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The River's Edge

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Record Number Graduate



May 2004 Graduating Class



Guest Speaker Kaneaster Hodges

A record number of graduates received diplomas during graduation ceremonies held Thursday, May 13, at Randolph County Development Center on the campus of BRTC. Approximately 175 students were recognized for their achievement by BRTC President Richard Gaines, who conferred degrees before a crowd of several hundred.

Guest speaker for the occasion was former U. S. Senator Kaneaster Hodges of Newport. He is also a member of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Tara Johnson, who received an Associate of Applied Science degree in Dietetics, was selected as class spokesman. Also participating in the ceremony were members of the

BRTC Board of Trustees and Registrar Margaret Snapp. Vice President for Academics Jack McCord announced Outstanding Departmental Graduate Awards and recognized members of Phi Theta Kappa and other academic honor graduates.

The event included additionally the pinning ceremony for those completing their Practical Nursing certification.

Important Dates

May 24-25

- Administrative Council Retreat

June 1

- Summer I Classes Begin

June 7-11

- Fall Registration online/current students

June 14

- Fall Registration Open Registration

June 14-17

- Kids College Pocahontas

June 21-25

- Kids College Paragould

July 6

- Summer II Classes Begin



Carol Belford-Lewallen

Carol Belford-Lewallen was confirmed as the newest member of the BRTC Foundation Board at the Board's May 7 meeting. She is Marketing Officer at Bank of Pocahontas. Her appointment to a four-year term brings the number of Foundation Board members to eleven.

"This is a great move for us," said Board Chair Scott Trammel. "With her experience in community work

Belford-Lewallen Named to Foundation Board

and her interest in education, she will be a great asset to this group."

The Foundation Board also welcomed new members John Jackson, Jr., Dr. Rebecca Edwards, and Ralph "Pink" Baltz, along with Mike Dunn, BRTC Board of Trustees Chairman, who is an ex-officio member of the Foundation. All were attending their first meeting of the organization.

Foundation Liaison Dr. Jan Ziegler noted the Foundation Board is undergoing a transformation as development activities become more

crucial for two-year colleges state-wide due to funding issues. She said the transformation will include expansion of the Board to create broader participation, particularly from Clay, Greene, and Lawrence Counties, as well as a Foundation Board workshop scheduled for July 30.

In other major business, the Foundation Board also began planning for the 11th Annual First Community Bank/BRTC Golf Tournament, slated for October 2 at Rolling Hills

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Scholarships Announced

Several area students have accepted scholarships to BRTC for the Fall 2004 semester. Scholarships awarded include Academic Distinction Scholarships, President's Scholarships, and privately funded scholarships. A number of scholarships funded by the BRTC Foundation remain open, and interested persons are urged to contact the Office of Financial Aid (870-248-4000) for further information.

Academic Distinction Scholarships are awarded to students who score 24 or higher on the ACT, or who place in the top ten percent of their graduating class. The scholarships cover the cost of tuition. Those awarded these scholarships include Rachel Hampton, daughter of Sue Ann

Hampton and the late Eddie Hampton, Sr., of Walnut Ridge; Ashley Hufstедler, daughter of Dina Hufstедler of Walnut Ridge and Cliff Hufstедler of Warm Springs; Shelby Jines, daughter of Brenda Jines and the late Greg Jines of Smithville; Jarrod Bishop (not pictured), son of Tim and Betsy Bishop of Paragould; and Holly Bell, niece of Richard and Marilyn Bell of Strawberry.

Hampton, who will graduate this month from Hoxie, plans to complete an AA degree in Criminal Justice, and then transfer to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Criminology. Hufstедler, who is graduating this month from Walnut Ridge, will take college transfer classes and then plans to study Endocrinology. A

prospective graduate of Sloan-Hendrix High School, Jines plans to study nursing, eventually pursuing an RN degree. A prospective Greene County Tech graduate, Bishop's plans are to major in Nursing. Bell, an upcoming River Valley High School graduate, plans to complete an AA degree from BRTC, and then transfer to a university where she will study Veterinary Medicine.

The Bank of Pocahontas Harry A. Belford Memorial Scholarship has been awarded to Jace Kincade, son of Steve and Leesha Kincade. This full tuition scholarship is for two consecutive semesters at BRTC, where Jace will complete college transfer classes before pursuing a degree in agriculture.

BRTC President's scholarships have been awarded to Jeremy Brock and Cody McGrew. Brock is a 2002 Westside graduate. The son of William and Kay Brock of Bono, Brock will enter the Industrial Electricity/Electronics program at BRTC. McGrew, who will graduate this month from Corning, plans to major in Networking. He is the son of Jim and Angie McGrew.

A BRTC Foundation Technical Education Scholarship has been awarded to Daniel Cline, son of Charlie and Doris Cline of Pocahontas. Cline, who will graduate in May from Maynard, will enter the Dietetics program at BRTC.



Holly Bell



Jeremy Brock



Daniel Cline



Rachel Hampton



Ashley Hufstедler



Shelby Jines



Jace Kincade



Cody McGrew

Halford Finds "Paper Route" Ideal Summer Job

Like many BRTC students this time of the year, Debra Halford can hardly wait for the summer break. She will leave behind her book-filled roller bag, pack her car with her two sons and enough clothing to last the entire summer, and head north. From the end of May through mid-August, Debra will deliver newspapers in Michigan's lower peninsula, bringing the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journals* and the like to businesses in and around the resort towns of Travers City, Harbor Springs, Charlevoix, and Petosky.

Halford, who is 40-something and now in the Associate of Arts degree program at BRTC, is unabashedly enthusiastic about her rather unconventional summer job. "I love it!" she says. "It's good money, and I

use this along with my Pell to pay my expenses through the next year of college."

The Michigan native grew up in the Ann Arbor area. She worked a variety of jobs—travel industry, meat cutting, insurance and others—and gradually made her way to Tulsa, Oklahoma, and eventually to Corning, where her parents owned a home. Her parents still have property in Michigan, and her brother James oversees ten paper route drivers. For the past two summers, Debra has worked for her

brother as "seasonal help" in this area known for its golf courses and lakes. An influx of summer tourists means increased demand for newspapers of national scope, and Debra is

happy to be a part of this supply-and-demand chain.

"I can make \$150 or so for six hours of work," she explains. The work day varies, sometimes lasting just a few hours, and may involve working evenings.

On Sundays, she notes, it's not unusual to deliver to her business customers 500 papers total.

Sometimes her sons, ages 13 and

15, are involved, earning money themselves by helping out with their uncle's business, or helping their mother.

It is, in fact, the opportunity to take her sons to what Debra calls "a whole different culture" that makes her summer job particularly appealing. "There's so much to do—every town has some sort of summer festival—and we might just do something like spend the day at Mackinaw Island—it's just a lot of fun to get away. It's a chance to take my kids on vacation."

She will return to BRTC for another twelve hours next fall, refreshed and enriched, trading in her paper route to continue a quest for what will eventually become a teaching degree in history.



Debra Halford

Rice-Upshaw House Oldest in State

It's official. The Rice-Upshaw house located near Dalton is "the oldest known structure still standing in the state of Arkansas." Preservation consultant Joan Gould of Fayetteville made the public announcement to an audience of interested residents, including many descendants of the Rice-Upshaw families, at a presentation May 1 at BRTC. Also attending were BRTC students who had participated in the research project.

The presentation included a comprehensive report of the Early Arkansas Settlement Study, 2003-2004, which included not only the Rice-Upshaw house, but also the Looney-French house lo-

cated across the Eleven Point River from the Rice-Upshaw structure, and the Foster-Riggs house in the Attica Community. All three home sites yielded findings which "will be of interest to numerous humanities scholars, particularly in the field of history, art history, folklore, anthropology, geography, architecture and archeology as well as local studies," according to Gould's summary report. The findings went "way be-

yond" the anticipated outcome, she said, and brought scientists and researchers back again and again to Randolph County because of the "significant findings re-

lated to history, architecture and archeology," she added.

Dendrochronology (or tree-ring dating) studies conducted by Dr. David Stahle, Director of the Tree-Ring Laboratory at University of Arkansas, indicate the Rice-Upshaw house was constructed in 1828 with virgin timber harvested sometime in 1826. The Looney-French house, according to the studies, was constructed in late 1933 or 1934 from virgin timber felled between 1831-1833. The Foster-Riggs (James Russell House) appears to have been erected in 1872-73, from timbers felled in 1871-1872.

Gould noted an important next step is to apply for inclusion of the Rice-Upshaw and Looney-French houses on the National Register of Historic Places; she explained the Foster-Riggs house in its present condition is not eligible for inclusion because it is covered by a synthetic siding. However, this site, too, is of major historic importance to Randolph County, she added, and a barn on the farmstead would be eligible for listing on the register.



Erma Ulmer, librarian, is pictured with BRTC's copy of the publication compiled in conjunction with the Early Arkansas Settlement Study. BRTC student essay excerpts and student art work is included in the book.



Freshman English Student Dawn Horton (left) and art student Johanna Smith (right) are pictured with Joan Gould, Historic Preservationist

Stahle's report points out that "the Rice-Upshaw Farmstead is an ideal candidate for historic preservation considering the good condition of the wall logs and rafters, the high quality log construction, direct accessibility via state highway 93, and the fact that this is the oldest known standing structure in Arkansas and representative of the first wave of permanent European settlement."

The homeowners are Jack and
con't on page 4

Fun Before Finals

BRTC's first annual "Fun Before Finals" day drew high praise from students and staff who celebrated the nearing close of the spring semester on May 5. The event, sponsored by BRTC, was held east of the BRTC Bookstore, and featured food, music and lots of good-natured sport.

Teams of students, faculty, and staff members joined in volleyball and horseshoe pitching contests, while others enjoyed the role of spectator, or generally just "kicked back" for a few hours of stress-free fun. The following local merchants provided prizes: Watco Services, Tool Central, The Studio for the Arts and Scentations. Barnes Sign Company donated the award ribbons, and BRTC provided promotional prizes.

The winning volleyball team was composed of Carl Hawkins, Mike

Greene, Malissa Wren, Dina Hufstedler, Travis DeClerk and Phillip Dickson. Winners of the horseshoe competition were John Utage and Jim Milam.

Radio KPOC was on hand for a remote broadcast of the event. Bank of Pochontas provided free hot dogs and the college provided drinks.

Event Chair Dr. Roger Johnson, Division Chair for Gen Ed, said "The participation of BRTC staff, faculty and students ensured the success of our first 'Fun Before Finals.'" He expressed his appreciation to the committee members Janna Guthrie, Janette Crawford, Kim White, Carl Hawkins, Tina Harris, Joniece Trammel, Courtney Clements, and Regina Moore, and to the many other faculty and staff members who assisted in various ways.



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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 Rice-Upshaw cont'd from page 1



Richard Gaines

This is always a very busy and a very exciting time of the year for the College, and this year was no exception. Graduation this spring was a special high point for BRTC and for the communities we serve, since an all-time record number of students—about 175—received their diplomas for completion of their associate degrees and certificates.

Our guest speaker, former U. S. Senator Kaneaster Hodges of Newport, delivered an upbeat message to the graduates and to the standing-room only crowd. He urged them to

never stop learning, noting that in many professions, half of what they have learned may be outdated within five years. He also reminded them that completing that degree or certificate would mean an increase of several hundred thousands of dollars during their working lifetime. A member of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, he stressed to the graduates the importance of never giving up on things they really believe in, and he cited the cases of FedEx and Sam Walton as perfect examples of what can happen if we hold on to our dreams. The distinguished guest speaker closed by reminding the graduates that they now are part of a long line of those who, throughout history, have pursued a higher education degree, and that they should never “take a back seat” to anyone with regard to their degree. How true: these were inspiring and wise words from an inspiring and wise man.

Rice-Upshaw cont'd from page 1

Christina French, Ronald and Nancy Riggs, and Dorothy Jean Upshaw. It was the cooperation of these families and others, including family descendants of original settlers, Randolph and Lawrence County historical societies and residents and staff of the Powhatan Courthouse State Park Archives, that resulted in the expanded findings, far beyond what had been originally anticipated, Gould noted.

Her presentation included numerous slides of the sites and of the scientists at work, as well as student drawings and excerpts from the essays of participating BRTC students.

The student work is included also in a comprehensive summary report Gould prepared. Copies of the report may be viewed locally at the BRTC Library, Randolph County Library, or by contacting the Randolph County Historical Society.

State agencies participating included Arkansas Archeology Survey, Arkansas Historic Preservation Alliance of Arkansas and BRTC. The project was funded in part by the Arkansas Humanities Council and the Department of Arkansas Heritage. The presentation was sponsored by BRTC's Department of Continuing Education.

Belford-Lewallen cont'd from page 1

Country Club. This event, explained tournament coordinator Jim Ulmer, is a major fundraiser for the Foundation and supports student scholar-

ships and other college events. For the second year, the golf tournament is supported by a \$10,000 donation by First Community Bank.