

The Bridge



Locust Creek Bridge in Winter

Volume 3, Issue 5

January, 2012



Important Dates

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| Jan. 9 | Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, BMS |
| Jan. 10 | Last Day of 2nd Nine Wks & 1st Semester |
| Jan. 16 | Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Schools Closed |
| Jan. 18 | Report Cards distributed at all schools |
| Jan. 19 | P-T Conferences at Elementary Schools |
| Jan. 23 | Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, KEMS |
| Jan. 23 | P-T Conferences at Middle Schools |
| Jan. 30 | Math Field Day Event; PBHS; 4:00-7:00 p.m. |
| Feb. 1 | Due Date for Potential Retention Notices |
| Feb. 11 | GED Examinations at CTEC, 8:00 a.m. |
| Feb. 13 | Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, PMS |
| Feb. 20 | ISE Day: No School; Tutoring Available |
| Feb. 27 | P-T Conferences at PBHS and CTEC |
| Feb. 27 | Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, PBHS |

Hi Folks,

First of all allow me to wish everyone a **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

Next, on January 11, 2012, we received official word from the West Virginia State Board of Education that our application for the Drop-Out Prevention Grant has been approved. I assure you it was great to be in the audience at the Board meeting and hear "Barbour County" called out!!

On behalf of our students who will ultimately benefit from your support and efforts allow me to extend their "THANK YOU" as well as our Board of Education's and mine. Related, our application to become a New Tech School site has also been approved and we will start to send staff for training during the upcoming spring semester.

It is hard to single folks out for special praise, but I would be remiss if I did not recognize Doug Schiefelbein for his work in making sense in word form of the vision for our project. His writing of the application was truly a work of commitment and dedication to that vision – Doug, THANK YOU.

A special THANK YOU also goes to the community members/agencies for your letters of support. I know that their commitment was favored highly and greatly impressed the Review Committee in their reading of our application.

The hard work of the application process is over and now we turn our sights to preparing for, among many other things, 2012-2013's incoming 9th graders, training our staff, working with the WVDE on one-to-one technology for the delivery of content, and scheduling in making ready for the Fall of 2012. Yes, all those steps mean more hard work, but it is not insurmountable and, more importantly, we are moving our students in the direction needed for them to compete in a global and 21st century workforce, no matter what career path they choose.

So, again, we look forward to the continued support of the Barbour County community in our efforts providing excellence in education and learning for all our students.

Respectfully,

Breakfast Expansion Grant Awarded to Mt. Vernon School

On January 11, the West Virginia Department of Education announced that Mt. Vernon Elementary School in Barbour County had been awarded some \$3300.00 for its proposed breakfast expansion project. The state's Office of Child Nutrition oversaw the competitive grant program, which will allow the rural school to purchase a variety of items designed to increase participation in the breakfast program, while providing students with information and enjoyable activities related to healthy eating habits.

Among the items approved through the grant are: nutrition games, a flip camera, an elementary recess kit, newsletter materials, health and fitness posters, a fruit and vegetable wedger and a variety of kitchen materials and supplies. The school staff plans to implement its new ideas during the second semester.



Kindergarten & PK Registration Set for February 17th at PBHS

Barbour County Schools will be enrolling students for 2012-13 Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten on Friday, February 17 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the auxiliary gymnasium at Philip Barbour High School. Children who are currently attending a PK program will not need to register. Parents are reminded that, by state code, children must attend a state-approved Kindergarten program prior to entering first grade. Children who will be five (5) years old before September 1, 2012 are eligible for enrollment in kindergarten for the 2012-2013 school year. All county four-year olds are eligible for PK enrollment during the same session.

PMS 8th Grade Explores State Government at Charleston

The 8th grade West Virginia History class at Philippi Middle School recently traveled to Charleston to get a first hand view of the seat of state government. Before the trip Delegate Mary Poling visited the school and talked with the students about different branches of the government, how a bill becomes a law, and her duties as a House of Delegates representatives. In Charleston the students began their day with a tour of the WV History Museum, where they were given a video camera and a list of questions to answer as they toured. At its conclusion, the group went to a computer lab and downloaded the pictures, video, and other collected information onto a 2 GB jump drive bracelet that the museum had provided.

The youngsters then enjoyed a bag lunch, spent some time at the gift shop, and then took tours of the state capitol building. The highlight of the trip came when the students met Delegate Poling in the House Chambers. They were seated and debated three simulated bills that had been proposed, before voting on whether the bills should become law. Delegate Poling and members of her staff helped with the process. Students watched as the votes they placed lit up and the percentages appeared on the tally board. Students then discussed the process and asked questions. Mrs. Poling then talked to the students about how they could influence government and policies.



After returning to their school, the group spent the next week creating a Powerpoint presentation about their trip. Using the notes, Internet data and photos they had downloaded onto their jump drives, they concluded the experience by presenting their projects to classmates at PMS.

Local Students Helped Others During the Holiday Season



Youngsters across the county school system showed their caring-and-sharing side during the recent holiday season by conducting a variety of service projects to help the needy of the community. For example, shown above are representatives from the Belington Elementary student body, which collected canned food items to be presented to Heart and Hand House, along with a check. Pupils at Kasson Elementary-Middle School also continued a tradition of collecting non-perishable food items for those in need, and collected 194 Christmas cards to be sent to an eight-year old boy named Max from Iowa, who is afflicted with leukemia, and made a wish for as many cards as possible from around the nation.



Get Ready to Do the “Write” Thing...

Test date windows have been finalized for Barbour County’s WESTEST 2 Online Writing Test, which is part of the reading/language arts portion of the annual assessment. The approved dates for each school include:

- ◆ Belington Elementary: April 16-20
- ◆ Philippi Elementary: April 16-27
- ◆ Kasson Elem/Middle: April 16-23
- ◆ Belington Middle: March 5-16
- ◆ Philippi Middle: March 5-16
- ◆ Junior Elementary: April 16-20
- ◆ Mt. Vernon Elementary: April 16-20
- ◆ Volga-Century Elementary: April 16-20
- ◆ Philip Barbour High School: April 16-23



Oh, that kind of eWalk!

No, these aren’t the scary teddy bear-like hunters from Star Wars. They’re information gatherers, designed not to evaluate, but to provide quick feedback for improvement.

For more than a year now, local school administrators have used *eWalk* data collection technology to gather, store and analyze a variety of data, including brief classroom observations. With the software installed on hand-held electronic devices, principals and county staff members can use a data collection template to efficiently record observations, using input elements such as pull-downs, check boxes and numeric and text entries. The resulting statistical reports, cross tabulations and comparisons can then be used as the basis for teacher and school improvement.

— Odds 'N' Ends —

➤ **Retention Policy Reminders:** County educators who are seriously considering the retention of a student who is experiencing academic difficulty should be alert to the provisions of county policy 7400. A final written retention notice must be received by parents by February 1st of each year. Prior to sending the notice, staff members must have conducted a Student Assistance Team (SAT) meeting for potential those first-time retainees in grades K-5, and have developed and implemented a resulting plan of support. Final letters will be sent by schools by May 25. For more information, teachers are encouraged to review policy 7400 or contact their building administrators.

➤ **Federal Monitoring Set For February:** Barbour County is among the West Virginia school districts scheduled for a visit from federal programs teams during 2011-12. Areas scheduled for review are Title I, Title II, Title III and Attendance and Homeless. The intensive and thorough reviews, which take place on a three-year cycle, are set for February 21-24 and will include all Title I elementary schools. Other schools may be visited as well, based upon LEP student and homeless data.

Central office and school administrators have been working with staff members during the fall and early-winter in preparation for this important event. Upshur and Barbour Counties have also been collaborating on mini-reviews with the goal of identifying areas for improvement in documentation that will benefit both school systems.

➤ **Energy Savings Update:** With the utility bill payment process completed through November of 2011, Barbour County Schools has now realized a projected savings of \$ 928,630.26 since the EEI energy efficiency program's inception in June of 2007.



English Grammar Advice



1. Avoid alliteration. Always.
2. Never use a long word when a diminutive one will do.
3. Employ the vernacular.
4. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
5. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are unnecessary.
6. Remember to never split an infinitive.
7. Contractions aren't necessary.
8. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
9. One should never generalize.
10. Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
11. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
12. Don't be redundant; don't use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
13. Be more or less specific.
14. Understatement is always best.
15. One-word sentences? Eliminate.
16. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
17. The passive voice is to be avoided.
18. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
19. Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
20. Who needs rhetorical questions?
21. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
22. Don't never use a double negation.
23. Do not put statements in the negative form.
24. Proofread carefully to see if you words out.



It's in Oklahoma...really!