

Lannae, Randalls chosen tops by W-W Chamber



Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce Director Ashley Barnett presents the Chamber's Citizen of the Year award to Cathy Lannae.

Testing tornado warnings part of weather readiness

Washington-Wilkes will take part in severe weather preparedness next week, including a statewide severe weather drill Wednesday that will test tornado sirens all over the county.

The Washington-Wilkes County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is observing next week, February 1-7, as Severe Weather Awareness Week in Georgia to encourage Georgians to practice emergency preparedness and response procedures for all types of severe weather events.

The week-long observance will focus on different topics each day. "Family preparedness is the focus on Sunday, February 1," says Wilkes EMA Director Alan Poss. "Family Preparedness Day is the perfect time for every family in Wilkes County to plan and rehearse what they should do during the first 72 hours of any severe weather-related event or disaster."

To help people get started, he said, the Georgia Emergency Management Agency's "Ready Georgia," a statewide emergency preparedness campaign, offers the necessary tools that residents need to make an emergency supply kit, develop a communications plan and stay informed about potential threats. Ready Georgia's interactive website, www.ready.ga.gov, provides detailed information on Georgia-specific emergency preparedness and allows users to create a personal profile and receive a customized checklist and a family communications plan.

During winter storms, floods, tornadoes or hurricanes, it may take emergency workers 72 hours or more to reach certain areas, open roadways, and restore utilities. Poss said that the benefit of being self-sufficient for 72 hours or longer is that families can survive circumstances that might otherwise be tragic if they were not prepared. "With a little time and effort, families can prepare for severe weather hazards affecting our area. Developing a family disaster plan is the first step,"

Tiger coach search narrows down to 4, meeting set Feb. 5

The search is narrowing for an athletic director to replace Coach Russell Morgan, Wilkes Board of Education Chairman Ricky Callaway said. An executive search committee is interviewing the top candidates this week, and the board has set a called meeting for Thursday, February 5, at 6 p.m. to meet and greet the chosen candidate and to vote on the choice.

The seven-member community committee narrowed the field from some 25 qualified candidates, Callaway said. The seven-person committee, consisting of Pete Gartrell, Ricky Callaway Jr., Detric Jones, Ed Geddings, Raleigh Turner, Skeet Willingham, and Jane Echols, has ranked the candidates and has passed their top choices to an executive committee consisting of Superintendent Joyce Williams, Dr. Rosemary W. Caddell, and W-WCHS Principal Steve Echols.

After the executive committee has interviewed the final four candidates for the job, the board will consider the committee's recommendation and vote on it at the called meeting next Thursday night.

he said. "Where will you and other family members be when severe weather or disaster strikes? Whether you are at work, at school, in the car or out-of-town, how will you find or contact each other? How will you know if your children are safe?"

Severe weather or a disaster may force an evacuation of your neighborhood or confine you to your home, he said. "What will you do if your basic utilities – water, gas, electricity, or telephones – are cut off? These are the types of questions your family disaster plan must address in order to help protect your family."

To develop a family disaster plan, start by learning about hazards in addition to your local emergency management agency (EMA), you may contact the nearest National Weather Service office, Ready Georgia, or the American Red Cross. Find out what type of disasters could occur and how you should respond. Learn the community's warning signals and evacuation plans.

Next, meet with your family to create a plan. Discuss the information you have gathered. Pick two places to meet: a spot right outside your home for an emergency, such as fire, and a place away from your neighborhood in case you cannot return home. Choose an out-of-state friend as your "family check-in contact" for everyone to call if the family gets separated. Discuss what you would do if advised to evacuate.

Finally, implement your plan. Post emergency telephone numbers by phones. Install safety features such as a NOAA Weather Radio, smoke detectors, and fire extinguishers in your home. Inspect your home for potential hazards such as items that can move, fall, break or catch fire, and correct them. Have family members learn basic safety measures such as CPR and first-aid; how to use a fire extinguisher; and how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity in your home.

In addition, teach children how and when to call 9-1-1.

Keep enough supplies in your home to meet your family's needs for at least three days. Assemble an emergency preparedness kit with items you may need in case of an evacuation. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers, such as backpacks or duffel bags.

Keep a smaller disaster supplies kit in the trunk of your car. A disaster supplies kit should include a three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food which will not spoil; one change of clothing and footwear per person; one blanket or sleeping bag per person; a first-aid kit (including prescription medicines); emergency tools (including a battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and a portable radio, flashlight, and plenty of extra batteries); an extra set of car keys and cash; and, special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members.

Poss said that families need to practice and maintain their plans. "Ask questions to make sure your family remembers meeting places, phone numbers, and safety rules," he said.

For more information, contact Washington-Wilkes County EMA at 706-678-7113, the Georgia Emergency Management Agency at 1-800-TRY-GEMA, or visit these websites: www.gema.ga.gov, www.ready.ga.gov, www.srh.noaa.gov/ffc/, or www.redcross.org.

Before a crowd of hundreds of friends, the Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce saluted the contributions of some of the volunteers, pioneers, and business owners that make the community great.

Led by Chamber Director Ashley Barnett, Chamber board members presented awards to recipients chosen by the membership.

Wills Memorial Hospital and Cravco/McDonalds tied for Big Business of the Year. Wills Memorial board chairman Lawrence Burton and Wills CEO Marvin Goldman accepted the hospital's award for their 175 employees.

Cravco owners David and Janie Cravens thanked the community for their support that has allowed the company to grow to seven stores since 1996. The Cravens employ 60

people in Washington and are active supporters of the schools, sports, and community efforts such as an annual scholarship for a local employee.

Chamber members chose God's Marketplace as Small Business of the Year, and David Toburen accepted the award for the organization, in which 50 volunteers help some 120 families meet their needs for food and clothing every month.

Buzzy and Jo Randall were honored as Volunteers of the Year for their decades of volunteer service to their community, from helping start the Washington Little Theater Co. to having a hand in Relay for Life, Meals on Wheels, the Washington-Wilkes Historical Foundation, and many more efforts.

Cathy Lannae was honored as
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Jo and Buzzy Randall were honored by Chamber members as Volunteers of the Year.

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Dr. Rosemary W. Caddell signs contract to be Wilkes Superintendent of Schools

By KIP BURKE
news editor

The Wilkes County Board of Education signed a two-year contract with Dr. Rosemary W. Caddell to become Superintendent in July, and is now narrowing the choice for Tiger athletic director to a single candidate.

The executive search committee started interviewing the final candidates for the position of athletic director and head football coach Tuesday, Chairman Ricky Callaway said, and the board has set a called meeting for Thursday, February 5, at 6 p.m. to meet and greet the chosen candidate and to vote on the choice.

The board voted unanimously to accept the final contract negotiated with Dr. Caddell, which will have her succeed Joyce Williams upon Williams' retirement at the end of June.

In other business, board member

Kay Finnell nominated new board member Andrew Jackson to be vice chairman of the Board of Education, and he was elected unanimously.

The board recognized Monica Gunter, head of the Special Education department, for her department's outstanding service delivery to special ed students, and presented her with a certificate from the state board.

Superintendent Williams announced the receipt of a Bi-Lo

Charity Classic grant in the amount of \$2,064. "Our local Bi-Lo asked us to apply for this technology grant, and we appreciate their generosity," she said. The money will go toward a SMART board and projector for teacher training.

The board approved no-cost, out-of-state travel to Chicago for two middle school math and science teachers, and approved a request to provide certain in-kind services to the Mary Willis Library.

The board also considered and approved the use of school facilities for A1 Driving School from Jonesboro to make driver's education classes available at the high school.

As the construction of the new school complex nears completion, Williams said, there was a need for an extended meeting to discuss change orders. The board agreed to set that called meeting on Monday, February 9, at 12:30 p.m. at the board offices.

Wilkes principals report year going well

All four Wilkes County school principals reported that the year is going very well at their respective schools as they gave credit to good staffs, good faculties, and good students. Their comments came at a special called meeting of the Board of Education designed to shorten the coming regular meeting and to handle some personnel issues in

executive session.

The principals also spoke about variations in daily enrollment, explaining understandable fluctuations and how that affects class size based on state regulations. All reported that maximum class sizes will be increased next year.

At this point in the year, other than the planned retirement of W-WPS

music teacher Ann Tiller and a small handful of uncertainties, the principals were expecting no significant changes in staff or faculty.

Florence Sandifer, W-WPS principal, reported that the scheduling is working well at her school for small group needs. "Our emphasis is still Reading First," she said but also pointed out the work that is being done with teaching math and writing.

For the elementary school, Principal Wanda Jenkins said she has been "very impressed with the level of academic success we continue to have." Though she said about 50 students are not currently on track for promotion, many of those are "struggling only slightly in one area." She praised the efforts of teachers David Harris and Lisa Newsome who hold "math camp" and "reading camp" after school in order to help struggling students. "And they do it for no pay – out of the goodness of their hearts," she said.

Jenkins said her challenges for next year will be in not having a school counselor in place and in handling a new special education situation to accommodate two new students with very special needs. She said she expects a slight increase in school population for 2009-2010.

Middle School Principal Bill Pendrey also reported a good year so far and praised his staff and faculty. Based on CRCT scores, he said, the school is doing well academically. Other issues prove to be not so easily handled.

"We are a middle school and as such we tend to have more problems than elementary or primary schools," he said. "We spend a lot of time getting the students acclimated. We are a bridge to high school and we work hard preparing the students for that big step." He noted that cell phones become much more of an issue for students of middle school age but that the W-WMS policy regarding cell phones is working with no major problems.

Pendrey said there are 48 gifted students in the middle school and it will be a challenge to find programs for them. He also said the school's maximum class size for next year will be 30 and he doesn't know how they are going to get that many desks

Raising the Betsy Ross Flag over Washington

The Georgia Society SAR Color Guard, along with the Elijah Clarke Militia, filled The Square in Washington with pageantry Friday in observance of the 229th Anniversary of the founding of the city. Ceremonies included Mayor Pro-Tem Pamela Eaton reading a City of Washington proclamation. The Georgia Society SAR was represented by Bill Ramsaur, and Carol Faz, Regent of the Kettle Creek Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, along with Skeet Willingham, described Washington-Wilkes during the Revolutionary War. The SAR Color Guard and the Elijah Clarke Militia presented the Colors and raised a Betsy Ross flag on the courthouse flagpole. The event was designed to bring attention to the upcoming Revolutionary Days observance set for the weekend of February 13-15.



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