

## Local Schools



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# Gary Simmons Honored for His Service

APRIL 13TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Gary Simmons Honored for His Service

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Veteran Poplar Bluff School Board member Dr. Cynthia Brown, who has begun her fifth term, and newcomer Roger Hanner were sworn in during a reorganizational meeting held Thursday, April 7, in the Administrative Building.

Outgoing board member Gary Simmons was awarded a plaque and thanked for his 9 years of dedicated service to the district.

“Gary has been such a good member of the board and supporter of the district much longer,” board president John Scott said. “I’m sure you’ll stay involved. There’s so much you do for the students that people may not even know.”

During an election of officers, Scott was nominated to continue as president and Ken Davis will take over for Brown as vice president. Alana Robertson will succeed Simmons in serving as a delegate to the Missouri School Boards’ Association. Member Heather Tuggle will remain the board liaison to the Foundation.

**Superintendent Chris Hon honors Gary Simmons for his three terms of voluntary service to the school system.**

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## Elementary Construction Comes in Under Bid

MARCH 24TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Elementary Construction Comes in Under Bid

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - The low bid for the elementary projects—the final component of the Poplar Bluff R-I buildings plan—came in over a half-million dollars under budget, it was announced Thursday, March 17, during the school board meeting.

The Board of Education awarded a \$1.5 million contract to Zoellner Construction to complete this summer the four renovations designed by Dille and Traxel Architects. Zoellner is responsible for building the Junior High safe room and classroom addition this past year, and the Perryville contractor is presently working on the 50,000 square-foot expansion of the future Middle School.

“This is the second time (Dille and Traxel) have come in under budget,” R-I Assistant Superintendent of Business Rod Priest said. “We are very proud of the way they designed these projects. They are producing a good product while remaining conscious of tax dollars.”

The following features are included in the elementary projects for purposes of increased safety and security:

- The newest building at Eugene Field will be connected with a T-shaped corridor between the main facility and the library. The playground will be relocated behind the school so students no longer have to cross a city road for recess.
- The two classroom buildings at Lake Road will be connected with an enclosed corridor. The opening of the new Middle School with grade four entering the configuration will allow the elementary school to abandon its trailers.
- A front entrance at Oak Grove will be created off the loop road that was financed last summer through the Transportation Development District. Corridors will connect the buildings with ADA-accessible ramps allowing students to travel without having to go outside.
- Four buildings at O'Neal will be connected with ADA corridors. The fourth grade wing will be remodeled for art and music classrooms, allowing for the converted basement currently in use to be vacated. A new HVAC unit will also be installed.

Shown in the photo: Several contractors attend a bid opening Tuesday, March 1, in the board room led by Project Manager Mike Pollard (left) of Dille and Traxel. Also pictured is Assistant Superintendent Rod Priest (middle) and Al Ursery, director of buildings and grounds.

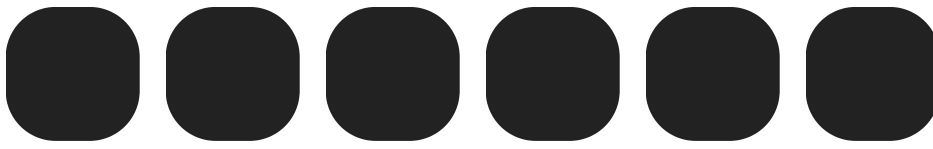
*The Poplar Bluff R-I Public School District is comprised of approximately 5,300 students, over 400 professional staff and 300 support staff, and has an operational budget in excess of \$46 million. Our goal, in partnership with parents and community, is to educate all students to their potential, and to inspire them to be lifelong learners who possess the skills and knowledge necessary to be productive members in our changing world.*

Submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Coordinator, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## Local DECA Chapter Brings Home State Awards

MARCH 03RD 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Local DECA Chapter Brings Home State Awards

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Three Rivers College's DECA chapter has secured "Chapter of the Year" honors at the Collegiate DECA State Career Development Conference, held in Lake Ozark, Mo., Feb. 25-26. Two members of the Three Rivers chapter also won individual awards, which qualify them to advance to multi-national competition at the Collegiate DECA international conference in Washington, D.C.

Three Rivers' DECA students competed against 140 students from colleges and universities across Missouri at the state conference. For the "Chapter of the Year" award, students Rebecca Cato of Doniphan and Melissa Speers of Poplar Bluff were interviewed on behalf of the chapter about their activities and experiences as part of DECA at Three Rivers.

In addition to the chapter award, two students won awards in individual competitions. Alex Strauts of Poplar Bluff won second place in the Retail Management competition, and Madison Miller won third in Banking and Financial Services. Students in the individual competitions are required to formulate and present a response to a theoretical problem in their chosen field. Both Strauts and Miller will advance to compete at the Collegiate DECA International Career Development Conference, to be held April 16-20 in Washington, DC.

DECA is an international organization that helps high school and college students across the country prepare for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management through professional development, education, and networking opportunities. For more information on how to support or participate in DECA at Three Rivers College, contact Dr. Martha Kirkman at [mkirkman@trcc.edu](mailto:mkirkman@trcc.edu).

Three Rivers College is committed to contributing to the quality of life in Southeast Missouri with quality, affordable higher education opportunities and community services that support and encourage the economic, civic, and cultural vitality of the region. For more information about college and workforce programs and upcoming events, visit [trcc.edu](http://trcc.edu).

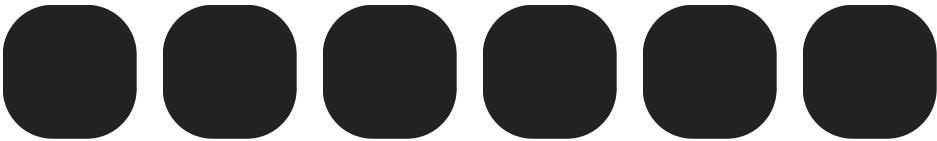
*Shown in the photos: DECA students from Three Rivers College pose with their awards from the Collegiate DECA State Career Development Conference. From L-R: Alex Strauts of Poplar Bluff, second place, Retail Management; Rebecca Cato of Doniphan, interviewee for Chapter of the Year; Melissa Speers of Poplar Bluff, interviewee for Chapter of the Year; and Madison Miller, third place in Banking and Financial Services.*

Article and photo submitted by Three Rivers College Media Services.

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# Digital World of Possibilities Showcased at Tech Camp

FEBRUARY 23RD 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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## Digital world of possibilities showcased at Tech Camp

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - Over 100 Poplar Bluff Middle School and Junior High staff members participated in the second annual Tech Camp on Collaboration Day Friday, Jan. 15, featuring workshops hosted by R-I faculty as well as education leaders from throughout the state.

The 45 break-out sessions at PBJHS centered on resources and strategies for digital classrooms. The professional development event is the brainchild of the R-I instructional technology team, which got its idea in 2014 after attending an International Society for Technology in Education conference.

“We went to great sessions and gathered a lot of info, and thought, ‘How can we bring these ideas back to our teachers, beyond a PowerPoint,’” said R-I Chief Technology Officer Aaron Badgley, adding his goal next year is to expand the training district-wide. “We polled teachers after our first Tech Camp, and they responded that it was the most beneficial PD they had received all year.”

To complement this year’s theme—play with purpose—organizers set up an interactive ‘playground’ in the hallway featuring emerging technologies including a green screen, Google Cardboard, Makey Makey and Sphero kits, which will be made available for classrooms to check out to teach students coding.

Special guest presenters included Greg Lawrence, Wentzville instructional technology coach; Patti Jones, Senath-Hornersville director of change and innovation; and Shannon Mangrum, assistant director of the Poplar Bluff Public Library.

More than \$1,000 in sponsorships allowed for prizes to be awarded to attendees, ranging from Chromecasts to flash drives. Underwriters included: Applebee’s, The Bread Co.,

Colton’s, Donut House, Frontier, Gamma HealthCare, Hardee’s, Harp’s, Hefner Furniture, Kroger, Las Margaritas, Lemonade House Grille, Office Depot, Poplar Bluff Realty, Ronnie Cline, Simmons Tire and Wal-Mart.

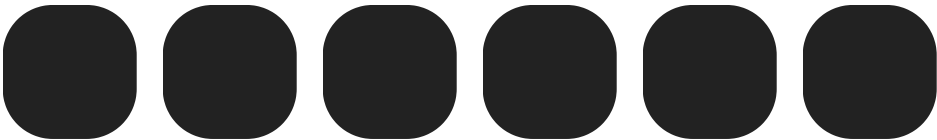
PBHS help desk students (from left) Thomas White, Ethan Gutterman and Maci Stucker give up their day off to teach the adults how the new innovations work. Not pictured is student Danni Raymer.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Coordinator, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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# Poplar Bluff December Athletes of the Month Named

FEBRUARY 12TH 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

Poplar Bluff December Athletes of the Month Named

**Poplar Bluff, Missouri** - The Mules Booster Club named Poplar Bluff High School wrestler Josh Lewis and swimmer Taylor Norwood the December Athletes of the Month.

Sophomore Norwood, an all-state swimmer, has performed several state cuts and holds multiple school and meet records. In addition to being an exceptional athlete, she is an incredibly “smart kid,” maintaining an 11.143 weighted GPA, according to her coach Elizabeth Lewis-Muse.

Josh Lewis, a junior, is 15:3 so far this wrestling season, and was heavyweight champion during the Tiger Classic in December at Cape Central. According to assistant coach Jason Smothers, younger wrestlers look up to Lewis.

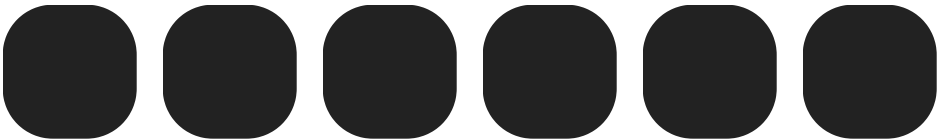
Presenting the plaques to Taylor Norwood and Josh Lewis on Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at E.T. Peters Gym is Booster Club President Jason Smothers (right).

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Coordinator, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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