

Career Explorations Day encourages W-W students to 'aspire to new levels'

Students at Washington-Wilkes Middle School and Comprehensive High School got to sample career alternatives Friday at the second annual Career Explorations Day. As a part of the C2G Committed to Graduate initiative, WCCP Executive Director Amethyst Wynn, in collaboration with Ashley Barnett, Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Director, hosted keynote speaker Rev. Kenneth Walker, business speaker Ames M. Barnett, and representatives from various colleges, technical schools, local businesses and other organizations to share information on their particular fields of opportunity and to inspire the students to stay in school and do their best. Principals Bill Pendrey and Steve Echols, along with W-WCHS counselor Don Bridges, assisted in the coordination and promotion of this event, Wynn said.

The purpose of the event was to encourage students to aspire to new levels of academia, school success, and scholarship. "We want students to make a 'commitment to graduate,'" Wynn said. "WCCP hopes that this Career Explorations Day will help students develop an affinity for school, and combat the problems of school failure and dropouts by helping students 'connect the dots' between school success, career success, and success in life."

WCCP is the Wilkes County - Family Connection Collaborative, and the Wilkes County Communities In Schools (CIS) affiliate; thus, it is the mission of WCCP to serve as a catalyst for improving results for local children, families, and communities, and to help children stay in school and become successful, productive citizens, Wynn said.

The keynote speaker, Rev. Kenneth Walker, is a native of Washington and was raised by his grandmother, the late Bessie Mae Hayes. "He accepted his call to preach at the age of 18. He was licensed and ordained to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He completed his Bachelor of Arts degree at Paine College in Augusta. He distinguished himself academically and was named the Student of the Year as well as Student Government Association president," Wynn said.

Walker served as the first African-American executive assistant to a Georgia lieutenant governor; the first African-American executive assistant appointed to the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority by Governor Roy E. Barnes; and helped to pass the HOPE Scholarship. He also worked in the reelection campaign of President Bill Clinton in 1996 and on the President's Ministerial Roundtable in 2000, and is a pioneering political blogger for

FaithfulDemocrats.org in Chicago. Walker is the father of Terrence and Cydney.

The business speaker, Ames M. Barnett, is the President of Barnett Southern Corporation in Washington and Vice President of Team Excavating Company in Wrens. A graduate of Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School and Georgia Southern University, he began his professional career in 1999 when he joined Barnett Construction which, under his leadership, grew into Barnett Southern Corporation.

Barnett said he believes in hard work and constantly stresses the importance of integrity. "These basic standards have become the pillars of his business strategy and leadership style. In addition, his diligence and commitment to quality have cultivated impressive relationships with clients," Wynn said.

"He and his wife Ashley are also very committed to their community. He learned from his grandmother, Mildred Barnett, the first woman elected to Washington's City Council, the importance of unselfish community involvement and service." In November 2007, he was elected to Washington City Council.

"Both Ames and Ashley look for opportunities to promote and preserve their hometown. The contributions of loyal and dedicated community servants like Ames and Ashley have made Washington-Wilkes a better place to live and work," Wynn said. Barnett is the son of Danny and Nancy Barnett of Washington. He and Ashley have a three-year-old son, Porter.

Career Explorations Day activities were scaled down considerably this year because CIS did not have an available grant, Wynn said. Last year, Wilkes County Community Partnership received a \$5,000 Communities In Schools of Georgia (CISGA) Bridgebuilder Grant to fund the 2008 Career Explorations Day activities, such as career interest surveys, essay contests, and field trips to colleges and technical schools. "Nevertheless, we believe this year's exposure to the speakers, business and college/technical school representatives will positively impact our youth," Wynn said.

Guardian ...

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from Congressman Broun to take up the challenge and do everything his office can to secure a meeting with senior people at DHS. That's encouraging, but it's too late for some of our investors."

Throughout the long effort to bring jobs and economic development to Wilkes County, Burkart says, he has had complete cooperation from city and county leaders and the Payroll Development Authority. "In fairness, I must give credit to the Washington-Wilkes government officials. Mayor Willie Burns, County Commission Chairman Sam Moore, along with members of their staffs, have been strong proponents of economic development and have worked tirelessly and prudently to support the TGC initiative wherever they can. It is obvious to me that these individuals are genuinely committed to the economic growth of the city and county to which The Guardian Center could greatly contribute."

In particular, he said, "Mayor Burns has also committed to pushing an initiative to put us in front of senior decision-makers at DHS."

At this point, Burkart said, the effort to bring a state-of-the-art training center to Wilkes County is still alive, but it depends on getting the blessing of Homeland Security. "To date we have been unable to test the business assumptions at DHS and this step is critical to investors before making any significant financial commitments. We truly hope we can work everything out and make this happen."



Santa brings cheer to Washington Manor residents

The jolly old elf himself visited the 22 residents of Washington Manor last week, passing out gifts to one and all. Family and friends joined the residents in their annual Christmas party on Thursday, December 17, said Joe Harris. "Everybody got a present, and everybody had a wonderful time, especially Santa."



The program is facilitated by Rev. Glen Kohlhaugen, pastor of the Washington Presbyterian Church. For information, call 706-678-7511.

Wednesday during the winter months due to budget cuts.

Hours for the Washington-Wilkes Animal Shelter have changed. The shelter is now open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.; or by appointment by calling 706-678-3187.

Wilkes County Census Testing is scheduled for December 28, 10 a.m., and 2 p.m., at the Mary Willis Library. For more information, call 866-861-2010.

Wilkes Transit and the Roy L. Burns Sr. Senior Center will be closed December 24, 2009, until January 4, 2010.

The Christmas Tree of Love sponsored by the Wills Memorial Hospital Auxiliary to benefit the hospital is having its fund-raising program. Donations in memory or in honor of loved ones and friends to light the tree are \$5.00 each. Donations may be mailed to 120 Gordon Street, Washington 30673.

The Reese J. Booker Scholarship Program will be held at the Marks Tabernacle Baptist Church Sunday, December 27, at 6 p.m. Elder H. Lee Anderson of Oak Grove, Kentucky, is scheduled to be the guest speaker.

The Marching Tiger Band Boosters are selling Tiger Paw charms as a fundraiser. The charm fits necklaces and bracelets. The charms are available at Scarboroughs on The Square.

The 2009 Christmas party for the W-WCHS Class of 1979 will be held December 26. Contact Lillie Perkins at 706-401-8474 for information.

Pompey's Chapel Baptist Church will have pastor appreciation and a birthday celebration Sunday, December 27, 12 noon. The pastor is W.R. Ferrell and the guest speaker is Rev. Lance Pitts.

New Salem Baptist Church on the Greensboro Road will have worship service Friday morning, December 25, at 9:00 a.m. A watchnight service will be held Thursday night, December 31, at 10:30 p.m. Pastor Reynolds and the congregation extend an invitation to everyone to attend these services.

Members of the Kiwanis Club of Washington are selling large shelled pecan halves for \$8 per pound. Contact any member of the club for information.

The Bereavement Support Group sponsored by Wills Memorial Hospital will meet Wednesday, January 12, at 1 p.m., in the hospital library. The meeting is open to the public and focuses on the sharing of experiences and changes to everyday living that have come about by the loss of a loved one.

Fitzpatrick ...

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specific merchandise for tourists." If the new efforts are successful, Horton said, the hotel can be expanded from the present 16 rooms. "If we do a great job on publicity and marketing, I believe we can add 24 rooms to the back of the hotel. And if we're really successful, we have other ideas that can bring many more people here and give them an experience that every business here will profit from. We're going to try our best, and time will tell. We're really excited about the possibilities."

Trinity Baptist Church will host a watchnight service December 31 at 10 p.m. Guest churches are New Ford, Reeves Chapel, Pole Branch, Thankful Baptist, and many others.

The Mary Willis Library will close at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday and



Courtney Gunter, (center) was presented with the DAR Good Citizen award by Kettle Creek Chapter regent Anneice Butler (right) and the Chapter's Good Citizen chairman, Joanne Pollock.

DAR selects Courtney Gunter for 2009 Good Citizen Award

Courtney Gunter has been named this year's recipient of the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award.

Gunter, a senior at Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School, was presented with the award Wednesday, December 16, by Kettle Creek Chapter regent Anneice Butler and the Chapter's Good Citizen Chairman, Joanne Pollock.

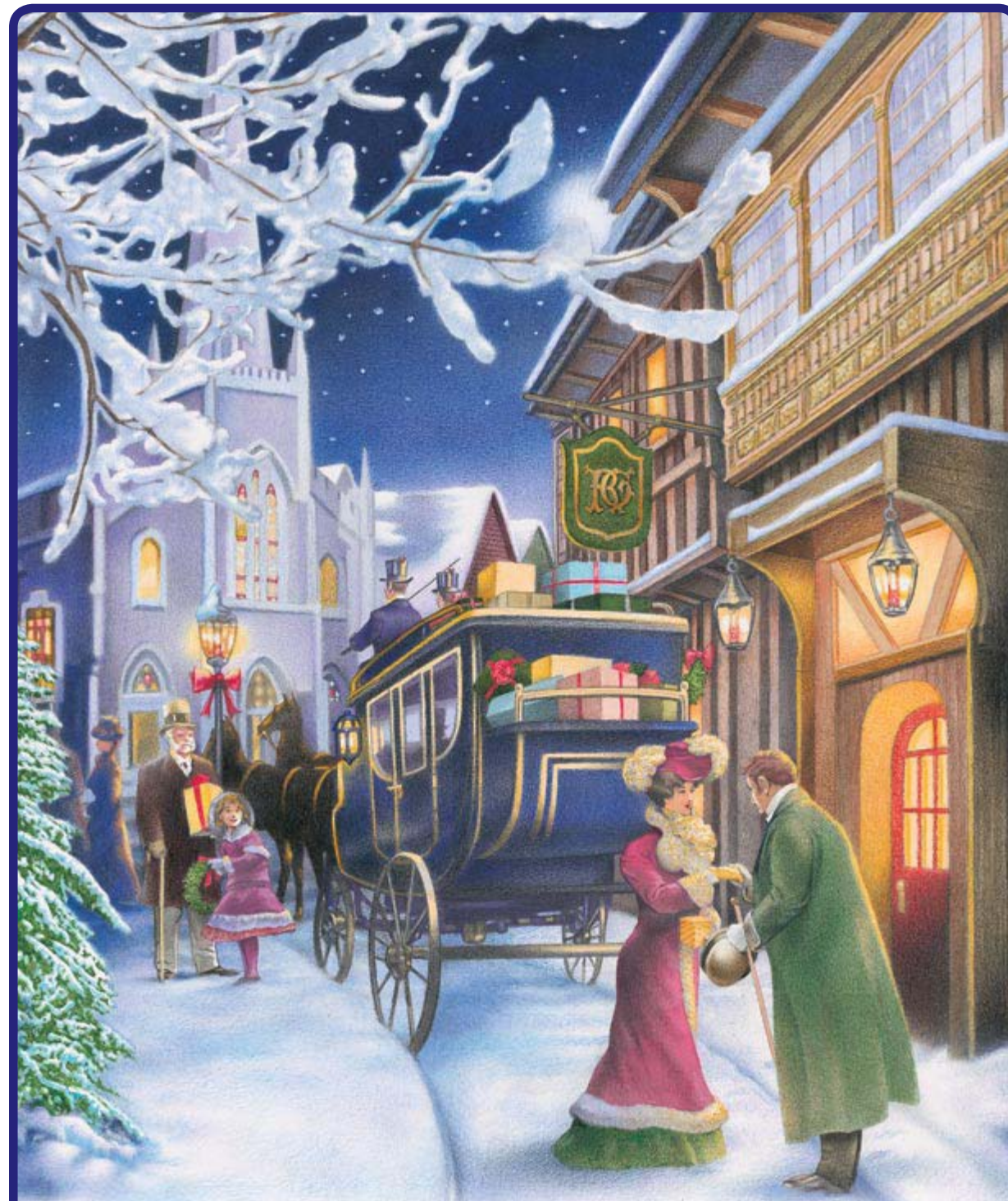
"This award is given each year to the high school senior who best exemplifies outstanding leadership, dependability, service, and patriotism in the home, school, and community," Mrs. Pollock said.

Courtney, the daughter of Monica and Danny Gunter, has excelled academically and has been an honor student throughout her high school career. She received the Chemistry Student of the Year award, the Georgia Certificate of Merit, the Trigonometry Award, the Georgia Retired Educators' Award, and achieved a perfect score on the math

portion of the Georgia High School Graduation Test. She is a member of the Interact Club, Future Business Leaders of America, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Future Farmers of America, and the Math League.

She has been a member of the Tiger football and competition cheerleading squad for four years, and is a member of the tennis team. She is a member of Sardis Baptist Church where she is the Sunday School pianist, a youth group leader, and is active in mission activities and works with the children of the church.

While completing the high school's CNA nursing program, Courtney worked at a local nursing home. She just received early acceptance at the University of Georgia, but is undecided whether to attend UGA or Georgia College and State University. She will be pursuing a nursing degree and would like to work in a children's hospital as a pediatric nurse.



Season's Greetings Are On The Way!

May glad tidings find you wherever you go this Christmas. We thank you sincerely for the gift of your readership, and wish you the best of the season.

The News-Reporter

Sparky Newsome
Mary Newsome
Jane Newsome
Smythe Newsome

Kip Burke
Susan Pope
Buck Cope
Whitney Richards
Tara Townsend

Teri Eno
Samille Sherrer
Bonnie Boatwright
Carolyn Gammon

Community Calendar

- Dec. 24 First Baptist Christmas Eve program, 6 p.m.
First Methodist Candlelight Christmas Eve, 6 p.m.
Presbyterian Church Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols, 5 p.m.
- Dec. 25 CHRISTMAS DAY
- Dec. 31 Trinity Baptist Watchnight, 10 p.m.
- Jan. 6 WMH Foundation, 12:30 p.m., Hospital library
- Jan. 11 City Council, 6 p.m., Pope Center
Woman's Club, 12 noon clubhouse
- Jan. 12 Iris Garden Club, 10 a.m., FUMC
- Jan. 13 WMH Tea and Learn, 2:30 p.m., Simpson building
- Jan. 14 County Commissioners, 7 p.m.
W-W Garden Club, 2 p.m., NW Library
- Jan. 18 DAR, 12 noon, Woman's Club
- Jan. 19 Historic Preservation, 5 p.m., City Hall Annex
- Jan. 21 Tignall Homemakers, 2 p.m., NW Library
- Jan. 25 Civil War Roundtable, 6 p.m., Jockey Club
- Jan. 26 WMH Auxiliary, 10 a.m., hospital library