



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Battle Ground Bits and Bites

An occasional roundup of news you can use -- or cheer

Julia Scott: “It was my toughest deployment”

Summit View High School staffer Kris Neal, back to camera, welcomes Julia Scott home after four and a half months in Afghanistan with the Air Force Reserves. Scott, school nurse at Summit View and Prairie high schools, called this the toughest of her five active duty deployments in 26 years. **See story elsewhere in this edition of Bits and Bites.**



Students to benefit from spring grants (Plus: An easy way to help fuel the foundation)

The Battle Ground Education Foundation is awarding 16 spring grants totaling approximately \$5,250 for books, science and photography equipment and other classroom and library materials.

In announcing the grants, ranging from \$200 to \$500 each, the Foundation said it would like to have given more, but “only a limited amount of (money is) available and not all requests could be funded for the full amount.”

The grantees are: **Midge Marcus**, Tukes Valley Middle School, \$200; **Marion Baty**, Daybreak Middle, \$238; **Ron Jensen**, BGHS, \$461; **Tom Wolverton**, Prairie H.S., \$464; **Angela Krant**, Laurin Middle, \$250; **Christie Shultz**, \$464; **Lynne Gropper-Baum**, Daybreak Primary, \$245; **Jeri Stith**, Summit View H.S., \$288; **Nicole Blahnik**, Amboy Middle, \$500.

Guy Brown, Chief Umtuch Middle, \$492; **Gina Lemberg**, Daybreak Primary, \$500; **Susan Kuhl**, Chief Umtuch Middle, \$150; **Cathie Padgett**, Daybreak Middle, \$250; **Suzanne Burgess**, Daybreak Primary, \$250; **Jamie Hurly and Larry Peck**, Battle Ground H.S., \$500; **Kristie Glock**, Pleasant Valley Primary, \$496.

How you can help: If you wish to donate maybe \$5, \$10, \$15 or \$20 a month (or whatever) to the Foundation and/or to Citizens for Better Schools (BG schools that is) – it’s easy to arrange. Just e-mail dobbins.julie@bgzd.k12.wa.us or currie.shawn@bgzd.k12.wa.us and ask for a donation form.

Three young BG artists draw winning bookmarks



Three of nine winners in Fort Vancouver Regional Library’s 2011 bookmark contest are from B.G. schools. From 4,000 entries in grades K-8, one winner was picked per grade. Congratulations to: Jocelyn Heath, kindergarten, Tukes Valley Primary (far left); Cindy Johnson, 4th, HomeLink BG (immediate left) and Malia Meyer, 5th, Chief Umtuch Middle (below). See all winners at www.fvrl.org/kids/bookmark_contest.htm



Did you know? . . .

The “Coming Events” list on the left side of the school district’s home page (battlegroundps.org) includes individual school functions that appeal to the general public, such as concerts, carnivals, rummage sales, spaghetti dinners, etc. But, schools have to send the news to herrington.gregg@bgzd.k12.wa.us.

Offering a helping hand . . .

Coats for Kids: Last month's Bits and Bites reported that the Futures Program has an ongoing inventory of coats for BG students. Principals and counselors who know of a need are invited to contact Jodie Rogers at the Dodge House to make arrangements.

Another major player in the effort to keep children warm is Lewis River Rotary. Its "Jim Collins Coats for Kids" program was the idea three years ago of Kevin Gorby and his wife, Kelly, a special education teacher at Tukes Valley Primary. The club works with principals in finding and filling needs. The Kidz Cloz store in Battle Ground is a major partner in both efforts.

Dinner at Ronald's: Nine Prairie High School marketing students (who also are DECCA club members) will make dinner this Friday for about 30 residents of the Ronald McDonald House at Portland's Legacy Emanuel Hospital. On the menu: lasagna, tossed salad and dessert. Marketing teacher Lisa Whitling says the food was donated by Food Services of America.

Prepping for disaster: The place was Susan Adams' second grade classroom at Captain Strong Primary School. The date was March 4, one week BEFORE the magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami struck northern Japan in one of the worst disasters in recorded history.

The event was a lesson for the children about the importance of having a home disaster plan and emergency kit. The instructors were students in Kelly Christel's disaster leadership class at BGHS. Simple Safety, a Vancouver company, donated water packets for the lessons. If that session didn't convince the kids to urge their parents to make disaster plans, the events one week later must have. Check out www.ready.gov and make your own disaster plans.

Photo: *BGHS student Haley Grossman wraps second grader Carrie Hervie in a warm but lightweight Mylar blanket.*



Kudos, congratulations and good luck

Geography: Best wishes and may the force be with Gunnar Tormanen, a seventh grader at Chief Umtuch Middle School, and Andrew Richardson, eighth grade at River HomeLink, when they compete April 1 in the state Geography Bee in Tacoma.

Science: Congratulations to Maple Grove Middle School's Peter Mattson and Nikki Willson who earned ribbons for their fourth-place finish in the "Fossils" category at the regional Science Olympiad in Longview March 12.

Parliamentary Procedure: Kudos to these members of the Battle Ground FFA chapter for their

first-place finish in the District FFA Parliamentary Procedure Career Development event in Longview. As reported by vocational/agriculture teacher Annette Weeks, they are Amberlea Hansen, Nicole Boes, Seriana Morgan, Kyle Dickerson, Nathan Weeks and Ashley Catania. They were coached by teacher Tod Garred. The finish at district qualifies the team for the state competition in Pullman in May.

Parade-bound: Princesses who will ride on the Battle Ground community float in the June 11 Portland Rose Festival Grand Floral Parade are: Halley Riggs, junior, BGHS; Katie Clune, sophomore, BGHS; Briena Henry, junior, BGHS and Caitlin Rouse, sophomore, CAM Jr.-Sr. High School in Battle Ground (Character, Academics, Marketplace).

Jazz Bands: The **BGHS advanced jazz band**, directed by Greg “Count” McKelvey, won the Sweepstakes Award at the Clackamas Community College Jazz Festival March 12. The talented group also took first place in the 4A division. Forty-five other jazz bands from the Northwest participated. Trombonist Garritt Stever was named outstanding soloist for the entire festival. In the middle school division, the **Pleasant Valley Jazz Band**, directed by Evan Irwin, took third place out of 18 middle schools.

Home from Afghanistan, Julia Scott discusses vivid, poignant memories

“They’re just kids” in those caskets.

“The oldest was 34,” said school nurse Julia Scott, home after four and half months in Afghanistan. “It was my toughest” of her five active duty deployments in 26 years with the Air Force Reserves.

Scott, who will resume her duties as nurse at Prairie and Summit View high schools after spring break, was stationed at Kandahar Air Field as chief nurse for air medical evacuation.

One of her duties -- one she considers an honor -- was participation in “ramp ceremonies” at which caskets of U.S. troops were put aboard C-17 or C-130 cargo planes for the trip home. She saw at least 50 U.S casualties carried up the ramp for that final trip.

“You realize they are just kids,” she said in an interview in early March. “They so believe in what they are doing over there. They love their jobs. They are great kids.”



Julia Scott

Scott said the ramp ceremonies were “heartwarming to me because all the nations came together to pay respects to the fallen – Canadians, Germans, the French, Romanians, Bulgarians . . .”

A lieutenant colonel in line for a promotion this spring to full colonel, Scott oversaw the nursing operations at Kandahar Air Field and at another base 80 miles away.

At Kandahar, her tent was 150 feet from the helicopter landing pad. "A lot of times they needed help, so we would go out and carry litters into the hospital," she said.

Servicemen and women weren't the only patients. "We did a lot with local residents," she said. "Once, a city bus overturned and we had a lot of resident casualties. They got good care."

Scott said the base is 12 miles from the front and she was never in personal danger, although rockets did occasionally land on the other end of the base, killing two over the course of her deployment.

This "toughest" of Scott's five deployments left her with a searing perspective on life at home.

"They have so little," she said of the Afghans. "So little, and we have so much. And we waste so much. Their medical care is pretty much non-existent. They don't have money, and they don't get treatment without cash.

"Everything here seems so petty," she said. "It is hard to come back and listen to people talk about the things that are the focus of their lives here. People complain about a traffic ticket they got for texting while driving. Everyone gets wrapped up in his or her own needs and wants.

"I get tired of the sense of entitlement and the lack of responsibility -- people telling themselves 'I deserve this.' We have so much. Nobody wants their budgets cut or wants to give up their programs. But nobody wants to pay for it, either. This is a hard time for me. Really hard."

Still, Scott is buoyed by some memories of her four and a half months in Afghanistan, including the dedication of the young American troops and the "nonstop care packages" from strangers in the United States, including school students and employee groups. Some of the care-package goodies were, in turn, given to Afghan residents, she said.

"People don't know your name, but send packages," she said. "It was amazing."

Quake forces trip cancellation

On March 11, following their regular morning greeting (photo), teacher Mary Metcalf, at left, and Japanese II students at BGHS discussed the horrific earthquake and tsunami in Japan. Metcalf, another adult and three students have canceled plans for a spring break trip to Japan because of the damage and radiation. "We'll go next year," Metcalf said.



Clamor for grammar

A student is not a “they:” Incorrect: “Each student’s grade will be sent to *their* e-mail address” or “Each member of the team must get *their* physical exam before the start of practice.”

Correct: “Each member of the band is to get *his or her* uniform cleaned and pressed before the parade Saturday.”

An organization isn’t a “they,” either: Similarly, organizations such as companies, government agencies and school districts are not a “they.” In most cases, “it” will work.

Incorrect: “The Acme Dynamite Co. is irresponsible. *They* sell explosives to Wiley Coyote all the time.” **Correct:** “Acme Dynamite Co. is irresponsible. *It* sells explosive to Wiley Coyote.”

Your vs. you’re: “Your” is a possessive pronoun and “you’re” is a contraction of two words -- “you are.” **Correct:** “Your cell phone is on the seat of the car. You’re breaking the law if you talk on it while driving.”

Its vs. it’s: This is another case involving a contraction. “It’s” (with the apostrophe) is a contraction of “it is”. When you are figuring out whether to use “its” or “it’s” just say to yourself “it is” and if that works, use the one with the apostrophe. **Correct:** The gas tank on *your* car is missing *its* cap. *It’s* a mystery how they keep disappearing. Maybe *you’re* just bad luck.

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