



PRESS RELEASE

Tracey H. Lewis, Ed.D., Director of Communications
P.O. Box 364
Dobson, North Carolina 27017
336/386-8211 Cell: 336/401-1873 Fax: 336/386-4756
E-Mail: lewist@surry.k12.nc.us

For Immediate Release

February 22, 2019

Gentry Middle Holds 12th Annual Derby

Gentry Middle School held its Twelfth Annual Derby on Friday, February 15, 2019, raising \$2,394.00 for the Victory Junction Camp. Victory Junction Camp is a camp that “provides life-changing experiences for kids with chronic medical conditions or serious illnesses.” Kids with cancer, genetic disorders, kidney, lung or heart disease, and other chronic illnesses can attend Victory Junction free of charge for one week, with medical care provided through the donations they receive.

Seventh-grade teachers explained that since the first day of school, seventh graders have been working hard across the curriculum to explore motion, force and how best to sustain speed, the scientific revolution, and the scientific method in science. Students have practiced ratios, proportions, and scale in math, while also improving upon reading, writing and communication skills in language arts. Moreover, students have had guest speakers, completed labs, taken notes, solved formulas, written responses and pulled all of that knowledge together to create derby cars.

“Today is your test to see how you have decided to apply and demonstrate all of your newly acquired knowledge. This is not a regular testing session where you are required to keep quiet, keep your eyes on your own paper, and make a dark mark to indicate your answer choice. Today we want you to enjoy all of the hard work that you have done because you earned it,” remarked emcee, Mrs. Melissa Whitfield, who teaches seventh-grade social studies.

Since the idea of the Pinewood Derby is most associated with Scout BSA, Mr. Dave Whitfield, Mr. Jeff Mosley, and Mr. David Haymore, of the Old Hickory Council assisted with carrying out the day’s races and have been a part of the annual Derby each of the twelve years.

This year's Derby was funded by an \$850.00 grant from Surry Yadkin Electric Membership Corporation. Surry Yadkin EMC's generous gift enabled teachers to purchase the car kits, paint, weights, and all of the other materials the event requires. Mr. Jim Robertson and Mrs. Megan Cox from Surry Yadkin EMC were on hand to support the event and were a part of the competition.

A new addition to this year's Derby is Victory Lane. Through a partnership with NC 811, employees, Mr. Jonathan Phillips and Mr. Brian Moorehouse helped make it a reality. Mr. Moorehouse is also a Nascar Official and shared his time and expertise as a guest speaker.

Also present were Mr. Doug Slate, Lead Instructor for Mechatronics at Surry Community College (SCC), Mr. Adam Vaughn, Division Chair of Engineering Technologies, Mr. Jordan Crowson, a Mechatronics Instructor, and Mr. Aaron Money, along with two former Derby participants, Mr. Trevor Marsh, a SCC welding student, and Mr. Zach Eaton, a machining student at SCC. Both former Patriots shared how proud they were to be in attendance and to see the Derby tradition continued. The SCC mechatronics, machining, welding, and engineering classes partnered with Gentry Middle to help ensure the day's event went off without a hitch.

The Derby was a fierce competition among student teams with the "Twitter Team" reigning victorious. "Twitter" team members were Hope Horan, Jacob Sawyers, Konner Mauldin, and Brayden Hall. The "Shake n' Bake Team" came in second place. "Shake n' Bake's" team members were Sarah Sutphin, Haley Baker, Mallori Puckett, and Gracie Goings. While the "Twitter Team" won overall among student teams, in a twist this year, the student teams also competed against their teacher's cars. Each seventh-grade teacher made a car but newcomer, Mrs. Candy Willard, an Exceptional Children Teacher racing the "Ocean Breeze" car, won the teacher rounds but ultimately lost to the Twitter Team.

Principal, Mr. Brandon Whitaker shared, "This is a proud day because we are able to open our doors to other organizations and institutions like Victory Junction. We are also grateful for our partnerships with Surry Yadkin EMC, NC 811, and Surry Community College. Without these partnerships, this event would not be possible today." Mr. Whitaker further expounded, "This event is racing but it is also curriculum, leadership, teamwork, grants, and giving back."

The large crowd of students, parents, and other special guests was riveted by the students' accomplishments as they "revved up their engines" for the races, and for their donation to Victory Junction. Indeed, it was a great day to see learning put into action by the Gentry Middle School Patriots.





