

April 5, 2004

Volume 2, Issue 6



The River's Edge

Inside this issue:

UK Spring Break Visit Brings Adventure 2

Board Cont'd from pg 1 2

Buxton Gives Presentation 3

Students Display Art at Local Banks 3

PTK Induction Cont'd from pg 1 3

From the Presidents Desk 4

Serendipity Cont'd from pg 4 4

Wildlands Class Slated 4

Important Dates

April 5—7

- In-house/Campus Connect Registration Summer I & II

April 9

- Law Enforcement Graduation

April 12

- Open Registration Summer I & II

April 13, 14, 15

- Rising Junior Exams

April 22

- Scholarship Donor Luncheon

April 23

- Business & Industry Luncheon Paragould

April 29 - 30

- Higher Ed Board Meeting at BRTC

'Serendipity' Meeting Held

A Task Force composed of 16 members of the community met March 24 to provide input for the development of 'Serendipity,' a new organization planned through a joint venture of BRTC's Department of Continuing Education and the BRTC Foundation. This organization, according to Patti Blaxton of Continuing Ed, will involve a series of mini-classes classes on assorted topics, and will include various benefits, including social activities as

well as educational events and trips. Blaxton and Dr. Jan Ziegler, representing the Foundation, conducted the idea-generating meeting by en-

gaging participants in discussion of various aspects of 'Serendipity.' These included consideration of the cont'd on page 4



From left: Barbara Dunn, Mike Dunn, John Rhodus, Marjorie Rhodus, Betty Born.

Board Holds Tuition Rate Level

The BRTC Board of Trustees voted to maintain the current tuition rate for another year, but to lift the cap on the number of hours for which tuition is charged during its quarterly meeting held April 1 at the BRTC/Paragould campus. The decision to hold steady on tuition rates followed a presentation by BRTC Vice-President for

Finance Loretta Williams, who acknowledged the financial uncertainty with state funding has prompted many institutions to enact tuition hikes this year. BRTC's current tuition level is in line with the SREB (Southern Regional Education Board) average, Williams explained, and is in the mid-range of tuition rates at the state's

other two-year colleges. The Board's action holds tuition rates per credit-hour at \$52 for in-district students, \$66 for out-of-district students, and \$178 for out-of-state students.

The lifting of the cap on number of cont'd on page 2

PTK Induction Adds 37

Some 37 BRTC students were inducted into Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society at BRTC, in ceremonies held March 31 in Randolph County Development Center.

The purpose of PTK is to recognize and encourage scholarship among associate degree students. Those who have completed at least twelve hours of applicable course work with a GPA of 3.5 or higher are

eligible for membership in this prestigious society.

Chapter officers are Darryl Foster, President; Darla Hopper, Vice-President; Monte Caldwell, Vice-President; Clark Marler, Secretary; Dawn Horton, Treasurer; and Tashina Pontzius, Public Relations.

Those inducted included Jeffrey Austin, Debra Baltz, Joshua Birmingham, Janice Bonner, Tammy



UK Spring Break Visit Brings Adventure, Enlightenment

The ninth annual BRTC international educational (EF) tour to the United Kingdom has proven the most popular so far in terms of numbers, according to Dr. Jan Ziegler, group leader. A total of 27 participants joined in this EF trip to England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales during spring break. The trip began March 10, and participants returned home March 21.

"We had a very diverse group, and that helps keep things really interesting," Dr. Ziegler noted. "Each of the tours we've taken has been remarkable, each with its own special 'flavor' and appeal. This one is no different," she added. "As for me, I have come home with these amazing images—the thousands of daffodils along the roadsides and in the gardens, and the lush greenness of the hillsides, dotted with sheep and baby lambs—something straight out of *All Creatures Great and Small*." In fact, the tour did pass through the regions where that BBC series, as well as *The Last of the Summer Wine*, are filmed.

Highlights of the tour included a drive around the breathtaking scenery of the Ring of Kerry, along the southern coast of Ireland. Other stops in Ireland included a brief stay in Shannon, Ballybunion, Killarney, Blarney, and finally, Dublin. There the tour members had opportunity to visit Trinity College and view the ancient *Book of Kells*, a personal favorite experi-

ence with Cindy Throgmorton.

From Dublin, the group boarded a ferry to cross the Irish Sea. In spite of a turbulent two-hour crossing, the group arrived safely to enjoy a drive across North Wales' northern coast, and to marvel at the scenic views of Snowdonia National Park. Of special interest was the ancient Beaumaris Castle of North Wales. The tour continued into England and through

the beautiful Lake District, home to Beatrix Potter and to William Wordsworth and the other "Lake poets." This stop was especially appealing to former BRTC English instructor Melody Walker and former high school English teacher Laura Ford.

Traveling north from there, the group then traveled to the Scottish capital, Edinburgh, a rugged but beautiful city built into the hillside. It was this city and its majestic castle on the windy hilltop that held primary attrac-

tion for many of those in the group, including BRTC Financial Aid Director Carolyn Collins. Following an overnight train ride considered "challenging" by most, but identified as a "unique experience I loved!" by Administrative Assistant Vickie

French, the group spent the final leg of the tour in the London area, viewing and visiting St. Paul's Cathedral, Buckingham Palace, the House of Parliament, and many other sites of interest.

BRTC President Richard Gaines picked a visit to London's National

Art Gallery as a personal favorite, saying, "People might be surprised to hear this, but I loved seeing the Reubens and VanGoghs and Rembrandts, something I've never before actually had a chance to do. It was really something, with all that great art there in one place."

Tour members elected to visit either Windsor Palace or Stonehenge and Bath. The "mystique" of the ancient stone formation on the Plains of Salisbury, and the wonder of how and why

these stones were placed as they were by their builders some 5,000 years ago was one of the top experiences of traveler James Throgmorton.

Throughout the experience, the EF tour guide and the various city guides provided orientation and historical information.

In addition to President Gaines, Collins, Dr. Ziegler, French, Walker, Ford and the Throgmortons, others attending included the following: Patti Gaines, BRTC Board of Trustees member Mike Dunn and grandchildren Joanna Dunn of Danville, Kentucky, and Nathan Dunn of Nashville Tennessee, Phil Collins, Tommy and Polly O'Donnell, James and Debbie McCurter, Dexter Kimbrough, Butch Smith, Elise Throgmorton and Ken Ziegler, all of Pocahontas, Joyce Moon of Ravenden, Brian and Kathy Ulrey of Bentonville, Barbara Mize of Little Rock, Willene Throgmorton of Canton, Ohio, and Linda Sharp of Jonesboro.

The college's tenth annual education tour will be to Spain, southern France, and Italy during spring break of 2005. This trip features visits to Madrid, Barcelona, the French Riviera, Pisa, Rome, and Florence, with an optional extension to Pompeii and Capri. Registration is now ongoing, and the group number will be limited to 30 participants. Interested persons should contact Dr. Ziegler at 870-248-4000.



Mike Dunn of Pocahontas pictured with grandchildren, left, Joanna Dunn of Danville, KY, and right, Nathan Dunn of Knoxville, TN, in front of Blarney Castle in Ireland.

Board Cont'd from Page 1

hours for which students are charged tuition is also in keeping with action at other colleges. Currently, there is a 15 credit-hour cap on the number of hours for which tuition is charged. Under the new policy, in effect for the Fall 2004 semester, students will be assessed tuition for the exact number of credit hours in which they are enrolled.

BRTC President Richard Gaines updated the Board on current con-

struction projects. He stated that the work has been completed on the HVAC systems in the Randolph County Development Center and in the main Administration Building, and that the addition to the Fire Science facility near Walnut Ridge is 75% complete. President Gaines also announced that bids on the planned new Continuing Education/Adult Education Building will be opened on May 27 at 2 p.m.

The Board also gave its approval to

efforts of the college in applying for a Reynolds Grant for the construction of a major new campus facility to house the technology program and a spacious new student center/cyber center. Dr. Jan Ziegler explained the grant process. She also expressed appreciation to the City of Pocahontas for its support of the project, widely supported for its potential as an economic development tool for this region.

In other action, the Board—

-- approved the employment of classified and non-classified 12-month staff, non-classified faculty, and the college president;

--heard a report from Vice-President for Academics Jack McCord concerning progress on seeking approval to offer an R.N. degree;

--learned from Vice-President Michael Sullens that 74% of BRTC students receive some type of financial aid.

Buxton Gives “Hog Killing” Presentation at Delta Blues Symposium

“Hog Killing in the Delta” was the subject of a presentation given March 25 by Gary Buxton, BRTC English Instructor, at the Tenth Annual Delta Blues Symposium held at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

The presentation was based on a paper he had written entitled *Ethnography of Hog Killing at Eddie Mae Herron Center as It Relates to the*

1930’s and 1940’s: More Than a Squeal.

While writing a paper for an ethnography class he was taking, Buxton was asked to cover and document a hog killing held at the Eddie Mae Herron in February 2003 in celebration of Black History Month. Ethnography is the branch of anthropology that deals with the scientific description of specific human cultures. He incorporated

the event with his paper for the class.

“Hog killing meant celebration and fellowship in addition to furnishing food for winter and for cotton chopping the following summer,” as quoted by Buxton from an interview with Eddie Mae Herron Center Board members and siblings, Melvin Young and Helen McCarroll. According to Buxton, Young and McCarroll remembered hog killing during the



Gary Buxton, English Instructor

1930’s and 1940’s as “a very joyful time – one they looked forward to each year,” because it meant celebration and fellowship among neighbors, both black and white.

Art Students Display Work at Banks

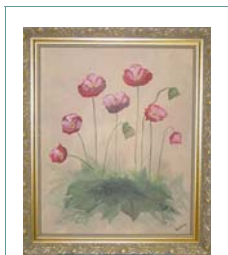
Pieces of art by BRTC’s Painting and Graphic Design students were on display at six local banking institutions during the week of Spring Break. Among those displayed were the paintings *Poppies* by Bootsie Barre and *Still Life* by Midge Baltz, as well as a graphic design, *Orlando Bloom* by Mantha Baltz.

The students are students of Sandy Davis-Baltz, who said the art exhibits have become quite popular. She noted the display of students’ art work is valuable for three reasons:

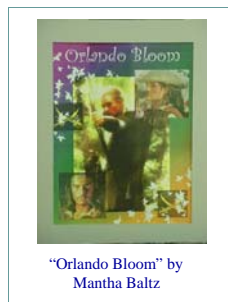
as a community service, as an avenue for students to exhibit their work, and as a means of informing the public of the programs and possibilities provided by the college.



“Still Life” by Midge Baltz



“Poppies” by Bootsie Barre



“Orlando Bloom” by Mantha Baltz

**LETA
Graduation
Friday,
April 9, 2004
11 a.m. in
RCDC**

**Scholarship
Donor
Luncheon
Thursday,
April 22, 2004
11:30 a.m. in
RCDC**

PTK cont’d from page 1

Burnside, Nicholas Caldwell, Regina Cartwright, Christine Cato, and Carol Clark.

Also, Sherrie Davidson, Lisa Dillard, Peggy Doll, Meredith Fluke, Michael Fort, Miranda Hand, Toni Heard, Tisha Henderson, Chris Hoggard, Jasa Haney-Hollis, and James Jenkins.

Also, Felicia Johnson, Heather Johnson, Amanda Little, Jerry Mullins, Michelle Murphy, Holly Parks, Pamela Penn, Julie Perkins, Suzette Persful, Brandon Reid, Paula Rondell, Janet Russom, Jennifer Smith, Robert Smith, Carolyn Staples,



Pictured with inductees are chapter advisors Dr. Linda Moss and Ruth Schaa (standing, from left), and Gary Buxton (standing, right). Also a chapter advisor, but not pictured, is Phillip Dickson.

Ronald Scott Strickland, and Dana Wells.

PTK is recognized by the American Association of Community Col-

leges as the official honor society for two-year colleges.

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Mission Statement

Black River Technical College is an institution of higher learning committed to a partnership with the individual and the global community to provide lifelong learning experiences, seeking always to empower those it serves to achieve their academic, vocational, and personal development goals.

On-line Application address:

<http://connect.blackrivertech.org/nappadm.html>

From the President's Desk



It's no secret that throughout the state of Arkansas, the Lake View case has caused budgetary uncertainties for everyone. Institutions of higher education are certainly watching developments closely as we plan our budgets for the next year. Many institutions have had to make tough decisions regarding next year's tuition rates. I am pleased that we were able to recommend that tuition rates here remain unchanged for another year, and that the Board of Trustees acted accordingly at their most recent meeting. We have worked carefully

to hold tuition as low as possible, but from time to time tuition hikes are necessary.

Most people probably do not realize that this college receives a major portion of its total funding--approximately 70 %--from the state. Thus when state funding declines, as it has in the past couple of years, the impact on this institution is significant. We have limited options for making up revenue declines. However, we want to continue to provide educational opportunities that are within the means of our students, so we are reluctant, as are all colleges, to turn to tuition hikes unless it is necessary that we do so. This time around, that was not a necessity, and I'm pleased we did not have to increase our tuition rate.

I remain convinced that BRTC is a great bargain and a great investment.

'Serendipity' Cont'd from page 1

mini-course topics and potential instructors, scheduling issues, possible benefits of membership, and destinations for in-state travel and outings.

Community Task Force members attending included Betty Born, Vicki Kuykendall, Norma Bowlin, Martha Teaster, Cindi Madison, Frances Brett, John and Marjorie Rhodus, Martha Brown, Margaret Carroll,

James Throgmorton, Mike and Barbara Dunn, Pat Johnson and Pat Lambert. Assisting at the meeting were Sharon Watson of Continuing Education and BRTC Ambassador Meredith Fluke.

Blaxton said a follow-up survey will be sent to the task force members, and an additional development meeting is planned before unveiling this new program.

"Wildlands" class slated

A class designed especially for volunteer firefighters has been scheduled for Monday, April 26, announced BRTC Fire Science instructor Steve Jones. The non-credit class will be offered from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Fire Training Center in Walnut Ridge, and is sponsored by the U. S. Forestry Department.

This course, available at no cost, is a requirement for volunteer firefighters who wish to pursue further training. Those completing the course will receive a certificate.

For further information, contact 873-886-5750, or check the department's website: <http://firetraining.blackrivertech.org/>