



COURTESY OF PCES

Stanley Tucker selects two contestants from the crowd.

Stan the Man provides positive message

Emme Clause
The Eatonton Messenger

Putnam County Elementary School (PCES) students could barely contain their excitement as author Stanley Tucker, better known as “Stan the Man,” spoke to them at a special assembly last Tuesday.

Tucker graduated from Kennesaw State in 2013 with a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education. He has since devoted his life to spreading kindness and literacy to children through his books and programs.

Tucker is the driving force behind Leap for Literacy, a program that provides free books to children as rewards for being kind to others. Tucker and his Read ‘n Roll Bookmobile travel to different schools to advocate for literacy. The stated goal of Read ‘n Roll is to improve reading comprehension, inspire imagination, strengthen writing ability, and encourage kindness.

With help from Georgia Writers Museum, Tucker came to spread his positive message to children at PCES, prompting GWM Programs Committee Chair Janet Kelhoffer to observe, “Stan made a great impact on the students. He was

like a rock star.

“There was one boy in the lobby checking in and Stan had arrived. The kid looked at him and his mouth dropped open. And he said, ‘I know who you are! You’re Stan the Man!’ Stan turned around, gave him a high five, and the kid was walking on air.”

“I mean, he had a wonderful message. He held their attention. He just had a very good way of engaging them with very important messages of kindness and doing your best,” Kelhoffer said.

At the beginning of his assembly, Tucker asked the students to close their eyes and think of the most important people in their lives. He did this before he read his book, *Stan and the Man*, which tells his story of losing his father at the tender age of eight.

Tucker said his father’s passing inspired him to do something great with his life and live in a way that would make the most important person in his life – his father – proud of him. He urged the students to do the same as they thought about their important people.

After reading his book, Tucker asked the children to recite his

mantra with him: “I will treat everyone with kindness and respect. I’ll give my best effort every single day. I’ll do the right thing when no one is looking. I’ll make my teachers and my family proud.”

With that, he shifted the focus from the mantra to the incredible power each child holds within themselves.

“I’m here to tell you this, and I want you to listen to this. Everybody in here – right now – is an author. You may not have written a book yet, but you’re the author of your own life story. And the cool thing about being an author is that you decide how the story goes.”

Tucker then showed a clip from his 2019 appearance on *The Ellen Show*, when he played the *Holey Roller* game and won \$25,000 for his cause. He picked two children from the crowd to play his version of the game, *Read ‘n Roller*, and through the power of positivity, both kids won the game!

Tucker got the kids excited, not only about reading, but about doing the right thing. Following his assembly, he visited classrooms. More information about Tucker and his cause can be found online at stanleytucker.com.



EMME CLAUSE/Staff

Stanley Tucker reads his book *Stan and the Man* to PCES students.

Georgia Writers Museum meet the author: Tori Whitaker

Georgia Writers Museum (GWM) has announced its Meet the Author presenter for December is bestselling author Tori Whitaker, who will discuss her new book, *A Matter of Happiness*.

In *A Matter of Happiness*, Melanie Barnett thinks she has it all together.

With an ex-fiancé and a pending promotion at a Kentucky bourbon distillery, Melanie has figured out love and career don’t mix – that is, until she makes a discovery while cleaning her Jordan MX car, a scarlet-red symbol of the Jazz Age’s independent women that she inherited from her great-great-great-aunt, Violet. Its secret compartment holds Violet’s weathered journal, and within it an intriguing message: “Take from this story what you will, Melanie, and you can bury the rest.”

Melanie wonders what more there is to learn from Violet’s past.

In 1921, Violet Bond deferred to no one. Hers was a life of adventure in Detroit, the hub of the motorcar boom and the fastest-growing city in America. But in an era of speakeasies, financial windfalls, free-spirited friends, and unexpected romance, it was easy to spin out of control.

Now, as Melanie’s own world takes unexpected turns, her life and Violet’s life intersect. Generations apart, they’re both coming into their own and questioning what modern womanhood – and happiness – really means.

This story, told in parallel times, will keep you on the edge of your seat. *NY Times* bestselling author Patti Callahan Henry called *A Matter of Happiness*, “A thrill of a ride and a beautiful read.”

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution said, “Tori Whitaker’s tender and lighthearted work of historical fiction ... is heartfelt and beautiful.”



CONTRIBUTED

A 1920s Jordan MX Playboy roadster similar to this museum piece plays a central role in Tori Whitaker’s new novel, *A Matter of Happiness*.

Whitaker is the bestselling author of *Millicent Glenn’s Last Wish* and *A Matter of Happiness*. She is a member of the Bourbon Women group and

the Historical Novel Society. Her work has appeared in the *Historical Novels Review* and *Bookmarks* magazine. Whitaker graduated from

Indiana University, is an alum of the Yale Writers’ Workshop, and recently retired from a national law firm where she served as its chief marketing officer. She spent a decade in Detroit because of her husband’s career in the automotive industry, and they now live near their children outside Atlanta.

The event will be held Dec. 3 at Georgia Writers Museum (109, S. Jefferson Ave., Eatonton) with doors open at 6:30 p.m. for a 7 p.m. start. Tickets are \$40 each and the evening will feature a unique gourmet meal fashioned around the theme of *A Matter of Happiness*.

Don’t miss this intriguing story and exciting author. Visit Georgia Writers Museum online at georgiawritersmuseum.org to register and pre-order a copy of *A Matter of Happiness* for signing after the event (The car, unfortunately, is not for sale!)

– Contributed



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