



# The River's Edge

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### Important Dates

February 26

*Foundation Gala*

March 2

*College Goal Sunday*

March 4

*BRTC Health Fair*

March 26 & 27

*PTK Blood Drive*

March 28

*Foundation Board Mtg.*

April 8 - 9

*Holocaust Presentation*

April 24

*Scholarship Luncheon*

## 'Lost Boy' Enjoys First Birthday Party

BRTC student David Magok was surprised recently with his first ever birthday party, given by staff and students of the Law Enforcement Training Academy. As a 'Lost Boy' of Sudan, one of an estimated 27,000 young boys who escaped the country's civil war around 1987, Magok made his way to the United States in 2001 at the age of 23. Less than half of the original Lost Boy population survived the journey.

During the immigration process, Magok was asked for his date of birth. He had no idea when his birthday was, so he was told to just pick a date. He chose January 1. This is one of the many stories that LETA staff and students have learned about Magok as they have gotten to know him through his work as a part-time custodian in the LETA building.

"He is a really great guy," said LETA Director Steve Shults. "When we realized that he (Magok) had never celebrated a birthday and we were at the end of the

month he had chosen as his date of birth, we decided to do something special for him and honor him with a birthday party."

A surprise awaited Magok as he entered the LETA building on January 30. The student lounge was full of people who had joined together to celebrate his birthday. The party was complete with decorations, cake, chips and dip, and gifts. "I had no idea this was for me when I walked in," said Magok referring to the gathering. "I was definitely surprised."

Magok expressed his appreciation and thanked the group for doing something so special for him. "This really made me happy," he stated with a big smile.



*David Magok, one of the 'Lost Boys' from Sudan, is congratulated by Board of Trustees Chair Mike Dunn.*

## Bank of Pocahontas Continues Support

Officials of the Bank of Pocahontas presented the third installment of their pledged financial support for the new Business Technology Center, making a check presentation last week to BRTC President Richard Gaines (second from left). Pictured with Gaines are, from left, Carol Belford-Lewallen, Business Development Officer at the bank; Terry Dickson, BOP President; and Mike Miller, Senior Vice President of the bank. In recognition of their contribution, the Board of Trustees officially designated an area of the building the Bank of Pocahontas Student Center and Internet Café.



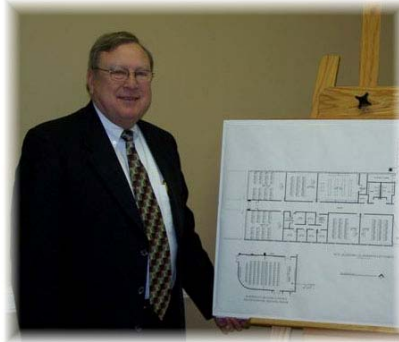
## Board Views Paragould Construction Plans

The Board of Trustees of BRTC viewed preliminary plans for construction of a 16,000 sq.ft academic complex on the BRTC-Paragould campus during their quarterly Board meeting February 7 in the new Conference Center. The new building will include classrooms, computer labs and a wet lab for science class use, and will connect to the existing building.

Growth at the Paragould campus has made the expansion necessary, BRTC President Richard Gaines explained to the Board. Currently, students enrolled at the Paragould campus comprise approximately 23% of the overall enrollment number.

President Gaines indicated the facilities on the Pocahontas campus are sufficient for the time being, but he said he can foresee the potential need for an expansion or replacement facility for the Health and Science programs in the future. He indicated continued growth in the health professions is expected. Division Chair for Technical Education Angie Caldwell described the current situation as "comfortably crowded."

Completion of the renovation of the former maintenance facility as the new Automotive Complex has met with great enthusiasm from students as well as staff, Gaines told the



*BRTC President Richard Gaines shows the Board preliminary plans for the Paragould expansion.*

Board. Both Automotive Services and Auto Body Repair Technology programs are housed in the renovated building, located on the northwest corner of the campus. An open house for the Automotive Complex is scheduled for April 1, to coincide with the upcoming Advisory Council meeting.

Board members also heard reports from the vice presidents. Action items included approval of an increase in the rental fee for Randolph County Development Center; a tuition increase of \$4 per credit hour; and a resolution setting the bylaws for a new organization, the BRTC Alumni Association.

## Blood Drives Held Recently at BRTC

Two separate blood drives were held recently on the campus of BRTC in Pocahontas. Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society and Law Enforcement Training Academy each held blood drives last month in collaboration with the American Red Cross.



*Tony Postell, left, Trumann Police Department, and T.C. Poskey, Searcy Police Department, donate blood during LETA's blood drive.*

PTK held their quarterly blood drive January 22 and 23 in the Randolph County Development Center. Typically just a one day event, the blood drive was held two days due to the cancellation of a scheduled drive at another location, according to PTK Advisor Dr. Linda Moss. "We agreed to host the event the extra day when contacted by the Red Cross about the cancellation," said Moss. "The response with having the drive over a two-day period was so great that we have decided to do it again for our next drive." The goal of PTK was to collect 30 pints and that was more than doubled with 80 pints being collected. "We appreciate everyone who turned out to donate," Moss added. The next PTK Blood Drive is scheduled for March 26 and 27 in RCDC.

LETA sponsors a blood drive during each of the two yearly class sessions. The most recent drive was held January 30 with 24 pints of blood collected. "We usually average around 35 pints," said Judy Ballard, LETA secretary, "but donation was down this time due to the Red Cross being short-staffed." Ballard, who herself is a regular donor at the LETA blood drives, is working on her eighth gallon of donated blood, which is equated to 64 pints. LETA will sponsor another blood drive during the fall semester.

## Single Parent Scholarship Applications Are Due February 15



*Chris Hankins*

## Sobriety Checkpoint Training Held

BRTC's Law Enforcement Training Academy Instructor Chris Hankins has been conducting sobriety checkpoint training courses for law enforcement officials statewide. "It is my job specifically to travel to law enforcement agencies around the state to teach the proper procedures for implementing sobriety check-

points," Hankins explained. "We are the only institution in Arkansas that provides sobriety checkpoint training."

The course offers the latest information regarding field sobriety tests for DWI, what the latest studies are showing, and what to look for in the detection of individuals operating

motor vehicles while under the influence of alcohol.

"We are anticipating the arrival of a 'BAT' (Blood Alcohol Testing) mobile this spring," added Hankins. The mobile unit will provide advanced training and on-site support to law enforcement officers conducting sobriety checkpoints.

# Holocaust Event Includes Educators' Workshop, Public Event for Students and Others

BRTC, in collaboration with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Northeast Arkansas Educational Cooperative, and with funding assistance from Mike and Barbara Dunn, will be hosting two upcoming Holocaust-related events on the Pocahontas campus.

The first event will be a Holocaust Educators' Workshop for area middle level, high school and college educators, and will be held Tuesday, April 8, from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. in the conference room of the Business Technology Center.

Holocaust survivor Manya Friedman will speak on Wednesday, April 9, at 9 a.m. in Randolph County Development Center on the BRTC campus. This event is open to students from area schools and colleges, as well as to the general public.

The purpose of the Educators' Workshop is to provide valuable information and resources to assist in

teaching about one of the defining events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The information provided at the workshop will enable educators to help their students put a human face on the statistics that tell the story of the persecution and annihilation of millions of European Jews, as well as millions of other victims of the Third Reich.

Presenters at the workshop will be Lolle Boetcher, Regional Museum Educator, Patricia Hesse, Museum Teacher Fellow, and Dr. Jan Ziegler, VP for Development and Holocaust instructor at BRTC.

Educators will be impacted by the personal testimony of Manya, whose presentation, followed by questions and answers, will conclude the workshop. Attendees can earn professional development hours by registering for this workshop through the NEARK Co-op website: <http://thor.nesc.k12.ar.us>.

In the special public presentation the following day, Friedman will

share her personal life story as an eyewitness to the Holocaust and will describe her experiences with hatred, prejudice, and indifference, and the fate of her family. Born in Poland in 1925, she is one of 60 survivor volunteers at U.S.H.M.M.

The public is invited to attend the April 9 presentation, and teachers are encouraged to bring their students. Audience members will have an

opportunity to ask questions of Friedman after her presentation.

Both events are free to participants, but registration must be made in advance for the workshop or for groups planning to attend the survivor presentation. For more information on either event, contact Dina Hufstedler, Project Specialist at Black River Technical College, 870-248-4000, ext. 4187.



*Manya Friedman  
Holocaust Survivor*

## Statler Scholarship Awarded



*Machine Shop Instructor Gary Meier and Statler Scholarship recipient Tony Loveless.*

Tony Loveless has been selected as the recipient of the Dave Statler Scholarship for the spring semester.

A Rector High School graduate, Loveless is the son of Gary and Cyndi Loveless. He is majoring in Machine Shop at BRTC.

The Statler Scholarship was established by Diamond State Tool and Die, owned by David and Donna Statler, as a way to honor longtime Machine Shop Instructor Dave Statler and also to support BRTC's Machine Shop program.

The award is for a full semester's tuition based on fifteen credit hours.

## Swink Joins BRTC Staff



*Rhonda Swink*

Paragould native Rhonda Swink has been hired as secretary for the

Department of Continuing Education and Business Outreach at Black River Technical College. She is a graduate of Greene County Tech High School and earned an Associate of Science in Administrative Services degree from Arkansas State University.

Swink has worked for the past fourteen years at Pulaski Bank (formerly First Community Bank and Pocahontas Federal). She and her husband Greg have one daughter, age 9, and reside in Imboden.

## H.O.P.E. Scholarships Go to Perez, Gomez



*Joshua Perez*



*Vanessa Gomez*

Joshua Perez and Vanessa Gomez have been selected as the Spring 2008 semester recipients of the H.O.P.E. (Hispanic Outreach Project for Education). The two also received the awards in the Fall 2007 semester. Each student receives an

award of \$500.

Perez, who graduated from Marmaduke High School, is majoring in Auto Body Collision Repair Technology, while Gomez is working on her Associate of Arts degree. A Jonesboro resident, she plans to major in Architecture.

The H.O.P.E. scholarship is funded by BRTC staff members. Community members interested in supporting the scholarship program may contact Vickie French at 870-248-4070.

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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*

One of the challenges we face as an institution of higher learning is the constant need to provide facilities and equipment that are in step with the current state of technology. This means that we must work not just to keep pace with growth, though we certainly try to do this, but also to ensure that the facilities housing the classes are modern and technologically appropriate to the times.

This means that growing colleges such as BRTC find themselves in an almost continual need for building and/or renovation projects.

It is easy to think that with the completion of a new facility and the increased capacity that new facility offers, our building needs are met for some time to come. From a space standpoint, that may even be the case. But from a training standpoint, rapidly changing technologies impact how our students acquire skills for the workplace. It is such changes that prompted us to undertake the recently completed renovation of the Maintenance building for use as a modern, well-equipped Automotive Complex.

Such projects are not inexpensive. This one, when all components are completed and added into the cost, will exceed \$1 million. This still represents a savings over what such a project would have cost if constructed as a totally new building. All in all, we believe the renovation is a bargain that will well serve the students and the community for years to come. Its completion now leaves us turning to the next facility need: construction of a 16,000 sq.ft. Academic Complex addition to the Paragould campus.

## Chili Lunch Slated for Trip

The public is invited to a Chili Lunch in support of a planned trip by Allied Health students to Kansas City, Missouri, later this spring. The lunch, at a cost of \$4 per person for chili, dessert and drink, will be held in the cafeteria of Randolph County Development Center on Thursday, February 21,

from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Students in the Nursing, Respiratory and Dietetics program will be traveling to view a special exhibit at the Kansas Convention Center, "Bodies Revealed." Making the trip will be around 90 students plus staff.

## Trammel in ASU Singers

Joniece Trammel, Music Instructor at BRTC, has been accepted into the University Singers of Arkansas State University, where she is a graduate student in the music department. Membership in the group involves an audition process.

The University Singers, along with two other choir groups at ASU, will participate in a joint public performance of Handel's *Messiah* on March 13 in Riceland Hall of the Fowler Center on the ASU campus. Ticket information for the event can be found on ASU's web page through the Forum.

In addition to teaching classes in Fine Arts Music at BRTC, Trammel directs the Kimbrough Choir and specialty groups, and



*Joniece Trammel  
BRTC Music Instructor*

coordinates the Concurrent Enrollment program at BRTC.