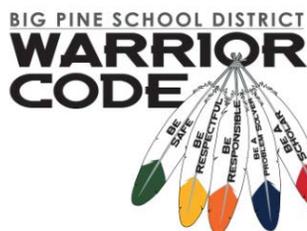


# The Big Pine Beacon

News from Big Pine Unified School District

March 9, 2018  
Volume 9 Number 4



## Upcoming Events

- Mar. 8 - Ski Day
- Mar. 12-16 - SLC week - Early Release
- Mar. 12-16 - Passages
- Mar. 16 - Elementary Awards Ceremony
- Mar. 22 - Ski Day
- Mar. 22 - Community Meetings
- Mar. 23-25 - UCLA Native Youth Conference
- Mar. 26-30 - SPRING BREAK No School
- Apr. 8-14 - College Tour NAU & Ft. Lewis
- Apr. 10 - Board Meeting
- Apr. 11 - County Speech Contest
- Apr. 25 - Elementary Community Meeting
- Apr. 26 - Middle School Community Meeting
- Apr. 27 - High School Community Meeting
- Apr. 27 - 5<sup>th</sup> Gr. College & Career Day
- Apr. 30-May 4 - Writing Performance Task
- May 7 - Board Meeting
- May 7-11 CAASPP Testing
- May 17 - Celebration of Learning - Minimum Day



## We Are Crew!

### See Something? Say Something!

By Pamela Jones, Superintendent, and the Big Pine Unified School District Board of Trustees

The recent school shooting in Parkland, Florida weighs heavily on our hearts. With great sorrow we wish to acknowledge the devastation to that school community, and we take heed that we at the Big Pine Unified School District must remain alert to any threat, take stock of our current safety plans and continue to improve upon a safe school environment.

The Board of Trustees and I had discussion at the March Board meeting about what precautions we might add to our current safety measures. We have many already in practice: regularly reviewed safety plans, communication with local law enforcement, emergency kits in every classroom, drills and practices, emergency communication systems, internal door locks, video cameras, lighting, window coverings, evacuation and lockdown plans. We are now considering additional safety features such as fencing, locked gates, backup communication technology, visible identification badging for staff and visitors and monitored access to school buildings.

While it can be tempting to focus on the visible measures, the research on school

Superintendent, Pamela Jones  
Principal, Ed Dardenne-Ankringa

shootings indicates that schools may achieve greater safety benefits by hiring a school counselor or launching programs to support students with social and emotional needs. We have already done both, as we know that research points to school climate efforts as some of the most important ways to keep students safe.

Many of us sadly recall the 1999 shootings at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, which prompted the development of research-based school safety strategies that still apply today. One national safety expert, Kenneth Trump (no relation to the President) says, "The number one way we find out about weapons in schools, still today as it was post-Columbine, is a kid comes forward and tells an adult that they trust." We all can work together to ensure that if we, or our children, see something, we say something.

If you have concerns or ideas, please contact Pamela Jones at 760/938-2005 ext. 2452 or e-mail at [pjones@bp.k12.ca.us](mailto:pjones@bp.k12.ca.us).



*4<sup>th</sup> Graders reflect on character goals prior to SLC's. 4<sup>th</sup> grade reflections build each year to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Passage presentation.*

## Passages

Our March Student Led Conferences are coming up March 12-16. This year we are increasing the rigor and relevance of the experience by incorporating "Passages" at the 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. "Passages" are a signature tradition of EL Education schools. They are similar to the existing

Senior Exit Interviews that have been a long held tradition at Big Pine High School. Students will present to community members, classmates and family the evidence of their readiness to move onto the next level of their educational journey.

## Winter Continues in the Eastern Sierra!

By Ed Dardenne-Ankringa, Principal

Will this be a Miracle March? The ski and snowboard season has been off to a great start this year. The February dates were like spring weather and conditions. These were some really warm days! What March has in store for us may be different, as we did have to cancel our first March date due to blizzard conditions on the mountain.

One of the biggest changes this year has been the addition of Mammoth Mountain instructors for our students. Kids in grades 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> have had the opportunity to take a two-hour lesson with a certified instructor. We have been dividing students up into groups of four to six based on ability level with either a ski instructor or a snowboard instructor. The progression of skills has been a real pleasure to watch! Our students have maximized his opportunity to improve their skiing and riding and move onto more challenging skills and terrain.

In addition to our alpine program (skiing and snowboarding at Mammoth Mountain), we also added a Nordic or cross country skiing program this year. Students have been going with their teacher by grade level and there is a combined middle school group. So far our students have really persevered and done an amazing job of skiing up to upper lakes out of Tamarack Lodge in Mammoth Lakes. Weather permitting, we will be sending more classes up soon! We missed a few days as the weather was so warm that it created a lot of snow melt and thin cover, which turned to ice from refreezing during the night. A special thanks to Jan Hart for leading our first groups of students up to Tamarack!

These positive additions and increased opportunities could not have occurred without the help of the Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation and the Executive Director,



*Students at a Nordic skiing instruction class. (l to rt) Cody Truelsen, Jayden Barlow, James Robinson, Lex Bencoma and Andrew Barlow.*

Lindsay Barksdale. Lindsay has generously helped allocate funding to Big Pine Schools through the Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation. This has allowed us to reduce costs to ski and snowboard, offer instructors, and also provide some scholarships to students in need. A huge thanks to Lindsay and the Mammoth Mountain Community Foundation!

There is still time to attend a weekly Native Youth Leadership Workshop at the Big Pine OVCD Office. This can provide families with assistance toward ski and snowboard program fees. If you are interested, please call 760-938-3355 for more information.

Shred on, Warriors!



*Spanish Class out to see Coco. (lft to rht) Auora Toledo, Jessamine Turner, Ciera Peterson, Halen Huber and Eric Fairley.*

## Spanish Class Sees "Coco"

By Linda Akyuz, Spanish Teacher and the Spanish Class

Ms. Akyüz's Spanish students went to see the Disney movie *Coco* on November 27 and December 4, 2017. In the movie, Miguel visits the Land of the Dead to find one of his ancestors during the Day of the Dead. During his adventure, he learns the importance of honoring family and remembering ancestors. We give it Two Thumbs Up!

Written by Ms. Akyüz's Second Period Spanish Class: Cassandra Meza, Gabriela Meza, and Jarrid Cortez

*Las clases de Español de la Sita. Akyüz fueron a ver la película de Disney, que se llama Coco, el 27 de noviembre y el 4 de diciembre de 2017. En la película, Miguel visita el lugar donde viven los muertos para encontrar uno de sus antepasados durante el Día de los Muertos. Durante sus aventuras, se da cuenta de la importancia de honrar a nuestras familias y recordar a nuestros antepasados. ¡Le damos dos pulgares hacia arriba!*

*Escrito por la clase de Español del Período Dos de la Srta. Akyüz.: Cassandra Meza, Gabriela Meza, and Jarrid Cortez*

## Spelling Bee 2018

By Lauren Zierer

Big Pine's Inyo County Spelling Bee competitors were Miles McPhee (5th grade), Chayton Patterson (7th grade), Noelani In the Woods (8th grade) and Lauren Loy (8th grade). All of Big Pine's competitors made it through the written portion of the competition to compete in the oral spelling bee. I was really impressed by our students' spelling abilities and their courage. It isn't easy to get up in front of such a big crowd and correctly spell words like subcutaneous! Noelani In the Woods placed 6th out of 29 overall competitors.



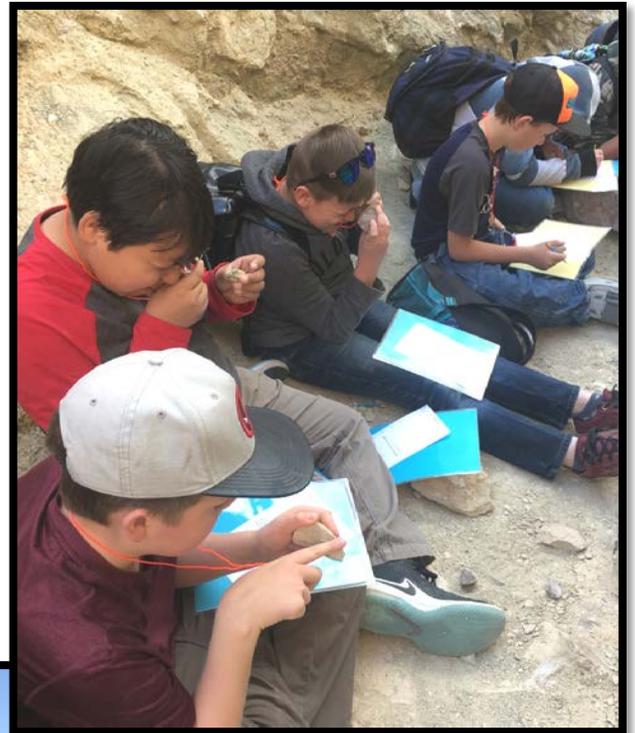
Noelani In the Woods at the podium during the Spelling Bee.

## Death Valley Rocks!

By Alison Amberg, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher

Crouched in their own hexagonal pockets of salt flat, sixth graders explored a world of extremes at Death Valley National Park on February 13. As a kick-off to their expedition, students used the experience to think about the Earth's geological time scale and dynamic geological processes. Park Rangers John and Valerie welcomed the group at Golden Canyon where students examined geological clues of past flash floods. Standing on a worn down fragment of road, students imagined past visitors driving up the narrow canyon. In a quiet moment, the group found a branch off the canyon and chose a rock to study. Students used hand lenses to sketch close-ups, and took time to measure and describe their rocks.

In Badwater Basin, students marveled at how far below sea level they were standing. Students found their own sense of solitude sitting and observing salt crystals with their hand lenses. It was well worth the long haul on windy roads. A transportation grant from Death Valley National Park and the Death Valley Natural History Association helped make the trip a reality. The sixth grade class would like to thank them for their generosity.



Above: Students using lenses to study rocks: (front to back) William Mairs, Jayden Barlow, Tyler Brown and CJ Carrington.



At left: 6<sup>th</sup> grade class at Badwater Basin: Vanessa Miller, Morgan Renard, Torrin Swain, Ivey Griego, Lex Bencoma, Tyler Brown, William Mairs, Michael Woollard, Ali Amberg, Teacher, CJ Carrington, Nathaniel Vance Jayden Barlow and Cody Truelsen.

## Boys' and Girls' Basketball Season

By Bob Church, Athletic Director

Big Pine High School Boy's and Girl's Basketball Teams wrapped up their seasons a couple of weeks ago, with each team experiencing some success in the Hi-Lo League.

The Big Pine Boy's Basketball Team fielded only six players, with no players over 5'9" tall. However, players Audie Begay, Jarrid Cortez, Adrian Marquez, Sonny Richards, Cesar Rico and Chris Turner held their own, while facing much taller players each game they played. These Warriors finished fourth out of six in the Hi-Lo League, going 4-6 in league play. Although next year is promising with the incoming 8th graders, the Warriors will certainly miss the play and contributions of Seniors Marquez and Rico, as each of these young men had very positive effects on the younger players and showed great leadership throughout the season. The returning boys look to improve their record and Hi-Lo League place next year.

## Great Backyard Bird Count 2018

By Maiya Aranda, Jarrid Cortez, Cassandra Meza, Gabriela Meza, and Kobe Talamantes

On February 16, 2018, Big Pine High School Advanced Spanish students participated in the "Great Backyard Bird Count", which is held every year by the Audubon Society. Participants in the Great Backyard Bird Count observe birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days—out of four possible days—and report their findings (species, exact location with latitude and longitude, and special observations) online. We prepared for the trip by: downloading online instructions, maps, and species list; planning our trip stops; and planning how we would observe and report the species we saw.

Our first stop was "Dirty Socks Springs" just south of Owens Lake. We observed and reported two mallard ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*); two Pacific brants (*Branta bernicla*), which are rare in our region; 10 long-billed dowitchers (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*); and 13 Savannah sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*).

Our next stop was Diaz Lake where we saw and logged two pied-billed grebes (*Podilymbus podiceps*), one great blue heron (*Ardea herodias*), 10 American coots (*Fulica americana*), and one Bewick's wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*).

At our next stop, the Owens River at Lone Pine Narrow Gauge Road, we saw and reported a red-winged blackbird



Bird watchers: (It to rt) Kobe Talamantes, Cassandra Meza, Jarrid Cortez and Maiya Aranda.

The Big Pine Lady Warriors Basketball Team captured a share of the Hi-Lo League Championship with a 6-2 record and was rewarded by the CIF-CS a place in the CIF-CS Basketball Playoffs against the number one seeded team, East Bakersfield. Although the Lady Warriors lost convincingly to the Blazers, the Big Pine young ladies represented their families, school and community very well with their sportsmanship and never-quit attitude. Anona Davis, Arrianna Haifley, Cassie Meza, Gabby Meza, Ciera Peterson, Lauren Simpson, Aurora Toledo and Jessamine Turner have much to be proud of with their play and sportsmanship this year. Unfortunately, both Simpson and Toledo will be missed for next year's team, as they will be graduating in June. The Lady Warriors will have several players coming up from the 8th grade ranks and will again look to compete for a championship.



Doing paperwork for bird count. (If to rt) Cassandra Meza, Gabriela Meza and Jarrid Cortez.

(*Agelaius phoeniceus*). At North Fork Oak Creek, northwest of Independence and west of the fish hatchery, we did not observe any birds.

We wrote what we saw, heard, smelled, and felt in English and Spanish in our journals while we were out there. We are creating posters out of these "poems."

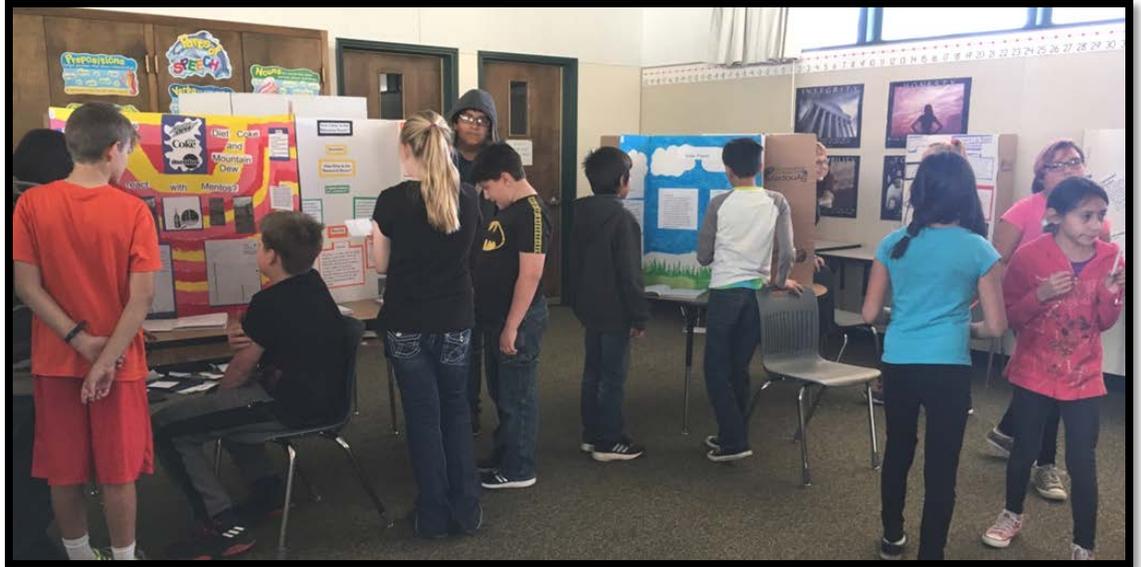
Our next day back at school, we changed some of our field classifications after we gained access to more bird identification resources. According to the way a bird looked when it was foraging—its back was humped instead of flat, we decided it was a long-billed dowitcher, not a short-billed dowitcher, which would have been very far from its natural habitat. We realized that what we thought was a red-necked grebe was a brant. We also entered a photography contest with our bird pictures.

We wrote a report of our findings in English and Spanish, we are adding our observations to our bird log and guide, and we are finishing up our bilingual bird fairy tale books! We had a great day and can't wait to go birding again in March and April, during the migratory season.

## Big Pine Middle School Students to Participate in Regional Science Fair

By Jan Hart, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher

Big Pine students had the chance to demonstrate their creativity and habits of scholarship during our school's biennial Science Fair held January 31<sup>st</sup> at the Helen Lund Square building. More than 30 science-based projects by sixth-grade, middle and high school students were judged for their originality and authenticity, inquiry, attention to the scientific method, and



*Big Pine School District Science Fair with students displaying and observing their projects.*

craftsmanship. Three projects that received the highest scores were entered in the Inyo County Science Fair on February 6<sup>th</sup> at the Tri-County Fairgrounds, where they competed with other student projects from throughout the Owens Valley. Seventh-grader Ashtin Vance's project about the Effects of Acid Rain on Plants, and eighth-grader Martin Woollard's project about the Effects of Wi-Fi Radiation on Plants, each received an Honorable Mention. First place honors were awarded to seventh-graders Paige Johnson and Luci Flores for their joint effort that investigated traffic speed along Highway 395 within the Big Pine school zone. Their project, "School-zone Speed and the Slow Down Marquee," will next compete in the regional

SIM Science & Engineering Fair (San Bernardino/Inyo/Mono Counties), to be held in Fontana on April 3rd. Big Pine Science Fair coordinators Alison Amberg and Jan Hart would like to thank the Science Fair judges from the Eastern Sierra Land Trust, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Owens Valley School District. We are very proud of all our participants for their creativity, craftsmanship and perseverance. When you next see Paige and Luci, give them a shout-out and wish them well as they take their project to the next round of competition!



*First Place Winners (at rt.) Luci Flores congratulated by Inyo Co. Supt. Lisa Fontana and (above Paige Johnson proudly displays 1<sup>st</sup> Place ribbon and certificate.*



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Check us out on the web:  
[www.bigpineschools.org](http://www.bigpineschools.org)

## Education

At EL Education schools, students appreciate how their Passage presentations help them become confident about their own strengths, and show how they have grown as a learner. One student said, "It was hard, but it was kind of fun at the same time."

# ATTEND TODAY

## ACHIEVE TOMORROW



## ATTENDANCE WORKS

[www.attendanceworks.org](http://www.attendanceworks.org)

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