

The Bridge



Volume 7, Issue 7

April, 2016



Important Dates

April 1	Nine-Weeks Report Cards Distributed
April 5	P-T Conferences at PBHS and CTEC
April 11	Board of Education Meets BOE; 6:00 p.m.
April 25	Board of Education Meets BOE; 6:00 p.m.
April 27	2016 Philippi Main Street Art Stroll
May 9	Board of Education Meets BOE; 6:00 p.m.
May 10	Election Day: No School
May 15	PBHS Honors Banquet 2 p.m. Commons/Aud.
May 20	Last Day for PBHS Senior Class
May 23	Board of Education Meets BOE; 6:00 p.m.
May 26	Baccalaureate Service Wilcox Chapel 7:00 pm
May 28	2016 Commencement @ Fairgrounds; 2 p.m.
May 30	Memorial Day: No School

Greetings Everyone,

We are coming down the home stretch of this school year and I wanted to take this opportunity to talk about the Barbour County Schools excess levy that is on the ballot for the May 10th election. I am not going to advocate that you vote for or against the levy but I do want to give you some information that may help you form your decision. Barbour County Schools is the largest employer in the county and the men and women that work for Barbour County Schools can play a large roll in whether this levy initiative passes or fails.

My wife and I lived in Hancock County since 1990 and bought our home four years later. Since 1994, we have paid an excess levy with 100% of the maximum levy rate allowed by law and, since 2010, we have paid for both an excess levy and a bond levy. I know it is difficult to vote to raise taxes. From 1990 till 1997, I was co-owner of a business and there were times during that period in our lives where we struggled to make ends meet and several times we did not have the money at the end of the week to pay ourselves. I know that times are tough for many people in this area but there is never a good time to run a levy. What is on the ballot for Barbour County Schools will represent the third smallest excess levy in the State with our rate being only 36% of what the State allows.

The levy includes the following: 1) money to increase the security of our schools by funding up to 3 certified law enforcement officers to work full-time in our schools, 2) technology and technology support that will allow one-to-one technology devices for all students by the 4th year, 3) funds to build a new bus garage and to provide upgraded maintenance for our schools, 4) funds to purchase new furniture and carpeting for our schools and to provide current instructional materials, 5) funds for the music and arts programs at all schools, and 6) funds for office supplies and duplicating equipment that will limit the numbers of fund raisers that will need to be done. The levy will also provide up to \$300 per teacher for use in their classrooms.

I am speaking to various groups throughout the community to educate them on what the excess levy can do for our staff and students. However, the fact of the matter is this: the men and women of Barbour County Schools have all of the power to decide whether the levy passes or fails. If you think it is a good thing for our community, then you must talk to your family and friends and convince them that the benefit of the levy will outweigh the personal cost. If you are not in favor of the levy, you can either speak out against it or do nothing; either way, it fails.

Continue to push yourselves and your students to do the best that you can do and remember, less than two months from now, you'll be on vacation and will have time to reflect on all of the good things that you did for our students.

Thanks,

Superintendent



Large Crowd Attends Annual County Celebration of Music



The bleachers at Philip Barbour High School were filled with family members and music-lovers of all ages as the 2016 All-County Concert was held on March 15. The popular annual event is one of the community's traditional means of ushering in Spring. Shown above, near the program's mid-point, the Philippi Middle School band performs "Queenwood Overture" under the direction of instructor, T.J. Dalton.

At the conclusion of a pre-concert performance by the Philip Barbour drumline, welcoming remarks were made by Barbour County Board of Education President, Eric Ruf, and Superintendent, Jeffrey Woofter, followed by the National Anthem as presented by the PBHS band.

The formal program included two numbers by the combined middle and high school choir, guest accompanied by Judy Hodgkinson and directed by Carol Isner. Next, the individual bands from Kasson, Belington and Philippi Middle Schools performed, followed by a Circus Medley by the Pride of Barbour County.

The evening concluded with a trio of selections by the combined (six school) elementary choir and the heart-stirring grand finale of "America the Beautiful" by the entire ensemble.

Student Writers Honored In March 21 Ceremony



Barbour County Schools hosted the 2016 Young Writers awards program on March 21 in the Philip Barbour High School auditorium. A total of 15 students from across the county were named winners, receiving commemorative booklets during the event and joining family and audience members in refreshments at the conclusion of the night's activities. The theme for this year's Young Writer's Contest was "Writing Is a Springboard for Imagination."

Following comments and congratulatory remarks by school administrators and other dignitaries, first place honorees were invited to read their essays during as part of the evening's program. First place winners have been invited to participate in the West Virginia Young Writer's event in Charleston during May. Local award-winning writers for 2016 included:

Grades 1 – 2: 1st – Isabella Croston (Philippi Elementary) "A Bird Named Loony;" 2nd – Lydia Baumgardner (Belington Elementary) "The Puppy Story;" 3rd – Malachi Sandy (Junior Elementary) "Hunting"

Grades 3 – 4: 1st – Caylee Simons (Volga Century Elementary) "The Fox;" 2nd – Kaitlynn Williamson (Philippi Elementary) "The Three Singing Girls;" 3rd – Sarah Drooger (Kasson Elementary) "Carmel and the Horse Rider"

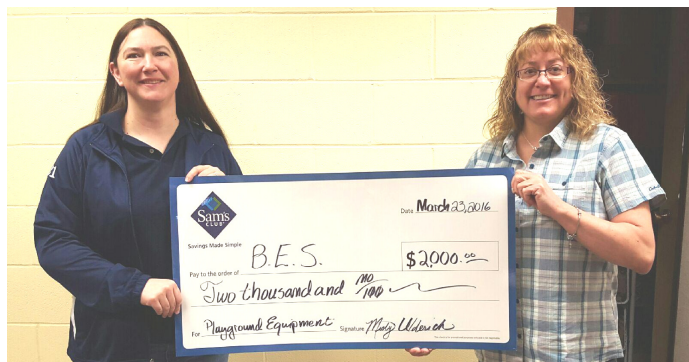
Grades 5 – 6: 1st – Gracie Miller (Belington Middle School) "Faith;" 2nd – Lydia Phillips (Kasson Middle School) "Through the Trees"

Grades 7 – 8: 1st – Hunter Melvin (Kasson Middle School) "The Last Family;" 2nd – Katriana Beckwith (Belington Middle School) "Silver Scales;" 3rd – Emma Kennedy (Kasson Middle School) "Goodbye Forever"

Grades 9 – 10: 1st – Alexis Robinson "Storyteller;" 2nd – Haley Mallow "Dixie Rose;" 3rd – Anna Ruf "The Quest for the Golden Horseshoe"

Grades 11 – 12: 1st – Madison Sandridge "Light Blue Chair;" 2nd – Corrine McDaniel "The Picture;" 2nd – Hannah SwickI "Say Nothing"

Belington Elementary Receives Grant Funding for Playground Projects



Sam's Club of Morgantown recently announced that Belington Elementary School had been selected for a \$2000 grant award as part of the WalMart Foundation and the Sam's Club Community Grant Program. BES principal, Cindy Sigley is shown above, right, accepting the award from Mrs. Ulderich, manager of the Morgantown Sam's Club. The school has designated the funding to expand and improve the playground facilities at Belington Elementary.

Junior Elementary Students Show Creativity in Social Studies Fair



Third and fourth grade students at Junior Elementary School used research and creativity to complete a variety of projects as part of the school's 2016 Social Studies Fair. The youngsters formed teams and selected topics of interest as the basis for their works. Winners were named on March 23 after the teams displayed and explained their ideas and projects.

Test Windows Announced for Spring General Summative Assessments

The 2016 round of the West Virginia General Summary Assessments is just around the corner, and the State Department of Education and Barbour County Schools have announced the testing windows for district schools as follows:

<u>School</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>
Kasson Elem/Middle	4/22	6/2
Belington Elementary	5/3	6/2
Junior Elementary	5/9	6/2
Mt. Vernon Elementary	5/12	6/2
Philippi Elementary	5/2	6/2
Volga-Century Elementary	5/2	6/2
Belington Middle	4/25	6/2
Philippi Middle	5/2	6/2
Philip Barbour High School	4/13	6/2

JES Does the "Shamrock Shuffle"

A number of Junior Elementary students and adult supporters braved the elements and participated in the annual "Shamrock Shuffle 5K" on Saturday, March 19. Sponsored by the JES PTA, the event helps raise funding for school projects throughout the year. The volunteers enjoyed the challenge as they ran a loop from the school through the community and then back to JES.





Do Your Best on the Test!

Tips and Strategies

When students ask why it is so important to give good effort on the General Summative Assessment (or any other instrument), here are some reasons, tips and/or discussion starters...

- *It is generally good practice to always give your best effort on anything you do. It becomes ingrained and **a part of your character**, and others will notice.*
- *While it is true that the GSA results will not affect your classroom grades, report card or promotion status, these scores become part of your official school records and, as such, will be available to future schools and employers.*
- *In addition to the importance of your individual scores, the overall grade level and school scores will be used to compare your school with other schools around the county, state and nation. We want to show how well prepared our students are! The results will also be used by the school staff to improve the curriculum as it analyzes strengths and weaknesses.*

Note: The teacher's attitude toward the testing process is critical because students are by nature intuitive. Also, be aware of the fine line between preparation and over-preparation. There exists a point of diminishing returns where students may become overwhelmed by the whole process and begin tuning out.

Before the Test:

- *Get a full night of rest before each of the testing dates so that you are fresh and alert the following mornings. Test sessions are usually limited to the morning hours to avoid fatigue and burn-out.*
- *Eat a good breakfast either at school or at home to provide fuel for the day's activities.*
- *Dress comfortably so that you are not distracted by clothing too warm, not warm enough, too tight, etc.*
- *When feeling nervous before the test, close your eyes and take several slow, deep breaths; spend a few moments completely relaxing your mind as necessary.*
- *Do not try to study for the General Summative Assessment. Think of it as a non-threatening opportunity to show what you've learned over the past several years.*

General Test-Taking Tips:

- *On the GSA, consider using the available technology tools. They are there to help you. For example, you can use the on-screen calculator in math for grades 6 and up.*

- *The GSA is untimed. Don't agonize over any one question. Work at a comfortable pace, marking any items that you need to return to, and use available time at the end of each section to review your answers.*

- *Answer all questions. All multiple-choice items are weighted equally. You are not penalized for incorrect responses. Your score is determined by the correct number of answers. Don't leave any answers blank.*

- *All tests have some hard questions. Don't skip them. It's much better to take a good guess. Use the process of elimination to reduce the number of choices and then make your best guess.*

- *Read all directions through twice. Never begin to answer questions before reading all directions.*

- *Read all passages in their entirety before attempting to find the answers to any related questions.*

- *Stop at the pop-up STOP sign at the end of the test section. You can then go back and work on any questions that were skipped and marked for review. Make sure that an answer has been bubbled for every item. You may then begin a quiet activity at your desk (e.g. reading a book, working a puzzle, etc.) until the rest of the class is finished.*

- *Use the highlighter and note-taking tools to mark key words or phrases that tell what kind of computation is needed in mathematics sections; for example, less than, greatest, between, nearest, least and so on.*

- *Use the provided scratch paper for mathematics calculations or notations.*

- *Try out all answer choices until finding one that is correct. Sometimes the correct answer is not given. Then follow the directions for marking the none of the above choice. Similarly, sometimes the first three answers are all correct. Then mark all of the above as your choice.*

- *Watch carefully for negative words in directions, such as NOT or OPPOSITE. These words tell exactly which answer to look for. Such key words often appear in bold or italic type or all capital letters.*



8th Grade Orientation Hosted by PBHS



Eighth graders from all three of Barbour County's middle schools recently visited Philip Barbour High School for an orientation to help acquaint them with the facilities, programs and opportunities during their upcoming high school years. The students arrived on the morning of March 23 and rotated through several informational sessions and presentations, including a large group meeting in the school auditorium (above) that featured comments from student council and faculty members. As the day progressed, they received information about high school scheduling, the New Tech curriculum, career and technical education programs at the adjacent center, athletics, extracurricular options and other areas of interest to rising freshmen. They also participated in small group tours of the PBHS Complex.

Following lunch in the commons area, students participated in a Commitment to Graduate ceremony. They each received and completed a Commitment to Graduate contract and participated in a mock graduation ceremony where they signed a special C2G banner and donned a PBHS graduation gown while crossing the stage. In the afternoon, students continued to rotate through the informational sessions and building tours before returning to their respective middle schools at the end of the busy day. School officials termed the event a very successful introduction to high school life for the PBHS Class of 2020.

Buster the Talking School Bus Ready to Teach Safety



Barbour County Schools' friendly "Buster the Talking School Bus" has been busy once again this school year traveling to area elementary schools, singing songs, playing games and teaching kids about how to be safe school bus passengers. Buster stresses items such as getting on and off the bus safely, stop arms and danger zones. The friendly, animated vehicle was joined by members of the county's transportation staff at county elementary schools and Head Start during 2015-16. For more information about Buster or to arrange a future program, contact transportation supervisor, Lisa Knight at 304-457-1289 (lisa.knight@k12.wv.us).

Kasson Holds Family Science Night

A total of 92 students, parents and visitors took part in Kasson School's Family Science Night on April 5. The event featured current science fair projects and other science-themed stations positioned around the school gymnasium. Colorful titles such as "Slime Time," "Rock On!" and "Optical Illusions" attracted much attention. The Kasson staff and students were assisted by ABU professor Kelly Flaherty and her ZAG science students, along with former Kasson student, Corrine McDaniel.

