

# Interact Club spreads Christmas joy



Warren County High School Interact Club members made the lives of 29 families happier at Christmas. McMinnville Breakfast Rotary and the Overton Retreat Community partnered to raise \$5,000 that Interact Club members used to purchase items. Pictured, from left, are Colby Elkins, Robert Balderas, Jordan Bess, Emma Mullican, sponsor Thomas Parker, Matthew Yott, Logan Dyer, Mia Cantrell, Ethan Stuart, Brendan Breedlove, Nate Cantrell and Lucas Rogers.

Photo provided

# Testing a valuable gauge for all of us

## EDUCATION MATTERS

**BOBBY COX**



The holiday break is now behind us and we have completed our second full week of school after the break. It seems very early to start talking about student assessments and testing, but in just a few short weeks the new TN Ready assessment will be given to the students of Warren County and all across Tennessee.

The TN Ready assessment is the new and improved TCAP test. The old assessment was given on paper and used the all-too-familiar bubble sheets, but the new and improved TN Ready assessment will be given totally online providing a whole new set of challenges for students, teachers, and administrators.

According to the Tennessee Department of Education website, "The TN Ready TCAP will provide all of us — educators, parents, and students — with better information about our students' progress toward college and career readiness. Annual assessments serve as a crucial academic check-up to make sure all students are moving forward. TN Ready is designed to assess true student understanding and problem-solving abilities, not just basic memorization skills. Parents and teachers have told us these are the critical-thinking abilities they want our children to have in order to be successful, lifelong learners."

The first assessment window begins Feb. 8 to March 4, with the second window opening April 18 to May 13. I would like to encourage all parents to go to the Tennessee Department of Education website, [www.tn.gov/education/topic/tnready](http://www.tn.gov/education/topic/tnready), to find our more information about this new assessment. At the Department of Education website, parents can access a parent guide for TN Ready, view helpful resources, and gather information about the new assessment.

This assessment is very important not only to our schools and dis-

trict, but also to our teachers, administrators, parents, and most importantly our students. Along with a new assessment comes a new accountability system for districts and schools.

This year is a baseline year so the data gathered this school year will serve as the building blocks for the years to follow, gauging the learning of our students and their readiness for college and career, as well as a base for goal setting for our district and schools. Part of our accountability system is ensuring we test at least 95 percent of our students annually. Of course our goal is always 100 percent tested but we must ensure at least 95 percent of all Warren County students in grades 3-11 are assessed.

Parents, we need your help to make sure we meet this important goal. If students are ill during the testing window, please use the same judgment as you would if your child were sick during a regular school day. If your child is running a fever, vomiting, or too ill to attend school, of course we would not expect them to come to school, but we would ask you contact your child's school to arrange a time to take the assessment when your child feels better before the window closes.

Allowing students to take the assessments helps us meet our requirement but also allows the students to display the knowledge they have worked to attain during the school year.

The TN Ready assessment is new to us all and is important in many ways. Teachers and students have been preparing for this new challenge in education. Please know that with all change comes frustration when goals are not reached.

We will reach our goals over time so if we don't get the results we all want, we can't quit trying to improve. As the old saying goes, we are in a marathon not a sprint.

Thank you all in advance for your patience during this time of change and if you need more information about TN Ready, please feel free to contact your child's school.

*Bobby Cox is director of schools for the Warren County School System.*

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### SUNDAY, JAN. 17

Greg McDougal and Family will be in concert at Bridges of Hope Fellowship at 4023 Smithville Highway at 7 p.m.

Browntown Church of Christ will have friends and family day with Allen Northcutt speaking. Sunday school at 9 a.m., worship at 10 a.m., lunch following morning service, and evening service at 1:30 p.m.

### MONDAY, JAN. 18

McMinnville City Hall will be closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. There will not be garbage service on Monday. Monday's route will run along with Tuesday's route.

### TUESDAY, JAN. 19

Central High School Class of 1952 will hold its first monthly get-together this year at 12:30 p.m. at Nana's Kountry Kupboard on Sunnyside Heights.

The Warren County Lion's Club will hold a Blood Assurance blood drive from 12:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the parking lot of Billy's Restaurant in Newtown. You can pre-register by calling Susie at 808-0929, or sign up online at [www.donor.bloodassurance.org](http://www.donor.bloodassurance.org).

Westwood Church of Christ will hold a clothing give-away from 8 to 10 a.m.

Upper Cumberland Social Services Association will have its meeting at

NHC Healthcare in McMinnville at noon. For information, call Brenda at 474-4921.

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Middle Tennessee School of Preaching will hold a 13-week course at Bethany Church of Christ on Thursday nights from 6 to 9 p.m. with classes on Hebrews at 6 p.m., Psalms at 7 p.m., and the Church Encounters Culture at 8 p.m. The classes are free and can be taken for credit. For information, call David Costello at 931-728-9290.

The senior ad deadline for the WCHS yearbook has been extended until 2 p.m. Friday, Feb. 5. The yearbook staff will

accept senior ads until then. Please visit [wchs.warrenschoools.com](http://wchs.warrenschoools.com) and click on the students tab under yearbook for further information. You may also contact Leah Simpson in room 211. You can also go to the same website to purchase a yearbook.

If you make less than \$3,739 a month for a family of four, you may qualify for WIC assistance to help ensure a healthy diet for pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants and children up to age 5. For information, call 473-8468.

LBJ&C Midway Headstart has openings for 3-5-year-old children. For information, call 686-2098.

Narconon is offering free screenings, referrals and brochures to help fight drug addiction. For information, go to [drugabusesolution.com](http://drugabusesolution.com) or call 1-800-431-1754.

The hospice volunteer program needs volunteers. The Caris Healthcare Volunteer Program will provide training and support. To get involved call 1-888-537-3430 or go to [www.carishealthcare.com](http://www.carishealthcare.com).



Seth Wright/Southern Standard

# BOWLING IS NO FUN IF YOU'RE THE PINS

Through their federal taxes and higher insurance premiums, Tennesseans are paying for healthcare for people in 31 states. But ours is not one of them.

Two committees in the Tennessee Senate last year blocked Governor Haslam's Insure Tennessee plan that would have extended Medicaid benefits to 280,000 working poor and disabled, including 24,000 veterans. Senator Janice Bowling (R-Tullahoma) has the distinction of being among the first to vote against the poor and sick people of her district. Her vote helped assure that Insure Tennessee would not come to a vote in the full General Assembly.

In the first three years of Insure Tennessee the benefits would be 100% paid by funds the federal government is already collecting from your payroll taxes and from cutbacks to rural, financially-challenged hospitals. After that, the required 10% share would be covered by the state's hospitals. Even if you have good insurance with your

employers, it's vital that we keep our rural hospitals economically secure and viable. What if you suffer a stroke or heart attack in the middle of the night and the nearest emergency room is 70 miles away?

As Senator Bowling refuses to allow many of her constituents access to basic health care—benefits that would not cost our taxpayers another dollar—Tennessee is giving up \$3.8 million a day in pre-paid health care for our citizens and economic input to our communities. She is blocking not only the life-changing or life-saving care for her constituents but also vital economic support for her 16th Senate district.

Why not ask Senator Bowling why she wants to deny all these benefits to Tennessee while sending their money to 31 other states? Contact her at [sen.janice.bowling@tn.capitol.gov](mailto:sen.janice.bowling@tn.capitol.gov) or (615) 741-6694. Or write to her at 310 War Memorial Building, Nashville TN 37243.

## BLOOD DRIVE

Jan. 19, 2016

12:30-6:30pm

In Billy's Restaurant Parking Lot  
For St. Thomas River Park's only  
supplier Blood Assurance

Sponsored by  
Warren County Lions Club



For more  
information call  
931-808-0929

### Free Marketing Workshop

## Learn how you can grow your business on the web

(WHETHER YOU HAVE A WEBSITE OR NOT!)

Please join us as national speaker, author and online expert **MIKE BLINDER** shares

### "The ABC's of Interactive Marketing"

**Topics will include:**

- Finding new customers on the Web, cost effectively
- How to get found on Google & Yahoo!
- What Facebook is all about and how to use it properly
- Who's online and what they want from you
- How to work with local media to make the Web

**Two Sessions:**

**Wed., January 20**  
12-1:30pm Lunch Provided

**Thurs., January 21**  
8:30-10:30am Biscuits & Coffee Provided

**Warren Co. Administration Bldg.**  
**Magnolia Room**  
201 Locust St.  
McMinnville, TN 37110

## REGISTER NOW!

**Registration is FREE!**

Call 931.473.2191 or go to [www.localmediaworkshops.com](http://www.localmediaworkshops.com)

# Southern Standard