We Are Crew!

Creating Beautiful Spaces to Promote Learning
By Pamela Jones, Superintendent

Frog poetry, self-identity mobiles, "My Town" anchor charts, authentic local food chains...what do all of these have in common? They are all examples of high-quality student work showcased in the entryway and main hall of the high school building. Teachers display student work to honor the work, the character it took to accomplish the work, and create a museum quality that inspires student and community pride. The work is supported with explanations, scoring rubrics, student writing and student art. In this way we send a welcoming and beautiful message to visitors that this is a place that values student achievement, quality work and student and adult character.
Second Grade Fieldwork in Alabama Hills for John Muir Learning Expedition
By Heather Burror, 2nd Grade Teacher

The second grade class recently traveled to the Alabama Hills near Lone Pine for fieldwork and study for their John Muir Learning Expedition. As students hiked the Mobius Arch Trail, they stopped to learn about the local habitat, and how erosion shapes the landscape. Students’ work included close reading about erosion, and journal writing and sketching about the natural rock formations, plants, and animals they saw.

Students were excited to see the Mobius Arch, as well as several other arches and interesting rock formations. Colorful desert flowers bloomed near the trail. Students spotted several varieties of cactus, as well as lizards, jackrabbits, red-tailed hawks, and other desert animals.

Students will be continuing their studies with fieldwork at the Eureka Dunes in Death Valley National Park when we return from Spring Break.

Ski and Snowboard Club Set to Go!
By Ed Dardenne-Ankringa

Calling all snow Warriors! Our season begins after the MLK holiday weekend. Once again this year we are planning 8 to 10 trips, including our annual all day spring break shred fest. Students in grades 3rd through 12th are eligible to participate. The envelopes with packets and instructions have already gone out to interested students. The fees this year are $100 per student and include transportation, lift tickets, full rentals, instructors, snacks, a hoodie, and a t-shirt. Forms and fees are due January 6th. If you have any questions, please contact Ed Dardenne-Ankringa at 760-938-2222 ext. 2423 or eankringa@bigpineschools.org. We have some extra winter clothing (jackets, snow pants, and some other miscellaneous items), so please let me know if your skier or snowboarder is in need. Extra packets are available in the school office.
We Honor and Remember Big Pine Teacher, Gabrielle Guerrero Orsello
By Pamela Jones, Superintendent

On November 21, 2019 our dear colleague and 4th grade teacher, Gabrielle Guerrero Orsello died unexpectedly. Ms. G, as her students called her, was a valued member of the Big Pine school community. She was a dedicated and passionate educator who was loved by her students and colleagues. We are deeply saddened by this loss. While we will miss her, we continue to be inspired by her memory.

Our plan moving forward is to hire a long-term substitute teacher. Qualified applicants may apply online at www.edjoin.org. In the interim, we are fortunate to have a collaborative and professional staff who have come together to support the 4th grade students in transition. Our Care teacher, Mrs. Dardenne-Ankringa, knows the students well, knows the curriculum, and is a fully credentialed and experienced elementary teacher. She has graciously agreed to teach 4th grade while we recruit a teacher who has experience, credentials and the ability to join in our shared vision of education that prepares our students to make the world a better place.

Eighth Grade Scientists Have Fun with Science at the Owens River
By Jan Hart, 8th Grade Science Teacher

In mid-November, Big Pine Eighth Grade science students spent the day along the Black Rock reach of the Owens River collecting ecological data as part of a long-term monitoring study of the Lower Owens River Restoration Project. In 2006, water was returned to the lower 62 miles of river channel for the first time since 1913, when the Lower Owens was diverted into the Los Angeles Aqueduct. Over the past 13 years the Eastern Sierra Institute for Collaborative Education has invited middle school students throughout the Owens Valley to participate in monitoring the river restoration. This is the largest restoration project of its kind ever undertaken in the United States. Student scientists conduct a variety of data collection activities, including river channel depth measurements and water quality evaluation, as well as soil and vegetation monitoring. Not only do our middle school students learn to do hands-on science, the data they collect also becomes part of the project’s database. So the data our students collect will help guide the river’s restoration in the future. Most importantly, our students learn about science by being scientists, here on their home turf, while having some fun along the way.
University of Nevada Trip for 8th Grade Crew
By Sunny Meza, Counselor

Mr. Steele, Ms. Meza, and the 8th Grade Crew traveled to the University of Reno on November 21st. Some of the highlights of this college tour included visiting the Nevada Museum of Art, attending the UNR Women’s Volleyball game and attending a meet and greet with the players. Students enjoyed walking around the campus and learning about the academic programs offered at this local college. We would like to thank the Inyo County Office of Education for making this trip possible.


ASB Fundraiser
Orders will be filled on a first come first served basis. On hand quantities are limited, all other orders will be filled with second round of inventory. Goal is to have items distributed by winter break on or before December 20, 2019.
Child shirts: $10.00 / Child hoodies: $20.00
Adult shirts: $15.00 / Adult hoodies: $25.00
Make checks payable to Big Pine ASB and submit orders to the front office.

Scholastic Book Fair December 16-20
By Christy Jennings, 5th Grade Teacher

The Scholastic Book Fair, run by the 5th grade class, will be open December 16th-20th during morning recess, lunch recess, and for one hour each day after school. It will also be open from 4:30-5:30 on Thursday night, December 19th, preceding the Elementary School Christmas Program. The student’s goal is to sell $2,500 worth of merchandise, the minimum amount of sales necessary for the class to profit from the book fair. The book fair earnings are saved in a class account, which follows the class and can be used for class purchases and trips.
First Graders Learn How to Create a “Magnificent Thing”
By Michele Dossey, First Grade Teacher

Students in the first grade are working on the performance task for the language arts module Tools and Work. In this module, students worked to build their literacy and citizenship skills as they engaged in a study of tools and work. Students first learned about how tools help to do a job. Then they continued learning that it takes habits of character to successfully complete a job.

In the performance task, students work in small groups to create a magnificent thing—a product that fulfills a need or solves a problem within our classroom or school. Students brainstormed possible things needed and then decided which products to actually build. We are making new labels for the book boxes in our class library, tubs for recycling markers for 12 classrooms, a ‘Books We Love’ bulletin board, and signs to identify our classroom library and listening center. Students have used a variety of tools as they build their magnificent thing along with the habits of character—initiative, responsibility, perseverance, and collaboration. Students learned that although tools are needed, habits of character are just as important, or even more so, to complete the project. After completing their magnificent things, students will complete a writing task telling all about their process of creating their magnificent thing.

(left to right) Sam Pischel and Flint Wagoner working on “Books We Love” bulletin board.

(clockwise from front left) Christopher Camargo-Gomez, Chance Carmona, Derek Soto and David Rico working on new Library labels.

Thank You Big Pine Mobil

A big Warrior thank you to Big Pine Mobil and the ExxonMobil Educational Alliance grant program. Thanks to the efforts of Big Pine Mobil, Big Pine Elementary School was awarded a $500 grant to be used for science and mathematics. The next time you fill up or grab a snack, please let the folks at Big Pine Mobil know their support of Big Pine students is appreciated!

The ExxonMobil Corporation is also proud to support education through Upromise, which helps ExxonMobil customers earn college funds. To learn more about the Upromise program, please visit www.exxonmobil.com/upromise website.
Big Pine Elementary School Winter Holiday Program

Please join us on Thursday, December 19th at 6:00 PM for a festive evening of holiday spirit and good cheer! Our preschool friends and Kindergarten through 6th grade students will perform songs, sing carols, recite poetry, and tell stories to all who wish to celebrate with us and share good company.

Both before the program and immediately following the program, our annual book fair will be open for you to purchase a good read for the winter nights ahead. Please support literacy and our elementary school by purchasing a book!

Immediately following the program, we will serve hot chocolate and cookies. Please plan on staying for the entire performance and enjoying a tasty treat with your fellow Piners! After all, Santa has been known to make an appearance at the end of a particularly festive performance...but only if you believe!

Students enjoying their performance at the 2018 Holiday Program.