



SANTA LETTERS

Hey Kids!
Get those letters ready for Santa.

Write, bring in, or email your Santa Letter to The Courier-Times, P.O. Box 311, 109 Clayton Ave., Roxboro, NC 27573, or e-mail to cgarett@roxboro-courier.com.

Your letter will be published in our Christmas Greetings tabloid on Wednesday, December 21st. We will also make sure your letters get to the North Pole in time for Christmas.

Parents may help the little ones write their letters. All letters are welcome, from the young to the old. Please include your name and age.

So write your letters and send them in today. Deadline is Monday, Dec. 5th.



JEFFERS: Commissioner named to state's New Generations Initiative committee

FROM PAGE 1

this initiative, we hope to retain more of our youth, not only in Person County, but the other 84 rural counties as well, with career training programs, community grant opportunities and, most importantly, job creation.

"Anything to promote and engage our youth across the state and particularly in our rural home communities, I am all for it," Jeffers added. "And, I am happy Person County has a seat at the table."

The initiative is supported by public and private partners and will be guided by the New Generation Advisory Council, made up of rural economic and community leaders.

"This is about building a foundation to grow North Carolina's

rural areas," said Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton, who will chair the council. "It is about making our communities stronger. It is about challenging our young people to make a difference in rural North Carolina. It's about challenging adults to assist them."

Earlier during the forum, Rural Center President Billy Ray Hall noted that over the last two decades 54 rural counties lost population in the 24- to 30-year-old age group. Furthermore, he said, 16 rural counties lost more than 20 percent of their young adult population.

"We have to give them a reason to stay," he said. "We have to create jobs that will allow them to earn a living and support a family. We have to continue to build an educational system that will prepare them and their chil-

dren for the future. We have to enhance the quality of life. And most of all, we have to listen to what they have to say, engage them in identifying solutions and then act on what they tell us."

The New Generation Initiative addresses those points through four distinct programs, touching on entrepreneurship, training for available career opportunities, leadership development and community service. The four programs include:

- **New Generation Ventures** aims to make self-employment an attractive and attainable career option for young adults, ages 18-30. It will support young entrepreneurs by providing

scholarships for business-related training, business counseling, networking opportunities and access to new forms of business capital tailored to the specific needs of young business owners.

- **New Generation Careers** will encourage young adults to develop careers close to home while engaging rural businesses to cultivate local talent pools. It will provide grants to assist 10 communities with the development of locally based strategies to fill and create jobs in high-demand fields.

The project will feature apprenticeships, on-the-job training and wage subsidies to help employers make new hires.

- **New Generation Leaders** will award challenge grants to stimulate the formation of high-energy youth and young adult action teams in rural communities.

Through the action teams, young people ages 16 to 30 will work together and with established leadership to design and implement a project aimed at attracting and retaining young adults in the community. Thirty grants will be awarded over three years.

- **New Generation Communities** will provide high-quality resources and training programs for rural communities that seek to more fully engage youth and young adults in economic and

community life.

A 160-page youth engagement resource directory offers information on national, state and local resources for communities seeking to launch or expand local initiatives. A series of training programs will provide how-to information on such topics as working with at-risk youth, fostering entrepreneurship and creating a welcoming environment.

Hall said that by January 2015, the program will have worked directly with nearly 2,000 rural young people, helped 100 young rural entrepreneurs start their own businesses and involved 3,750 young people in community improvement projects.

POINTER: Personian eyeing national title after recent victory

FROM PAGE 1

competing is that it takes a good team to get her stage-ready and looking her best.

Thus, she expressed her appreciation for Hieu Thach at Five Star Nails, Dr. Short, Scott Wesley and her "Total Fitness family;" Dr. Saunders, hair stylist Tonia Melton; her husband John and daughter Bliss.

While she has some time to rest before she begins preparing for her next show, Pointer said she won't stray far from her contest weight, and will continue to workout.

"I'm not going to sit around and do nothing for the next six months," she said.

Since she wore the same suit at her last two competitions, a new one is in order.

January will mark a year since Pointer began training for figure competition, and she's been amazed at what she's accomplished in such a short amount of time, and what eating smart and moving more has done for her body.

As a mother, full-time employee and graduate student, Pointer understands time constraints, and noted that it can be hard, for women especially, to make time for themselves. She said she would encourage other women not to feel bad about finding time to take care of themselves and be healthy.

FROM PAGE 1

afternoon," she said.

Atkinson proceeded to tell students a story about her first visit to the White House, and explained that her visit to Stories Creek was equally important, because their school was a "lighthouse" for other schools in North Carolina and throughout the nation.

Stories Creek was named the North Carolina National Title I Distinguished School for Closing the Achievement Gap during the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's annual Title I conference in Greensboro on Nov. 3.

During the 2010-11 school year, all students' reading achievement at Stories Creek increased

from 77.1 percent proficient in 2009-10 to 83.7 percent. Three years prior, Stories Creek was only 52 percent proficient in reading.

Stories Creek also met the school's goal of closing its reading achievement gap by five percent in one year. The reading gap for educationally disadvantaged students was closed by 8.1 percent.

"I am here to add my congratulations to you as students," said Atkinson, "to you as members of Stories Creek Elementary School, for being a lighthouse for North Carolina, and for your very well-deserved recognition of being one of the best schools in the United States."

Atkinson took time to answer student questions, and was also

presented with a book compiled of things the students had learned about her.

"She gets awards just like the president," one student wrote; and another, "She is the first girl to be elected for superintendent."

Person County Schools Supt.

Dr. Larry W. Cartner thanked Atkinson for visiting the school and presenting the award.

"We are indeed very proud of them, because they've done some great things," Cartner said of Stories Creek, "and we know they're going to do even more great things."

ATKINSON: State superintendent of public instruction visits Stories Creek to praise recent national achievement

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