



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Battle Ground Bits and Bites

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

New school district website coming soon

The new school district website is coming to a computer screen near you. The goal for the “go-live” date is some time in June, perhaps as soon as next week. There also will be a new address: www.battlegroundps.org. However, the current (old) address, www.bgsd.k12.wa.us, will continue to function.

We hope employees and the public find the new site more inviting and more user friendly than the current site, which is thought to be about a dozen years old. For certain, adding, deleting and rearranging things on the new site will be easier.

The work of redesigning and building the new site fell to a team of seniors in the Digital Technology and Culture program at Washington State University Vancouver, under the direction of Prof. Dene Grigar. The work was done at no charge to the school district as a learning and public service project. The School District presented Grigar with a plaque of appreciation to WSUV and the DTC program at the May 7 School Board meeting.

Chances that the new site will NOT need immediate corrections, additions or other tweaks are about as good as the chances the Seattle Mariners will make the playoffs this year. Employees and the public are encouraged to use the form on the bottom of the new home page to alert us to those issues.

We interrupt this edition of Bits and Bites . . .

. . . to bring you this public service announcement, which you might want to share with students, family and colleagues:

The new state hands-free cell-phone law takes effect Thursday, June 10. The State Patrol has announced that troopers immediately will enforce the new

law, which makes it a primary traffic offense to talk on a hand-held device or text while driving even if the drivers are not in violation of any other driving or faulty-equipment law. (Until now, it has been a “secondary” offense, which means a driver has had to be violating some other traffic law before he/she could be cited for driving while using a hand-held phone or texting.)

“Drivers have already had nearly two years to adjust their driving habits,” Patrol Chief John R. Batiste said. “We will fully enforce this law from Day 1.”

And now, back to our regular edition . . .

Glenwood conference inspires young authors

More than 550 primary and middle school students from Battle Ground and other Clark County districts were inspired, entertained and informed about writing at the annual Young Authors Conference Saturday, May 22, at Glenwood Heights Primary School.



Jill Dutchess at right, principal at Daybreak Primary, was one of many volunteer adult facilitators at the Young Authors conference May 22.

Chaired by Glenwood teacher Hollie Rose, the conference featured author Ralph Fletcher (www.ralphfletcher.com), whose books are aimed at children of various ages, some as entertainment and some as inspiration for the art of writing. A blurb for his newest book, *Pyrotechnics on the Page – Playful Craft that Sparks Writing*, says “Fletcher demonstrates how playful craft can energize student writing and breathe new energy into the writing workshop.”

Mike Maloney, assistant principal at Glenwood, says that’s exactly what happened Saturday. “He had the kids laughing, enthused and excited about writing. He was both informative and motivational.”

In addition to hearing Fletcher, the youngsters split into small groups with

volunteer adult facilitators. There, they read aloud from stories they had written and then discussed them with the group. Students from Battle Ground, Evergreen, Camas, Hockinson and Vancouver participated. Next year's conference will be hosted by the Evergreen School District.

BG educators get new assignments

Assistant principals trade places: Travis Drake, assistant principal at CAM Jr.-Sr. High and HomeLink Battle Ground, is moving down Highway 503 and Micah Hilario, assistant principal and athletic director at Prairie High, is heading up the highway. The two administrators will trade places beginning in 2010-11.

"I've enjoyed the experience at Prairie," Hilario said, adding, "I'm very excited for this new opportunity."

Drake, who coached basketball in different high schools for nine years, including four years as varsity coach at Washougal High, said, "With my coaching background and passion for athletics, I'm excited to serve the coaches and student athletes at Prairie."

Retirement and appointment at LSP: After 38 years with the district, Candy Jones is retiring as one of three Learning Support Program coordinators for Title I and LAP (Learning Assistance Program). Her replacement will be Allison Tucharadt of Yacolt Primary.

Jones started her career with the district at Glenwood Heights Primary, where she spent 12 years. Then, it was three at Maple Grove Primary, 16 at Pleasant Valley Primary and seven with Learning Support Programs. She describes the job as "working with Title I and LAP to support struggling students in kindergarten through eighth grade in reading, writing and math." Like Jones, Tucharadt started at Glenwood – in 1991-92. Then, she transferred to Yacolt Primary where she taught first and/or second grades for 15 years before becoming a reading intervention specialist three years ago. Congratulations, Candy and Allison!

Prairie ROTC again receives national recognition

Col. Pete Gray reports that the Air Force Junior ROTC program at Prairie High has been recognized as a "Distinguished Unit" for the fifth straight year by the Air Force Jr. ROTC headquarters at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. The honor recognizes units "that have performed above and beyond normal expectations and have distinguished themselves through outstanding service to their school and community." Among the unit's accomplishments, says Gray, were performing

more than 2,000 hours of community service, qualifying seven of eight drill teams for the league championships, finishing high in air rifle competition and being one of 12 units nationally selected for the National Science Center Partnership program to test instructional materials. PHS was one of 230 units from across the county to win the award for 2009-10. AFJROTC units are in 884 high schools.

Secret judges in the audience for ‘Music Man’

“There were bells all around, but I never heard them ringing,” sings Marian Paroo, the librarian in the ever-popular musical, “The Music Man.” As it turns out, there also were unidentified judges all around during the combined Prairie High-Battle Ground High production last fall.

They attended the show on multiple nights in their roles as adjudicators for the annual 5th Avenue High School Musical Theater Awards to honor outstanding productions across the state. Now comes word, passed along by Claire Verity, director of the show, that it has been nominated for the following awards: Outstanding performance by a chorus, for the entire Music Man ensemble; Outstanding performance by an ensemble group, for the School Board quartet, (Sean Dawson of BGHS and Paul Paresa, Sam McPherson and Evan Abeling of PHS), and honorable Mention for Outstanding Direction to Verity. Winners will be announced in Seattle on June 7. There were 65 students in the cast and in non-performing jobs for the show.

BG musicians shine in Savannah . . . Ellensburg . . . Portland . . . Washougal

Savannah: The 24-member Battle Ground High School Advanced Jazz Band and its director, Greg “Count” McKelvey, were honored again this year to be among 11 high school jazz bands invited to the “Swing Central” competition at the Savannah (Ga.) Music Festival in April. McKelvey said, “It was a great trip. We received a standing ovation after playing. The really neat thing about it was that after hearing the top three bands perform, our kids were so inspired that they already are playing on a totally different level than before the trip. The clinics were also outstanding. Some of the finest jazz musicians in the world were there.”

Ellensburg: BGHS sophomore Ruth Ferguson, a soprano, finished second in the state at the Washington Music Educators solo/ensemble competition this spring.

Portland: Battle Ground groups captured three first places in their respective divisions at the Cleveland High School (Portland) Jazz Fest last month. They were

the BGHS Advanced Jazz Band and the Chief Umtuch Middle School Jazz Band, both directed by “Count” McKelvey, and the BGHS Intermediate Jazz Band, directed by Evan Irwin, who also teaches music at Pleasant Valley Middle School.

Washougal: Some of our younger vocal musicians and their directors are making a mark in music, too. Eighteen singers from three primary schools were selected to perform April 10 at Washougal High school as part of a 108-member Southwest Washington Elementary Honor Choir. The schools were Glenwood Heights (choir director Cory Pierce), Maple Grove (Julie Ash) and Tukes Valley (Kristina Ronningen). It was part of a day-long workshop for the students.

Here’s more cause for applause . . .

Skills Center scholarships -- Five Battle Ground seniors are among 26 winners of scholarships for students at the Clark County Skills Center. They are Brittany Pruitt, PHS, from Kaiser Permanente/OHSU and from the Skills Center Applied Medical Sciences Advisory Board; Mykhaylo Rymar (auto technology), BGHS, from the Universal Technical Institute; Whitnai Barker (criminal justice), BGHS, Skills Center General Advisory Council; Drew Whithorn, (construction technology), HomeLink Battle Ground, Skills Center General Advisory Council; Aubriana Squires (applied medical science), BGHS, \$4,000, American College Testing Award. In addition, Rymar and Ben Rodriguez of BGHS (electro-digital technologies) are among four Skills Center students invited to compete in the national SkillsUSA competition next month in Kansas City, Mo.

Math is Cool! -- Susan Crill, teacher in the magnet program for highly-capable students at Capt. Strong Primary, reports that fourth grader Everett Buck was seventh in the state and classmate Kyle Barton 24th at the Math is Cool competition May 22 in Moses Lake. “They had very tough competition from both private and public schools,” Crill said. “They represented Battle Ground Schools with dignity, good sportsmanship, intelligence, and leadership.”

Science Olympiad – Math/science teacher Tom Wolverton at Prairie High sends word that the school’s Science Olympiad team “had a very good year,” finishing fifth at the state competition in Ellensburg April 10. “Although we did not finish first in a single event, we turned in an awesome team effort,” he said. “We look forward to a stronger finish next year.” (Last year, PHS was ninth at state.)

Health Care Careers – Two seniors were among those from Western Oregon and Southwest Washington honored at a Kaiser Permanente Health Care Career Scholarships ceremony and reception May 22 at Portland Community College, Sylvania Campus: Alma Eminic of BGHS and Brittany Pruitt of Prairie High.

Helping those in need: Maple Grove Middle School's six-day penny drive this spring yielded \$1,106.19 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. . . . A similar sum -- \$1,011.11 – was collected in a penny drive at **Tukes Valley Middle School** for the American Red Cross's earthquake-relief work in Haiti.

Coming soon – Gallery Night and, Fun & Fitness event

Gallery Night: The annual Maple Grove Primary Gallery Night is this Thursday, May 27, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Nearly 600 K-4 students, who get art instruction from Terry Burrell, will have their work on display. Moreover, reports Principal Barbara Baird, at least 15 artists from around the community will be on hand to share their work, many of them creating projects on the spot. The public is welcome.

Family Fun & Fitness Walk: We've all read about obesity and diabetes and getting too little exercise. Here's a fun way to start doing something about it. The second annual Pleasant Valley PTA Family Fun & Fitness 3 kilometer Walk (and other fun activities) will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 12, on the WSU Vancouver campus. But here's the thing: The **early-registration deadline** (\$10 fee compared to \$12 for later registration) is Tuesday, June 2. Registration includes a T-shirt, door-prize ticket, bottle water and snacks. Prior to the 11:15 a.m. walk on a 3K route at the beautiful WSUV campus in Salmon Creek, there will be a group warm-up exercise. Also planned are performances by the PV Unicycle Team, a dance troupe and a TaeKwonDo group. Also on tap are, face painting, balloon animals, tumbling, therapy dogs for kids to pet and more. Proceeds will go to the SHARE program and Pleasant Valley educational programs. Check it all out at www.pvptawalk.schools.officelive.com or call Susan Galaviz at 601-6601.



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