

EDUCATION

Meade County School District Teacher Highlight *Mr. Garret Compton – Meade County Stuart Pepper Middle School*

Claire Brown
Messenger Staff

On an early morning at Stuart Pepper Middle School, you may find a social studies teacher preparing for his classes by drinking almost 7 cups of coffee. Garret Compton teaches 7th and 8th grade social studies, though these grade levels learn vastly different content. Compton teaches his 7th graders world history, while his 8th graders learn United States History. Compton practically takes a world tour every day between the two of his class’s curriculum.

Compton is a long-time resident of Meade County, and a graduate of Meade County High School in 2018. He attended Western Kentucky University where he earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in teaching. Since his graduation, he has been teaching in Meade County, specifically Stuart Pepper

Middle School. Compton speaks of his job with great pride and love, saying “I love building relationships with students and getting to know them as people. Watching them grow throughout the year—both academically and personally—is the best part of the job.”

This young teacher was inspired to pursue a career in teaching, he says, by his former social studies teacher Amanda Love. Compton remarks that her passion for the subject she taught, and the way she cared for her students truly showed him the influence of a teacher. “Her teaching and mentoring helped shape the kind of teacher I strive to be today.”

He does mention a downside of teaching, however. He is not a morning person at all. “Once the day gets going and the students bring their crazy middle school energy, plus my six or seven cups of coffee, I

will eventually wake up.”

Compton highlights the community within Stuart Pepper Middle School, stating that “Our community is truly something special.” He says that the kids, combined with their parents and his fellow educators, make Meade County a wonderful place to teach, something that is unlike any other district. It is a mix of pride, support, and connection that Compton says makes the experience of teaching in Meade County rewarding in a way no other school could compare to. “It feels like being a part of one big family all striving for the same goal—to see our students, and each other, succeed.”

After school hours, Compton returns home to his family. At home, he spends time with his husband Bradley, and their three fur babies. These include two cats, Elphie and Luna, and the couple’s dog, Silas. He says he trades les-

son planning for pet time once he gets home in the afternoons and does his best to leave his work at the school. Compton uses his time after school with his family to recharge and rest before another day of teaching, striving to offer his students the best of himself every day.

As well as teaching, Compton also enjoys diving deep into history, spending time with his family and pets, traveling, playing video games, and reading. These hobbies may include activities such as history documentaries, visiting historical sites, or simply staying cozy in a gaming chair.

Compton also shares a fun fact about himself: He is technically only six years old. Born on February 29th, a day that is only on the calendar every four years. Compton has only seen six of his actual birthdays in his lifetime and says he often jokes to his students that they



Photo submitted by Claire Brown

Garret Compton teaches Social Studies to 7th and 8th graders at Stuart Pepper Middle School.

are being taught by a six-year-old and should catch up. “Not many can say they have been teaching since they were six years old!” Jokes Compton.

Whether it is at home or in the classroom, Compton’s heart is driven to offer the best to everyone he meets. Whether it is devotional time with his family, or teaching his

students the historical essentials they need, while also making his classroom a space that is safe for all. “Seeing the kids and hearing that they enjoy being in my class. Even though I feel like I sometimes ramble on and on... they still love talking to me about their days and that they feel safe in my class.”

Wheels on the bus: *Katherine Dodson*

Anastasia Basham
Messenger Staff

This week’s Wheels on the Bus features thirty-four-year-old Katherine Dodson. Dodson has been a bus driver for three years and is known in Meade County for being very protective of her bus kids.

Bus driving is just one of the many jobs that she has on her plate. For seven years, Dodson has been a caregiver, providing in-home care for elderly individuals. It is common for Dodson’s day to start at six in the morning by driving her bus kids to school before heading to Radcliffe to spend her late mornings and early afternoons with her elderly patients and then returning home just in time to drive all the kids back home, ending her day around four.

Like many parents, Dodson struggled to find a job that would support her family while also

having a similar schedule to her kid’s ever-growing list of extracurricular activities. She eventually decided that bus driving could work as she could be the one to drive her kids back and forth to school, leaving time for caregiving in the afternoon and being back in time to drive them home or take them to after-school activities.

She started her driving career in Ekron with driving for only a few months before being given a permanent route and driving for Barry Hahn Primary School and David T. Wilson Elementary. While driving a bus is one of her favorite parts of her day, the training to earn her Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) was an emotional journey.

“I passed all my tests the first time. But there were several times during the training that I doubted if I could really do it. I might have cried

a couple of times. Now I would rather drive my bus than my own car,” Dodson said.

Since her time driving, Dodson has developed a reputation in the county for being very strict about her bus stop sign. She was even featured in the Meade County Messenger a few years back regarding exactly that. Individuals running the stop sign have become such a pet peeve of Dodson’s that even her bus kids have become accustomed to catching the license plate, make and model, and color of the car that had the audacity to speed by their stopped school bus.

“I have reported every single car that has passed my bus. My bus kids help a lot with that. I do not play about safety,” Dodson said.

Safety is Dodson’s number one concern, so much so that she personally dedicates a week to teaching all of her kids

about emergency features on the bus, letting them physically open and close safety hatches and role-playing emergency scenarios. If a child misbehaves or pushes the boundaries of any safety rules, Dodson finds a way to handle the situation, so the child learns why it is so important.

“I had a child that would constantly ignore the rules about sitting correctly and staying out of the aisle. I personally don’t think suspending a child from the bus is useful; it gives them what they want, which is off the bus. I wanted the child to understand why I set the rules in place, so I had him write a two-page letter about bus safety. They had to research real life bus accidents, write about them, and provide sources. The parents agreed and the child did it. They came back and apologized and now is one of my most well-behaved kids,” Dodson



Photo submitted by Anastasia Basham

Ms. Katherine and her bus kids dressed up for Halloween holding up their hand hearts.

said.

While Dodson does not play around about safety, she does play games with her bus kids. She and the kids love playing trivia games, are you smarter than a fifth grader, etc. They also love telling funny sto-

ries and entertaining tales about their day at school. The bus kids describe Ms. Katherine as the “fun bus.”

“I couldn’t be the driver I am without my kids, so it is only fair I include them in the photo!” Dodson said.

New and returning members recognized at National Honor Society Induction Night

Lucinda Ayres
Messenger Staff

Juniors and seniors who have met the academic qualifications for the National Honor Society can apply at the beginning of the school year. The application process is composed of listing academic history, extracurricular activities, service experiences, and honors or awards. The application is then sent off by advisors Ms. Bishop and Ms. Foushee to the judging committee at the National Honor Society (NHS), where candidates are evaluated and picked.

Why is the opportunity to be a part of the NHS so important? The NHS, founded on Mar. 1, 1921, is one of the oldest, largest, and most widely recognized student organizations in American high schools, with 1.4 million members. The purpose is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to recognize outstanding students, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students at secondary schools. Membership in the local NHS chapter is an honor

bestowed on a student by a Faculty Council. It is based on the four pillars of the NHS: scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities throughout their academic careers. Being a member of the National Honor Society (NHS) provides opportunities for college scholarships, enhances college and job applications, and helps develop leadership skills through community service projects and other activities.

Once advisors hear back from the committee, candidates are notified if they have been accepted or not, and if they are accepted, they are invited to be a part of the induction ceremony.

The induction ceremony is a long-standing tradition for the Stuart Pepper Chapter of the National Honor Society. This past one, on Thursday, October 23rd, was the 64th annual one. Both new and returning members are recognized at the ceremony, with returning members receiving a pin and new members obtain-

ing a certificate.

The ceremony was called to order by NHS president Annabelle Morkwed. Advisors Ms. Foushee and Ms. Bishop introduced the chapter officers: President Annabelle Morkwed; Vice-President Jossalin McGaughey; Secretary Piper Vowels; Treasurer Eva House; Service Chair Claire Cornett; and Marketing/Media Chair Addie Stull. The officers introduced the four pillars of the NHS.

Members who received second year pins were: Camden Abell, Raegan Adkisson, Ryleigh Arthur, Aidan Ausbrooks, Kaitlyn Beach, Madison Bishop, Luca Caristi, Solomon Carpenter, Brooklyn Clan, Claire Cornett, Moxie Crutcher, Destiny Farmer, Aurora Gagle, Lars Garfield, Kari Hardesty, Eva House, Isadora Jones, Scarlett Jordan, Jossalin McGaughey, Aliza Melchor, Luke Miller, Annabelle Morkwed, Paisley Perdue, Anthony Pickering, Maddison Puckett, Annalyse Ryan, Amadeo Sanchez, Lila Scott, Bailey Shoemaker, Addelyn Stull, Brianna Sturgeon, Piper Vow-

els, Gavin Wilkins, and Brylee Yates.

New students inducted into the NHS were: Carter Adams, Aiden Anderson, Anastasia Archibald, Taylor Ashcraft, Lucinda Ayres, Jackson Bahr, Delilah Barker, Abby Barley, Rhiannon Bevill, Sophia Bonagofski, Kaylee Carroll, Miah Corbin, Jack Douglass, Preston Fackler, Isabella Fierro, Madilyn Ford, Grace Frazier, Ava Frank, Allie Glover, Sam Goins, Rylie Grenda, Samantha Hacker, Ryley Hancock, Kaitlyn Hardenstine, Paige Harrison, Matthew Ingle, Benjamin Jackson, Forge Jackson, Logan Kasey, Joseph King, Emma Klinglesmith, Brenna Knott, Lexy Ladd, Sienna Lucas,

Ava Maricevic, Kylee Martin, Nicole Melinger, Abigail Oliver, Carter Pike, Kaylee Pike, Jacob Popham, Hallie Prevento, Lindsey Ray, Joshua Reardon, Duncan Rogers, Brody Roys, Samantha Serrano, Andrew Stith, Mia Stull, Emma Tanner, Shea Tate, Ryder Tygret, Macy VanMeter, Chloe Vogt, Zoey Warren, DeLana Wooldridge, and Gavin Wright.



Photo submitted by Lucinda Ayres.

Inductees, (L to R) Grace Frazier, Lucinda Ayres, Emma Tanner, and Kaylee Pike.



Photo by Korey Martin.

Kylee Martin with her certificate of induction into the National Honor Society.

The ceremony was closed with congratulations to all members, and an invitation to all attendees to join them in the lobby for refreshments. The refreshments entailed delicious cupcakes and punch made by the Meade

County High School culinary class. NHS T-shirts were also available for purchase.

Thank you to everyone who made the ceremony happen, and congratulations to everyone who was recognized!