

# Former Resident Earns High Honor

## Lubbock ISD's Stephens Named 2013 Texas Secondary School Asst. Principal of the Year

Leo Copeland  
Seminole Sentinel

Lori (Vogler) Stephens, a former resident of Seminole and current assistant principal of Evans Middle School in Lubbock, received high state honors in her educational field being named 2013 Texas Secondary School Assistant Principal of the Year, representing assistant principals at the state's 1,602 high school and 1675 middle schools and junior highs.

Archie E. McAfee, Executive Director of the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals said in a letter informing Lori of her award, "On behalf of the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals Board of Directors, it is my pleasure to inform you of your selection as the 2013 Texas Assistant Principal of the year. The TASSP Principal Image Committee was unanimous in their decision... The TASSP Board of Directors is proud of you and your accomplishment!"

After receiving the recognition Stephens said, "I felt excited and humbled by the award. This recognition is not just about me, it is about Evans Middle School and Lubbock Independent School District. I am simply one person that is part of a phenomenal team. The honor must be shared with my team members: the superintendent, assistant superintendents, school board, administrators, teachers, supporting staff, parents, students, and community.

## Museum Group Recaps Eventful 2012 Calender Year

The "Friends of the Museum" organization closed out 2012 with a bang.

In mid-October, 125 visitors from Seminole, Denver City, Lubbock, Brownfield, Hobbs, N.M., and Andrews attended "A Comanche Evening," a dual dedication event hosted by FOM and the Gaines County Museum's Seminole Division, which culminated with a slide show created by Terry Jeffries and narrated by Linda and Charles George.

Seminole resident Jean Moffatt prepared the narration taken from Charles' book, "The Comanche."

The Seminole museum and FOM hosted the dedication of Seminole artist Jammey Huggins' sculpture, "Wind Spirit," followed by the dedication of the giant Quanah Parker arrow displayed at the entrance to the museum parking lot.

November and December saw a marked increase in student visitors with Mr. Jose Olascoaga's Seminole High School Spanish students visiting the museum and Mary Arambide's adult education class using the museum for their educational field trip to learn more

After all," she said, quoting Andrew Carnegie, "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision and the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

"I'm very honored by it. I believe what I am comes from all my experiences, from the leaders who have taught me and the children who have taught me.

Evans Middle School Principal Flo Touchstone said she nominated Stephens at a regional meeting of the Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP), the organization which awards the honor.

"I know how she is here at the campus and what she does and how the staff loves and respects her and what she does for them," Touchstone said. "When I knew she'd won for the region, I was very excited. Once she got the interview, I was pretty confident because I knew how much she'd prepared."

The TASSP says the Texas Secondary School Assistant Principal of the year is selected for demonstrating professional growth and development collaborative leadership and expertise in instruction and assessment.

"Lori has a great rapport with students as well as with teachers," Touchstone said. "Everybody at our campus knows that if you need something, go to Lori, she'll get it done. She's such a champion and a cheerleader of education - and her enthusiasm is contagious."

Stephens said she was a teacher for 18 years of her 21 years in education because she thinks it is important to know what it is like in the classroom, working with students and parents. She's always looking for ways to serve the teachers and staff,

from hot chocolate on snow days and supportive notes to wearing a Krispy Kreme hat while handing out doughnuts.

"They think I'm dorky," she said. "They like to know their leaders can play with you but also take care of business."

Students and teachers at her school joined in her accolades. Josh Wheeler, an eighth grade science teacher at the 895 student school, said he wrote a letter in support of Stephens' nomination and heard she had won in an e-mail.

He said, "Her relationship with the kids and her relationship with the staff - I think that's her strong point," Wheeler said. "On top of that, she always has great ideas for teachers on improving your craft."

Lori Vogler (Stephens) lived in Seminole for 15 years. After her freshman year in high school in 1982, she moved to Lamesa where she graduated from high school in 1985. She went on to Texas Tech University where she got her Masters degree in Education and her Educational Management Certification.

While in school at Seminole she played the piano for nine years and took piano lessons from Minnie Jones. She played for the school's Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) and served as secretary of student council in junior high. She was in two plays while in junior high.

She was a competition twirler and twirled in band. She played the flute in band under the director, Mickey Owens.

She played tennis (singles and doubles) under coach Ronald Bums. And she was in the 4-H club (Cooking and showing lambs).

Of her childhood and Seminole memories she said, "I enjoyed attending classes at Seminole. I feel fortunate that I attended Seminole schools. They provided me

with a safe and nurturing learning environment. The facilities were phenomenal. I had great teachers who provided me with a top-notch education. They did a great job preparing me academically and socially for my adult life. My first principal was Mr. Gandy at F.J. Young Elementary. I remember him wearing a big smile on his face, laughing, and talking to the students. I have many favorite teachers. One of them was my third grade teacher, Mrs. Lewis. She understood the value of building relationships with her students. She empowered her students by valuing them and making learning relevant and fun.

"I remember walking the hallways and visiting with friends. I enjoyed talking and laughing with friends. My friends and I liked walking to the Pow Wow Restaurant that was across from high school and eating lunch. Attending athletic events and school dances at the Youth Center were also a blast.

"The Gaines County Livestock shows were fun. I enjoyed showing lambs and spending time with my family. On the 4th of July, my family and I loved attending the special events at the county park and watch-

ing the amazing firework shows.

"When I was home I had a great time riding bikes and playing outside with my two Australian Shepherd dogs, Minnie and Sissy.

Lori attended the First Baptist Church with her family. Her parents are Rinehard and Lenda Vogler. Her father is a farmer. She has two sisters, Valerie and Stacy. Valerie was also a twirler and Stacy was a cheerleader. They lived out in the country about 15 miles, between Seminole and Denver City.

She said, "My parents taught me the value of faith, love, forgiveness, helping others, hard work and having an open mind set. They taught me that learning is a continuous process and to have tenacity. My father taught me that it is permissible to play and have a good time while you work hard. I learned at an early age to laugh and not to always take myself, too, seriously."

One of her favorite things to do now is taking pictures. "I've taken thousands of pictures of the students," she said. "I like making positive phone calls home, too."

Recent honors in education earned by Lori Stephens include: 2010 Crestview Teacher of the Year

(Friendship ISD). 2010 Wolforth Teacher of the Year (Frenship ISD). 2013 Region 17 Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP) Middle School Assistant Principal of the year (Lubbock ISD). And, of course, 2013 Texas TASSP Middle School Assistant Principal of the year (Lubbock ISD).

The statewide honor makes Stephens eligible for the National Association of School Principals' recognition.

She and her husband, John, who grew up in Borden County, and farms and ranches in Lynn and Borden counties, have three children: Chelsea, Colton and Cylan ages 21, 16, and 10.

Mrs. Stephens left us with some final thoughts. She said, "I get excited about going to school every day. I am passionate about serving and helping others. It is my mission to make a positive difference in the lives of others and to ensure that all students receive a quality education. Ignite Success and Inspire Excellence."

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(Editor's Note: Some parts of this article are quoted from an Avalanche-Journal article by Laurel L. Scott, December 20, 2012.)

# Gaines County Sporting Events

**January 11**

- Seminole Maiden Varsity Basketball vs. Lubbock Estacado, @ Seminole, 6:00 p.m.
- Seminole Indian Varsity Basketball vs. Lubbock Estacado @ Seminole, 7:30 p.m.
- Seminole Maiden JV Basketball vs. Lubbock Estacado, @ Seminole, 4:30 p.m.
- Seminole Indian JV Basketball vs. Lubbock Estacado @ Seminole, 4:30 p.m.
- Seminole Maiden Freshmen Basketball vs. Lubbock Estacado @ Seminole, 7:30 p.m.
- Seminole Indian Freshmen Basketball vs. Lubbock Estacado @ Seminole, 6:00 p.m.

**January 15**

- Seminole Maiden Varsity Basketball vs. Levelland @ Levelland, 6:30 p.m.
- Seminole Indian Varsity Basketball vs. Levelland @ Levelland, 7:30 p.m.
- Seminole Maiden JV Basketball vs. Levelland @ Levelland, 5:00 p.m.
- Seminole Indian JV Basketball vs. Levelland @ Levelland, 5:00 p.m.
- Seminole Maiden Freshmen Basketball vs. Levelland @ Levelland, 8:00 p.m.
- Seminole Indian Freshmen Basketball vs. Levelland @ Levelland, 6:30 p.m.



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### 5TH GRADE ART CONTEST WINNERS

Pictured above are the judged winners of an art contest hosted by the Friends of the Museum, in which Seminole Elementary School students participated. Winners include: John Wesley Barnes, Alysia Espinoza, Analyssa Betancourt, Tina Neufeld, and not shown, Mirandah Rempel. Also pictured is Seminole Elementary School teacher Lee Nell Mayes.



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### 5TH GRADE ART CONTEST WINNERS

Seminole High School Spanish student winners as they appear left to right in the photograph: Jonah Rempel, Kylee Weeks, Susie Heide, Monica Alvarez, Jocelyn Loewen, Cassandra Luna, Emily Letkeman, Ibeth Nuñez, McKenzie Ivins, and not shown, Vanessa Torres