



New Moatsville Bridge

The Bridge

Volume 6, Issue 1

September, 2014



Important Dates

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| Sept. 1 | Labor Day Holiday:
No School |
| Sept. 8 | Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m. |
| Sept. 19 | Homecoming at Philip
Barbour High School |
| Sept. 22 | Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m. |
| Sept. 23 | Five-Year Planning
Committee Meeting |
| Sept. 25
and 26 | Visitations by Office
of Ed. Perform. Audits |
| Oct. 13 | Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m. |
| Oct. 15 | Last Day of 1st Nine-
Weeks Grading Pd. |
| Oct. 16 | CE Day—All Staff
Report (Fac. Senate) |
| Oct. 22 | 1st 9-Week Report
Cards Are Distributed |
| Oct. 27 | Bd. Of Education Mtg.
@ BOE Office; 6 p.m. |

Hi Folks,

It is hard to believe but we are close to being a full month into the new school year. I have no idea where the summer went; in fact, I am not too sure there even was a summer! Here is hoping we are not hit with another hard winter and snow days; if we are, then there really won't be much of a summer break as we have traditionally known.

Once again we have opportunities to showcase Barbour County Schools: this time the biggest will be the new Accountability and Accreditation system (A-to-F) that our system and individual schools will be facing. I cannot put into 25 words or less an explanation of this new system other than to say we will receive a letter grade next at the beginning of next year (Fall 2015) based on our test scores from last year (2013-2014) and this year (2014-2015), along with an onsite monitor evaluations from the Office of Educational Performance Audits (OEPA).

In my four years as BCS Superintendent, this will be the third monitoring system that has been in place from the State Board and the OEPA – sort of like Last Year's New Thing, This Year's New Thing, and now....Next Year's New Thing. I do hope, for the sake of our teachers and students, that this system will be around for some time. Regardless, this will be an opportunity for all of us to move ahead in our efforts for continuous improvement for the whole school system.

And as always, I welcome your input as we take the next steps for our communities in Barbour County, our school system and our students; my door is open to all! I trust if you have a need or concern and believe I can help, that you will come and see me. And remember too, come out and support the very best West Virginia has to offer: the staff and students of Barbour County Schools!

Respectfully,



Tonya Baker Is Named Barbour County Teacher of the Year

Philippi Elementary School music instructor, Tonya Baker, was honored by the Barbour County Board of Education on September 8 as the district's 2014 Teacher of the Year. Entering her sixth year at PES, the 21-year veteran currently teaches general music and beginning band at the school.

A caring school leader and a volunteer in many venues, Tonya states that "Spreading joy is one of the most important things that I try to do, and music is full of joy...I am not just training musicians, though. I am one of many people in charge of helping to sculpt children into the adults they will become someday."



Matt Edge Is Honored as 2014 Service Person of the Year



Matt Edge, who currently serves as a custodian at the Philip Barbour High School Complex, has been named Barbour County's 2014 Service Person of the Year. He was recognized by the school board on September 8 for his many contributions during 27 years of service. Known as dependable and hard-working, Matt frequently goes above the call of duty and serves as a friendly mentor to students and staff at the school. He explained, "I try to listen to those who are struggling and give them a different point of view and hopefully a better outlook."

School System Greets 19 New Employees to Open the 2014-15 School Year

As the 2014-15 school year opened in August, greetings were extended to nineteen new Barbour County school employees with best wishes for an enjoyable and productive school year. The group includes: Lisa Henline, PMS teacher; Derrick Helzer, BES teacher; Camron Mouser, Maintenance; D.J. Stout, BMS teacher; Erin Carver, PES teacher; Tiffany Miller, Itinerant Intervention Specialist; Amber Haller, BMS teacher; Markita Prieto, PES teacher; Tonya Cooper, BES teacher; Nancy Lockwood, PBHS teacher; Clinton Bennett, PBHS teacher; Sarah Booth, BES teacher; Jonna Potoczny, PMS teacher; Melissa Parsons, BES teacher; B.J. Mayle, Itinerant TSS; Carleen Scott, BES aide; Samantha Golden, BES teacher; Mary Beth Hovatter, BMS teacher; Meng Chen, PBHS teacher.



Mt. Vernon Students Enjoy Sunshine and Fresh Air in New Outdoor Classroom



Thanks to the Matthew 25 aid organization, the students at Mt. Vernon Elementary School now have an outdoor classroom. The instructional area includes benches that can accommodate up to 20 youngsters. Parents of MVES students recently planted seeds in the new garden bed, and second graders in Ms. Gould's class (shown above) studied and researched the plants, to identify them and learn about their growth cycles.

Fresh Fruits & Vegetables Program Expands to Four Schools in County

Students at Belington Elementary School have joined those at Philippi, Junior and Mt. Vernon as participants in Barbour County's Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program, which provides nutritious snacks to elementary-aged children once daily in mid-morning or afternoon. The project promotes healthy eating and gives students an energy boost.



The county recently received a USDA grant for 2014-15 in the amount of \$50,600 for the fresh food and supplies. The Board of Education hopes to soon include locally-grown produce in the project.

September Designated as Month for Attendance "Call to Action"

The West Virginia Department of Education is sponsoring Attendance Awareness Month during September, asking school officials and personnel to help tackle chronic absenteeism. The "Make Every Day Count Call to Action" urges superintendents to make attendance a top priority starting in the early grades by mobilizing the community and identifying students and schools in need of extra support through the use of data-driven findings.

"Improving student attendance is an essential, cost-effective but often-overlooked strategy for ensuring our students are on-track to learn and succeed," according to WV Superintendent of Schools, Charles K. Heinlein. "Nationwide, as many as one out of ten students is chronically absent, meaning they miss 10 percent or more of school days, or nearly a month. The good news is that chronic absence is a problem we can solve."

Chronic absence is a leading early-warning indicator of academic trouble and later dropout. While addressing some attendance barriers—such as health, poor transportation and unstable housing—can often require longer-term strategies, everyone can make a difference by helping students and families understand that going to school every day and avoiding absences whenever possible is critical to realizing their hopes and dreams.

Some strategies to become involved at the county level include:

- As a parent, ensure your child is in school, on time, every day. Plan appointments before or after the school day.
- As an educator, share with your students and their families the importance of regular school attendance using the toolkits on the Attendance Awareness website: www.attendanceworks.org
- As a community member, get involved in local campaigns in your county by sponsoring or attending planned events.

— Odds 'N' Ends —

➤ Retirement Seminars Underway:

The Consolidated Public Retirement Board is sponsoring educational Retirement Seminars throughout the state for members of the WV Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) and the WV Teachers' Defined Contribution Retirement System (TDC) during September. The presentations will include overviews of defined benefit plans, options and regulations, and will provide opportunities for questions and one-on-one consultations. The remaining seminars, all scheduled for 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., will be held on: September 15 at Bridgeport Conference Center; September 16 at Oglebay Resort (Wheeling); September 17 at Holiday Inn Martinsburg; September 25 at Grand Pointe Conference Center (Vienna); and September 30 at the Consolidated Public Retirement Board in Charleston.

➤ **WVU Pumpkin Drop:** The 27th Annual Pumpkin Drop will be held on the Evansdale campus at West Virginia University on Friday, October 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Students from around the state enjoy the rewards and challenges of this engineering-based event. A tour of the WVU Creative Arts Center can be arranged for the same day. For more information or to enter, send an e-mail to: *kande.brandt@mail.wvu.edu* or call 304-293-3177.

➤ **Computer Safety Contest:** The State of West Virginia invites schools to participate in a national K-12 Computer Safety Event to encourage young people to use the Internet safely and securely. The poster contest seeks artwork that illustrates any original concept depicting the safe use of the web or mobile devices. Open to all student in grades K-12, the top three state winners in each grade grouping (K-5, 6-8 and 9-12) will advance to the national contest. More information can be found at: *go.wv.gov/artcontest*.

Inspirational Quotes to Ponder Early in the New School Year (from an eclectic mix of sources)

- "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela
- "He who opens a school door closes a prison." Victor Hugo
- "You can never be overdressed or overeducated." Oscar Wilde
- "You educate a man, you educate a man. You educate a woman, you educate a generation." Brigham Young
- "Intelligence plus character—that is the true goal of education." Martin Luther King, Jr.
- "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." John Dewey
- "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." W.B. Yeats
- "I'm not going to buy my kids an encyclopedia. Let them walk to school like I did." Yogi Berra
- "Give a man a bowl of rice and you will feed him for one day. Teach him how to grow his own rice and you will save his life." Confucius
- "The roots of education are bitter, but the fruits are sweet." Aristotle
- "Education is the movement from darkness to light." Allan Bloom
- "The purpose of education is to replace an empty mind with an open one." Malcolm Forbes
- "The foundation of every state is the education of its youth." Diogenes
- "The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next." Abraham Lincoln