



The Bridge

Volume 11, Issue 2

December, 2019



Important Dates

- Dec. 16** Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, KEMS
- Dec. 20** End 2nd Nine-Weeks and First Semester
- Dec. 20** 2-Hour Early Release for Faculty Senate
- Dec. 23 to 31** Schools Closed for Christmas Break
- Jan. 1-3** Schools Closed for New Year's Holiday
- Jan. 13** Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, BMS
- Jan. 10** Report Cards are Distributed K-12
- Jan. 20** Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Schools Closed
- Jan. 27** Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, BOE
- Jan. 29** 2-Hour Early Release for School PLC's
- Feb. 5-6** TASC Testing at Career-Tech Center
- Feb. 10** Progress Reports
- Feb. 10** Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, JES
- Feb. 14** 2-Hour Early Release for Faculty Senates
- Feb. 24** Board of Education Meets, 6 pm, BOE

I've been asked if I'd write a short essay for the holiday edition of The Bridge. While I'm not sure that it ties directly into education, there is no question that we in the school business become bit players (and sometimes stars) in scenes that are memorialized within the chapters of our students' lives. In the daily bustle, often we don't realize the impact of an encouraging word, a kind gesture or a poignant shared moment that is so important to a youngster. Life's monumental events naturally become seared into our souls. But, in an odd way, some of the most simple, mundane slivers of life can, at times, have the power to burrow their ways deep into our memories as well. Most of the details for this recollection have survived for well over 60 years now...

A Winter Walk

It was getting dark on a cold December evening outside 19 Violet Lane in Levittown, on Long Island, New York. I later learned that the neighborhood was like a few other Levittowns that had sprung up in the eastern U.S. after World War II with affordable, cookie-cutter structures and small yards, as cozy as they were modest. "Let's go for a walk," my dad said, "I need to go to the store." So, Mom bundled me up in a snow suit outfit with the hood cinched up under my chin, and off we went. There were four mini-shopping centers (they were like today's strip malls) across the community called Village Greens. Our destination was Village Green West, located a couple of dozen blocks away.

The street lights were coming on as we walked, the wintry air strangely chilling, then warming, then numbing my face along the way. My father was a burly six-footer and it took three of my five-year old steps to match each one of his strides. With the hood, my view of the surroundings was limited, as through a porthole, and I craned a look up at Dad in his toboggan hat, smoke trailing from a glowing cigarette back over his shoulder, and he seemed like a locomotive to me. Up and down the curbs we went, block after block, turning just once at the enormous Levittown water tower, passing houses that looked a lot like ours.

After nearly half an hour, we reached the halo marking the cluster of stores (a small grocery, a barber shop, a general store, a cleaner's and a few others) and Dad soon had a paper bag filled with whatever it was we needed. "Come on, let's make one more stop," he said. And so we crossed a frosted grassy area and then a crowded parking lot into a long, low building within sight of the stores. Was this a part of the Village Green too? It turned out to be a bowling alley.

(concluded on page 5)

Four Barbour County Schools Earn Energy Star Certification

Barbour County's two largest middle and elementary schools have been selected for recognition as Energy Star schools for 2019-20. Belington Middle and Elementary, and Philippi Middle and Elementary Schools were each notified of the honors in December by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as part of the 470 sites nationwide who are making a difference.

Buildings that have earned Energy Star status use about 40 percent less energy than average buildings and rate in the top quartile nationally. In addition to saving up to 30 percent on their energy bills each year, these schools reduce greenhouse gases and improve students' learning environments.



Launched in 2005, the EPA joined more than 40 organizations and states to bring the Energy Star challenge to owners of commercial and institutional facilities across the nation. The program notes that energy costs reflect the second highest budget item (after salaries) for school systems. Typically, one-third of energy used is wasted due to poor insulation or outdated equipment and technology.

Studies show that schools that are well lit, well ventilated and in good repair create a healthy, comfortable learning and teaching environment, increasing productivity and improving performance and achievement. Each honored school will receive a letter of congratulations, a certified school decal and a promotional toolkit.

Junior Elementary Robotics Program Continues to Grow in Its Third Year

Students at Junior Elementary School are well into their third year in the study of Robotics. With two previous state competitions under their belts, the youngsters are completing their third month of practice for 2019-20. The Bobcats' team now has constructed six robots and are making adjustments, designing programs, and running the course designed by NASA engineers to be ready for the upcoming competition season.



The team, still made up of 3rd and 4th graders, grew in size this year with an increase in the numbers of parent volunteers (above photo). Staff members, Charla Reger and Lindsey Skinner, are serving as team coaches this year and have witnessed amazing parental and family support from program volunteers: Jose Lopez, Beth Tusing, Joel Wolpert, Jason Keyes, Ashley Justice, Oscar Wolpert, and Jackson Wilson. With the STEM enrichment project now fully entrenched, the students and their adult members look forward to future adventures in robotics.

Local Health Agencies Help Prepare Students and Staff for Flu Season

Barbour County students and staff members received some extra protection from the flu in recent weeks as several local health organizations traveled to schools to provide free influenza vaccines. The Barbour



Community Health Association, the Brandon Wellness Center and the Barbour County Health Department all participated at different sites. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends annual flu shots for adults and children six months and older.

Early Childhood Registration Set for February 21st at PBHS

County parents and guardians of four and five-year olds will be visiting Philip Barbour High School on Friday, February 21st, to register students for district kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programs in 2020-21. Teachers and county personnel will be available in the auxiliary gymnasium from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. to help complete the process.

Children who will become four years old prior to July 1st may enroll in WV Universal Pre-K programs, while those turning five years of age before July 1 should register for local kindergarten classes. A make-up registration date of Friday, February 28, has been established in the case of school cancellation.

Reminder Issued on Semester Grade Completion Dates

With Friday, December 20, marking the conclusion of the Second Nine-Weeks and First Semester grading periods, teachers are reminded of the established grade completion dates upcoming after the holiday break.

The cut-off for grade finalization will be 12:00 noon on Wednesday, January 8. The turnaround time will be quick with report card distribution scheduled for Friday, January 10. Questions regarding details on this process should be directed to building principals.



Kasson School Partners with Local Veterans During November Events



The Kasson PTO, its students and staff, invited local veterans to a luncheon at the school (above, right) on Friday, November 15, to commemorate Veterans Day Week. The activity was part of a week-long focus on the service and sacrifice of our nation's service men and women.

Earlier in the week, the students were visited by representatives of Philippi American Legion Post 44 and learned facts about Old Glory and proper care and etiquette for the American flag. Shown above, left, members of the eighth grade class witness the presentation of a donation check from the Legion to Kasson School to help fund the annual class trip in the spring.

Dates Are Announced for Major 2nd Semester Academic Events

Preparations are underway for several major academic events scheduled for the second semester of the 2019-20 school year in Barbour County. Dates for events that have been established are as follows:

- *Young Writers: Student essays due to BCS on Feb. 3
 - State Event in Charleston on May 8
- *All-County Music Concert: March 17 (7 p.m. @ PB)
 - Make-Up Date if needed is March 18th
- *Golden Horseshoe: Feb. 12 (essay); Feb. 19 (on line)
- *County Art Stroll: April 24 in Downtown Philippi

PMS Teacher Selected as 2020 National STEM Cohort Mentor

Angela McDaniel, a science teacher at Philippi Middle School, has been selected and trained to serve as a Next Generation STEM Teaching Project mentor. Angie is one of two nationwide recruited to serve in this role for this year's cohort of eight teachers to the program. As a past participant, she was tapped to help guide the new class in the process. She is shown at right receiving the award as 2018 Army Educational Outreach Team Advisor of the Year for her work with the eCybermission program.



The NGSTP is a teacher professional development project which includes opportunities to gain funding for classroom projects. Selected teachers participate in the NSTA's *Assessing Three-Dimensional Learning* workshops and then propose an "anchor phenomena" to develop a lesson plan or unit using the Three-Dimensional Model of Instruction. Teachers will then submit a budget for supplies to use in the classroom to implement their lesson plan.

Ms. McDaniel has just returned from training and participation in the 3D Learning Workshop from December 12-16 at the NSTA event held in Seattle, Washington. In accepting the role and fulfilling its responsibilities, Angie will receive conference costs, membership and access to NSTA resources, up to \$2695 for a classroom project and compensation for activities related to the program.



Retirement Bonus Guidelines Announced

County school personnel are reminded that the date for **classroom teachers** to submit early written notification of their intent to retire in order to receive the \$500 bonus authorized through WV Code 18A-2-2(g) this year is Monday, March 2nd.

In accordance with WVC 18A-2-5a, county boards have the authority to pay, strictly from local funds, up to a \$500 bonus to professional personnel other than classroom teachers or service personnel who provide written notification of their intent to retire at the end of the school year by March 2.

Questions about these guidelines or the notification process in Barbour County may be directed to either David Neff (ext. 1011) or Homer Talbott (ext. 1031) at the Board of Education (304-457-3030).

CTEC Students Create and Donate Gingerbread Houses to Community

ProStart students at the Philip Barbour High School Complex recently designed and created gingerbread houses during their foods classes. The students baked, constructed and decorated the houses in teams, each choosing their personal designs. The festive houses were donated to local businesses to display during the holiday season. Following the activity, Ms. Holbrook's students collaborated with Mr. Murphy's classes to assist in creating gingerbread houses using kits.



Locations where the constructed houses are on display include: Wanderlust Coffeehouse, Molly's Ice Cream, Lil Moe's Pub, Mansfield Place, Subway, Baughman Towers, the WV State Police barracks, Dianne's Restaurant, Station 1, the Good Samaritan Society, Skate Zone, Sheetz, Dave's Plumbing and Heating, Laurel Mountain Inn, Mace's Pharmacy, Belington Middle School, and the Volga Post Office.

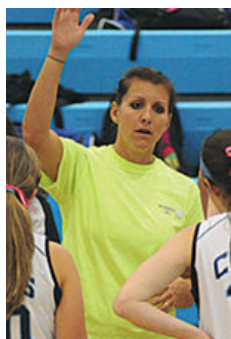
— Odds 'N' Ends —



PB Volleyball Squad Back to States:

The Philip Barbour volleyball team made its historic 18th consecutive trip to Charleston for the AA state tournament, defeating Winfield 3-2 in the opening round, before bowing to Shady Spring 3-2 in the semi-finals.

Under the direction of 2019 WVSSAC Coach of the Year, Heather Halfin (right), the Lady Colts posted a sparkling final record of 49-10-2 in a season that saw Ms. Halfin also named as the Big Ten Conference Coach of the Year.



Changes Noted in ABE Program:

The Barbour County Adult Basic Education program recently underwent a change when it was announced that, as of December, classes will be held off-campus in Philippi. The new instructor is Ms. Kelly Brenner. Those interested in adult education classes or in registering for the TASC exam may contact her office for more information at 304-457-3007.

The TASC high school equivalency testing will still be offered at the county Career and Technical Education Center. Dates for the 2019-20 second semester exams are: February 5-6; April 1-2; and May 27-28, 2020.



Certification Reminders:

Staff members whose teaching certification is due to expire on June 30, 2020, are reminded that the coursework required for renewal and an application for renewal must be submitted to the Personnel Office prior to the opening of the 2020-21 school term. Teachers are encouraged to contact their colleges with any questions. Also, those who have completed hours making them eligible for advanced salary classification are urged to submit all paperwork as soon as the class is completed. The county's state aid funding is based in part on current salary information. More importantly, the state will generally backdate salary increases only up to three months.

A Winter Walk (continued)

The contrast between the brisk wintry air outside and the heavy warmth within was jarring. Dad helped me untie my hood and we sat at an empty table for a few minutes and I remember just absorbing the atmosphere: the background murmur of voices punctuated by shouts and laughter, the rumble of heavy rubber balls and the clatter of pins. The air was thick with scents of smoke, machinery and hot grease. My father was a bowler and while he watched the various styles and results on display across the lanes, I was fascinated by the scores of people milling about, with everyone seeming so, I don't know, relaxed and cheerful. It felt like a party for grown-ups. After ten minutes or so, we headed back out for the trip home.

While we had been inside, full darkness had fallen and the snow had started. The flakes drifting down were that big, fluffy kind, as in a snow globe, and the ones that landed on my nose or eyebrows would stick for a moment and then wrinkle into wet droplets. By the time we reached the giant water tower, the sidewalks were covered and our steps left prints, creating puffs of white.

Now, turning my shoulders (and my circular window) left and right, I could see the Christmas lights on many of the houses, along the edges and around the windows... multi-colored bulbs as big as hen's eggs. Home holiday lights did not flash or twinkle back then, but the falling snow gave them that effect. It was magic in the muffled darkness.

We finally reached Violet Lane and could see that Mom had plugged in the plastic candles set in the front windows, along with the colored light string in the evergreen out front. I *just knew* that warm milk with chocolaty Bosco syrup, and maybe a cookie or two, would be waiting for us inside.

And they were.

None of us knows if or when our roles in what may seem to be a minor passing moment might become a part of a child's lifetime memory. - DRS

