

all around information

generals 360

December 2009

Important Dates

- Dec. 2
Basketball @ Cousins
Wrestling home
- Dec. 4
Basketball vs. Edwards home
Wrestling @ Union Grove H.S
- Dec. 7
Academic Bowl @ JC Booth M.S
- Dec. 9
Basketball @ Indian Creek M.S
Wrestling home
- Dec. 10
Chorus Concert 7:00 6th and 7th
- Dec. 11
Basketball @ Conyers
Wrestling Home
- Dec. 15
Band Concert 7:00
8th grade Chorus
Basketball @ Davis
- Dec. 16
Wrestling Home
- Dec. 18
End of 1st semester
- Dec. 21-31
Holiday Break

Veterans Memorial Middle School
13357 Brown Bridge Rd.
Covington, GA 30016
770-385-6893

Keeping Veterans Green



Veterans' recycling crew has been working diligently to help the environment. Every Tuesday and Thursday, eighth grade students Demario Loyal and Kerry Hill go class-to-class in search of recyclable items. Assisted by seventh grader, Kevin Allen, the recycling crew works extremely hard to keep Veterans' classrooms environmentally friendly. They apply their recycling knowledge inside and outside of their classrooms, sorting items by hand. Mr. Bigby, Veterans' recycling coordinator, was more than happy to form the recycling crew and is proud of their hard work. He says, "Recycling of paper, plastics, glass, and metals helps save energy (it takes 80% less energy to recycle items than to make them new), saves landfill space, and cuts down on the costs to the environment through reduced destruction of lands and forests." The next time you see these three students, please thank them for their hard work.

By Ajah'lai Edghill and Ricardo Menchaca

Teacher Spotlight: Eric Hollier

"If you fail to plan, you plan to fail" is a quote Mr. Eric Hollier enjoys. He was born in Los Angeles, California along with his three sisters and his brother. He was the only child in his family to graduate from college. He lived in California for thirty years where he attended University of Southern California, where he taught math for three years. He then moved to Georgia in June of 2005. Mr. Hollier then got married to Mrs. Chinasa Hollier, and had a beautiful baby girl named Gabrielle, who is now twenty-one months old. In his spare time he likes to watch his favorite football teams, the Trojans and the 49ers, and travel with his family. He also likes to play basketball, and he's the assistant coach for the girl's basketball team at Veterans. When he was little he wanted to be a NFL player, but as he got older he realized that his chances for that were slim to none. He then decided to go for either engineering or teaching; luckily for his students he stuck with teaching. Mr. Hollier has taught for ten years, but only three and a half years at Veterans. "My favorite thing about teaching is working with students and helping them to better themselves." Even though he says he will always teach math, he wouldn't mind trying to teach social studies or science. To keep his students disciplined he talks to them about making good choices, but it is difficult to motivate all of his students. Mr. Hollier thanks his tenth grade math teacher, Ms. Dupras, for inspiring him to become a teacher.



By Taylor Crews and Alex Jordan

generals sports

Boys Basketball Team Hopes for a Great Season

Here come the Generals! Recently, the team sponsored a dance and the boys made enough money to cover all the expenses. Out of fifteen players on the team; only three are seventh grade students, and the rest are eighth grade. The team's first game was November 18 at Liberty, and the Generals were victorious. Coach Adams and his assistant, Coach Smoak, are hopeful that the team will be this year's NewRock champions. Coach Adams feels that as each player develops stronger basketball skills, he also benefits as he learns to become a team player, to become a better man, and understand how discipline affects his life.

By Briseida Cabral and Brandon Johnson

Watch Out for the Lady Generals!

The Lady Generals have been practicing everyday after school to prepare for the upcoming season. Many girls tried out for the team, but only nine 7th grade girls and eight 8th grade girls made the team for a total of seventeen players. Last year, the team went undefeated and won the NewRock championship. Their goal is to do the same this year.

Coach Fulton, one of the coaches for the Lady Generals, says that he enjoys coaching very much and feels that the team is a way of helping the girls to extend their abilities while representing Veterans. The first game of the season was November 18, and the Lady Generals won against Liberty Middle School with a score of 33-26. Come out and support your Lady Generals as they do their best to continue on their way to another championship!

By Milan Mitchell and Briseida Cabral

Wrestlers Are At It Again!

By practicing in the cafeteria every day, the thirty-two Veterans wrestlers have been making great progress by working hard to prepare for their first match of the 2009-2010 year. "My favorite part of wrestling is that it's just you against another; you don't have to count on anyone else," says first-year wrestler Tristen Payne. The main goal for most wrestlers is to beat Indian Creek and go to the NewRock Championship. "We are missing a few good wrestlers, but the coaches are great and we will do well," returning wrestler, Max Komar says. The first match will be held at Veterans on December 2 against Davis Middle School! "I look forward to the season. I hope everyone comes out and supports us," says Coach Robinson. The students of Veterans are looking forward to seeing fellow wrestling classmates go undefeated.

By Kinsley Gerks and Alexis Jones



Star Steppers

Star Steppers are going to be lighting up the home basketball games during halftime at Veterans! At tryouts, sixteen girls were chosen out of thirty-five hopefuls. Talent was not the only thing that mattered in these try-outs. Good attitude, good grades, and good behavior also contributed greatly to the overall package the girls had to offer. During the course of the season, Coach Kellen Ellis wants the girls to gain confidence and grow towards being young ladies by working together and reaching their goals to perform the very best they can every time. Most importantly, they should have fun! Step team member, Milan Mitchell, believes that the step team is a fun outlet that lets

her escape from her normal school day, but it takes a lot of effort and focus. Watch for the Star Steppers, Generals! They will be coming to a game near you. Come out and support the steppers' first performance at Veterans on December 4, 2009. By Gaby Collantes and Andreana Guillet



Did you know?

Veterans' cafeteria workers scored a perfect 100 on their last inspection.



Veterans Day at Veterans

Veterans Day is a day when everyone comes together to support and honor all of the men and women who have served their country. Veterans Day was originally called Armistice Day. On November 11, 1918, people began recognizing soldiers that fought in the war. It was first declared by Congress in 1926, and so Armistice Day became Veterans Day. The name was changed to honor all who served in the nation's



wars or conflicts. Claude "Sandy" Thomas, who was a U.S Army State Lieutenant and expert rifleman, took time out of his busy day to come and talk to Veterans students about Veterans Day and why it is important. Lieutenant Thomas gave students an overview of the history behind Veterans Day and ended his presentation by helping students focus on what national treasures veterans are; they are willing to work for, fight for, and if necessary die for their country, making them true heroes in the eyes of many.



Lieutenant Thomas brought items to display for his Veterans Day speech to the students.

Many of the faculty at Veterans who are served in the armed services wore their uniforms to school on November 11 and gathered at the end of the day for a photograph. The students seemed to enjoy the presentation and would like to take the time to thank all who have served their country for freedom that everyone enjoys.

By Alex Jordan and Alea Nesbit



club news



Campus Life- It's a time for Christians to come together and talk with other fellow Christians. These students meet in the chorus room every Friday from 7:45 to 8:30 am. In November, Campus Life members participated in Operation Christmas Child in which they packed shoe boxes for children ages 2 to 14. These boxes will go to underprivileged boys and girls in various foreign countries. Special thanks goes to Mrs. Reed for bringing in supplies and her class for staying and packing boxes together. Also, thanks goes to Coach Roberts for using his truck to transport the boxes to the drop off location. Anyone interested in joining Campus Life should see Coach Sammons or Mrs. Reed.

F.C.C.L.A. - or Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America, is a club to promote personal growth and leadership development through family and consumer sciences education. In recognition of Veterans Day, FCCLA hosted a "Veterans Day" decorating contest. Fifteen students participated in the contest and the winner was Ansleigh White, a sixth grade student. The cakes were donated to Veterans. Anyone interested in joining FCCLA should contact Mrs. Worman in the Family Consumer Science room.

G.E.M.S - Girls Engage in Meaningful Service hosted a Canned Food Drive in November to fill the Covington Food Pantry. To read more about the canned food drive, go to the article on page 5. If anyone would like to join GEMS, feel free to contact Ms. Jones or Ms. Jackson.

Academic Bowl—The Academic Bowl team has been busy competing in various competitions over the last couple of months, and their last competition is scheduled for December 8. Good luck! The Academic Bowl sponsor is Mrs. Lassiter.

Happy Holidays from the Generals 360 Staff



“Curing Cancer Would Be Like Living in Paradise”

Relay for Life is an annual event that raises funds to help in the search for a cure for cancer. Anyone and everyone can be a part of this journey; every school, business, and citizen of Newton County can participate in Relay for Life. Veterans’ theme for Relay Day is a Hawaiian luau. Relay day, when everyone gathers at a festival, is not until April,

but many fundraisers are being held now at Veterans. A committee was formed to plan ways to raise money. Currently, teachers are selling “Purple Feet” for \$1.00; the goal is to fill the halls with footprints until they circle the entire school. Special pink 4G flash drives were sold for \$15 and since it was such a success, it was offered again. Dime bottles are an upcoming fundraiser for Veterans. The point is to get every homeroom to fill a 20oz bottle with dimes; when full, the bottles will contain \$100. On November 16, a purple toilet was dumped on Veterans from Cousins Middle School. Students were asked to vote by putting their spare change in a jar labeled with Alcovy, Newton, Livingston, West Newton, Rocky Plains, or Oak Hill. These schools were all possible destinations for the toilet. All the donated money will go to Relay for Life. To support the cause, you can join the team on



www.relayforlife.org/newtonga, or for more information, contact Mrs. Blackerby in the Media Center.

Did you know?

There is no charging of lunches during December, so remember to bring your lunch money!

By Jenna Mitchell and Ashton Stewart

Literacy Day at Veterans

The Literacy Day competition was held at 9:00 on October 28, 2009 in the Veterans media center. The poetry recitation was first, in grade order. Next, the skits were performed. In total there were twenty-four poems and fifteen skits. The judges were Leslie Coleman, who is Veterans’ media specialist, Jessica Elmore, a former media specialist at Veterans, and Linda Wade.



There were rubrics for scoring the poems and skits. For the poems, students were to speak loud enough so that everyone could hear them, and use hand motions. For the skits, students were required to have props, announce their skits, speak loud and clear, and make sure that their backs weren’t turned to the audience. The more props and more creativity that the students had, the better it would be for their score.

The poetry winners were sixth grade student Hannah Maddux, seventh grade student David Croone, and eighth grade student Will Dobar. Hannah recited *Oh, The Places You Will Go* by Dr. Seuss, David recited *The Three Little Pigs* by Roald Dahl, and Will recited *Paul Revere’s Ride* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The top winners of the drama competition were all eighth grade students. The groups performing *Raven Blaine-Street Magic*, and *Baking a Cake* tied for third place. Second place went to the group performing *Moon Bears* consisting of Tyler Aldridge, Austin

Brown, Jacob Carter, Anfernee Cruz, Maverick Geeslin, Hannah Jackson, Maya Brooks and Jeremy Rachels. Though the scores were close, the group performing *Dirty Dishes* placed first. The winning group consisted of Robert Bullard, Tyrel Cooper, Gaby Collantes, Will Dobar, Andreana Guillet, Milan Mitchell, and Mia Williams.



Although all the poems and skits were great, only the first place winners can go on to the next stage of the competition in December. If they win, they will then go to Griffin RESA.

By Anfernee Cruz and Tyler Aldridge.

Looking for Guidance?

Are you a student at Veterans who needs guidance or tutoring? The peer helper program is here to help. The program is sponsored by Mrs. Turner and Mrs. Alston, the counselors at Veterans. The seventh and eighth grade students, who went through an application process to become a peer helper, help students with conflict resolution, and they can also tutor students who request help. The peer helpers work during their connections. Each peer helper must maintain a C average or higher, and they must have outstanding behavior. The guidance schedule is made of rotations and the tutoring schedule is set up by Mrs. Alston. Trustworthiness is an important quality for peer helpers because students have to be able to confide in the peer helpers. They must also be responsible when they are on their own. Mrs. Alston says, "I hope the kids will use the program and that they will come in and meet with the peer helpers."



By Kinsley Gerks and

Generals Collect Food to Dodge Hunger

This month, GEMS sponsored a canned food drive to help out the needy during the upcoming holidays. The Generals collected over 5,500 items that were donated to the Solid Rock Baptist Food Pantry. This food pantry serves all of Newton County. To encourage donations, GEMS held a dodge ball tournament for the top six classes out of each grade level that collected the most canned food items. The top six classes out of each grade level got a chance to eliminate their competitors!



The top six classes out of each grade level got a chance to eliminate their competitors! The teachers of homerooms that collected enough cans to participate for sixth grade were Ms. Cole, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Carter, Ms. Braswell, Mrs. Scott, and Mr. Bigby. Ms. Frix, Mrs. Mansfield, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Ellis, Mrs. Alexander, and Mrs. West were the teachers for the homerooms that participated for seventh grade. Mrs. Rachels, Mr. Hollier, Mrs. Walton, Mr. Adam, Mr. Roberts, and Mrs. Watkins were all proud that their homerooms brought in enough cans to qualify for the tournament. Mr. Bigby's homeroom collected the most cans with a grand total of 584 cans, so they won a pizza party.



The dodge ball tournament was held in the gym during connections on Friday, November 20. Mr. Johnson's homeroom won for the sixth grade tournament. Ms. Hypolite's class placed first for seventh grade and Ms. Rachels' homeroom beat out all the other eighth grade homerooms. Whether they played in the tournament or cheered for their classmates from the stands, all who attended the tournament had a great time. But even better, Veterans made the largest contribution to the food pantry in its history.

By Hannah Jackson and Bianca Hannon

Hundreds of Mouths to Feed at Veterans

Who would have thought that eleven people are in charge of preparing one thousand, two hundred and twenty-five meals in one day at Veterans? Not having a moment of rest, cafeteria staff must prepare all meals, which do not come pre-cooked. They spend two hours and fifteen minutes fixing breakfasts and lunches for the students to eat. Since many of the last year's students now go to Liberty, the staff was downsized and as a result, there are only three registers to record all those meals. "It's a rush job" states School Nutrition Program (SNP) manager Cindy Palecek. Ms. Palecek and her two assistants are so well organized, it's clear that it's a smooth running operation. Just like with any job, there are obstacles. Cooking all of that food is not an easy job and to make sure the cafeteria is run correctly, an inspector comes to make sure they abide by the food codes. Although the potential for having a mess is great, the cafeteria at Veterans is always kept spotless, which delights students, faculty, and parents.



By Ella Svirida and Megan Ralston