



The River's Edge

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REACH Meeting Draws Large Audience



Dr. Linda Moss, Sean Seawell and his mother Barbara Seawell talk to Kathy Cande, Archeologist with AAS at REACH public meeting.

cal College to restore two territorial-era log structures donated to BRTC. The structures were built by early settlers Reuben Rice and William Looney in 1828 and 1833, respectively.

Among the guests were Jean Upshaw and family members, donors of the Rice House, and Jack and Christina French and family members, donors of the Looney Tavern. Many other descendants of the Rice and Looney families were also in attendance.

In addition to the panel presentations, guests had opportunity to view artifacts recovered at the Rice House, as well as exhibits of tools used by the log specialist and stone mason, and the unveiling of a pictorial history exhibit designed by Ann French, Director of Marketing and PR, showing REACH activities to date. The evening also included the premiering of two video presentations, one an overview of the project produced for BRTC by Ivy Tech Community College staff, and a second on the log replacement process produced by Amber Sarhan, Secretary for the Office of Development.

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Important Dates

November 26

Gaines Scholarship Application Deadline

December 8

RN Pinning Ceremony

December 9

PN Pinning Ceremony

December 11

BRTC Graduation

December 12

Faculty/Staff Potluck

January 12

Classes Begin

February 24

Foundation Gala

March 3

Holocaust Survivor Visit

'Growing Strong' Campaign Seeks Pledges

Readers of *The River's Edge* are asked to consider becoming a donor in support of BRTC through the 'Growing Strong '08' Annual Campaign, announced campaign Co-Chair Ruth Ann Ellis. The annual campaign offers opportunities to give in specified categories, including scholarships or special areas, or to give to the college in an unrestricted category.

"No amount of donation or pledge is too small," Ellis said. "When the Foundation Board launched this campaign, we decided that wide participation rather than a specified dollar amount is our goal." Ellis is a member of the BRTC Foundation Board, which is conducting the campaign. Donations to the BRTC Foundation campaign are tax deductible.

Those who give through this campaign receive a desk plaque designating their status as a supporter of BRTC.

"We have already exceeded last year's campaign,"

Ellis said. "I encourage others, especially those who receive the college newsletter, to join this worthwhile effort. We all know that colleges are only partially funded by tax dollars. The more we can help, the more the college can keep costs for students lower, and the more services and programs they can provide for the students and the entire community."



Ruth Ann Ellis, Campaign co-chair, displays plaque.

Pledge cards and envelopes are enclosed in this issue of the newsletter. For more information, contact Dr. Jan Ziegler, VP for Development, at 870-248-4000.

LETA Ceremony Honors 39 Graduates



Ark. A. G. Dustin McDaniel

Attorney General Dustin McDaniel addressed 39 officers from around the state during BRTC's Law Enforcement Training Academy graduation ceremony held November 14 in the Randolph County Development Center. He reminded the graduates that this was just the beginning of the learning process and there is so much left to learn.

Graduating students completed a thirteen-week course which included instruction in standard police tactics, firearms, legal education, technical skills and practical exercises. Officers are required to score at least 70% on each exam, and consistently fire at least 80% during firearms training exercises in order to graduate.

Jamie Gray of the Pope County Sheriff's Office received the Top Overall Award, which is earned by having the highest overall average in the areas of academics, firearms, and physical fitness. He also received the Top Physical Fitness Award. Bryan Strickland of the Augusta Police Department received the Top Firearms Award, and Michael Beasley of the Clay County Sheriff's Office received the Top Academics Award.

Class members selected Bobby New of the Poinsett County Sheriff's Department to serve as class spokesperson during the ceremony, and LETA Director Steve Shults served as Master of Ceremonies.

REACH

Panelists included Historic Preservationist Joan Gould, who presented new findings from her research on the migration of the earliest Anglo and African Americans into the region. Gould also explored the roles of Rice and Looney as leaders in their Eleven Point River Valley settlement, as well as in the development of Pocahontas. Evidence suggests that Looney operated a tavern/inn on the Eleven Point River, while Rice was engaged in various business ventures, including blacksmithing, weaving, textile production, tanning, and various agricultural pursuits. Rice and his mercantile-like establishment were apparently well-known throughout the region, Gould pointed out, as frequent references in varied archival documents refer simply to "Reuben Rice's."

The existence of several pieces of

"material culture" support this assessment of Rice, panelist Ronnie Walker continued. Walker is BRTC's Construction Manager. As a specialist in restoration trades, he also works closely with Project REACH. His presentation included images and discussion of the large loom brought, according to family tradition, in the 1812 wagon train bringing Reuben Rice and family members to what is today Randolph County. Walker also showed images of a spinning wheel and rope or cord bed belonging to the early settlers.

Panelist Kathy Candy, project director with the Arkansas Archeological Survey of the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, showed images and explained the work of the archeology team. Several items, including varied shards of dishes found on-site at the Rice House were included in the exhibit. Fragments of

dishes date to the 1760s and can be traced to England, consistent with items recovered in archeological work at Old Davidsonville State Park.

Project Architect Tommy Jameson of Little Rock explained the process of discovery and how this has impacted architectural decisions on the Rice House. Jameson said the archeological findings have influenced design issues regarding, for example, the reconstruction of the south porch. Many questions remain, he said. Evidence shows, for example, that the existing winder stair was not original with the 1828 structure. Current questions include the issue of whether the house as originally constructed included only one story.

Dr. Linda Moss, Science Instructor at BRTC, spoke of the involvement of Chemistry students at BRTC in analysis of the mortar covering the

chinking between the logs. Student Sean Seawel presented and explained images, including a close-up picture taken through the microscope, showing the work the class has done in conjunction with the REACH Scholars' program. The next phase of the students' investigation will entail analyzing materials from the nearby creek bed to try to determine the source of the materials used in the mortar.

Additional panelists included three others associated with the project: James Park, on-site construction manager; Eric Sammons, log specialist; and Ben Hurd, stone mason. Moderator for the event, Dr. Jan Ziegler, VP for Development, facilitated an audience Q-A session at the conclusion of the evening. Members of the Serendipity Club provided refreshments.

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Dr. William Hubbard, left, Medical Director for the Respiratory Program, Janet Murrell, BRTC respirator care instructor, and Travis Layne, transtracheal patient.

Transtracheal Patient Visits with Healthcare Students

Travis Layne, a former underwater demolition expert, recently visited with BRTC healthcare students and demonstrated the use of the transtracheal catheter. The catheter, which was inserted surgically into Layne's trachea, provides a direct flow of oxygen and lowers liter flow usage. He demonstrated how to insert and remove the catheter, how to clean it, and how to monitor the oxygen consumption, according to Respiratory Instructor Janet Murrell.

Layne spoke with BRTC's Respiratory Care students and three classes of nursing students on the Poca-

hontas campus, and then visited students of Dr. William Hubbard, Respiratory Program Medical Director, at an off-campus site in Jonesboro. Layne and his wife Dee, who reside in Boulder, Colorado, were in the area staying with family and friends when asked to speak to the students during his visit.

"It was a very exciting time for the respiratory department to actually see equipment that they have studied about, and to actually see it in place on a patient," said Murrell. "It was a great experience for all the classes."

RN Pass Rate ‘Very Good’

BRTC’s pass rate for RN students taking their state board licensure exam is “very good,” reported VP for Academics Jack McCord in a presentation to the Board of Trustees November 6. BRTC is one of six two-year colleges comprising the ARNEC consortium to provide RN training throughout the state. The Arkansas Rural Nursing Education Consortium ranked third among all RN programs statewide, with a 94.74 pass rate, on the year ending September 30.

“We are extremely proud of the good job our nursing staff, and those in the other member-colleges, do in preparing nurses,” McCord said. “Of a total of 57 students completing the program in the target time frame, 54 of

them passed the National Council Licensure Examination on the first attempt.” Only two entities, University of Central Arkansas and National Park Community College, earned higher marks, McCord added. The total number of programs statewide is 26.

The ARNEC pass rate exceeded both the state and national pass rate averages, 88.02% and 86.34%, respectively.

Statewide, a total of 321 students applied for the 120 slots available through ARNEC. Locally, 53 students applied for BRTC’s 20 available positions. Of the 53 applicants, 40 had met all prerequisites.



BRTC Campus Police “Go Green”



Officer Scott Bland

BRTC Campus Police recently purchased a Segway. The battery operated device travels at 12 MPH and officers, Scott Bland and Tony Saylor, can be seen riding around campus daily.

“It’s amazing the response time we have with the Segway,” Bland said.

In the past, not having the Segway has hindered the campus police. They had to travel on foot throughout the campus which slowed response time.

“It’s also helped us cut cost,” Bland said. “It cuts down on mileage and gas on the jeep and we can get into places like classrooms and buildings that we can’t get into with the jeep.”

Other advantages of the Segway include prevention of fatigue and the

benefit of added height; on the Segway, officers stand several feet above the crowd.

For the night patrol, the Segway is used to travel down hallways of the buildings on the BRTC Pocahontas campus to check all the doors for security reasons.

The Segway is equipped with an alarm system and uses a coded key in order for it to run. There is a storage compartment that holds various forms including report forms and ticket books. It also has the ability to travel in reverse.

Campus Police saw a demonstration of the Segway in August when Robert Peevey, an officer with the Arkansas State University Police Department, presented the “Benefits of Segway Patrol” at the BRTC Law Enforcement Training Academy.

Art Class Paints Mural

During the past several weeks, students from Dr. Sandy Davis-Baltz’ Design I class have been painting a mural at the new Auto Collision Complex located on the BRTC Pocahontas campus. The mural depicts the history of NASCAR.

As of press date, students have compiled 60 hours of work time on the project. Dr. Baltz has put in 72 hours of research, sketching and painting for the project as well. Together more than five gallon buckets of paint have been used on the 38 ½ x 9 ½ foot wall.

“It’s authentic as well as entertaining,” Dr. Baltz said.

EMH Presents Book to BRTC

Pat Johnson, Chair of the Board of the Eddie Mae Herron Center, presented a book, *The Pocahontas Colored School* by David McDonald, to the BRTC Library. The book chronicles the experience of a former teacher, Eddie Mae Herron, and her students at the former one-room African American school (now the EMH Center and Museum), as they attempted to take a field trip to the Memphis Zoo.

The trip turned into a disappointment and a lesson in the realities of the times in a segregated world, as the attempted visit was not on the zoo’s “colored” day. The students were turned away. Details of the story came to the attention of the minister of the Pocahontas Methodist Church when the teacher visited him to unburden her heart after the disappointing day. His son, David McDonald, wrote the account from his father’s sharing of the story.



Pat Johnson presents book to Anne Simpson for BRTC’s library.

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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



Richard Gaines

It seems there is often much to celebrate at BRTC. Nothing pleases us more than to see our students—our graduates—excel. This is clearly the case with the news of the extremely high rates at which our Registered Nursing students are succeeding when they take their licensure exams following the completion of their studies here with us.

We recall when seeking permission to add the RN level of training that the request received hard scrutiny because of the insistence that

any new program have the required level of rigor and quality. We don't disagree with that—certainly all of us would want those taking care of our health care needs to be highly qualified and trained. Even though the state and nation are experiencing a severe nursing shortage, there is no rush to add new programs unless they are programs of high standards.

So it is especially gratifying and something we certainly celebrate to see that BRTC and the other five community colleges who make up the consortium for educating and training registered nurses are not only fulfilling the requirements, but are doing so at a very high level, as evidenced by the 94.74% pass rate, ranking us third in the state's 26 programs for training RNs.

We always believed we could be successful, and now others can be confident of this also, thanks to the hard work of our nursing staff and that of the other consortium members.



Law Enforcement Class 2008 - B



*Attorney General
Dustin McDaniel
presents Jamie
Gray from Pope
County Sheriff's
Office the award
for top overall
graduate.*