

that goal, CEC assigns students a “work ethic grade” in each class along with the course grade.

By collaborating with local businesses, CEC is able to offer students opportunities such as job shadowing, internships and apprenticeships. Because CEC is the Coweta County campus for West Central Technical College, students enrolled in CEC can earn dual-enrollment college certifications.

Whitlock calls CEC the county’s “workplace development center” and a resource for lifelong learning. In addition to its programs for high school age students, CEC also teaches adults through the Technical College programs and offers both day and evening courses for those trying to earn a GED.

Central Educational Center is located at 160 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. in Newnan. For more information on CEC, visit the center’s Web site at www.gacec.com or call 678-423-2000.

Brewton-Parker College in Mt. Vernon, Ga. has its Newnan campus located at the nationally recognized Central Educational Center.

College officials call it “a friendly learning environment with large classrooms, state-of-the-art labs, and individual attention from an excellent group of faculty (who) work together to bring a Christian-based education to its student body made up of traditional college students who have

just graduated from high school, as well as non-traditional students who juggle full-time job responsibilities.” All Newnan campus classes are offered in the evening.

Brewton-Parker students may begin or simply continue their college education in Newnan. All core curriculum classes are offered along with degree programs such as a Bachelor of Business Administration, a Bachelor of Ministry, a Bachelor of Arts in General Studies and an Associate of Arts.

The Newnan Educational Center offers a program for working adults that allows qualified students to earn a business degree in as little as two years. For more information, visit www.bpc.edu.

Assistant Director Pat Tidwell began serving July 1, and the Newnan Site Director, Janie Lore, may be contacted at 770-683-3245 or by e-mail at jllore@bpc.edu.

Through a cooperative effort by the University of West Georgia (UWG), the Newnan-Coweta Chamber of Commerce, Coweta County Board of Education, and other business, civic and educational leaders in Newnan and Coweta County, the Newnan Center of UWG was established and approved by the Board of Regents in August 1988.

The program began at Newnan High School with 15 students in two

classes. In 1990, classes moved to the Shenandoah Center, serving 100 students. From there, UWG now operates a 14-acre campus in the Shenandoah Industrial Park and serves more than 2,100 students a year in more than 115 credit classes. With the help of its partner organizations, more than 20,000 people pass through the UWG Newnan Center’s doors each year.

This campus offers college courses to students in the Newnan area who would like to begin or continue their education locally. Core curriculum, graduate-level Education, Master of Public Administration (MPA), and Master of Business Administration (MBA) courses are offered at the center. Students may see an advisor, register for courses and order books at the center.

In an effort to accommodate the course schedule needs of both traditional and nontraditional students, classes are scheduled in the morning, afternoon and evening. Students may attend full or part time.

In the summer of 2005, the center began offering the B.S. in Registered Nursing Program. The Newnan Center also regularly offers Continuing Education courses on a variety of topics, including computer courses and home decorating classes.

For more information on the center and its offerings, visit www.newnan.westga.edu or call 770-254-7280. 



COWETANS WORK FOR LITERACY

By Leigh Knight

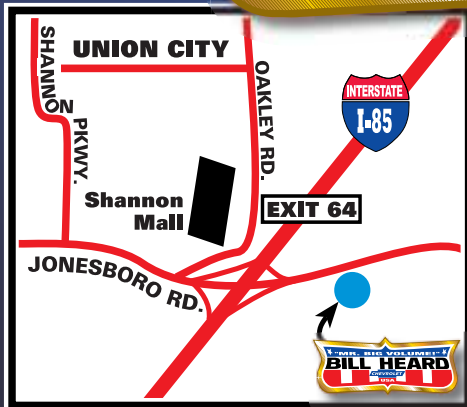
Imagine the possibilities if every child in our community enters Kindergarten having been read to regularly by the most important teachers they will ever have — their parents. That is the mission of the Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy (FFCL), a non-profit public foundation that seeks to provide books for local communities to prepare all Georgia’s preschool children for reading and learning success. Ferst, in collaboration with Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library of Tennessee, provides free books each month to registered children ages birth to 5.

“Statistics show that 61% of homes don’t have a single book in them,” says volunteer Anne Josey. “Not having books limits children’s exposure to vocabulary words and just basic things you want them to have before Kindergarten.”

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The Ferst Foundation receives a donation from the employees of PAPP Clinic at Christmas.

“We currently have 1,500 children registered in Coweta,” says volunteer Janie Cantrell, “and we have mailed out more than 60,000 books. Parents have said, ‘My child sleeps with his book when he gets it.’ Getting a book in the mail is like getting a present, and the children equate reading with pleasure.”

The first book children receive is “The Little Engine that Could,” a favorite of founder Robin Ferst, who was diagnosed with hearing loss at six years old and is now profoundly deaf.

“As it became harder to communicate, I became an avid reader,” says Ferst. “Books gave me a confidence that I might not have otherwise known. They opened up a world of imagination and possibility that helped me face and overcome challenges.”

Inspired by a community program she read about in 1999, Ferst established the foundation in Morgan County. With participating Kindergarten readiness test scores increasing from a 45% pass rate in 2001 to a 90% rate in 2004, school superintendents and educators around Georgia quickly became advocates.

In 2005, with the help of key volunteers Josey, Cantrell, Nancy Royal, and Janie Lore, the Coweta Community Action Team (CCAT) became the champion for the Ferst Foundation’s efforts in Coweta by making the commitment to register every eligible child (ages birth to 5) and to raise the funds necessary to cover the expenses of the program. CCAT was created by Stepping Stones and CLICK (Certified Literate is Coweta’s Key), two local not-for-profit programs operating under the auspices of the Coweta Community

Foundation, Inc.

Stepping Stones is a hospital-based early intervention effort focused on educating new parents on the importance of early childhood development and school readiness directed by Cantrell. Stepping Stones organizes a team of teachers and volunteer educators to visit all parents of newborns at Piedmont Newnan Hospital. These volunteers deliver a bag of readiness materials including information on the Ferst Foundation.

Cantrell also coordinates the Puddle Jumper program that is funded by Title I funds through the school system. The Puddle Jumper program is a “mommy and me” program designed for two- and three-year-olds with the goal being to teach moms and dads skills that will help them interact more effectively with their preschoolers. Puddle Jumpers establishes a foundation for learning in pre-school and Kindergarten in an interactive, fun, educational environment.

Josey is the director of CLICK, which focuses on adults and the mobilization of all local resources in the fight against illiteracy. CLICK supports the adult education/GED classes taught by West Central Technical College (WCTC) by providing marketing, financial resources through scholarships and supplies, and recruitment and training of volunteer tutors. CLICK has expanded its programming to work with English as a Second Language through a program called “Welcome to the Community,” an informative series of classes that introduces local resources to the Latino population. Guest speakers from the school system, the health department, the

labor department, and public safety provide vital information and encourage citizenship. Childcare and homework help are provided to the participating families to encourage success in school.

"We look at literacy as a community issue and a family issue," says Josey. "We provide paths for furthering literacy skills at each age. Ferst is a natural fit for what we do without interfering with our CLICK and Stepping Stones duties."

Local businesses such as Piedmont Newnan Hospital have been active in helping fund Ferst, as have individuals and local civic organizations such as Kiwanis and the Rotary Club, according to Josey; however, additional funds are needed. The cost of the book along with postage is \$2.92 per child, per month. In addition to a new book each month, participants receive a parent's guide to reading, monthly newsletters including book guides, activity pages, community information and a Ferst library card to be exchanged at their local library. Parents are not allowed to pay for their own child's book but can make a donation if desired.

"It is a cost-effective way of introducing children to language skills and encourages interaction between parent and child," says Josey.

"Ferst has no administrative costs. Everyone is volunteering time, including Robin Ferst," says Cantrell. "Every dollar goes to the purchasing and mailing of books."

Josey encourages anyone interested in education and literacy to join the CCAT.

"There is a variety of opportunity for those who want to get involved," says Josey. ☺

For more information on Ferst, call 770-254-1985 or visit

www.ferstfoundation.org.

For more information on Puddle Jumpers, call 770-254-1985 or visit

www.cowetaschools.org.

For more information on Stepping Stones, contact Janie Cantrell at 770-254-2895.

For more information on CLICK, contact Anne Josey at 770-502-8944.

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