



The River's Edge

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Important Dates

December 5 - 11

Final Exams

December 10

RT Pinning Ceremony

December 11

RN Pinning Ceremony

December 13

Graduation

December 14

Employee Potluck

December 20 – January 1

Christmas Holidays Campus Closed

January 3

Orientation

January 7

Classes Begin

Foundation Adds New Member, Plans Gala

The BRTC Foundation Board has added to its ranks Kevin Rose, Vice President Commercial Relationship Manager of Pulaski Bank. Rose has been active in supporting the college and Foundation efforts, including the annual Golf Tournament, in the past several years. Foundation Board Chair Mike Miller said at the November 30 meeting that he wholeheartedly applauds the decision to name Rose to the Foundation Board. "He has proved to be a great asset and a great worker, and I know we can look for more good things to come from Kevin."



Kevin Rose

The Foundation Board consists of sixteen appointed members, including two members of the BRTC Board of Trustees, and four ex-officio staff members. The Foundation serves as the fundraising entity of BRTC, and supports the College and its mission in many ways, such as funding campaigns and activities.

The next major fundraising event, the Foundation Gala, was also on the agenda for the day's meeting. The Gala has been set for Tuesday, February 26, beginning at 6 p.m., in Randolph County Development Center. Gala

Chair Mike Dunn said the evening will include an elegant, sit-down dinner with entertainment provided by Vicki Bishop of Paragould as vocalist. The event this year will include a silent and live auction, with unique and special items available, Dunn said.

Among the auction items listed to date are a thirty-minute personalized flight around Pocahontas in a vintage 1941 Stearman, courtesy of Steve Manley; a trail ride and "Cowboy Lunch" for two, courtesy of Richard and Patti Gaines and Jim Rex and Loretta Williams; a "Run for the Roses" Brunch for eight courtesy of Drs. Warren and Martie Shull, hosts; a specially catered and served four-course dinner for eight in the home of the winning bidder, courtesy of René Tyler, CPA; a John Deere Pedal Tractor, courtesy of Mike Dunn; an Impressionist-style painting by Dr. Sandy Davis-Baltz, courtesy of Dr. Jan Ziegler; and hand-painted glassware by Nancy Roberts. Numerous additional items will be announced.

Tickets to the fundraiser will soon be available from BRTC Foundation members, or by phoning Vickie French at 870-248-4070. The cost is \$100 per couple.

Shirley Clifton Strives For Goals

Nearing her 60th birthday, Shirley Clifton of Rector has found herself seeking a college education after her 33 year career with the same employer came to an end.

Clifton is one of several dislocated workers from Rector Sportswear now attending classes at Black River Technical College after the factory shut its doors last year.

"I knew I did not want to go back to work in another factory," said Clifton, "so I decided to pursue a college



Shirley Clifton

degree. It has really taken discipline and I've really had to apply myself to return to school after all these years."

Growing up the daughter of migrant workers, Clifton moved around most of her young life which made getting an education difficult. "I changed schools about four times per year, all during a 9-month period," she explained. "We continuously moved between Rector, Arizona, and Michigan, following the work of the season."

Clifton married by the age of 17, but she still had a goal of completing her education, just not at that time. "That was one of my father's wishes," Clifton said referring to her getting an education. "He only attended school through the second grade and he really wanted to

(Continued on page 3)

Orientation Now Required for New Students



BRTC Registrar Kimberly Bigger, seated, assists a new student with the orientation process.

BRTC recently held its first sessions of the newly required "student orientation." Beginning with registration for the Spring 2008 semester, student orientation will now be required for new or transferring students, according to Dr. Roger Johnson, Division Chair for Academics.

Johnson explained that the reason

for implementing the student orientation process is to better prepare first-time BRTC students to deal with situations such as schedules, online classes, financial aid, etc. "Hopefully, students that are more knowledgeable about the 'workings' of BRTC will be more successful with their educational goals."

Students had a choice of three dates to attend orientation for the upcoming semester. The first two sessions were held November 26 and 27 with a total of 81 students participating. The next session is scheduled for Thursday, January 3.

"The students were extremely receptive to our newly implemented orientation," said Johnson. "Many stated that they did not realize the variety and quantity of class offerings at BRTC, and they were also surprised at the number of potential financial aid possibilities. Overall, I felt that orientation was a great success and we received several favorable comments from students."

The January 3 full day event will be held in Randolph County Development Center with registration from 8:00-8:30 a.m. Students unable to attend the session may complete orientation online. Once students have completed orientation and submitted the required documents to the Office of Student Services, they may enroll in the spring semester classes. Required documents include



Priscilla Stillwell, instructor, speaks to new students

a completed application, high school transcript or GED scores, transcript from any post-secondary institution attended, ASSET and/or ACT scores, copy of driver's license, and proof of immunization against measles and rubella, and an MMR booster for students born on or after January 1, 1957.

For more information contact Student Services at 870-248-4000.

Students In Campus, Community Activities

A bank exhibit and Country Feast are two projects that students of Dr. Sandy Davis-Baltz participate in each year under her direction. Both events took place in the past few weeks.

The work of Art students in Drawing I and Design I were on display in area banks November 13-19. The banks participating were Bank of Pocahontas (both branches), Bancorp South, Pulaski Bank, First National Bank, and the Pocahontas branch of Coming Savings and Loan.

The Country Feast, held November 29 in RCDC, included participation of Baltz' World Civilization

class in addition to students from Drawing I and Design I and past Graphic Design students, and students in Tina Harris' Dietary Managers class.

The feast was a culmination of research papers, artwork, and authentic dishes representing ten different countries the World Civ students had been studying this semester. Dr. Roger Johnson, Dr. Martie Shull, and Angie Caldwell were special guests.

"Both projects are held each semester by students of these classes," said Baltz, and "each project is a great way for students to showcase their talents."





Kimbrough Choir in Holiday Performances

BRTC's Kimbrough Choir performed a selection of Christmas music for staff and students in the lounge of the administration building on Wednesday, Nov. 28. Selections included traditional and specialty songs, including a spiritual, "Born in Bethlehem," accompanied by guest performer Josh Talley on conga drums.

Members of a quintet then traveled to both Elmcroft Assisted Living Facility and Pocahontas Rehabilitation Center for performances. The quintet consisted of Joyce Rose, Joniece Trammel, Whitney Caldwell, J.R. Briggs, and Jake Cooper.

The choir also performed at the recent Community Thanksgiving service held at Great

Harvest Church.

The next scheduled performance of the Kimbrough Choir will be December 8 at the Old Court House on the square in Pocahontas as part of the annual downtown Christmas festivities.

The choir is directed by Joniece Trammel, with Glenda Blasini as accompanist.



Nick Lee (left), Human Resources Manager and Steve Engelken (right), Operations Manager for Bosch, present donation to BRTC President Richard Gaines.

Bosch Continues to Support BRTC

Robert Bosch Tool Company has donated \$2,500 to the BRTC Foundation for use as needed in support of the students. Bosch representatives presenting the gift to President Richard Gaines on November 20 were Steve Engelken, Operations Manager, and Nick Lee, Human Resources Manager.

The tool company currently employs 120 at its Walnut Ridge facility. Their annual contributions have provided new furnishings and remodeling for the student lounge areas on campus.

President Gaines expressed his appreciation to the company for its continued support of the college and the students.

Agencies Benefit from PTK

BRTC's chapter of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society recently collected items to donate to local organizations as part of the group's yearly charitable giving activities.

Members began a campus-wide drive at the beginning of November for non-perishable food items and stuffed animals. The community was also invited to participate. They collected food items to donate to the local food bank and collected stuffed animals to donate to area emergency response agencies for use in situations involving young children, according to Dr. Linda Moss, PTK Advisor.

PTK President Jonathan Bennett and Vice-Presidents Terri Milburn and Whitney Crouch worked Friday to prepare items for delivery. Crouch and Bennett, along with Moss, made deliveries to the Randolph County Sheriff's Department, Medic One, and some local fire departments, with more deliveries planned for other agencies in the area.

"I would like to thank all who participated in these worthwhile projects and donated so generously," said Moss. "Because we received so many stuffed animals – a truck load – more agencies will benefit. We will also be able to use some for our Nursing Home Christmas project."



Jonathan Bennett, Sheriff Gary Tribble, Dr. Linda Moss, and Student Whitney Crouch, show gifts collected by PTK.

Clifton (Continued from Page 1)

see his children complete school. So, that was a goal for me and for him." That goal was reached when she received her GED in 1978. Now, 29 years later, she is back in school working towards a Business Technology in Administrative Services degree. "My objective is to train for a job in a medical office of some sort," Clifton explained. "It hasn't been easy. I've stressed and cried at times, because it has been so difficult. I've certainly had to apply myself more."

Her instructors would agree that she does get very concerned when she doesn't do well on something. But, they also agree that Clifton is very dedicated and determined and is doing remarkably well in her classes. "With a factory job, you clocked out and went home and that was it," Clifton stated. "That's not the case with school. When you leave school, your work is just beginning." She works part time at Wal-Mart and said she works hard to complete her homework before going to work. If she doesn't, she stays up half the night after work, or as long as it takes to get it done.

"Without the support of my husband, I couldn't do it," Clifton added. "He not only continues to encourage me when I question whether I've made the right decision or not, but he also helps in other ways, such as with laundry."

"I wish I would have had this opportunity when I was younger," she said. "But, however difficult it may be, I'm still glad to have the opportunity at any age to earn a degree."

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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.

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From the President's Desk



Richard Gaines

As we near the end of the semester, there is a certain amount of excitement around the campus—students and staff alike. For most students, there is the obvious relief at having completed the coursework and enjoying a few weeks free of the pressures of assignments and tests. For many, this time is especially exciting. Those who have completed their certificates and degrees are looking to the next chapter, whether that be continuing their education at a four-year university or entering the workforce. The semester's end is

particularly gratifying for a group of people who have been on our campus here and at Paragould. Those are the dislocated workers from Waterloo and from other closed industries. We often share their stories in *The River's Edge*, because we think they are inspiring and instructional. We recently featured Mary Morgan of Pocahontas, a former Waterloo employee and now a Dietetics major. In this issue, we are featuring Shirley Clifton of Rector, a former Rector Sportswear employee.

BRTC and its staff are committed to doing everything possible to ensure the success of the many Marys and Shirleys we have enrolled here. College work comes "easy" to very few people. I suspect it may be especially difficult for those who have been out of an educational setting, like so many dislocated workers, for twenty or thirty years. That's why, when our dislocated workers succeed, their cause for excitement and celebration is so high. All of us at BRTC celebrate with them.

Fall 2007 Graduation
December 13 - 7:00 p.m.

RCDC

Guest Speaker:
Dick Trammel



MSSPS Silent Auction

Janna Guthrey, Chairman of the Mary Sallee Single Parent Scholarship committee, is collecting donations for the annual auction to be held during the staff potluck December 14. All proceeds from the auction will go to the MSSPS fund.