



“OF THE YEAR” WINNERS AT WEST — In addition to Mr. Seliga (see photo with article), West Alexander Middle School staff who received “Of the Year” honors for 2025-26 are shown above, left to right: Teacher of the Year – Matthew Cochran, Band Director; Classified Support Staff of the Year – Joy Fox, Data Manager; and Certified Support Staff of the Year – Lisa Bentley, Counselor.

“Of the Year” staff named at West Alexander Middle

Principal Amy Daigle announced the following “Of the Year” recipients for staff at West Alexander Middle School:



LOGAN SELIGA

• **Beginning Teacher of the Year** – Logan Seliga, Health & PE, and serves as an athletic coach for wrestling and track & field. What his colleagues had to say: It’s never easy to jump into a classroom after the year has already started, but Mr. Seliga didn’t miss a beat. He hit the ground running, earning his students’ respect and getting straight to work. He is always smiling and willing to lend a helping hand to his colleagues. He has also managed to balance being a new teacher while coaching two sports. He shows up for his kids in the classroom, on the mat, and on the field with energy to motivate. He’s been a huge asset to our team from the moment he walked into our school.

• **Teacher of the Year** – Matthew Cochran, Band Director. What his colleagues had to say: Mr. Cochran exemplifies the very best qualities of an educator, consistently going above and beyond to support his students, col-

leagues, and school community. Mr. Cochran’s dedication to his craft is evident in the exceptional quality of his band program. His concerts are consistently top-notch, showcasing not only musical excellence but also creativity and innovation. This year, his collaborative performances with other schools, along with the Color Concert, stood out as particularly unique and memorable experiences. These events required extensive planning, coordination, and vision, and the final products were nothing short of outstanding. They provided students with meaningful opportunities to grow as musicians while also bringing the community together in a powerful way. Mr. Cochran demonstrates a deep commitment to meeting the needs of all learners. He has gone above and beyond to provide meaningful and engaging lessons for my EC class. My students require constant attention, redirection, and individualized support, yet he approaches them with patience, enthusiasm, and care. Because of his efforts, they have developed a genuine love for music and eagerly look forward to “Band Day.” His ability to connect with students who face significant challenges speaks volumes about his skill as an educator and his compassion as a person. In addition to his classroom and program responsibilities, Mr. Cochran is always willing to step up wherever help is needed. Whether he is driving buses, attending sporting events, or sup-

porting school activities, he consistently demonstrates a team-first mindset. His reliability and willingness to serve make him an invaluable member of our school community. Matthew Cochran embodies excellence in teaching, dedication to students, and commitment to the broader school environment.

• **Classified Support Staff of the Year** – Joy Fox, Data Manager. What her colleagues had to say: Joy is an absolute joy on a daily basis. She has had to adapt this past year tremendously with Infinite Canvas and has done so with dignity and grace. Ms. Fox works overtime to make sure the school and schedules run smoothly each day. She is willing to step in where needed, even if it is beyond her job description. She always has the child’s best interest at heart.

• **Certified Support Staff of the Year** – Lisa Bentley, Counselor. What her colleagues had to say: Mrs. Bentley is a vital part of the WAMS family. She serves in many roles, but my favorite to observe is when students come to her with personal issues and problems. Mr. Bentley brings a wealth of knowledge and experience and offers our students good old-fashioned wisdom and practical advice to help them grow as humans. She is consistent and treats each student she serves with respect. I believe that many who have visited her will look back in their adulthood and be grateful for the way she poured into their life. ★



AT TWIN BROTHERS’ PIZZA — Left to right: Twin Brothers’ General Manager Megan Weaver, brothers/owners Danny and Darin Glenn, and Alexander County Manager Justin Mundy celebrate the restaurant’s recent opening with a ribbon cutting on April 24.

Ribbon Cutting held at Twin Brothers’ Pizza at Player’s Ridge

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on Friday, April 24, at 1:00 p.m., at Twin Brothers Pizza, located at 1159 Player’s Ridge Road at Player’s Ridge Golf Course in Bethlehem. Twin Brothers is owned by Danny and Darin Glenn and has been open since November of 2025 at their Bethlehem location. They have another

location in Valdese. Their menu is very family friendly and the restaurant is quickly gaining popularity. Their menu includes pizzas, wings, pasta entrees, various hot and cold sandwiches, calzones, sandwiches, burgers, hot dogs, chicken tenders, fish & chips, salads, and desserts. They are known

for the fact that they make all of their own pizza dough and sauce fresh in house. There are specialty pizzas on the menu, but customers can build their own customized pizzas as well. Justin Mundy, County Manager, attended the ribbon cutting and said he was excited to see another

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A New Beginning for New Life Thrift Store

A special groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new location for New Life Thrift Store, which is currently located at 8935 NC-127 in Bethlehem. The ceremony took place on Monday, May 11, at the new location on the grounds of Mt. Bethel Methodist Church, located at 9042 NC-127, also in the Bethlehem Community.

For the special ceremony, complete with a golden shovel, a group of thrift store volunteers, Rodney Green from G & M Structures, Taylorsville Savings Bank Branch Manager, Kim Wilcox, and Assistant Branch Manager, Jackson Reid, the Co-Administrators for the Thrift Store, Holly Campbell and Tammy Beard, as well as Church Trustee Chairman, Kevin Beard, were in attendance.

Excitement was in the air as this project has been prayed over for many years. In an online interview, Co-Administrator of New Life Thrift Store, Holly Campbell, was asked how long the store had been open? She replied that it had opened on May 1, 2018 and added it was “originally where Morgan’s Ice Cream is now, then moved to our current location in the upper floor of the Stumps by Dan building across the street from our church in February of 2019.” It has been there ever since.

Holly was also asked to state the mission of the New Life Thrift Store. She had a lot to say about that. She said, “We are a Mt. Bethel Methodist Church Outreach Mission. Our mission is to provide affordable clothing and housewares for our community and the surrounding area. We are “Faith, Hope, Love in Action”. Action is an important word. Without actions, without outreach, we are just a church body, in a church building going through the motions of churched. By having a volunteer-run thrift store in our community, we’re helping to provide basic clothing and household needs at very affordable prices for everyone who enters. There is no application, no income guidelines. Everyone is welcome to shop, volunteer and/or donate items. God’s “business model” is being lived out inside the New Life Thrift Store. We are bursting at the seams at our current location, thanks to support of the community at large. Our church council and body has recognized that investing in a church owned building, rather than continuing to rent a space we have hugely outgrown, is a ministry in need of expanding. Our new building, directly across the street from our current location, and on our church property, will be double the square

footage and an aesthetically beautiful addition to the Bethlehem Community.”

Holly shared how the project is being funded. “Our new building will be partially funded by the blessings on hand and the remainder by a construction loan from Taylorsville Savings Bank. Our ultimate goal is to be debt free for our Grand Opening through ongoing fundraising and community support.”

Holly could not say enough about the volunteers who keep the thrift store going and she is always looking for more. She said, “Our volunteers include men and women from our church membership and other mission minded volunteers from our community. All volunteers are welcome and needed. Being a volunteer at New Life Thrift Store is not only heart warming, but FUN. Every 3 hour shift has at least 2 volunteers. We are open Tuesday and Saturday from 10-4 and Thursday from 12-6. We do the bulk of our sorting of new donations every Monday morning from 8 am until done. We plan to have 3 volunteers per shift at our new store and hope to be able to expand our hours as more volunteers join our mission team. Anyone wishing to volunteer sorting or working a shift can call Holly Campbell at 252-422-2900 for

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Bethlehem Elementary’s “Of the Year” staff chosen

The annual “Of the Year” winners were chosen at Bethlehem Elementary School recently.

“All of our Of The Year winners make Bethlehem a better place each day with their hard work, compassion and willingness to go the extra mile. Bethlehem is truly a better place because of these three ladies. Congratulations to all of our winners,” said Tyler Tomlin, Assistant Principal.

Recipients are:

• **Teacher of the Year** – Kim Hertzler. Miss Hertzler teaches fifth grade ELA at Bethlehem. She works tirelessly to help make Bethlehem better each day. Ms. Hertzler holds her students to high standards and approaches each day with the same expectations for herself. She is always willing to go the extra mile to help both students and staff. When walking into Ms. Hertzler’s classroom, it is easy to see why the students enjoy coming to her class each day, as her lessons are filled with high energy, active student engagement and student collaboration. Ms. Hertzler is an asset to Bethlehem Elementary and truly deserving of Teacher of the Year.

• **Classified of the Year** – Taylor Hollis. Ms. Hollis works as a Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver at Bethlehem. Ms. Hollis does a fantastic job each and every day working with students in various grade levels, in addition to driving both a morning and afternoon bus route. Watching Ms. Hollis approach each day with such a positive attitude and a willingness to step in and help however needed is truly remarkable. We are extremely thankful to have Ms. Hollis at Bethlehem.

• **Certified of the Year** – Chrisi Williams. Ms. Williams has stepped into a new role as our School Counselor this year at Bethlehem and has done a fantastic job. Ms. Williams leads various small groups,



HERTZLER HONORED — Bethlehem School’s Teacher of the Year for 2025-26, Kim Hertzler (left), is congratulated by Principal Stephanie Reep.



HOLLIS RECOGNIZED — Classified Staff Member of the Year at Bethlehem School, Taylor Hollis (left), is congratulated by Principal Stephanie Reep.



WILLIAMS RECEIVES AWARD — Bethlehem School’s Certified Staff Member of the Year, Chrisi Williams (right), is congratulated by Principal Stephanie Reep.

teaches whole class lessons and is readily available when student needs arise. Ms. Williams shows compassion and brings such a calming presence to all situations, which com-

ports students when they are in need. Ms. Williams has done a great job adjusting to a new role, while also maintaining positive relationships with those at Bethlehem.

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