title in Class AAA in 2002, 2003, and 2004.

During the competition, there are four students per team. A toss-up question is posed which any student can buzz in and answer. Whichever team answers first and correctly gets a bonus question that all the team members can confer on. Questions come from a wide variety of topics - from sports to history to geography to math to pop culture. According to the team's coach, Stan Brown, the state level competition hosted by the Georgia Academic Team Association sticks to the more academic questions.

"I think it is a wonderful experience for the students to engage in this kind of competition at the national level, meeting and measuring themselves up against outstanding students from around the country," he says. "I also think it is good for Bibb County schools to learn how well we can compete with the nation's best."

If you would like to help these students represent themselves, Central High, and Bibb County Public Schools on the national stage, checks should be made out to Central High School, with a memorandum that they are for academic team. They should be sent to the notice of Kay Carr or Stan Brown at Central High School, 2155 Napier Avenue, Macon, GA 31204.

Community Partnership leads to Dictionaries for Third Graders



Realtors passed out dictionaries to third graders across the county.

"We've got something for you today," Coldwell Banker, SSK Realtor Ivan Bickett tells the Hartley Elementary students gathered in the Media Center. "It's something that will help you from now until the day you graduate."

As Bickett and fellow realtors open the boxes behind them, students lean forward and make moves to stand up and see what they're about to receive. "Everyone stay seated," their teacher lightly chastises them. Back seated again, their heads still strain up and forward to be the first to figure out what's so special.

Thanks to a partnership between Coldwell, MaconReads, and *The Telegraph's* Literacy Committee, every 3rd grader in Bibb County Public Schools received their very own dictionary. "You can learn anything from these dictionaries," Bickett tells them, pointing out they can be a good resource in their studies as they prepare for the Criterion Referenced Competency Tests. Where a normal dictionary leaves off, these also include information about presidents, the Constitution, each state, Roman numerals, the Periodic Table, and even foreign countries.

"The children use dictionaries in the classroom, but these are for them to use on their own," explains Bernd Assistant Principal Rhonda Hardrick. "It's great because many students don't have a dictionary at home."

After making sure each student gathered had theirs, the realtors played a game with them using their new dictionary. Having them turn to certain sections, they would ask questions like 'who was the 37th president,' 'what is the capital of Italy,' 'what is the 6th planet from the Sun,' and 'what is the definition of harmony!' The first student to raise their hand and correctly answer received a prize.

"I want to thank Coldwell Banker for giving us these dictionaries," says

Hardrick. Smiling, she then adds "I got one, too!"

The interest shown by these realtors extends beyond just showing up and passing out the dictionaries. Even before the money was completely collected, they were spending time each week in the school reading to the students, tutoring them, and helping out wherever possible.

"Education is one of the most important aspects [of a community]," explains David Green from Coldwell Banker. "We are proud and honored to be a part of this program."



Coldwell Banker, SSK presents the check for the dictionaries at a press conference at The Telegraph.

Skyview Elementary's Living Wax Museum

Innovative History lesson has students teaching students



Students receive an innovative history lesson from one of their peers.

Students are lined down the walls of Skyview Elementary, seemingly immobile until they have a class standing before them. "Coming to life," as REACH teacher Misty O'Barr describes, the student against the wall begins to tell the class before them all about

themselves...or rather, about who they are dressed as to resemble.

All year long, REACH students have been studying historical figures throughout certain eras of history: 2nd graders studied Ancient China, 3rd graders studied Famous Americans, 4th graders focused on the American Revolution, and 5th graders researched American History from 1900 on. Picking one figure for their final project, they had to do an in-depth study of that person. "They had to research that person's life, find an interesting fact about them not well known, how they dressed, important contributions, and prepare a ten-minute presentation," says O'Barr.

After a year of research and study, the students were allowed to pick who they wanted to focus on for the final presentation. For the grade, they would have to give a speech to their REACH class, as well as prepare a two-page biography. The fun part of all the research, students dressed up as the character and hosted a day-long 'Living Wax Museum.' Every class in the school took time out of the day to circulate, stopping before each character for a ten-minute

history lesson.

"When you research a project, you can learn a lot," says Principal Gail Gilbert, "but when you teach it to others, it really reinforces that learning."

"The kids are so excited about today because they've worked so hard, and they're ready to present what they've learned to the other students," says O'Barr.

Historical figures represented included Emperor Hsien-feng, Confucius, Emperor Ming, Kublai Khan, Empress Dowager Tzu His, George Washington Carver, Coretta Scott King, Amelia Earhart, Madam C.J. Walker, Sandra Day O'Connor, Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, John Paul Jones, Emily Geiger, Rosa Parks, Queen Lollikilani, Elizabeth Bacon Custer, Babe Ruth, Susan B. Anthony, and many others.

"It's such a creative and novel idea," praises Gilbert, adding this isn't the first time O'Barr has made an effort to educate the whole school. "Everything she's done [with her REACH students], she takes the whole school into consideration."