

# TALLULAH FALLS SCHOOL

*Magazine*

FALL 2016

## Virtual reality

Innovative technology provides  
a new avenue of learning  
for TFS students

Also inside:  
Board of Trustees  
names Upper School  
Academic Complex in  
honor of President  
Larry A. Peevy

*5th grade starts strong*

*Student Activity Center*

*Twin Rivers recap*

*Tallulah 12 program*

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## Tallulah Falls School

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- 2 President's Message
- 3 5th grade officially opens at TFS Middle School
- 4 New Student Activity Center opens
- 6 Upper school complex named for Larry A. Peevy
- 8 Tallulah 12 teaches life skills for middle school students
- 10 Virtual reality - the next best thing to being there
- 12 Standing out - names in the news
- 13 Creating a safer TFS campus
- 16 Nantahala adventure
- 18 Alumni profile - Chris Pic - Class of 1988
- 20 Giving back to the community
- 21 Special visitors come to TFS
- 22 Varsity sports recap
- 25 Middle school sports recap
- 28 Twin Rivers Challenge ride recap

ON THE COVER: Fifth grader Ella Smith of Demorest reacts in wonder to a virtual reality 'tour' of the lunar surface. The new technology provides an opportunity for TFS students to learn about hundreds of exotic, educational points across the globe. See story on page 10. Photo by E. Lane Gresham.

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### Inside

Fifth grader Tessa Foor of Cleveland is one of 30 new fifth graders at TFS this year. She is shown challenging herself on the 70' x 10' climbing wall at the new TFS Student Activity Center. Both the new fifth grade and the new activity center are featured in this issue.



Tallulah Falls School is an equal opportunity school and does not discriminate based on race, color or national or ethnic origin.

# Elevating student potential



**F**resh traditions are being established on the campus of Tallulah Falls School. With the launch of the 2016-17 academic year, we welcomed a class of 30 eager fifth graders, elevating our enrollment to an all time high of 467. Our student body hails from 16 countries, 11 states and 22 counties in Georgia.

On the very first day of school, these youngest students were among the first to experience the rock climbing wall at the new Student Activity Center – smiling and eager to test their strength. Watching them stretch to reach the next handhold – to elevate themselves physically – reminds us of our mission to prepare each student to thrive by elevating character and intellect in a challenging and diverse college preparatory environment.

Everyone on campus plays a role in nurturing the highest expectations for our students and our school community. The deep connections our faculty and staff have with our students and the relationships students have with each other is what builds a positive school culture. That culture is what creates an image. That image is what gives students confidence and guidance to feel comfortable in this environment so they can move forward to their greatest potential.

Collectively, we make a significant impact in terms of the end result – happy, satisfied, well-adjusted and successful students.

To enhance the student experience – and potential for life – we’ve launched the school year with a dynamic set of new programs and enhanced existing programs. In this issue, I invite you to:

- Read about the Tallulah 12, a new community building initiative at the middle school.
- Take a peek at our new Student Activity Center, where memories are made every day.
- Marvel at the Virtual Reality field trip program where students can take a trip around the world without ever leaving the classroom.
- Take pride in the accomplishments of our alumni who continue to represent the TFS legacy of success.
- Cheer the triumphs of our athletic teams.
- Celebrate a successful fundraiser with the second annual Twin Rivers Challenge doubling its first year sponsorship totals.

Savor these stories and join us as we continue to elevate the student experience at Tallulah Falls School.

Sincerely,

Larry A. Peevy  
President and Head of School

## 2016-17 - Another year of RECORD ENROLLMENT

**Opening enrollment:  
467 students**

**middle school:  
184 students**

**upper school:  
283 students**

**boarding program:  
132 students**

**day program:  
335 students**

# Five comes alive



photo: E. Lane Gresham

## Fifth grade officially becomes part of Tallulah Falls School

**T**hey're here! Last Fall, Tallulah Falls School announced that after more than 60 years, fifth graders would again be a part of the TFS community. Thirty excited (and a bit nervous perhaps) fifth graders took their first 'steps' as members of the student body as school opened for the 2016-17 academic year on August 8.

The addition of the new grade was largely a result of tremendous growth in the school's day student program over the last nine years. With the increase the school has moved back toward its original mission of educating students from the immediate and local areas, primarily Habersham, Rabun, Stephens, and White counties.

"The fifth grade has added a whole new dimension to the TFS middle school," said Middle School Academic Dean David Chester. "Finishing off the new classrooms on the

upstairs floor has added a new energy to the building."

"The fifth graders have a desire to be involved in every aspect of the daily routine. They are quickly learning and becoming an integral part of our school culture."

Chester continued, "They are very eager to greet and welcome guests into the building."

The addition of a fifth grade necessitated several changes at the middle school. As Chester stated, the second floor of the facility was reconfigured to accommodate the new enrollees. Also, lunch periods were adjusted and two new teaching faculty

were hired.

This is already a very special class, but in the end, these fifth graders will become the first class in more than 60 years to receive eight full years of academic instruction at Tallulah Falls School. It will be exciting to watch these young students grow and mature over the next eight years.

*"With fifth graders each day is a new adventure."*

David Chester  
Middle School Academic Dean

# GAME CHANGER

## New Student Activity Center takes center stage

For two years motorists traveling along busy Highway 441 have watched as a massive structure has risen above the red clay hillside of the TFS middle school campus. On September 21st the waiting came to a highly anticipated end as a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the massive Student Activity Center was held and the beautiful structure was 'officially' opened. An enthusiastic crowd filled the new facility as the entire TFS student body was joined by faculty and staff, board of trustees members, and special guests to witness the ceremonial grand opening.

The more than \$6 million facility not only features an expansive modern gymnasium, but also classroom space, a performance stage, concession area, walking track, 70' x 10' rock climbing wall, state-of-the-art sound and digital display system, fitness area and outdoor gathering areas with a pergola and firepit. While TFS middle school students have been utilizing the facility since the start of school in August, the September 21 event was the first day the the public-at-large had a chance to view and tour the building.

President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy is excited about the many possibilities that the new facility presents. Peevy said, "We wanted to build something to meet the needs for years to come and be a multi-purpose building and more of an activities center than a gymnasium."

Rev. James Turpen, Pastor of Tallulah Falls Methodist Church, offered a heart-felt prayer of dedication for the new facility. Turpen is a TFS alum, former Dean of Students, and current member of the Board of Trustees.

During the brief program President Peevy recognized architect George Hlavenka of Hawaii for his outstanding work designing the facility. Peevy also singled out Ron Cantrell of Ron Cantrell Construction, Inc. of Cleveland for their successful completion of yet another outstanding structural addition to the TFS campus. Peevy also recognized other stakeholders in attendance, including students, faculty/staff, parents, grandparents, Board of Trustees, elected officials and chamber members.

No structure as grand as the new student center can be properly christened without a ribbon cutting. On this day, three ribbon cuttings were held. The TFS Board of Trustees cut the first ribbon commemorating the important milestone. Immediately afterwards both the Habersham County Chamber of Commerce and the Rabun County Chamber of Commerce had their turn at the ribbon.

State-of-the-art facility provides a dynamic forum for athletic events, drama and music, fitness activities, special events and more



The new Student Activity Center features a beautiful new gymnasium with bleacher seating. On the second level is a walking track and fitness area, as well as a 10' high by 70' long climbing wall. An outside courtyard features a gathering area with firepit and pergola.

Right: Seventh grader Katherine Tench explores the climbing wall.



### Historic bell adds finishing touch to Student Activity Center

Symbols and traditions are an important part of the culture of a school. With the addition of the magnificent new Student Activity Center, a new symbol has been added that is already becoming an important part of the culture of the middle school.

A historic bell cast in 1902 was installed along the walkway leading to the main entrance of the building. With its prominent new location, it has become an emerging symbol of the TFS middle school. Already the bell is ringing out after athletic victories and during special school occasions.

E. Lane Gresham, the school's Director of Community Relations, did a bit of detective work and discovered that the bell's pedigree was 'high profile.'

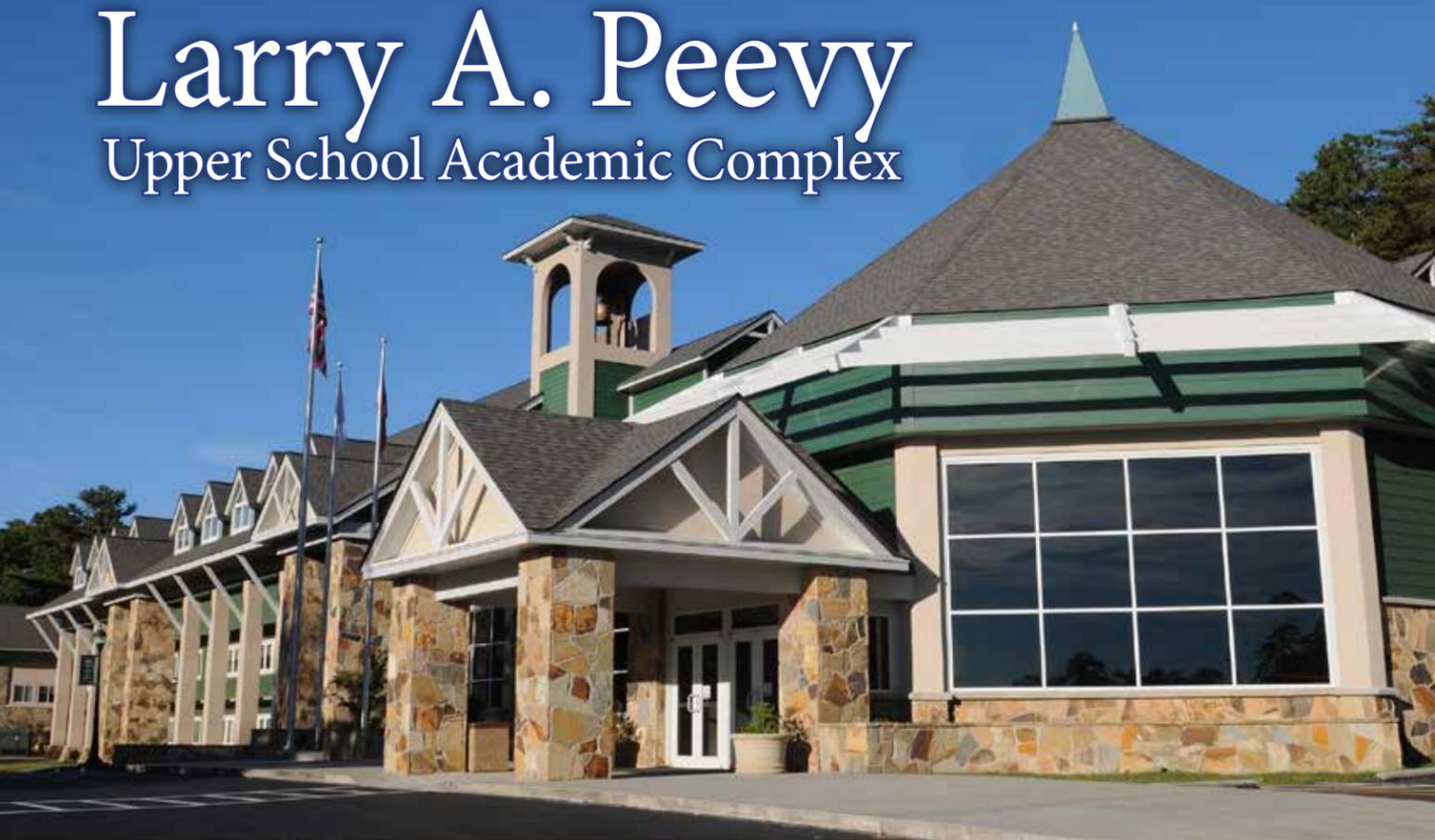
The bell was forged over a century ago in 1902 by the famed Meneely Bell Co. in Troy, New York. It first served as part of a 10-bell configuration at a church in Taunton, Massachusetts.

The Meneely Bell Co. closed in 1952, but produced bells which rang over Independence Hall, Dartmouth College, and as part of the carillon at the Steeplechase Park at Coney Island. Meneely bells were prominently used at churches, schools, and colleges across the country.



# Larry A. Peevy

## Upper School Academic Complex



### TFS Board of Trustees names the upper school academic complex in recognition of President Peevy's visionary leadership

When Larry A. Peevy became President and Head of Tallulah Falls School in 2007, he and wife Dinah had but one goal - to build and develop an institution to support the finest educational program available to area students. Nearly 10 years later and largely due to Peevy's efforts, TFS is recognized as truly one of the most prestigious independent schools in the state and the Southeast.

In September the Tallulah Falls School Board of Trustees recognized Peevy's visionary leadership with an announcement that, by unanimous vote, the Upper School Academic complex in its present or any future expanded configuration be named the 'Larry A. Peevy Upper School Academic Complex.'

"During my tenure as a member of the TFS Board of Trustees," said TFS Board Chair Amy Atkinson, "I worked with Larry Peevy on campus construction projects

valued at more than \$25 million. I hold him and his abilities in the highest regard. Under his guidance, our school has experienced unprecedented academic advancement and achievement."

"TFS is an excellent college preparatory school with a growing reputation of excellence. The strong position we now enjoy is due in large part to the vision and direction of Larry Peevy," said Atkinson.

Nearly 10 years ago when Peevy arrived the school year began with 138 students. All grades were located in an aging classroom structure badly in need of repair and renovation. Under Peevy's leadership, nearly every building on campus has received major renovations and other projects include upgrades to athletic facilities as well. Today the school has 467 students on two campuses and a retention rate of 92 percent.

"President Peevy never takes personal credit for any of these remarkable school advancements; he always says the leadership teams are responsible for the positive direction TFS has taken," Atkinson said.

"But every well run organization has a great leader, and there is no doubt that Larry Peevy is that leader.

**He is a practical dreamer. He dreams big dreams, and then finds ways to make those dreams become reality.**

He is an amazing person, gifted teacher and an exceptional leader and I am truly grateful to have the opportunity to work with him."

Peevy credits working with a dedicated, highly-qualified faculty and staff and an invested board as the key to guiding TFS to its prestigious status. "We truly looked at the opportunity here as a way we could make a difference in the lives of many young people," he said. "Their success has been our success. It has given a much higher meaning to our lives than anything I can imagine."

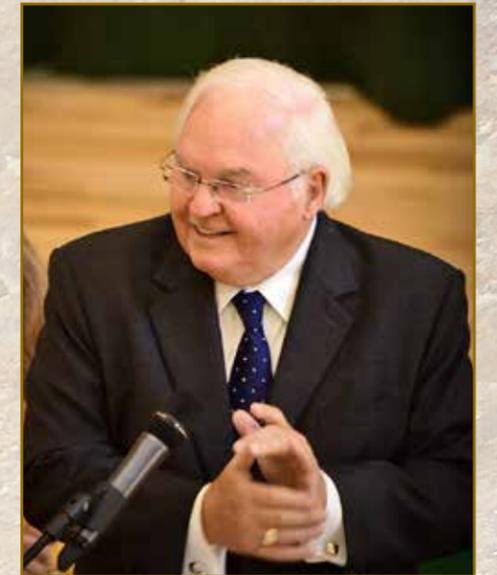
James C. Weidner, Secretary and member of the Board of Trustees, also acknowledged the Peevy's commitment to the school. "As board member Gewene Womack mentioned in her prayer before lunch at last year's September Board meeting, there is little doubt that Larry and Dinah Peevy came to Tallulah Falls School by God's grace and providence," Weidner said. "As a result of, and with the help from, that Divine Guidance, Larry Peevy, for all intents and purposes, saved this school."

**"Through his efforts, he not only restored TFS to its past glory and rank; he has also enhanced its reputation and status as one of the premier college preparatory schools in the Southeast...if not the nation.**

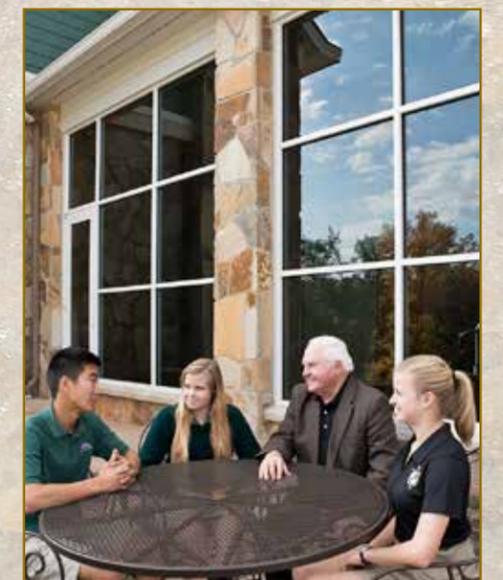
Fortunately, he is not nearly finished and for that, we are exceedingly grateful."

The school is planning a special dedication ceremony to honor President Peevy on January 18, 2017. Additional details will be announced as soon as plans are finalized.

*top: Larry Peevy speaks at the Student Activity Center dedication in September. Bottom: Chatting with several members of the Class of 2017. photos by E. Lane Gresham*



"TFS is an excellent college preparatory school with a growing reputation of excellence. The strong position we now enjoy is due in large part to the vision and direction of Larry Peevy."



What do TFS middle school students think about an innovative new program designed to teach gratitude and respect for others? Just ask them.



Manners. Respect. Common courtesy. Traits that were once commonplace but now becoming increasingly rare. In an effort to better prepare students for success in school, and life, middle school administrators have developed a program consisting of 12 core principles known as the Tallulah 12. Eighth grade English teacher Hannah Gibson recently had her class write about their impressions of the new program.

I.

**Make eye contact**

and convey that we care when someone is speaking.

II.

**Respect and acknowledge**

other's comments, opinions and ideas. When appropriate, ask a question to facilitate the discussion, and respond to all questions with a complete thought.

III.

**Demonstrate gratitude and stewardship.**

We say 'thank you' when we are given something; we take only what we need without being wasteful while considering the needs of others.

IV.

**Win and lose graciously.**

We can celebrate wins and mourn defeats appropriately.

**What is the purpose of Tallulah 12?**

**Joe Griswold, Demorest, GA:**

*Tallulah 12 is a program that gives you the qualities you need to become successful in everything you do. The program is all about teaching you how to use these qualities in your daily life. I guarantee you that if a student uses these qualities they will be better and make the world better. If you look at great leaders like Martin Luther King, Jr., JFK, and Franklin Roosevelt, they had these qualities.*



**Olivia Rogowski, Martin, GA:**

*The most basic reason is to make students hard-working, appreciative and polite. But there is more to it than that. Tallulah 12 is about giving people a sense of community and a sense of belonging. The program was created to help individuals develop within themselves...to build community but not sacrifice traits that make individuals unique. To create a healthy balance between community values and personal morals.*



**Aaliyah Doddridge, Lakemont, GA:**

*Before Tallulah 12 I honestly did not understand the importance of something like maintaining eye contact. I am naturally shy but I have learned that one day, such as when applying for a job, maintaining eye contact will help me show the other person that I have confidence.*



V.

**Track along and contribute**

without prompting, whether reading aloud, being involved with discussions, or doing an activity.

VI.

**Learn everyone's name**

in the school and greet them. We look for opportunities to welcome and introduce ourselves to visitors at our school.

VII.

**Be aware of our surroundings**

in the dining hall and hallways. We are courteous to each other and our environment.

VIII.

**Observe safety procedures.**

We appreciate the thought and planning that has gone into providing the safest environment for us.

IX.

**Model patience.**

Recognize that we do not always have to be first. We are aware of this when getting into line, walking through doorways, using lockers, etc.

X.

**Build community**

by sharing concerns with appropriate people. Together we want to cultivate an environment of trust.

XI.

**Responsibly manage**

time and property while being considerate of others' time and property.

XII.

**Own our mistakes**

as a part of growing. Failure is success in progress.

**How would you summarize Tallulah 12?**

**Sydney Murdock, Carnesville, GA:**

*Tallulah 12 is really a guideline for success. The program contains tools that are being used by our middle school students to shape the world around us. But to me, they are just words on paper until you choose to do something with them. Tallulah 12 encourages students to act upon these guidelines without even having to think about it.*



**Morgan Webb, Demorest, GA:**

*I hope Tallulah 12 stays at the middle school for many years to come. With these guidelines we will have good careers by having respect for our bosses and colleagues.*



**How does Tallulah 12 challenge me?**

**Grey Bourlet, Tallulah Falls, GA:**

*It challenges me to be a better person. To be great you have to first take the initiative to stand up and do what you know is right.*



**What lessons have you learned from Tallulah 12?**

**Grant Barron, Clarkesville, GA:**

*Tallulah 12 has taught me personally how to manage my time better. I used to procrastinate a lot, and it would sometimes hurt my grades. But now I manage my time better and have a good bit of free time. T12 will help us get better grades and become better people.*



**Ben Fisher, Clayton, GA:**

*I have used tracking and contributing. When our school counselor comes to our advising classes, I pay attention to what we're talking about and add to the topic with well-thought out comments. I make sure I'm adding something positive and not just saying pointless things.*



*I don't do this just for the praise. I do it because I want to be a good person. I try to do this in all my classes as well. If everyone follows the guidelines of Tallulah 12 we will be more successful in life.*

**Hagan Eubank, Tallulah Falls, GA:**

*Winning and losing graciously is just a longer way to say 'sportsmanship.' Winning is a great thing, and losing is not the best feeling, but you need sportsmanship because you don't want to make yourself or your team look bad. Just try to show good sportsmanship, show that you are happy for the other team or person, and keep any negative comments to yourself.*



# Almost like being THERE



**Virtual Reality takes students to over 300 sites around (and out of) the world**

With the addition of an incredible new learning tool, TFS students can now 'travel' on more than 300 exciting field trips. The journey is through the magic of virtual reality technology, and the tool is a dedicated smartphone device equipped with a special virtual reality headset.

This new learning portal allows students to visit notable locations across the globe including national parks, historic sites, famous landmarks, college campuses, locations of current news, science applications and much more.

Once an appropriate field trip is selected from the more than 300 available through the Google Expeditions App, students strap on the special headsets and are able to enjoy a 360° tour of the featured location.

The app allows a teacher to customize their particular presentation by bookmarking notable points that are visible to each student through the headset. The entire process is controlled by the teacher from an iPad application.

The virtual reality technology was recently used in a TFS middle school classroom where the students were shown views of the earth from space as well as views from the perspective of standing on the lunar surface.

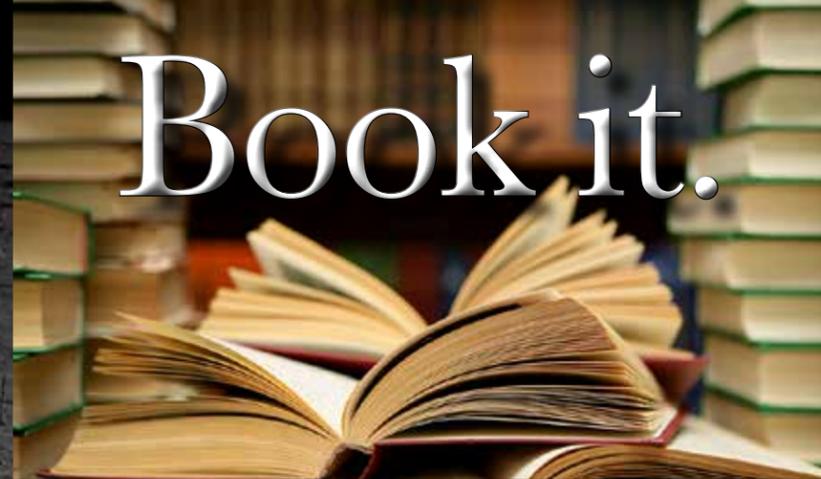
During the entire teaching period the students were fully engaged, wriggling and twisting to take full advantage of the incredibly lifelike 360° image.

Both middle and upper school students will have access to the virtual reality devices with a classroom set at each school. So if your student comes home tonight and tells you that he or she has been exploring on the moon today, there may be more to the story than meets the eye.



*The faces tell the story. TFS middle school students embark on a journey to the moon via the realistic images rendered by mobile devices. Top left: Lawson Fulbright; top right: Ella Smith; bottom left: Keygan Antosiak. photos: E. Lane Gresham.*

# Book it.



President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy joins Emma Barrett for a look at her book, "Cancer and Courage."



E. Lane Gresham

**A** very special emerging author made a special presentation to Tallulah Falls School President Larry A. Peevy on August 15. Emma Barrett, a sixth grade student from Clarkesville, wrote a book earlier this year entitled "Cancer and Courage." Barrett's 30-page book tells the story of one

family's journey from Florida to Clarkesville, Georgia. The family was searching for just the right school for their child, ultimately settling on Tallulah Falls School. After relocating, the mother receives bad news.

"They are dealing with getting the child in a new school and also getting a job. On top of all that, the mom has cancer," Barrett says. "After weeks of testing and going to the hospital...they told them that everything was good. The family felt like they could move on in life."

"... It was something that made me happy and that told me I could do it," she says. "It was a dream come true; I had always wanted to make a book and be able to tell people I made a book.. it takes a lot of time but all that time pays off."  
- Emma Barrett, TFS sixth grader

Barrett says she has written many stories but this was the first time she has attempted something as ambitious as a book. The self-published tome features Barrett's artwork. Like many writers, she finds inspiration in real life.

"Life is not always easy but if you fight through it, one day it will all turn into a happy life," she says. "I just thought that it has not been an easy road for me so why not write about something like that." She

says the five-week writing process was "long and kind of stressful."

Peevy, a character in the book, says he was delighted to receive the unique gift and was impressed with the young author's talent and work ethic. "It's not every day a student writes a book," he says. "It's even more special that she featured our school in the storyline. I look for great things from this young lady as she continues her education at TFS."

## Bass Fishing Club making waves in early tournaments

Tallulah Falls School's newest club is hitting the lake in style. The Bass Fishing Club recently had their club boat on campus displaying the official TFS crest and sponsor logos. TFS Bass Club members Marshall Harrelson and Marshall Williams (far right) pose with President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy and club captain Russell Williams.

The TFS chapter recently hosted an event on October 8 at Lake Hartwell's Tugaloo State Park. Ninety-five boats and 270 anglers participated. With positive early results the TFS duo has already qualified for a state tournament berth.



# Coming up ACES



E. Lane Gresham

Seventh grade Academic Aces: Nafis Rahman, Kylar Cloutre, Reagan Brode, Luke Atwood, Emily Church, Tyler Popham, Ava Wehrstein and Charlie Cody. Eighth grade Aces: Baylee MacBeth, Brinson Hall, Eli Sims, Caroline Turpin, Gigi Welch, Maggie Jackson, Caleb Carter, Jack Greene, Hagan Eubank and Collin Kelly.

## Middle school names Academic Aces for fall semester

Academic Aces have been named for the Fall Semester 2016. This group represents the top academic students in the seventh and eighth grades. The first semester Aces were announced in August. Selection is based on GPAs (grade point averages) from the second semester of the previous school year. To qualify as an Academic Ace, students must have attended TFS the previous semester.

Students qualifying as an Academic Ace receive a lapel torch pin and an Aces T-shirt. For each subsequent semester they qualify as an Ace, students will receive a lapel bar. A student is eligible to receive one torch pin and three lapel bars over the course of their middle school years if they qualified as an Academic Ace each time they are eligible. The torch pin may be worn on the lapel of their formal uniform blazers. Students earning Academic Ace inclusion all four semesters will receive special recognition at the eighth grade awards assembly at the end of the year.

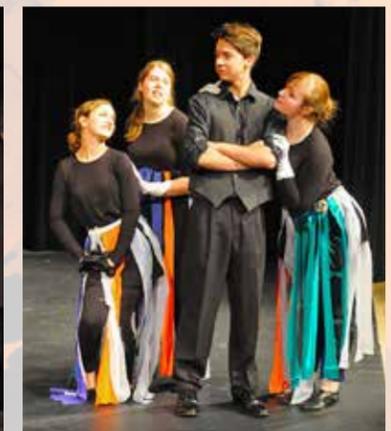
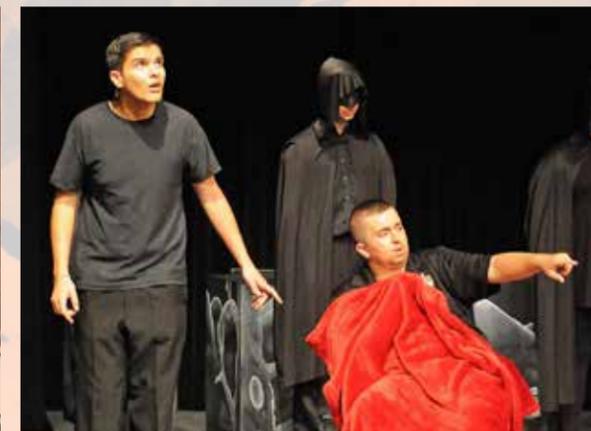


# Fall into the Arts



Music and drama are in full swing at Tallulah Falls School. On October 3, the TFS music department held its annual Fall concert. The Norwood Key Taylor Chapel came alive with the beautiful sounds of the seventh grade chorus, eighth grade chorus, combined middle school chorus, TFS Ringers, and the Tallulah Falls Singers (upper school chorus). The free concert was open to the public and resulted in a standing-room-only crowd. The singers and ringers are under the direction of Memrie Cox and Curt Frederick, respectively.

Under the direction of drama instructor Carrie Elrod, the TFS Players presented a one act production, *The Shuddersome Tales of Poe*, on October 27 before taking the competition 'on the road' for the regional One Act competition.



## Adding up the victories

### Mathematics team has another strong showing at UNG tournament

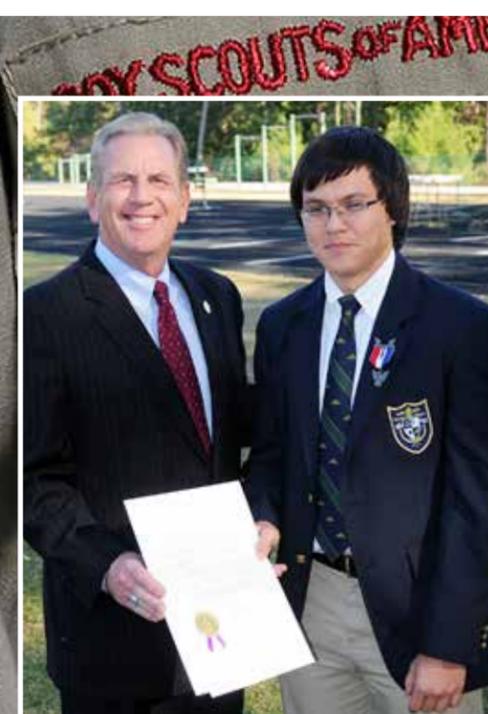


The Tallulah Falls School mathematics team continues to excel in competition. The team, sponsored by veteran mathematics teacher Linda Harris, came home with first place overall from the University of North Georgia Mathematics Tournament in September.

The competition consisted of a multiple choice test, a ciphering test, and a problem-solving test. TFS sophomore Xing Fan placed first in the multiple choice section, junior Jonathan Huang claimed second place, with senior Yuting Zhang coming

in third. In the ciphering competition Xin Fan again placed first, while senior Vincent Li claimed second place. In the problem-solving competition the team of Yuting Zhang, Jonathan Huang, Mark Faingold, and Xuan Yang earned first place.

Mrs. Harris, justifiably proud of her students, said that during the awards ceremony the director of the competition, Dr. Brad Bailey, chose the TFS team to present their solution to the group. Quoting, Dr. Bailey, Mrs. Harris said that it was "a particularly nice solution."



## Gulle achieves elite Eagle Scout rank



Jesse Gulle, a junior from Sautee Nachoochee, recently achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank attainable by the Boy Scouts of America (BSA). Gulle is shown at left with District 10 State Rep. Terry Rogers who presented Gulle with a resolution honoring his achievement. Only 4% of Boy Scouts are granted the rank of Eagle Scout, and only after a lengthy review process.

Gulle, who has been involved in scouting since second grade, was required to complete a special community service project as part of his Eagle Scout requirements. With the help of scouts from his local troop, Gulle and several adults constructed a new 10-foot pull up bar and several benches adjacent to the TFS soccer field. Using wood donated from the Cornelia Lowe's and hardware donated by the school, Gulle's project required approximately 120 hours of labor.

# Creating a safer campus



It was only a simulation, but it had the look and feel of the real thing. Law enforcement from three local and area agencies converged on Tallulah Falls School in July for a hostage simulation exercise. The purpose of the exercise, which utilized several members of the faculty and staff, was to familiarize law enforcement with the campus and provide live training in a simulated hostage situation.

Law enforcement personnel from the Habersham County Sheriff's Office Special Response Team (SRT), Georgia Emergency Management Homeland Security Agency, Tallulah Falls Police and TFS campus security participated in the exercise.

The hostage simulation, held in the TFS boys dormitory, utilized upper school history teacher Tom Tilley as the suspect, and Tallulah Falls Mayor Dan Hayes as the hostage.

TFS President Larry A. Peevy observed the exercise and was pleased to have an opportunity to host the training. Peevy said, "It is

## Tactical training - part of a comprehensive safety plan



**HOSTAGE SIMULATION EXERCISE**

important for law enforcement personnel to be familiar with our campus. Hosting training exercises is a key part of relationship building with local and area law enforcement. We want to take every step to ensure the safety of our school community."

Tallulah Falls School has developed a comprehensive safety plan, according to Dustin Rogers, TFS Directory of Security. "Training with our law enforcement partners is one part of the overall plan," Rogers said. "It helps us to maintain our vigilance."

Special Response Team Leader 1st Lt. Matt Wurtz added, "This type of training helps everyone involved. This is a valuable resource not only for the training of the team but of all departments involved. With good training we will all be better prepared if there is an incident at the school."



E. Lane Gresham

## Smith joins TFS Advancement Team

The school's Advancement Team has a new member. Sonya M. Smith of Clarkesville joined the team in September as the new executive director for advancement. Smith joins existing team members Brian Boyd, director of communications, and E. Lane Gresham, director of community relations. The team is charged with building awareness of all facets of the school throughout the community and the region.

Smith, a Cleveland, GA native, brings a wealth of fundraising, event management, and marketing/public relations experience to the position. She will serve as the primary fundraising professional for all TFS advancement efforts, including the annual Tallulah Fund and the Georgia Goal scholarship program.

"She will represent the school in many ways, including outreach efforts to General Federation of Women's Clubs - Georgia members and other strong supporters of the school," said Larry A. Peevy, President and Head of School.

Prior to her hiring, Smith served as an annual gifts officer/senior coordinator for The Medical Center Foundation, the fundraising arm for Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville.

"Tallulah Falls School has a long and proud history of helping its students achieve their greatest potential," Smith said. "I look forward to joining the TFS school community, learning about its future financial needs, and working with the Advancement Team to create both short and long-term fundraising plans to help meet those needs for the children it serves."

Smith is a graduate of the University of Georgia Terry College of Business. She is also a graduate of Leadership Habersham and is a member of the Georgia Association of Development Professionals.

*"Sonya Smith has a proven track record in institutional advancement. She will take our fundraising and major gifts initiatives to the next level."*

- Larry A. Peevy  
President and Head of School

## building a stronger

# tfs team

New faculty and staff bring experience and enthusiasm



www.tallulahfalls.org • 15

## 2016-18 Board of Trustees

The Tallulah Falls School Board of Trustees held its annual Fall meeting at the TFS middle school on Wednesday, September 21. Those in attendance are pictured cutting the ribbon on the new middle school Student Activity Center. Front row, from left: Mark Rasmussen (TFS Vice President), Dr. Judy Taylor, Amy Atkinson (TFS Board Chair), Lucy Willard, Gewene Womack and Larry A. Peevy (TFS President and Head of School). Second row, from left, Alice "Cookie" Noel, Peggy Pruett, Dr. Karen Thomson, Donna Foland, Dr. Judy Forbes and Gail Cantrell. Back row, from left, Suzanne Ratliff, Rev. James Turpen, James C. Weidner, Sandy Ahearn, Donald Wells, Elizabeth Wells and Greg Brown.





**NINTH GRADE TRIP TO THE NANTAHALA RIVER OFFERS  
ADVENTURE • CHALLENGE**

photos by Ashley Walden  
TFS Social Studies teacher

TFS freshmen tackle Class III Nantahala Falls (above and opposite page top and bottom) on the popular Nantahala River. In the photo below TFS students are shown exploring various points along the high ropes course.



In mid-September TFS ninth graders enjoyed a day away from campus as they traveled to the rugged Nantahala Gorge near Bryson City, NC. Here they spent the day perfecting their teamwork on the rushing Nantahala River, and facing their personal fears while negotiating the challenging high ropes course.

According to social studies teacher Ashley Walden, the annual trip provides an opportunity for students and faculty to get to know one another better, as well as helping the students to challenge themselves and thereby grow in self-confidence. "Though it was an exhausting day for all involved I am happy to say that this trip has become a tradition for our ninth graders," Walden said.

TFS faculty members Beth Huebner, Jennifer Dunlap, Allen Campbell, and Ashley Walden attended, as well as Dean of Students Jimmy Franklin.



Just another day hanging around for Lillie Free.



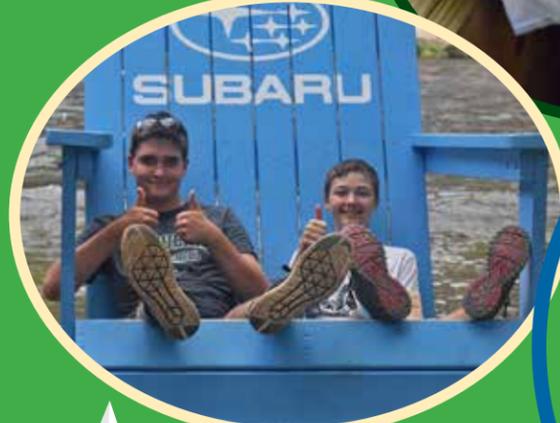
No fear of heights for Luke Johnson.



Brianna Docsol looks like she's holding on for dear life as she prepares to leave the safety of the platform on the ropes course.



It's all good for Matthew Weidner as he prepares for his adventure.



Paul Chambers (left) and A. J. Hayes chill by the river at the Nantahala Outdoor Center.



Alumni **PROFILE**

## 1988 TFS graduate returns as special guest rider for second annual Twin Rivers Challenge

by E. Lane Gresham



Chris Pic - Class of 1988  
special guest rider

For Chris Pic, a 1988 TFS alum, coming 'home' gives him a chance to combine two of his favorite things - biking and Tallulah Falls School. Pic returned to Tallulah Falls School from his home in Utah as a special guest rider for the October 29 Twin Rivers Challenge cycling event which benefits student scholarships at his alma mater. Pic is a former professional cyclist and now works in the specialty sporting goods industry.

Pic was accompanied by his wife, Tina, who is a professional cyclist and a member of the Happy Tooth Dental pro-cycling team. Tina Pic began team cycling in nearby Athens in the mid-1990s, winning the Collegiate National Road Race title in 1995.

"After spending seven years from middle school through high school at TFS, where the staff really prepared me for university and in some cases life," Chris Pic said. "It is a great honor to be able to come back home to participate in a really cool event in such a great area of the United States. It really means a lot to me."

Several long-time faculty and staff members have great memories about Chris Pic's time at TFS. Among these are the teaching and coaching duo Allen and Cyndy Campbell, who remain close to their former student.

"I have many sweet memories of Chris Pic," Cyndy Campbell said. "My memories start when he was 12 years old and continue with each year. I am so proud of the man he is today and all that he has accomplished."

'Coach CC' recalls running with Chris down Tugaloo Village Road (across from the present-day TFS middle school) and was also with him for his first 5K road race in Gainesville while he was still a middle school student. "I kept trying to wake him up on the bus ride but that never worked out. I am convinced he ran the first mile in his sleep," she said. Campbell also said she watched him race numerous times in cycling events in South Carolina and Georgia after leaving TFS.

"I remember how proud I was of him during those days," Campbell continued. "My excitement and pride was as though he was my very own son. No matter how busy and crazy things were after each race, he always made time for us." Through the years the Campbells have spent time with Chris and his wife, including celebrating special occasions in downtown Athens before the annual Twilight Criterium bike race.

"I remember conversations about him finding the right girl that had the same interests, goals, hobbies, etc.," she said, "I told him the perfect girl will come along at the perfect time."

"Indeed, he did find the perfect girl when he met Tina Mayolo Pic," Campbell said. She and Allen attended the Pic's wedding at Athens Botanical Gardens.

Dining Services Director Harriett Worrell is another long-time TFS staff member who remembers Chris Pic from his days as a boarding student. "I see Chris as the only student that we gave permission to train by himself off campus. I remember one day seeing him on his bike in Clarkesville. I am sure he was maybe in 9th grade," Worrell said. "He would ride from our campus to Clarkesville and back to train for his races. He was very driven to succeed in his chosen area."



Reunion. From left: Allen Campbell, Chris Pic, Cyndy Campbell, Tina Pic.

## Greetings

from the

### U.S. Merchant Marine Academy



photo credit: Justin Gallagher

John Luke Gallagher, a 2016 TFS graduate, took a moment from his busy duties as a cadet at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy to share a few highlights from his college adventure so far.

"I'm involved in several clubs and teams. Chiefly, I swim on the varsity men's swim team and the bonds I have made have been amazing. Having a group that always has your back makes the academy that much better. I'm also a member of the Christian Fellowship Club that meets once a week. Its a relief to sit down and fellowship with other people that believe in the same God as you do. The academy has tons of other great clubs and sports like all the waterfront activities that go sailing basically every weekend."

"I am majoring in Maritime Logistics and Security. Tallulah Falls School definitely prepared me for the time demands of college. I'm taking 18.5 course credit hours this trimester and, honestly, it's only as demanding as I want it to be. The schedule I have is like that of TFS including sports, so study habits that I made in high school are just as successful in college."

"The teachers at Tallulah Falls School also made a huge difference in my preparedness compared to my classmates. Normal challenging courses made even more challenging at the academy are easier because of the foundation that was prepared while I was in high school. The teachers prepared me so now I can spend time helping my classmates study and teaching them when they don't quite get it in class."

*"Tallulah Falls School definitely prepared me for the time demands of college. I'm taking 18.5 course credit hours this trimester and, honestly, it's only as demanding as I want it to be. The schedule I have is like that of TFS including sports, so study habits that I made in high school are just as successful in college."*

*-John Luke Gallagher  
TFS Class of 2016*

## Alumni passings

### Bill Jackson '56

Bill Jackson, TFS Class of 1956, passed away on July 18, 2016. Jackson was 77 years old. Jackson earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Arkansas and was a retired engineer. Jackson lived in Lewisville, Texas. He was actively involved in alumni affairs and is remembered as a great supporter of Tallulah Falls School.

### Jill Bryant

Jill Bryant, age 59, passed away on October 3, 2016 at her home in Athens. Bryant attended Tallulah Falls School from 1972-73.

### Emily Norton '42

Emily Norton of Buford passed away on October 7, 2016. Norton grew up in Tallulah Falls and graduated from TFS in 1942. She graduated from Wesleyan College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. She also earned a Masters degree in Political Science from Emory University. Norton taught music at Tallulah Falls School for one year. The bulk of her teaching career was at Decatur High School in Decatur, GA.

### Katherine Parks Pete '99

Katherine Parks Pete, Class of 1999, of Covington, GA passed away on October 7, 2016.

### Myrtle Mae Baker Phillips

Myrtle Mae Baker Chandler Phillips, a 1937 graduate of Tallulah Falls School, passed away in Toccoa on October 15, 2016. Phillips was honored in 2010 as a TFS Outstanding Former Student. She was a member of Cornelia United Methodist Church.

### Mylam Nichols Kosica

TFS oldest living alumni, age 100 years, passed away on October 11, 2016. The Tallulah Falls School magazine will run a special feature on Mrs. Kosica in the Winter 2017 edition.



# Community Service

Community service - it is a trademark of TFS sports teams and clubs. This Fall TFS students left their mark in our community. Here are just a few of the projects that TFS students were involved in recently.

Varsity volleyball spruced up the landscaping at the new Prevent Child Abuse Habersham offices in Clarkesville.

## Tallulah Falls School welcomes special visitors to campus



Macon Service League • September



Cartersville Woman's Club - October



Athens Woman's Club - October



Committee of Associates - October



Brunswick Woman's Club - October



Stone Mountain Woman's Club - October



Circle for Children - November



Ivey Hall

Middle school cross country spread mulch along the trails at Tallulah Gorge State Park.



Middle school coed soccer provided general maintenance and yardwork at the new Prevent Child Abuse Habersham facility in Clarkesville.



The JV volleyball team helped out at the local food bank.

Varsity volleyball also raised funds for Play for the Cure to fight breast cancer. The players are shown with a breast cancer survivor during this year's Pink Out event.

# Varsity Soccer

by coach Jonathan Roberts

Tallulah Falls School can be very proud of the 2016 varsity soccer team, and the growing tradition of excellence and gritty play on Amick Field. I had really high expectations for this year's squad with the most experienced group of returning seniors (six) along with nine other experienced players. Tryouts were more competitive than ever with over 30 skilled young men vying for 22 roster spots. Assistant coach Josh Welborn and I added eight new faces to the team, five of them freshman. Balance in class representation is important so that we don't have any dips in talents, strength, experience, or field leadership.

We continue to challenge ourselves by scheduling well-established, talented programs as new opponents. We can learn much about ourselves and the game by facing teams from tougher conferences with historically competitive resumes. For instance, this year we added Bob Jones Academy and Atlanta's Brandon Hall, two schools with strong soccer programs. At the same time our regular yearly competition continues to improve. It is great to see the level of soccer around us continue to get better and better.

The 2016 team had 'big cleats' to fill without the return of last season's two top scorers, along with the stingiest defense in school history, but the squad rose to the occasion many times to finish with the solid record of 6-6-2.

Senior Thala Freeman led the scoring with nine goals followed by the tireless work of junior Ian Carroll. A confident defense allowed only five more goals than last season's record-setting unit.



coach Roberts



photos: E. Lane Gresham



# coach's Varsity corner Cross Country

by coach Scott Neal

**Driven** was the theme of Cross Country this season... *driven* to be GREAT, *driven* to build a family atmosphere, and *driven* to "Elevate" everything we do, especially unity. Top boy's performers were sophomore Aaron Hughes and freshman Chris Geiger; both finished literally within .3 seconds of each other in multiple races and placed 10th and 11th, respectively, at the Area Championships. Junior Perry Gresham remained the top TFS female again throughout the season, placing 22nd at the Area meet and ranking in the top 15% of Class A - Private. Freshman Sophie Alexander placed 29th at Area.

TFS cross country hosts four distinctly themed meets organized by team leaders and assisted by younger members in order to create a Season of Significance and to continue the legacy of the program. A Relay Carnival, Cookies 'n Quotes Festival, Heroes Invite, and Harrier Harvest allowed the team to highlight TFS in an uncommon, athlete-directed, mentorship-driven fashion that creates memories for visiting schools as well.

They will forever remember the stress and elation involved with exploring and creating excellence in relation to service and competitiveness.

Team captain and manager Julia Nichols described, "We had a splash literally and figuratively in the lake and in the rain on the team's annual camping trip. We learned a new side of our teammates by standing in someone else's shoes."

Fellow team captain and senior Michael Weidner, who often delivered the word of the day such as "we, as a team are like a firework display," consistently praised his teammates for fulfilling meaningful roles and making thoughtful contributions to the life of the team.

Lasting impressions were created by: running along mountain trails, back roads, and the TFS farm; Tallulah Gorge rims, waterfalls, river plunges, 600 plus cookies and quotes, patriotic bandanas, corn hole, hills, and lactic acid; ice baths, baked awards, haybale hopping, Spaghetti Dog Awards, campfires and s'mores, and the everyday grind of putting one foot after another. These experiences built confidence and strengthened a bond that only adversity and purpose can forge.

This season has been stellar in leadership, fun in creating what can be imagined, and satisfying in seeing improvement among each runner. What a significant season!

# Growing stronger



Youth-laden varsity volleyball team qualifies for state playoffs for 2nd consecutive year

by coach Allen Campbell

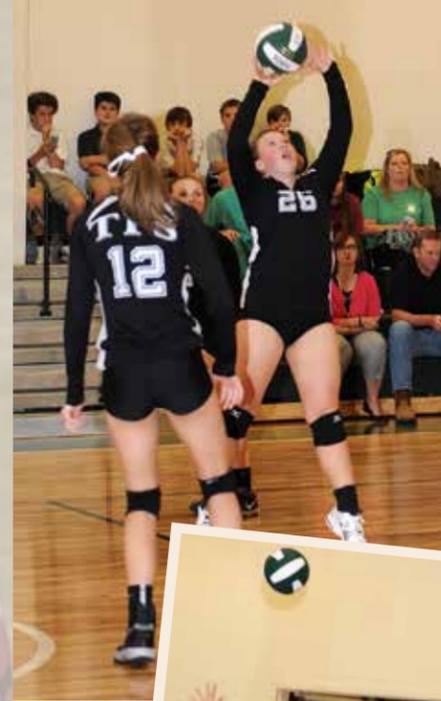
Tallulah Falls School's varsity volleyball team had another strong year in 2016. Though loaded with young players in a region featuring tough competition, Allen Campbell's squad fought to a 19-23 season record, finishing 5-6 in Area 8A. The highlight of the season was the program's second consecutive trip to the State Playoffs.

The future is bright for the program, as two freshmen earned Area 8A honors. Freshman Ashley Crosby was selected to the Area 8A Second Team. She led the team in kills (215), blocks (44), and hitting % (229). She also contributed 69 digs and added 51 aces on the season.

Freshman Kate Blackburn was named Area 8A Honorable Mention. Blackburn led the team with a school season record 334 assists, and contributed 83 kills, 38 aces, and 150 digs.

Other notable performances include sophomore Jade Mitchell who led the team in serving percentage (97%); junior Anna Davis who led the team in aces (69); and junior Grace Brewer who led the team in digs (260). Campbell also noted the solid play of junior Chloe Turpin who contributed 129 kills, 59 aces, 241 assists, and 168 digs for the season.

2016 team records: 770 kills • serving percentage: 88% • 1275 digs • 688 assists



## middle school volleyball

Young netters combine winning ways with positive community service

by coach Madison Miller

The middle school volleyball team finished their 2016 season with a record of 8-2. They also finished fourth in their area tournament this year. The girls had a couple of tough losses this year, but persevered through the season and made sure to better themselves for the next match.

The team also participated in an outstanding service project this year called 'Stand For the Silent'. It is an anti-bullying program that helps to raise funds for education and prevention of bullying.

The team raised money at their match against Hart County to present to the Cornelia Fire Department in order to implement the program. They played for a great cause and I'm extremely proud of them. They are an amazing group of young ladies and I look forward to seeing what they will do in the future.



## junior varsity volleyball

JV team developing future varsity stars

by coach Katie Johnson

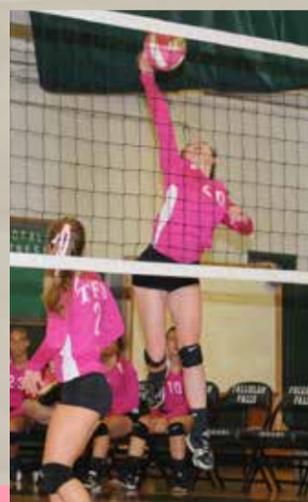
The junior varsity volleyball season started out extremely strong, with our girls able to overcome any opponent that they faced. Toward the middle of the season the team faced a few setbacks which resulted in some tough loses. We ended 17-7 for the year.

Highlights included freshman Sydel Idehen who served a rare shutout game (25-0). I would also like to recognize freshman captain Lillie Free, who was a

player that I could depend on when the going got tough. On more than one occasion she took a ball that was likely a point for the other team and gained points for TFS.

Also, Mali Danavall stepped out of her comfort zone to fill spots on the floor. By season's end she became a 'rock star' on those back row positions.

The girls were able to overcome and end their season on a high note. Though small they played fiercely!



Ashley Crosby  
Area 8A  
Second Team



Kate Blackburn  
Area 8A  
Honorable Mention

## tallulah falls school varsity volleyball



varsity



jv



middle school



# Middle School Coed Soccer

by coach Zac Roland

The 2016 middle school coed soccer season was one of growing and adapting. With 31 students on the roster, 3 different squads, and over twice as many matches as last year, the season seemed like a bit of a blur. Our final record was 4-6-2.

Our players hosted the finals match with Swain County and Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School. They prepared goody bags for each player as well as preparing the sidelines for the match. Our squad also worked the sidelines having balls ready for each out of bounds play. They coordinated and ran a halftime event for fans 10 and under and had a prize for each child that participated. The TFS players also stayed after the game, congratulated the winners, and helped clean up. All of this was done in a total of four hours of pouring rain.

The highlight of our season was winning the sportsmanship award which is voted on by each team in the Tri-State region. We also had an intrasquad scrimmage and cookout early in the season which had a great turnout and was fun for the whole family.

For our community service project we volunteered on two different Saturdays at the Prevent Child Abuse Habersham facility doing yard work and getting the house ready for families. This was followed by lunch and a trip bowling.



Winners of the 2016 Tri-State Conference Sportsmanship Award (tied with Swain County)



Tri-State Conference: Tallulah Falls School • Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School • Summit Charter School • Highlands School • Swain County School • Nantahala School



# coach's Corner Middle School Cross Country

## A season recap like none you have ever read

by coach Scott Neal

The 2016 middle school cross country season was a plethora of varying contrasting contradictions of collective collaborative competitions against me, we, and they while battling mind over matter, friend and foe.

Doing what other sports do for punishment for 2.2 continuous miles (3K) with no timeouts or halftimes, the tween harrier jogs, trots, travels, runs, races, flees, scoots, scampers, scrams, skeddaddles, scurries, hurries, darts, dashes, slashes, vamooses, whips, zips, and zooms on dirt, mud, grass, sand, gravel, concrete, asphalt, and rubber over bumps, humps, clumps, lumps, slumps, dips, inclines, declines, slopes, gradients, hills, dales, gullies, hollows, ravines, meadows, fields, penitentiaries and pastures along straights, arcs, bends, turns, and clockwise or not-so-wise double loops, around trees, lakes, flags, chutes, paths, in equatorial heat, intense UV rays, sweltering humidity, intense water vapor, drizzle, precipitation, rain, and deluge under some animal or object changing version of stratus or cumulus or blue covering, wooded perennials, forest covering, and leaves while frazzled or dazzled feeling discomfort, pain, coward yielding fatigue, and exhaustion just to receive cookies, quotes, certificates, medals, points, places, improvement, or pride.

Every single middle school cross country member set personal 3K farm course records at the culminating Tri State Conference Championships. The three top TFS placers for both boys and girls - Ben Fisher (2nd place), Collin Kelly (5th place), and Shepherd Roland (6th place); and Lucy Alexander (2nd place), Emma Jackson (4th place), and Kate Trotter (5th place) led the teams to runner-up finishes at the championships.

Many runners on the team earned their way onto the esteemed TFS middle school cross country Legacy List. Coach Susan Nichols and I are very proud of each team member who was driven to elevate their training, tenacity, and GREAT character! We had a lot of fun while continuing a culture of community and competitiveness.



Both the boys and girls teams were the proud recipients of the 2016 Tri-State Sportsmanship Award

## MS cross country quadrathlon - Tallulah Gorge State Park



kayaking • swimming • biking • running

# RIDE RECAP

## 2nd Annual Twin Rivers Challenge



*"What an awesome day to compete in the 2016 Twin Rivers Challenge. This is a great cycling event in the Northeast Georgia mountains and around the lakes."*

-Bryan Ferguson  
Clarksville, GA

*"Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers, especially the SAG that was supported by the girls basketball team. Loved visiting with them and they treated us like royalty. I wish them a successful season."*

-Debbie MacDonald  
Cumming, GA

### TFS students are the major beneficiaries after another successful ride

**C**lear skies, a light breeze, warmer than usual temperatures and a backdrop of gorgeous autumn leaves provided the stage for another highly successful Twin Rivers Challenge bike ride.

An enthusiastic group of close to 120 cyclists joined special guest riders Chris and Tina Pic for one of four scenic rides through Rabun and Habersham Counties.

Even before the crack of the starter's pistol, more than \$25,000 in corporate sponsorships had been raised making this the most successful ride to date.

This is a key fundraiser for student scholarships, according to President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy.

"To double our sponsorships in one year is a tremendous accomplishment," Peevy said. "It shows the support of our community and key vendors for the mission of the school."

For Chris Pic of Utah, TFS alum and special guest rider, it was exciting to be back on the mountain roadways of his youth during the peak foliage weekend.

"The weather, atmosphere, course, hospitality and people made it perfect. These are all the ingredients to being able to continue and grow this event," Pic said. "The course is amazing for all levels of riders. Having three ride lengths with the first parts mostly flat and the amazing curves and ups and downs on the lake sections are so much fun and really scenic."

For 2016, three 'King Queen of the Mountain' segments added an element of competition to the extended climbs along Bridge Creek Road, Burton Dam Road, and Low Gap Road. All told, the scenic routes featured approximately 5,000' of elevation gain.

After crossing the finish line, riders continued to celebrate as they were treated to legendary Tallulah Falls School hospitality with fellowship, traditional bluegrass music and a post-ride meal at the TFS firepit.

Other riders traveled from California, Florida, Kentucky, Ohio, Texas and throughout Georgia.

"We extend a hearty thanks to our riders, sponsors and volunteers who made the 2016 Twin Rivers Challenge a rousing success," Peevy said.



**Be sure to mark your calendar:**

**The 2017  
Twin  
Rivers  
Challenge  
will be held on  
Saturday,  
October 28, 2017**



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