

The Big Pine Beacon

News from Big Pine Unified School District

December 13, 2018
Volume 10 Number 3

We Are Crew!

Superintendent, Pamela Jones
Principal, Ed Dardenne-Ankringa

WARRIOR CODE



Upcoming Events

- Dec. 15/HS Winter Formal
- Dec. 19/Kinder White Day
- Dec. 20/Christmas Program
- Dec. 21/Minimum Day
- Dec. 24-Jan. 4/Winter Break - NO SCHOOL
- Jan. 2-5/Title VI Unity Mid-Year Conference
- Jan. 7/Board Meeting
- Jan. 10/Martin Luther King Day-NO SCHOOL
- Jan. 16/Kinder Purple Day
- Jan. 28-Feb. 2/Winter Writing Performance Task
- Jan. 30/Kinder Pink Day
- Jan. 30/K-6 Community Meeting
- Jan. 31/ICSOS Spelling Bee; 4th-8th Grades
- Feb. 4/Board Meeting
- Feb. 14/District Advisory Council Meeting
- Feb. 15 & 18/ Presidents' Holiday - NO SCHOOL
- Feb. 27/K-6 Community Meeting
- Feb. 28/HS Community Meeting
- Mar. 4/Board Meeting



Big Pine Unified School District Welcomes Board Members to Governance Team

By Pamela Jones, Superintendent

Thanks to all of you who took the time to consider our school board candidates and who voted in our recent election. It was great to see the support evidenced by the full ballot, and on behalf of the district I wish to express my appreciation to the five citizens who had the interest to run for election.

We welcome one new trustee to the board, Carrol Hambleton, and one incumbent board trustee, Marilyn Mann. These two, along with our three sitting trustees: Sandy Lund, Carla Bacoch, and Denelle Carrington, join with me, the superintendent, to form what is known as the governance team for the district.

Having an elected school board entrusted with govern-

ing a community's public schools is intended to ensure that school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs and priorities of their communities. According to the California School Boards Association: "Authority is granted to the board as a whole, not each member individually. Therefore, board members fulfill these responsibilities by working together as a governance team with the superintendent to make decisions that will best serve all the students in the community."

The board and I will continue to focus on our mission and priorities, dedicated to providing an expeditionary learning community that equips all learners with the skills to be college and career ready and to contribute to making the world a better place.



Governance Team: (front row-lt to rt) Carrol Hambleton, new member; Pamela Jones, Superintendent; (back row-lt to rt) Sandra Lund; Tom Snyder, outgoing member; Denelle Carrington, President; and Marilyn Mann, Vice President

Mary Austin Prize for Writing

By Tim Steele, ELA Teacher

Three Big Pine High School students were finalists in this year's annual county-wide *Mary Austin Prize for Writing*. The three finalists were Araya Bencoma, Cassie Meza, and Sierra Keller. The writing contest is named after local writer Mary Austin and challenges students to write an original short story that takes place in the outdoors, with an emphasis on local experiences. Each of our finalists impressed the judges with their pieces while making the top ten finalist list.

Araya's piece, *Sweat Lodge (Muza)*, explained the sacredness and beauty of the Native American ceremony known as *Sweat*.

Cassie's piece, *Stories Under the Stars*, reminisced about an evening spent pondering the meaning of life with friends under the desert night skies of Death Valley.

Sierra's piece, *My Euphoria*, touches on the importance of finding your own place in the outdoors that can transport you to bliss and happiness.

According to the contest coordinator, David Wooduff, "We had a record 72 essays submitted this year and I felt the quality of writing exhibited was the best ever." The competition certainly was tough this year and these three ladies deserve kudos for proudly representing Big Pine in this prestigious contest! In addition to appearing in the *Inyo Register*, each finalist also received a copy of Mary Austin's book, *The Land of Little Rain*.



Mary Austin Writing finalists: (lt to rt) Cassandra Meza, Araya Bencoma and Sierra Keller.

High School ASB Event

Winter Wonderland Formal

Saturday, December 15th from 8:00 to 11:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Students must be academically eligible to attend. ASB is asking for canned and dry food donations in lieu of admission cost. Dinner will be provided.

Veteran's Day Assembly

By Sunny Meza, Counselor

On November 7th, the Big Pine American Legion Glacier Post 457 and the American Legion Auxiliary held assemblies on Veterans Day. Students were reminded of the significance behind Veteran's Day, were read a book, and learned proper flag etiquette.



Big Pine American Legion and Auxiliary members demonstrate how to properly fold the American flag.

Congratulations to our Fortunate Fall School Climate Survey Winners

Annually at our fall Student-Led Conferences, we ask parents and guardians to take a little more of their time, after their conference session, to answer a number of survey questions. The topics are wide-ranging, including school safety, school engagement and school effectiveness. The survey is produced by CalSCHLS, and we expect our reports from them in the next few weeks.

One of the benefits to using the CalSCHLS survey is that we can compare local results with those from other districts across the state. Such comparisons can help us interpret results and guide program decisions by placing the results in a larger context of what is happening in other places.

We add a little fun, and show our appreciation to survey participants, by offering a raffle ticket for two \$100.00 gift cards for those who take the survey. This year, congratulations go to Adelina Rico and Callina Cortez who had the winning tickets. Thanks go to all that took their time to complete the survey. Your input helps us gain insight into the best ways to support student success in the district.

Field Work for the “Human Face of Human Rights” at the Museum of Tolerance By Tim Steele, Teacher

On October 31, the freshman and sophomore classes visited the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles as part of their learning expedition entitled: “*The Human Face of Human Rights*.” The expedition examines a number of human rights violations throughout history including the Holocaust, Japanese internment, Native American genocide, as well as a number of contemporary examples. This quarter, students have been immersed in learning about one of the darker chapters of the 20th century, the Holocaust.

Students began their tour of the museum by visiting the Anne Frank exhibit where they learned about the life and death of the most famous victim of the Holocaust. The exhibit featured many of Anne Frank’s personal items as well as an exact replica of her famous diary.



Front row: (lt to rt) Rainah Dewey; Briana Banta; Brooke Spratt; and Holocaust survivor, Mrs. Martha Sternbach. Back row: Martin Woollard; Tim Steele, ELA Teacher; Chris Turner; Joseph Huston; Annanna Haifley; and Jessamine Turner.

For many students, the highlight of the visit was meeting a Holocaust survivor. Mrs. Martha Sternbach bravely shared her experience at *Auschwitz* and eventual liberation and journey to America. Mrs. Sternbach, who recently turned 83 and whose daughter happened to be present, ended her talk by encouraging students to never hate others and impressed upon them how it was the people - often strangers - that helped her during and after the Holocaust that really mattered. As sophomore Chris Turner pointed out while reflecting on his experience, “We are the last generation to have the opportunity to meet a Holocaust survivor. I’m very glad to have had this chance and I am thankful.”

After enjoying a kosher lunch in the cafeteria, students moved on to the main exhibit of the museum which is focused on the rise of Nazi Germany and the Holocaust. Students were led around the exhibit by a charismatic expert on the Holocaust named Walter Gertz. Mr.

Gertz made it clear from the beginning that his intention was to “get into your heads,” stating that, “If I can reach just one of you, it is worth it to me.” Freshman Robert McDowell recalls his experience on that portion of the tour saying, “I learned a lot more than I expected from Walter Gertz. All the words that were coming out of his mouth were really heartbreaking because he was telling the very sad details [of the Holocaust] and I could feel it in my heart. He said he would try get into one of our heads and I think he got into mine. I will never forget this trip because this is one of the most important things that ever happened to me.”

The experience was emotional and powerful for all students. Some students wept when they were led into a mock gas chamber only to learn of the fates of children and babies at the death camps. Brooke Spratt later reflected upon her experience saying, “At the museum we went through the Anne Frank exhibit, we listened to a Holocaust survivor, and we went through the Holocaust exhibit. Let’s just say I cried in all of these. Just hearing about all of the pain and suffering they went through just made me so angry, sad, and just disgusted in what man can do to his fellow man.”

“What I take back from the Museum of Tolerance is that we shouldn’t take our lives for granted!” recalled sophomore Jessamine Turner. “Going to the Museum really helped me open my eyes, just thinking about how scared the people were in the death camps not being able to be with their family, not having freedom. It was horrible.”

The lessons learned at the museum will no doubt stick with these students for a long time to come. In the end, everyone was glad they went on the trip despite the atrocities they witnessed. One key lesson that everyone took away from their visit is that one person really can make a difference in the world and it is everyone’s responsibility to stand up to injustice and work to create a more compassionate world. As freshman Joe Huston noted, “Walter taught us [the Yiddish word] *tikkun olam*, which means ‘repair the world.’ I told him that it will always stick with me.” Giovanni Talamantes echoed Joe’s sentiment saying, “The word that I will never forget is *tikkun olam* which means to repair the world or to heal the world. I will never forget this because I know how bad this world is and how much repairing and healing this world needs to be a better community for others and me.”

Middle School ASB Events

Canned Food Drive

7th & 8th grade canned/dry food drive competition from December 10th-14th. The class with the most food items will win a popcorn and movie party during lunch on Dec. 18th.

Winter Dance

December 14 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria. \$2.00/person; \$3.00/couple (students must be academically eligible to attend). Snacks will be provided.

Field Work at the Getty

By Ali Amberg, 6th Grade Teacher

"Look up," our docent Nancy said. "Who's that staring down at you?"

"Medusa!" the sixth graders all said in unison. They learned of her stone-cold glare that warded off thieves. Her snake-knotted hair could be seen at the bottom of hallway lamps and at the entrances to estates.

To dive into our expedition on myths, the sixth grade class did field work at the Getty Villa in Malibu. The Villa was modeled after the Villa dei Papiri in Herculaneum, an extravagant property that was unearthed from the ashes of Mt. Vesuvius's eruption in 79 BCE. A trove of oil magnate J. Paul Getty's antiquities collection, the Villa houses Greek, Roman and Etruscan statues and artifacts.

The highlight for many students was the Romano-Egyptian mummy. They learned about the process of preparing the body for the afterlife: taking out organs, burying the body in salt to dry it out, soaking it in perfumed oil, and layering it in linen.

"It was cool and scary," student Isabel Ramirez said. "Not like Hollywood stuff, but like it was the first mummy I ever saw not on TV."

"Looking at the mummy made me think there's really a dead body in there," student Miles McPhee said. They wondered if there was a coin under the tongue of the man inside. He would need it to cross the Styx.

Strolling down the grand hallways, students got a glimpse into the life of a wealthy Roman. They admired

bearded irises in the garden and spied lizards in the frescoes. They were tempted to jump into the reflection pool, something a Roman may have done. Instead, they got a chance to get their feet wet at the beach in Malibu.

"The beach was bright," student Thomas McDarment said. "When you looked out at the ocean, it looked like a light festival."



(l to rt) Dakota Kibler; Nancy, the docent; Kayne Howard, Thomas McDarment; Miles McPhee; & Serenity Limon

We continue our study of the hero's journey through close readings of myths from various cultures. Sixth graders are looking forward to the last case study; we will be reading *The Lightning Thief*, an adventure-packed story of a boy who finds himself connected to the world of Greek mythology.

Bigs and Littles

By Tim Steele, Teacher



(Picture above) Field work at Cardinal Pinnacle Lodge. (Picture at rt) 8th and 3rd grade students with Ms. Guerrero on right.

This year, Mr. Steele's 8th Grade Crew, "The Blue Weasels," and Ms. Guerrero's 3rd Grade Crew have partnered up for learning and adventure through mentoring! The two classes will be meeting throughout the year to collaborate and learn about science.

For starters, the classes met back in September for a meet and greet activity which involved exploring what they share in common and just getting to know one another. On October 18, the two classes traveled up to Cardinal Pinnacle Lodge to witness the fall colors in an aspen grove. Mentors assisted their littles in collecting leaves to bring back to the classroom for an experiment looking at colors present within a leaf and the science behind it. Back in the classroom, students worked together to conduct the experiment, record results, and discuss findings. Mentors and mentees also worked on producing authentically colored and detailed leaves that contained one fact about why leaves on trees change color in the fall. Those leaves went on to be displayed on the front window at Carroll's Market.



This year's mentoring experience will actually be a role reversal for the 8th grade "Weasels" who were once mentored themselves just two years ago by the senior class of 2017. That year, they built and launched model rockets. Later this year, the 8th graders will guide the 3rd graders in building rockets too. The role reversal works well, as it challenges students to step up as mentors and leaders. Mentoring also reinforces what they already know as they have to rely on their prior knowledge to explain the science they learned back in 3rd grade. Plus, as 8th grader Grace Reeder noted, "It makes me feel good inside that I can help them do things."

Basketball Season is Here

By Bob Church, Athletic Director

With the football and volleyball seasons concluding at the end of October, basketball season is upon us. Big Pine High and Middle School teams have been at practice for a couple of weeks, with the teams looking forward to those long awaited games.

The middle school girls will be coached by MS/HS teacher Pete Schlieker, while Derek Carrington will continue his Big Pine coaching career with the middle school boys. Volunteering her time to help coach the boys will be Big Pine 4th Grade teacher, Lorelee Mairs.

At the high school level, David Mettam will once again lead the girls, with Bob Church helping out. Church will again head the boys program, with Beno Davis assisting.

Both high school teams started with games at Mammoth and played in the always competitive tournament in Coleville, hosted by the Antelope Valley Lion's Club. The middle school programs started games December 3rd, by hosting Round Valley. This looks like the last year for Round Valley to field middle school athletic teams, as their middle school students will be attending Home Street Middle School next school year.

Upcoming home games:

- Wed. Jan. 9, Lee Vining @ Big Pine-5:00 & 7:30 pm
- Wed. Jan. 16, Mammoth @ Big Pine-5:00 & 6:30 pm
- Fri. Jan. 25, Immanuel Chr. @ Big Pine-5:00 & 6:30 pm

High School Spirit Week

Mon. Dec. 17 - Pajama Day
 Tues. Dec. 18 - Sports Day
 Wed. Dec. 19 - Candy Cane Day
 Thurs. Dec. 20 - Beanie Day
 Fri. Dec. 21 - Movie Character Day



2018 Homecoming Court: (lt to rt) Marcelo Chavez, Cassandra Meza, Audie Begay, Bob Church, Arthur Richards, Raven Duckey, Jarrid Cortez, Gabriela Meza, Sonny Richards, Jessamine Turner, Giovanni Talamantes, Noelani in the Woods.

GoNoodle in Action

By Pamela Jones, Superintendent

If you walk into one of our elementary school classrooms, you might be surprised to see how the kids jump into action at the signal for GoNoodle, and start running next to their desks or dancing in place in time to the music on a colorful, and interactive video. Our smart teachers at the Big Pine School District have discovered the magic of movement and mindfulness in their classrooms. Short bursts of either calming or energizing activities improve focus, attention, productivity and have even been shown to improve math and reading comprehension scores. As the CEO of GoNoodle, Scott McQuigg, says: "The brain actually lights up differently after short bursts of movement." And best of all, the students love the opportunity to wiggle, dance, jump, run and stretch. Putting brain research to work in the classroom is fun! (Parents, there is a home version of GoNoodle available, designed to turn screen time into movement time as well. www.gonoodle.com)



Our kindergarten class springs into action, moving in synch with the actors in the GoNoodle program.

Middle School Spirit Week

Mon. Dec. 17 - Ugly holiday sweater
 Tues. Dec. 18 - Holiday head-wear
 Wed. Dec. 19 - Candy cane day
 Thurs. Dec. 20 - Flannel day
 Fri. Dec. 21- Pajama day



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Check us out on the web:
www.bigpineschools.org

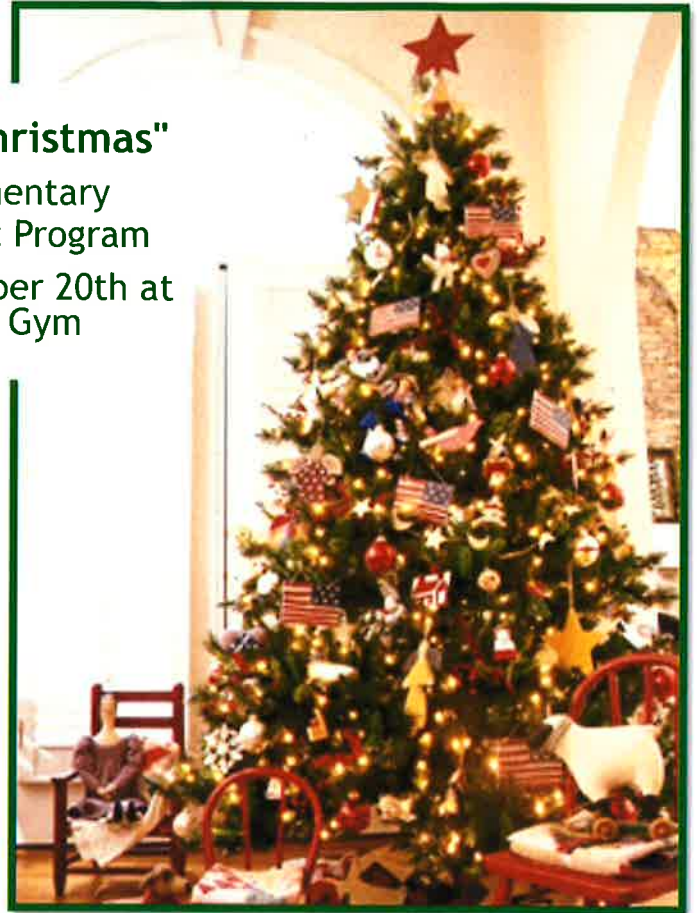
Give the Gift of Good Attendance

This holiday season, the best gift you can give your child is a good education. And the best place to get that education is in school. Every day. On time.

Just a few missed days here and there, even if they're excused absences, can add up to too much lost learning time and put your child behind in school.

So make sure your child is in school every day, right up until vacation starts. Our teachers will be teaching, and our students will be learning. Give your child the gift of being present.

"Americana Christmas"
Big Pine Elementary
Christmas Music Program
Thursday December 20th at
6 pm in the Gym



Big Pine Unified School District
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