

Soundside Learning

This Week On Core Sound

Education...A Down East Tradition

Celebrating our Down East Teachers

It may come as a surprise to some to learn that the Down East community of Atlantic was home to the first public high school in the state of North Carolina. By 1924 a teacher training program had been added to the school and attracted aspiring teachers from far and wide. But Atlantic was not alone.



Atlantic High School, Circa 1950s.

Photo: carteretcountyyearbooks.com

In Bettie a two room school house served generation of students, while the children growing up in Turnagin Bay learned at the humble Brown's Creek schoolhouse. At one time or another, nearly every little corner of Down East had their own community school. These were times when, largely due to the thriving commercial fishing industry - which in turn spawned boatbuilding, net hanging, fish packing, and more - when Down East was teeming with young children as families grew and put down roots generations deep. In many cases, the only interactions with people from "off" came as teachers came into these communities seeking employment from the interior of the state.

Still, no matter the difficulties imposed by our relative isolation, education has not just been a priority Down East, it has *flourished*. Our schools have, in large part, held our communities together across generations. Without schools, there is no community, and without teachers there are no schools. Our Down East teachers today, carry on a tradition of education centuries in the making.

The past couple of years, since March 13th of 2020, have tested the resolve of our teachers in ways that no-one could ever have predicted. It was on that date, at 2:40 in the afternoon, that an emergency staff meeting was announced for teachers around the county in response to the growing pandemic. Little did any of us know at the time, that it would be well over a year until "regular" school returned as we were plunged into a world of virtual lesson plans, meetings, parent conferences, virtual *everything*. Still, our teachers held strong through it all as they learned to adapt to a new way of teaching during those challenging times - just as those teachers of yesterday made do with whatever they had. That's what teachers do, they teach and they nurture their students, their schools, their *communities*. So as we look back on Teacher Appreciation Week in 2022, to our local teachers, *Thank you!*



Sound Reading
Material For You &
Your Child

Blue-Back Speller
By: Noah Webster

At Cape Lookout Village's school, students were required to learn the material in the "Blue Back Speller". First published in 1783, the book was a staple for generations of American school children. It has been told by those who attended the school at Cape Lookout before the turn of the century that children were allowed to graduate after having learned the book's contents.

Westbrook, Guthrie Take Top Honors In County

Down East Educators Named Principal, Teacher of Year!

Mr. James Westbrook of East Carteret High School and Ms. Chelsea Guthrie of Harkers Island Elementary School were named the 2022 Carteret County Public Schools principal and teacher of the year, respectively. The awards were announced on Friday, May 6th during a ceremony at the Coral Bay Club in Atlantic Beach.

Mr. Westbrook has been serving as the principal of East Carteret High School since the start of the 2019-2020 school year. His time as the leader of the Mariners has been anything but easy, navigating the difficulties associated with the pandemic as well as community tragedies over the past couple of years. His steady hand during these challenging times undoubtedly set Mr. Westbrook apart as a front-runner for this prestigious award which is voted upon by the fellow principals of the county.

Ms. Guthrie, the third grade teacher at Harkers Island Elementary, took home the top teacher honor in the county along with the prize of a new Chevrolet Equinox, donated by Curtis Chevrolet of Morehead City, which Ms. Guthrie will be allowed to drive for one year. She will now go on to compete against other teachers across the state for the title of North Carolina Teacher of the Year.

As adults we can all reflect on one, or maybe even multiple, teachers that made a truly marked difference in our lives. These men and women continue to selflessly serve the young people of our Down East community through times both good and turbulent. Through it all their steady hands provide us leadership and hope in the face of adversity. To our excellent cast of Down East educators, from Atlantic to East Carteret and everywhere in between, thank you for being *you*.



Mr. James Westbrook, right, and Ms. Chelsea Guthrie, left, receive their respective awards for principal and teacher of the year in Carteret County.

Photo: Cheryl Burke, Carteret County News-Times



Looking Forward ~ Summer Learning At Core Sound

The Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center will host a wide variety of summer camp experiences for children of all ages including marine science, decoy carving, and more! To inquire about our summer offerings please email tannerlynk@coresound.com.