



VAN BUREN

SCHOOL DISTRICT



Fall 2016 Vol. 20 Issue 1

THE VIEW



The 2015 Teachers of the Year were honored at the Spring Convocation Ceremony held back in May. The Teachers of the year are pictured Back Row: Left to Right: Karen Beckner: Career Center; Amber Hurst: City Heights Elementary; Logan Hight and Jeff Hight: In honor of Debbie Hight from Tate Elementary; Laura Rogers: Freshman Academy. Front Row: Left to Right: Kevin Croxton: Parkview Elementary; Lisa Johnson: King Elementary; Kelly Henson: Rena Elementary; Carrie Pottorff: Central Elementary; April Evans: Butterfield Trail Middle School, Deanna Spears: Northridge Middle School and Courtney Cochran: Van Buren High School.



Courtney Cochran, VBHS Teacher of the Year, was selected as the 2015, VBSD Secondary Teacher of the Year. Ms. Cochran is also a finalist for the Arkansas Teacher of the Year. Pictured Left to Right: Eddie Tipton: VBHS Principal, Courtney Cochran and Harold Jeffcoat: VBSD Superintendent.

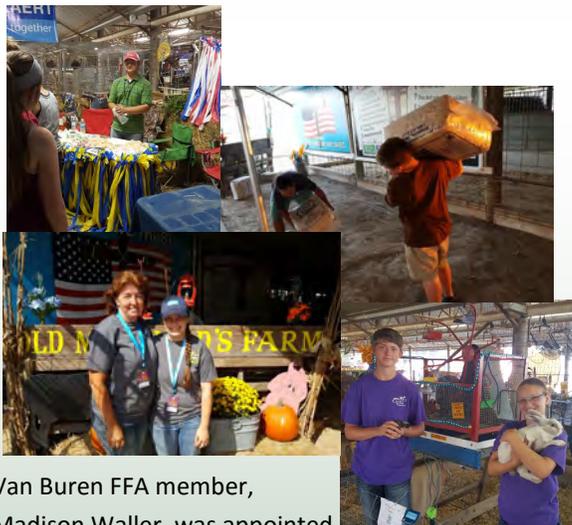


Debbie Hight: Tate Elementary Teacher of the Year, was selected as the 2015, VBSD Elementary Teacher of the Year. Debbie, long time teacher of the VBSD lost her battle with cancer back in May. Debbie's son Logan and husband Jeff accepted the award. Pictured Left to Right: Robert Childers: Tate Elementary Principal; Logan Hight; Jeff Hight and Harold Jeffcoat: VBSD Superintendent.

Community Connection



We would like to welcome T.D., the newest member of the Pointers, to the Van Buren School District. T.D. (Touchdown Pointer) is the new, official mascot for the Van Buren School District. Owner Chris Feeny and T.D. will be out and about at numerous VBSD Activities, and welcome you to stop and say hello and meet T.D. first hand.



Van Buren FFA member, Madison Waller, was appointed Jr. Fair board Chair of Old McDonald's Farm at the Arkansas/Oklahoma State Fair. Madison recruited fellow FFA members to assist her in running the fair exhibit. The Van Buren FFA members helped set up, feed, monitor the animals and clean up the Old McDonald's Farm, September 20th through October 2nd. The FFA members worked from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM each day. Six members stayed late several days to ensure all visitors were able to see, pet and feed all the animals. The FFA Members helped people take a closer look at the individual animals and talked to fair visitors about specific animals.

Destiny Potter, Teacher's Aide, Parkview Elementary.



Jackson Webb, Dillon Montgomery, Zackery Meadows and Jonathan Gutierrez, students at IZARD Campus held a food drive to stock Little Pantries.



Trevor Burns, Tenth Grade Student, VBHS.

Staff and students in the Van Buren School District have taken it upon themselves to become part of a movement to end community hunger called, "Little Pantries". The little pantries are built, located in a stationary location and then stocked with food items. The little pantries have food items available for pickup 24 hours a day. Destiny and Trevor are both amazed at how often the little pantry is utilized and are thankful the community has stepped up to help them keep their little pantries stocked and available to those in our community that are hungry.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. In support of all those fighting breast cancer, the school district participated in National Pink Out Day. Pictured is Northridge Middle School Principal, Lonnie Mitchell and eighth grade students sporting their Pink Out Against Breast Cancer Gear.

Community Connection Cont.



King Elementary hosted their 4th Annual Green Apple Day of Service, on Saturday, September 24th. Parents, students, school staff, volunteers and community members all attended to promote a community effort to clean up and improve the school's environment. Volunteers participated in litter pickup, recycling, tree trimming, garden and greenhouse prep. King Elementary would like to thank the VBSD Education Foundation, Turf Pro, Parks Brothers, Peace, Love Organics, Yeager's, MAHG, Lowe's, VBHS National Honor Society, King Elementary PTA and all of the volunteers for all of their hard work and contributions.

Pointer Pride in Professionalism



Lisa Moose, VBHS, ELA Instructor, was one of ten Arkansas teachers selected to participate in the 2016-2017 AR Teacher Fellowship program with the University of Arkansas Center for Children and Youth and Crystal Bridges. The fellowship, which can be renewed for three consecutive years upon the successful completion of each year, includes a summer workshop and five school days commitment, as well as the development and presentation of arts integrated with Marcia Draft of the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, located in Washington D.C. The AR Teacher Fellowship includes bringing a class to the museum and a \$1,000 stipend upon completion of all requirements.



Mary Wilmot, King Elementary Teacher, stands in front of President George Washington's Tomb this past summer while participating in the George Washington Teacher Institute Summer Residential Program. Wilmot was one of seven teachers chosen from the state to attend this four day immersive professional development experience, designed to support K-12 educators who teach about the life, leadership and legacy of George Washington and the 18th Century World in which he lived. Participants spent the entire week on the grounds of Mt. Vernon.

Education That Engages



Students at City Heights Elementary participated in a week long Olympic Competition in honor of the start of the Olympic Games. The students and staff celebrated at the end of the week long festivities with a closing ceremony.



First Grade students at Central Elementary School sang the reading strategy song at Math and Literacy Night. Jayden Mendez, #51 on VBHS Football Team, accompanied the students' performance on guitar.



Eighth grade students at Northridge Middle School have been studying the topic of Child Soldiers. This study led the students to note the suffering endured by all the children in Africa. Many students felt a call to make a difference, so they had a collection drive for all Northridge students last spring. The items were packaged and delivered to the Port of Louisiana to be shipped to Africa to help show what are considered the, "Invisible Children" that they are no longer, #NOlongerINVISIBLE. The students collected over 5,400 items including: school supplies, clothes, books, hygiene products, shoes, toys and dum-dum suckers. These items will be distributed to care centers all over Africa and given to children that are in need. It was amazing to watch the excitement and motivation of the eighth grade students as they reached out beyond themselves to help children in need.



Over the next few weeks, 8th grade students from Butterfield Trail Middle School will take part in an Expeditionary Learning Unit titled, "Rock The Vote." During this unit, students will take a leadership role in learning about our government, elections, and active citizenship by studying elements related to these subjects in history, language arts, math, and science. Students will create voter's guides, participate in a three branches simulation, study historical perspectives, poll community members, and host a mock election. Their learning will culminate in a celebration of learning night on Monday, November 7th. The students kicked off this unit with special guest speakers to get students excited about the relevancy of these issues. We were excited to welcome US Senator John Boozman via Skype, Arkansas State Rep. Gary Deffenbaugh, Executive Director of the Republican Party of Arkansas, Sarah Jo Reynolds, President of the University of Arkansas Young Democrats of America Chapter, Ryann Alonso, and Newseum Educational Programmer, Adam Lewandowski.



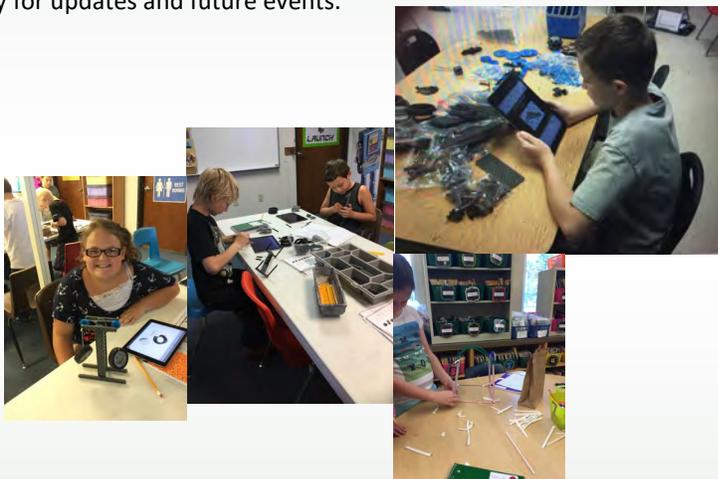
Ninth grade students at the Freshman Academy created, "Body Biographies" for characters found in the Short Story Unit they recently completed. Students had to decorate posters with visual and written details from the stories they had read. To find evidence to use on their poster students focused on what characters "thought, said and did", as well as how others "saw" the character.

Education That Engages



The VBHS Quiz Bowl Team, coached by Starlene Duggan, is having a great start to their season. Gabby Vatthanatham, a junior, ranked the second highest scorer and Andrew Henry, also a junior, ranked eleventh highest scorer in the Greenwood Invitational Tournament.

Project Unify at the Freshman Academy had their first Special Olympics outing for the 2016-2017 school year. The partners and the athletes had a blast showing off their golf skills at the First Tee in Fort Smith. Like our Facebook page at VBFA Project Unify for updates and future events.



Students at the Freshman Academy's Family and Consumer Science Classes recently completed a unit on relationships. As an cumulative project for the unit, each student was able to bake and take home a, "Friendship Loaf". Guest, Debra Riseke, explains a step in the baking process to Alex Yarbrough and Ashley Hurst.

The school district has taken on a new venture in the area of science. With the standards in science expecting higher order of thinking from students the district understands that we must step up our expectations for science instruction to ensure we provide students with opportunities to learn science in a new and innovative way. The direction the school district has decided to move in is Project Lead the Way. Project Lead the Way is a non-profit organization that develops science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Students will participate in Project Lead the Way instruction in grades K-8 this year, with a particular focus on third through fifth grade this year. Project Lead the Way is a hands on, transformative learning experience designed to help students think on their own and learn through a system of design and redesign to encourage free thinking and the freedom to try again and again to master a project. Julia Cottrell is the district coordinator for Project Lead the Way. She provides professional development to Project Lead the Way Instructors as they teach students in areas of computer programming, building compound machines, rescue of wild animals, building robots and many other activities teaching them to think like an engineer. The students are very excited about this addition to the science curriculum and many describe it as their favorite part of the day.

Education That Engages



Butterfield Trail Middle School, Ignitor's Camping Unit Students from the Ignitors Team learned many skills during their camping unit. They learned how to set up tents, hammocks and start campfires. They had to work in groups to accomplish each skill, learning valuable social skills in the process. Math skills were developed by locating items needed for camping (such as tents, backpacks, and food) and then adding up the price of each item to determine the total cost of a camping trip. In social studies, the students learned how hunters and gatherers lived and how this was similar to camping because they had to find, hunt and cook their own food as well as construct their own shelters. The culminating activity for this unit was a day of camping outdoors, where the students put into practice all the skills they had learned throughout the unit. They were taught fire safety as they learned how to construct a campfire and also while cooking their food. Students learned about chemical and physical changes as they grilled hotdogs and marshmallows over a charcoal grill. They all had a great day celebrating their learning as they grilled hotdogs, roasted marshmallows and played games. After the unit was over, students also reflected on their learning during the unit and how to apply those skills to other areas of math, science, social studies and reading.



On Tuesday, September 13th, all of VB Freshman were taken on a trip to the University of Arkansas, Fort Smith. While there, students were given a tour of the campus, as well as the Baldor building that houses the WATC program. Students were also given the opportunity to visit the many booths at the Majors Fair that UAFS puts on for their students. Lexi Miller, Brooklyn Baker, and Bailey Baker took notes after discussing the job qualifications with a representative at the Dental Hygiene Booth.



Northridge Middle School students taking part in Project Lead the Way Classes recently completed the Ankle, Foot, Orthosis (AFO) Project. Each engineering team created an AFO for an imaginary patient with Cerebral Palsy. In the photo you see each team presenting their prototype made from craft material and household items to nurses, Ms. Marvin and Ms. Shade. During the presentation, students explained how the AFO would support the foot and modify movement to aid the patient. The team then had to inform the nurses what each material would need to really be constructed of if the prototype should be manufactured. The Project Lead the Way Program is a semester class recently offered as part of the eighth grade curriculum. The program is intended to get a head start in both math and engineering courses offered at the high school.



Dale Brunk, World Trade Center Survivor, was a guest speaker at Northridge Middle School on Friday, September 9th. He shared his experience of being on the 40th floor stairwell of the south tower when terrorists flew a commercial aircraft into the building. Students were able to listen to the accounts of this terrible and historic event and ask questions of a direct victim.



Rena Elementary has created a new club to promote a team and community atmosphere. It will focus on anti-bullying topics. The club titled "6" is open to third through fifth grade students. October being anti-bullying month the members created posters, handed out bracelets and sunglasses to kindergarteners to promote the theme, "Too Cool to be Cruel". The club is sponsored by Jeff Dean and supported by an Ed. Foundation grant.

Education That Engages



Resource Officer, Dewayne Richesin, conducts a class with students at Northridge Middle School titled Fatal Vision. The students wear the fatal vision goggles that simulate impaired vision when a person is under the influence.



Butterfield's Positive Behavior System A Hit With Students: Butterfield Trail Middle School is innovating with a brand new school store! HOWLS "R" US opened October 3rd. This school store is run by students. Students at BTMS have the opportunity to earn points by demonstrating respect, responsibility & perseverance. HOWL's (points) are given by adult school employees using the LiveSchool program. The items in the school store were selected by students who acted as representatives for their team. Students pay for items with their LiveSchool points. This positive behavior system allows teachers and faculty to reward students for showing their "HOWLs" or Habits of Work and Learning. Students are rewarded for doing good deeds and going above and beyond. This school store has everyone at BTMS buzzing about their next shopping trip.



That's How Butterfield Does It: This semester, sixth grade students at Butterfield Trail Middle School participated in their first Expeditionary Learning Unit. EL units are project based, interdisciplinary units focused on in-depth projects designed to produce a final, collective project. The unit was designed to engage students who are new to middle school and familiarize them with a new learning environment. Students researched geography, culture, beliefs, vision, government and important people at BTMS. They conducted interviews with important staff and engaged in research intensive studies about our school and it's history. As a final project, each class created a brochure to present to the parents and community members. In addition, students created multi-media presentations and visual displays to share their learning. The community presentation provided students with the opportunity to work on oral speaking skills as they shared their learning in a public setting. On September 20th these sixth grade students launched their first culminating event to the public entitled, "That's How Butterfield Does It." All sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students at Butterfield will participate in two of these units this year.



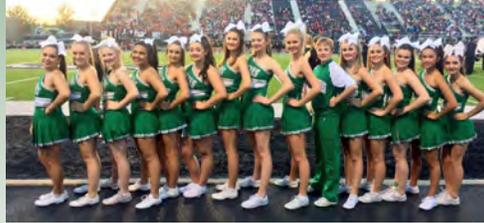
Resource Officer, Dewayne Richesin, conducts an officer friendly course with kindergarten students across the school district. During this course, he teaches students about police officers and brings the robotic police car to teach students that police officers are here to help you. Top picture: students at Rena Elementary present Officer Richesin with a thank you card for presenting to them.

Pointers, Pointers: Go, Go, Go!!!

Pointer Activities are in full swing. Thank you to all the Van Buren Pointers that take time to volunteer at events and show our future Pointers what it takes to be awesome!



Landon Hoodenpyle, getting autographs from the Pointers at Parkview Elementary Dude's Day



Van Buren High School Cheerleaders ready to cheer on the Pointers.



Pictured Left to Right: Trenton Fredricks, Walter Greene, Landon Clark, Jacory Taylor and Aaron Ray at the K-Kids Kick-off event.



Van Buren cheer, dance and football players help students celebrate at the annual K-Kids kick-off event.



Freshman Academy football players start the season off in style as they dress for success on the day of the first home football game of the season.



Van Buren High School Cheerleaders help paint faces with Pointer Paw Prints at City Heights Elementary.



Fifth grade student council members help paint faces with Pointer Paw Prints at Parkview Elementary.

Buses, Buses: Go, Go, Go!!!



The Van Buren School District is happy to announce the arrival of three new school buses. These buses were a much needed addition to the current aging bus fleet. This is just the beginning of a bus renewal system to help keep the buses up to date and safer for all students.



Custodians, Anna Brown and Kim Cockrell riding in style greeting students at Central Elementary.