



# The River's Edge

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## LETA's 15<sup>th</sup> Graduation Held

BRTC's Law Enforcement Training Academy held its 15<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony November 17 in the Randolph County Development Center for 53 officers who completed the police basic training course. One officer, Patricia Swain of the Quitman Police Department, completed a 121-hour "refresher course," and 52 officers completed the full 13-week, 589-hour course, which includes instruction in standard police tactics, firearms, legal, educational and technical skills, and practical exercises.

Swain, a 1983 graduate of the FBI National Academy, retired from the Shelby County Sheriff's Office in Memphis, Tennessee in 2002 after 28 years of service. She is now working as a School Resource Officer for the Quitman Police Department, and she completed the refresher course to obtain Arkansas certification.

During the ceremony, awards were presented to the

top three students based on average scores in each of the following categories: Physical Training, Academic,

Firearms, and Overall. Tracy Whitaker of the Paragould Police Department was named Overall Top Student based on having the highest average score of academics, firearms, and physical training. He also received the Top Physical Training Award.

Dustin J. Morgan, also with the Paragould Police Department, received the Top Academic Award, and Caleb Barkley of the Jonesboro Police Department received the Top Firearms Award.

Circuit Judge Harold Erwin of Newport served as guest speaker, and Jonathan Tubbs with the Tuckerman Police Department was the class spokesman.

John Vorhees of the Greene County Sheriff's Office played the bagpipes during the processional and recessional.



*Circuit Judge Harold Erwin*

### Important Dates

**December 10**

*RN Pinning Ceremony*

**December 13**

*PN Pinning Ceremony*

**December 14**

*Graduation*

**December 15**

*Faculty/Staff Potluck*

**December 19**

*ASSET Test*

**December 21—January 1**

*Offices Closed for Christmas Break*

**January 8**

*Classes Begin*

## Project REACH Draws Interest



*Tommy Jameson*

Project REACH (Researching Early Arkansas Culture and History) enthusiasts turned out at a public meeting November 14 on the campus

of BRTC. The subject of the meeting was the planned preservation and restoration of two historic structures, the Rice-Upshaw house and the Looney-French house, both located in the Eleven Point River Valley. The structures were built by some of the county's earliest settlers, Reuben Rice and William Looney. Looney and his slaves arrived in Randolph County in 1802, while Rice and other family members, relatives of the Looneys, arrived in 1812.

Family descendants had maintained possession of the houses before deeding them to the college for preservation earlier this year.

Project Architect Tommy

Jameson of Little Rock and Project Historical Consultant Joan Gould of Fayetteville were on hand to explain work done to date, and to hear ideas and suggestions from audience members. BRTC is in the first phase of the project, which entails historic, architectural and archaeological study and development of a master plan and Historic Structure Report. Other phases will follow, pending receipt of further grants.

Members of the audience signaled their support for the eventual restoration of the log structures for their potential educational value, as

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## Kimbrough Choir Participates at Festival



Members of BRTC's Kimbrough Choir perform at a two-year college choral festival at University of Arkansas-Fort Smith.

BRTC's Kimbrough Choir recently traveled to Fort Smith to participate in the Fifth Annual Two-Year College Choral Festival held at the University of Arkansas - Fort Smith campus. Seven choirs from two-year colleges around Arkansas and Kansas performed at the event.

According to Director Joniece Trammel, the festival was not a competition, but rather a celebration of music. "The intent was to inspire and encourage," said Trammel "and to share the beauty of each piece rather than compete with the other

choirs." The group sang *Benadictus* and *Angel's Gloria* for the small group performances, and joined the other choirs for a mass performance directed by Tom Lippert, UofA-Fort Smith Music Director.

The trip was funded in part through the SEAS (Special Event and Activity Support) Fund of the BRTC Foundation. The Kimbrough Choir is comprised of BRTC students as well as members of the community. Anyone interested in participating may contact Trammel at 870-248-4000, ext. 4187.

## 'Not too early' to Make College Choices

Though final exams for the Fall 2006 semester are just beginning, it is "not too early" to be making decisions about college for the Fall 2007 semester, according to BRTC Recruiter Joniece Trammel. In fact, many students are deciding early, including Kristal Harvey and DeCora Penny, both seniors at Oak Ridge Central. The two say they plan to major in nursing at BRTC.

Harvey and Penny toured the campus last week, accompanied by Trammel, along with two current BRTC students and fellow ORC graduates, Travis Bonner, who is majoring in Industrial Maintenance, and Chris Bates, majoring in Aviation.

The decision is an easy one, the

girls say, because they want to attend a college that is small and close to home. "And price," added Harvey. "The cost is important, too."

Campus tours as well as visits to area high schools keep Trammel busy from now until the end of the spring semester. Between now and Christmas break, she will visit schools at Doniphan, Kennett, Naylor and Neeleyville, Missouri, and Pocahontas.

Other schools who have either sent students to tour

the campus or have hosted Trammel and others during the fall semester include Marmaduke, Batesville, Delaplaine, Tuckerman, Williford, Sloan-Hendrix, Black Rock, Walnut Ridge, Maynard, Piggott, Rector, Hoxie, and Paragould.



Pictured back row, from left, Chris Bates and Travis Bonner. Front row, from left, Kristal Harvey and DeCora Penny

## Country Feast Enhances Learning Experience



World Civilization student Paul Ferrell talks about France.

Students in Western Civilization, Dietetics, Drawing I and De-

sign I classes at BRTC recently enjoyed a Country Feast as part of a learning experience engineered by Dr. Sandy Davis-Baltz, Instructor. "I wanted the students to experience a more enjoyable and interactive way of learning than the traditional classroom lecture," said Baltz. "The Country Feast was created as a way of enhancing the learning experience and encouraging participation and cooperation among the students."

The multicultural event featured a feast of foods and artwork from different countries and was a collaborative effort between the classes. The World Civilization class presented facts about various nations,

and the Drawing and Design classes provided the artwork from the specific regions. Authentic recipes representing each region were researched and prepared by Dietetic students under the direction of Tina Harris, Dietetic Manager. The college's administrators were special guests at the event.

According to Baltz, this was the third semester for the feast to be held. "We plan to hold a Country Feast each semester as long as it continues to be successful and enjoyed by the participants," noted Baltz. "The instructors feel that the students benefit from the event by



World Civilization student Shellie Callan talks about Mongolia.

learning about the different cultures, their artwork, and their food."

## Third Time's a Charm for LETA Graduate



*Kevin Eddings on the firing range during LETA's firearms training.*

The third time is a charm for Kevin Eddings of Paragould who graduated from BRTC's Law Enforcement Training Academy November 17. After earning both a certificate in Machine Shop and an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice from Black River Technical College, Eddings is finally realizing a life-long dream of working in law enforcement with his graduation from the academy.

"I had always wanted to follow in the footsteps of my father and grandfather who both worked in law en-

forcement with the Greene county Sheriff's Department," said Eddings. "But, factory work seemed to be where my best opportunities were in the beginning."

Eddings first attended BRTC while working at Darling Manufacturing in Paragould, a job he began after graduating from Greene County Tech High School in 1990. He worked during the day and took classes at night in pursuit of his Machine Shop Certificate, which earned him a promotion into a tool and die maker position. After 12 years with Darling, the manufacturing plant downsized, forcing Eddings out of a job. He began looking once again into his employment and training options.

Through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reform Act (TAA), Eddings returned to BRTC to pursue a different avenue of training – Criminal Justice – where his heart was all along. TAA is a program through the U.S. Department of Labor that assists with "retraining" dislocated workers, according to Elise Cater,

BRTC Registrar. "TAA provides funds for tuition, books, supplies, and other related costs associated with workers pursuing additional education and training."

After graduating from BRTC in December 2005, this time with an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice, Eddings began working as an officer with the Paragould Police Department. In less than a year, he was back at BRTC for a third round to complete his basic police training at the academy. "He worked with us for almost a year before enrolling in the academy," said Paragould Police Captain Todd Stovall. "He is a good officer who works well with others and is always eager to work on off-duty projects such as D.A.R.E. He is an asset to the department and we are proud to have him."

Eddings, who is married and has two daughters, believes he is now embarked on a great career – one that he has always dreamed of. The basic police training course is required of all law enforcement officers, and Eddings is pleased to have completed

this final step. "My whole experience at BRTC has been great" he expressed. "The instructors, the staff, the school...everyone and everything about it has been great, and I can't say thanks enough to everyone who helped me get to this point."



*Kevin Eddings, with acting Director Mike Doyle, shows the diploma he received at LETA graduation.*

**BRTC  
Graduation**  
*December 14, 2006  
7:00 p.m. RCDC*

## Area Students Attend Career Day at BRTC

BRTC's Fire Science and EMT/Paramedic Training Center in Walnut Ridge hosted a Career Day on November 15, according to Recruiter Joniece Trammel. Approximately twenty high school seniors from Black Rock, Walnut Ridge, Greene County Tech, Westside, Harrisburg, Cave City, Pollard, and Poplar Bluff, Missouri, attended.

During the event, students experienced an automobile extrication, a live burn demonstration, an on-the-scene emergency management demonstration, and a demonstration of emergency medical procedures used on patients. Students also toured the BRTC campus in Pocahontas.



"The purpose of the Career Day is to allow students interested in a Fire Science or EMT/Paramedic career to experience a brief segment of the training involved in these areas," Trammel explained, "and to provide interested students with a better understanding of these careers."

## Nolte Joins BRTC Staff

Debbie Nolte of Pocahontas has joined the BRTC maintenance staff as Custodial II worker on second shift.

A 1982 graduate of Marianna

High School, Nolte moved to Pocahontas 16 years ago where she now resides with her daughter. She has worked for the past three and a half years as a laundry aid at Lawrence Memorial Hospital in Walnut Ridge.



*Debbie Nolte*

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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.*

*The River's Edge is produced by the  
Office of Development.*

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## From the President's Desk



**Richard Gaines**

The importance of the BRTC Foundation in our institution was underscored by a recent report published by the National Conference of State Legislatures. The report, *Transforming Higher Education: National Imperative – State Responsibility*, shows that tuition is outpacing financial aid opportunities for post-secondary students causing a “higher education crisis in this country.” According to the report, post-secondary education is not accessible to many Americans because tuition

and fees are skyrocketing and financial aid and loan programs aren't keeping up.

It is worth noting that members of the Foundation Board spent a day last week in a training workshop showing their commitment to the needs of our college and its students. I applaud this sort of dedication and giving of time by the all-volunteer members, especially in the face of growing financial burdens placed on students as indicated by NCSL's Blue Ribbon Commission on Higher Education study.

State legislators are being asked to take an active role in this nationwide movement to “identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current system, determine a public agenda for higher education, set clear goals, and hold institutions accountable.” BRTC's Foundation will continue to play an important role in the college by assisting students with their financial aid needs.

## Spring Registration

**Returning Students**

*November 13 - January 12*

**First-time Entering and Transfer Students**

*November 27 - December 8*

*January 2 - January 12*

## REACH

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well as their value in the promotion of historic and cultural tourism to the region.

The Rice-Upshaw house, constructed in 1828, is the oldest documented structure of its type still in existence in Arkansas, while the Looney-French house, formerly used as an inn/tavern, dates to 1833, making it also among the oldest structures of its type in the state.

The project, both during and after the restoration process, will offer study opportunities for students at all levels and in varied academic disciplines.

Many audience members were descendants of the Rice, Looney, or Stubblefield families.

Of special interest at the meeting was the display of quilts dating to the post-Civil War era belonging to Alma Smith. She was born in 1915 and is the great-great-granddaughter of both Reuben Rice and William Looney. At least one of the quilts is believed to have been made by Margaret (Rice) Jackson (1845-1923) who was a granddaughter of Reuben Rice. Smith was among family descendants present at the meeting.