

BELLEFONTE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ISSUE NO. 42

RED RAIDER

m a g a z i n e



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Bellefonte Area Board of School Directors

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Robert Lumley-Sapanski, Vice President
Hope Boylston
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A message from the school board

By Rodney Musser, board member

How to Reach Us

Administration Building
All Numbers.....355-4814
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Director of Fiscal Affairs.....Ext. 3015
Assistant Superintendent.....Ext. 3004
Director of Human Resources.....Ext. 3002
Director of Special Education.....Ext. 3021
Business Office.....Ext. 3001
Director of Physical Plant.....Ext. 3006
Director of Food Service.....Ext. 3010
Director of Transportation.....Ext. 3015
Bellefonte Elementary.....355-5519
Benner Elementary.....355-2812
Marion-Walker Elementary.....357-2425
Pleasant Gap Elementary.....359-2739
Bellefonte Middle School.....355-5466
Bellefonte High School.....355-4833
BeLA.....Ext. 3053
Website.....www.basd.net

Discrimination Policy

The Bellefonte Area School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry or any other legally protected classification. This policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Information relative to special accommodations, grievance procedure and designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 may be obtained by contacting Superintendent Michelle Saylor at 355-4814, Ext. 3005.

When you enter Bellefonte Area Middle School, chances are you won't notice a plaque on the wall that dedicated the original construction of the building during the 1964-65 school year. Whereas today we have a nine-member board, on the plaque are 30 names of school board members from the borough and each of the surrounding townships. Legislation in 1963 forced local schools to combine, but it was not without some struggle and acrimony.

It may be difficult to believe that as late as the early 1960s, each of the municipalities that now comprise the Bellefonte Area School District were in the final phase of combining to create the school district we know today.

Through the intervening years, the district has undergone a slow process of change. Some of the buildings built in the 1940s and 1960s appear the same from the outside, but what's happening inside has seen a significant shift in instruction and learning opportunities for our students. During the past 20 years the district has renovated the middle school, high school and an elementary school. Rogers Stadium, first built in 1947, is undergoing a complete rebuild at no additional cost to taxpayers.

As the board moves forward to tend to the needs of our other older facilities, we are also mindful of our fiduciary responsibilities to the community at large. In this calendar year, the board will be reaching out to the community through public forums for comment on the needs of the district. The remaining elementary buildings will be the focus of these forums.

The decisions to come are never made in a vacuum and without consideration of our ability to fund certain needs, wants and requests. Every budget should be handled with compassion because we do not want our community to change into one that becomes exclusive based on individuals' abilities to pay taxes. We also recognize that some constituents may be uncomfortable voicing their opinion in public regarding the direction they believe the district should be heading and so we will make a serious effort to receive your concerns by all means possible.

The goal every year is to have the school district and our community in a better place than it was the previous year – an effort that began in 1963 and is never-ending. We hope to see and hear from you soon.

For the Love of Learning



Bellefonte Area School District Superintendent Michelle Saylor regularly writes a blog called, "For the Love of Learning," which can be found on the district's website. It was also picked up by the School Superintendents Association, and an excerpt was used in the September edition of School Administrator magazine.

On the web

<https://www.bsad.net/Page/12624>



"Over the course of the last year we faced many challenges — some internally, some externally,

but as a team we weathered them well. ... We began work on a much needed stadium project and initiated serious conversation around our other facilities — we began to ask the questions we've needed to ask for many, many years."

From "Always Live in Beta" by **Michelle Saylor** (superintendent, Bellefonte Area School District, Bellefonte, Pa.) on her blog For the Love of Learning

Welcome new teachers

Bellefonte Area School District welcomed new teachers this school year. A teacher induction ceremony was held during a three-day welcoming event that allowed the new teachers to meet other members of the district, go through some training, tour the schools, and meet with mentors and more. There was even a signing event.

New teachers for the 2018-19 school year

- Arimani Caprio Davy: Science teacher, Bellefonte Area High School
- Jessica Brown Cetnar: Elementary music teacher
- Kelsey Darling: First-grade teacher, Bellefonte Elementary School
- Scott Douglass: Elementary orchestra teacher
- Bethany Felter: Learning support teacher, Marion-Walker Elementary School
- Jill Geyer: Fifth-grade teacher, Bellefonte Elementary
- Samantha Hubley: Sixth-grade English language arts teacher, Bellefonte Area Middle School
- Katherine Kohler: Learning support teacher, Pleasant Gap Elementary School
- Anne Lorenzo: First-grade teacher, Bellefonte Elementary
- Brianne McDaniel: First-grade teacher at Pleasant Gap Elementary
- Melissa MacNeely: Elementary Spanish teacher
- Stacey Norfolk: Guidance counselor at Bellefonte Area Middle School
- Caleb Rebarchak: Music teacher, Bellefonte Area High School

Homecoming 2018

This school year, students involved in student council at Bellefonte Area High School worked since the beginning of the year with advisers and teachers Arianna Gouzouasis and Jennifer Richardson to prepare for 2018 homecoming festivities that included a school dance; themed spirit week; parade throughout downtown Bellefonte; homecoming king and queen and court selections; and a football game against Central High School played at Lock Haven University. Spirit Week at the high school kicked off on Oct. 8 with comfy clothes day, followed by tie-dye day, meme day, throwback Thursday and red and white day for students to show their Red Raiders pride.



Ashley Harter and Micah Heckathorne were named homecoming king and queen.



The Red Raiders beat the Central High School Dragons, 21-12. The undefeated football team from 1968 was also honored during the Bellefonte Area homecoming football game.

Miss Bellefonte

The new Miss Bellefonte has a role model who she's looked up to since the age of 9. Senior Lissi Przybys said it's because of longtime baton coach Arimani Caprio Davy, who also teaches in the district, that she wanted to someday be Miss Bellefonte.

"It's very exciting," Przybys said. "When I was younger, my baton coach was Miss Bellefonte and she was just someone I always looked up to – captain of her team and (treasurer) of her class – and was everything I wanted to be."

During prom last school year, Przybys was elected Miss Bellefonte after being voted for by teachers at Bellefonte Area High School. Eligibility requirements allow students to apply for the title if they have at least an 85 percent GPA. A list of accomplishments and extracurricular activities are also included that help teachers make their pick.

Now, Przybys has a responsibility of acting as the school's representative when in the community. She will continue to attend school and community events. In the fall, she participated in the Flaming Foliage Festival held annually in Renovo.

"My life goes by 100 miles an hour, but it's really rewarding to see everything that may be stressful at times, but has a positive impact on others."

Lissi Przybys

Przybys is the vice president of the Class of 2019 and National Honor Society, a member of Spanish Honor Society, holds a class cabinet position, is the student chair of the prom committee, is on the softball and majorette teams, is a part of marching band and regularly is involved in community service work.

She even has a few words of wisdom for young women wanting to have the same title: "Have a good attitude and get involved in extracurricular (activities) for a purpose – not just to be Miss Bellefonte, but because it's something you have a passion and dedication for."

The Miss Bellefonte term will last for one year before the next girl is crowned. The 2017-18 Miss Bellefonte was Sierra Pletcher.



Ecosystems of Ecuador



A science department-sponsored trip to the Galapagos Islands gave high school students a chance to go to a place they never traveled to before, while focusing on biology-related curriculum during the journey. And to make the trip a reality, students were involved in fundraising efforts – some which have helped raise money for the trip while also giving back to a research-based organization focused on conservation efforts.

Advisers and teachers Chris Freidhoff and Kevin Harman said the mission of the trip was to study the ecosystems of Ecuador and study habitats of the rainforest, plains and other areas of the Galapagos Islands. The 10 students involved, along with their advisers, also participated in other activities such as whitewater rafting, relaxing in a hot spring, standing directly on the equator, eating different foods and visiting Cotopaxi Mountain. On the Galapagos Islands, others got to snorkel, visit the Charles Darwin Research Center and observe the giant Galapagos tortoises along with other unique species to the islands.

Curriculum in Freidhoff's Advanced Placement biology class is centered on evolution, and while on the trip, students experienced firsthand what Charles Darwin saw when he was there in the 1800s that helped lead to his contributions to the theory of evolution.

An organization named in his memory, the Charles Darwin Foundation, located at a research station in Puerto Ayora, Ecuador, was also on the group's list of places to visit and support. They teamed up with Jabebo studio on High Street in Bellefonte to design a series of animal-themed earrings made from recycled cardboard, and sold them to help benefit the trip and foundation. Harman said \$350 was raised for the organization.

Bamboo fly fishing rods

Senior Zach Spearly is an avid angler who spends time fishing Spring Creek. A project he was involved in during woodworking class since last school year allowed him to make a fly fishing rod from Tonkin Cane bamboo shipped in from the state of Washington. For him, the fishing rod will also likely be something to use when fishing and can be put on display to showcase his work.

Teacher JP Mayes said the idea to make bamboo fly rods with his class came last year when a physical education teacher suggested it.

"Mr. (Dan) Miller was who gave me the idea, and when I looked it up, there was a whole process involved," Mayes said. "There's a lot of math, science involved and a lot of precision."

Using a planer forming machine and a router – among other tools – students assemble the fly rods using six equilateral triangle-shaped bamboo pieces that are heated and glued together using adhesive called Unibond 800. One bamboo stick can make up to two seven-foot rods, and once finished, the rods will be valued at \$1,300 to \$1,900.



Ceiling art

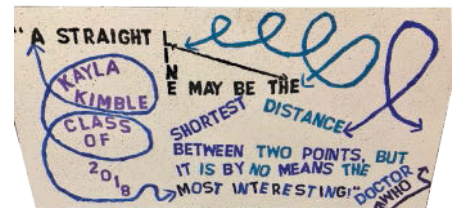
If you looked up at the night sky on June 1, the stars appeared to be in a different alignment than they are on any other day. That was the same night as the 2018 Bellefonte Area High School graduation, and that constellation was recreated in a picture drawn by graduate Ryan Houser on a ceiling tile as part of a larger project open to seniors.

Social studies teacher Ally Durney began the project with the Class of 2017 to help make sure students literally left their mark on the school. Each year, seniors can purchase a ceiling tile, and paint an administrative-approved drawing of their choice that will be installed on the ceiling of the high school.

"My hope is that A) kids can have some kind of personal relation with the school, because it's their school, and B) they can kind of invest in our environment under schoolwide (Positive Behavior Support program)," Durney said. "My goal is that in a decade, all of our tiles will have permanent art."

Durney spearheaded the idea inspired by an Advanced Placement world history class she teaches.

"I figure it could be done as a bonus if kids wanted to paint some aspect of history and I could have it all over my room," she said. "Then it turned into, 'hey, let's do this as a class,' and got an overwhelming response."



Paint the Plow

“Know before you go.” That’s the theme to this season’s Paint the Plow competition through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. And again, PennDOT District 2 offered schools in its region the chance to be represented on a plow to help promote driver safety throughout the winter.

Students who participated were from schools in Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Juniata, McKean, Mifflin and Potter counties. High school principal Mike Fedisson said the plow assigned to Bellefonte Area was one painted by students on the school’s Safety Committee. Those students worked together to develop an idea, sketch and paint the plow. They were Natalie Book, Isabella Corman, Owen Knisely, Max Kroell, Evan McMullen, Keeli Pighetti and Olivia Reiter.

A panel of judges selected the plow painted by Bellefonte Area High School students as the overall winner of this season’s competition. “We’re very pleased with the level of participation and enthusiasm the Paint the Plow program received in 2018 and are excited to see it continue to grow,” District Executive Karen Michael said in a prepared statement. “It’s a pleasure to see local students put their artistic talents to work in delivering an important safety message.”

Last year’s theme was “Ice and snow, take it slow,” and the Bellefonte plow was painted by students in the Art Club. Fedisson said that to participate this school year, an application must have been filled out, and once accepted, students had six weeks to complete the project.

“Each plow is intended to be used in the district where each school district is located,” Fedisson said.



Street Law



Photo provided by Penn State Law

By partnering this school year with Penn State Law, social studies teacher Matt Martin is taking a different approach to a government class he regularly teaches at Bellefonte Area High School. It’s an opportunity that allows Martin’s 56 students to learn about curriculum they normally would have learned in class, but through the eyes of law students studying at Penn State.

“The mission (is) to network with Penn State Law School and give our kids a hands-on, interactive experience that is really going to affect their lives,” Martin said. “We thought it was a good opportunity to see them work with law students and respond to law students rather than with teachers because they present a different perspective and expertise.”

Using resources and law student instructors from the Street Law Program at Penn State, high school students in the government class learned how law, policy and citizenship relate to everyday life. The Street Law Program is used to create opportunity for students to better understand the law and democratic process – though the use of simulations, mock trials, classroom discussions and more.

Martin said Penn State Law rolled out its program last year with the State College Area School District. Looking to expand, Penn State Law Associate Dean Keith Elkin reached out to Martin in November of 2017 to see if he was interested in bringing the initiative to Bellefonte.

“They (the students) seem to be really encouraged by it,” Martin said.

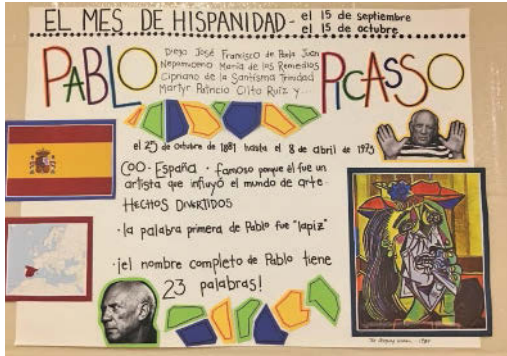
The mission is to help students develop practical law-related knowledge to help foster decision-making, problem-solving and more.

“Personally, I really don’t know that much about law and government, and I’m really hoping that I get to learn more from them about how things work in the system,” senior Elizabeth Giacobe said. “Obviously, I’ll learn a lot from the books in government class, but with them (the law students) it’s like learning directly from what’s happening in the world now and how it’s going to affect what I’m going to do later in life.”

In Martin’s government class, students generally first learn about the foundations of government and practical applications with the Constitution and how that affects people’s lives, including their own; and then learn about the branches of government and street law.

The term “street law” is colloquially used to explain the process where law students teach youth about the law. It stems from an initiative established in 1972 with the Georgetown University Law Center and the public school system in Washington, D.C.

Hispanic Heritage Month



Students in Spanish Honor Society, along with students in Spanish teachers Emily Zimdahl-McManus and Victoria Butch's classes have been participating in educational activities that promote the Hispanic culture. This effort was enhanced during Hispanic Heritage Month. According to information from senior Gretchen Little, public relations student chairperson for the Spanish Honor Society, "the roots of Hispanic Heritage Month go back to 1968 under President Lyndon B. Johnson, but was only a week-long celebration." She added that President Ronald Reagan expanded the cultural celebration in 1988 to last from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

"During this 30-day period, we celebrate the culture, history and contributions of the American citizens whose ancestors came from Central and South America as well as Mexico, the Caribbean and Spain," she said.

Students learned about the Hispanic culture and notable Hispanic figures. Students in Spanish class also researched Hispanic figures and created posters to display around the hallways of Bellefonte Area High School.

"This project helps to promote the Spanish language and the accomplishments of Hispanic men and women around the world," Little said. "In addition to promotional posters, the Spanish Honor Society (posted) a fun fact about Hispanic Heritage on the morning announcements."

*Information contributed by senior Gretchen Little

Monster Project



The Monster project students in the high school Spanish department were involved in was one that Spanish teacher Emily Zimdahl-McManus said reviews Spanish vocabulary and encourages creativity.

Each year during Halloween time, students are required to participate in the project, which acts as an authentic assessment for project learning about human body parts, with increasing difficulty depending on the level of the class students are enrolled in.

Students in Zimdahl-McManus and Victoria Butch's Spanish classes were tasked with creating a body of their own design and then labeling body parts in Spanish. It's a project Zimdahl-McManus brought to the district about six years ago.

During this time of year, the students also celebrate Day of the Dead from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2. Also known as Día de Muertos, the holiday encourages families and friends of the dead to gather and celebrate their spiritual journey to the afterlife.

Class winners

First period, Spanish 4 Honors: Natalie Book

Second period, Spanish 5: Victoria Abbott

Third period, Spanish 2: Melina Weaver

Fourth and fifth periods, AP Spanish: Marley Lambert

Ninth period, Spanish 2: Brynn Albright

Tenth period, Spanish 4 Honors: Jessica Shearer

Red Hill Fossil Site



About 35 students from Advanced Placement biology class at Bellefonte Area High School had the chance this fall to visit the site where the first tetrapod was discovered in North America – Hyner, about 45 miles north of Bellefonte in Clinton County.

Teacher Chris Freidhoff said the discovery was outlined in the book, “Your Inner Fish,” which was assigned to students to read during the summer. The book assignment was required in order for students to join his class, in addition to filling out an AP application and going through an interview process.

“The book does a great job of sprinkling in evolution into areas where you wouldn’t initially make the connection between life from millions of years ago and today,” Freidhoff said. “The documentary about the book actually shows the exact location where we fossil-hunted on that day.”

When his class first arrived on location, they met with paleontologist Doug Rowe who works at the Red Hill Fossil Site. Rowe is an expert on living things during the Devonian period reportedly spanning as far back as 419.2 million years ago.

“Students got to touch and hold some of the fossils at the field station and listen to Doug explain what the major species that lived during that time period,” Freidhoff said. “We then drove back to the Red Hill Fossil Site where Doug gave us a presentation on how to hunt for fossils, then let my students fossil hunt for nearly three hours.”

Students used hammers, picks and chisels to chip away at the bedrock estimated to be formed 360 million years ago.

Centre County Outstanding Young Woman

Bellefonte Area High School student Halle Mitchell was named this year’s Centre County Outstanding Young Woman. The title is given each year to a high school senior living in Centre County who demonstrates excellence in her life.



Vice Principal Mike Baughman

When students entered Bellefonte Area Middle School on the first day of class, Mike Baughman said one of the first things he wanted to do was build a positive relationship with students to help foster a foundation for success.

The school's new vice principal comes to the Bellefonte Area School District after about eight years working at Keystone Central School District in Clinton County – about four years as a teacher at Bucktail Area Middle and High School in Renovo followed by four years as vice principal at Central Mountain Middle School in Mill Hall. He also helped implement the Keystone Central Virtual Academy where he taught many social studies classes and developed cyber curriculum.

Baughman was approved by the Bellefonte Area school board to join the district on Aug. 2. He replaced former BAMS Vice Principal Jackie Wynkoop who changed positions within the district.

Baughman is a 2009 graduate of Penn State where he earned a social studies teaching degree with a minor in history.

"It's a good opportunity for me to grow," he said about taking on the new role. "My wife and I care about this community and this school, and since this is our neighborhood school and community, we are very invested in it."

His wife, Jessica Baughman, is a math intervention specialist at Bellefonte Area High School.

While at BAMS, Mike Baughman said he hopes to help enhance the school's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports program, and work with students and families to provide academic, social and emotional support.

"It starts with getting to know the students and building a relationship with them so you can support them as individuals to help them grow," he said. "Education is your key to a better life, and I love the middle school and that age where you really start to build that foundation for success."



BAMS Beautification Day



Bellefonte Area Middle School held its first-ever BAMS Beautification Day for school staff to team up with the community to help spruce up the grounds. Principal Sommer Garman said the idea to hold the event came during the summer when discussing areas of the school that needed improvement.

"Our custodial crew works their butts off to get the inside of the building clean, so we wanted to give them a break and not add more to their plate," Garman said.

Participants helped weed, lay mulch, cut overgrown bushes and more.

To see the video, visit this link

<https://www.facebook.com/552506274784512/videos/1797667530268374/>

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Book Club

Pleasant Gap Elementary School third-grade teacher Trevor Montgomery regularly met outside at the school's playground with some former students, now in fourth grade, for a weekly book club he hosted during the summer. It's something he's done for several years, starting when he was a teacher at Bellefonte Elementary School.

Montgomery and about 10 students sat under a small pavilion and discussed the book, "The Lemonade War," which students read throughout the summer. They also drank lemonade during the discussion. That was the second book the students read during Montgomery's book club.

The discussion encouraged the students to think outside the box when asked questions about the meaning of the book, lessons one can take away from it and the kinds of things they'd ask author Jacqueline Davies if given the chance. The event ended with a water balloon fight against Pleasant Gap fourth-grade teacher Pam Grimminger and her former students. Grimminger held a similar book study with students who are now in fifth grade.

And like Grimminger and Montgomery, other teachers in the Bellefonte Area School District hosted programs to promote student reading during the summer. School libraries also had extended summer hours for students and families to come in and work on Makerspace kits and other reading initiatives where they could take Reading Counts quizzes, check out books and spend time reading in the library.

"Just like you have to practice to get better at sports, kids need lots of practice reading to get better at reading," Benner Elementary School first-grade teacher Kacie Montgomery said. "Students, who don't read over the summer, tend to lose literacy skills. Students who do read over the summer tend to improve their literacy skills. A lot of teachers reference the 'summer slide,' meaning that kids slide backwards or regress over the summer because they are not practicing skills."

Kacie Montgomery and fellow Benner Elementary first-grade teacher Jamie Beard held a reading

program with some former students who entered second grade this school year. They posted questions on a mobile application called, Seesaw, where the students could respond to the questions in a voice comment, video, picture or text. About 15 student participants read "The Littles" and "The Chocolate Touch."

"Their parents often read the book with them and help them form their responses," Kacie Montgomery said. "We really wanted to incorporate families reading together, as well as students responding and interacting with each other."



T-shirt design contest



Elijah Davis said it only took him about 10 minutes to come up with a T-shirt design idea that helped make him a winner in a local T-shirt design contest. He said the idea came to him just before an orthodontist appointment this fall.

The Pleasant Gap Elementary School fifth-grade student in Jen Roth's class was one of 47 students who participated in the inaugural T-shirt design contest through State College Orthodontics. The theme this year was all about preventing bullying, and encouraged students to create a design around that theme.

Elijah's T-shirt design included the phrase, "Labels are for food, not people." The middle of the shirt also included a jar of peanut butter with an additional phrase, "Don't be a nut, make people feel butter."

"I thought of food to use first because they have labels, and right away also thought of peanut butter and making people 'feel butter,'" he said.

The play on words helped crown him a winner of the contest with two other students from Gray's Woods Elementary School of the State College Area School District. Because he won, State College Orthodontics had T-shirts with Elijah's design made for every student in his class and had a pizza party to celebrate.

State College Orthodontics marketing coordinator Sheridan Sheehan said the office came up with the T-shirt design contest to promote antibullying.

"Kids can really embrace this and it was a way to make it a more inclusive (activity)," she said.

Book donations

Books donated to Pam Grimminger's fourth-grade class at Pleasant Gap Elementary School are being used to promote literacy and other topics the books focus on.

Grimminger received about 80 books since the start of school after she created an Amazon wish list looking for donations to help enhance her classroom library. It was an idea inspired by a similar project fellow Pleasant Gap Elementary teacher Trevor Montgomery did, which also received a positive response.

"It's a way bigger number than I was expecting," Grimminger said.

She now regularly introduces new books to the class. Her students are



then allowed to read them during reading time and check out them to bring home. When asked if they like the donated books, the students all enthusiastically and simultaneously said, "yes!"

"It's really cool when we get new books delivered," student Emma Kopcha said.

She likes reading the "A to Z Mysteries" series, and is hoping to complete the "I Survived" series by Lauren Tarshis, as well.

Grimminger said many of the books she's received are focused on nonfiction work. She also hopes to keep adding to the list to help build the classroom library.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Global Read Aloud

Second-grade students at Benner Elementary School had the chance to connect via Skype with students in Buenos Aires, Argentina. It was made possible through a global literacy project called the Global Read Aloud.

Teacher Nicole Harris introduced the GRA to her class so they could participate in the program for six weeks, beginning on Oct. 1. It allows students from around the world to connect with others through Skype, SeeSaw and Google Hangouts or other online platforms while reading a common book. Harris said her class connected with dozens of other students from schools across North and South America, while reading the book, "A Boy Called Bat." They even marked locations of their connections on a map – most which have come from the U.S. and Canada.

Harris said she got involved in the GRA after learning about it online.

"It doesn't matter how different we all are, we can still find a cool connection between us and use things like books to bring people together," she said.

The Global Read Aloud program has about 1.2 million students participating from about 70 countries.

While connecting through Skype with students from the Belgrano Day School in Argentina, students from Benner Elementary and their counterpart class took turns asking each other questions about the book. They then answered the questions to the best of their abilities. Students also had the opportunity to tell each other about their schools.



Mini-Thon



When fifth-grade student Brooke Whitman heard about the mini-Thon event last spring at Bellefonte Area High School, she knew she wanted to help spearhead one at her school, Bellefonte Elementary. It was done as a way to help give back to the community, while making sure she did something memorable in her last year before entering middle school.

More than 100 students participated in the inaugural event that included dancing, games and other activities. More than \$6,000 was also raised for the Four Diamond fund.

The event was a smaller version of the IFC/Panhellenic

Dance Marathon hosted annually by Penn State that raises money for the foundation that supports those affected by childhood cancer. The elementary school's event in the fall was even verified by Thon at Penn State and given approval to sell items with the Thon and Four Diamonds trademarks.

Fourth-grade teacher Lauren Whitman said students worked since the beginning of the school year helping to raise money through various fundraising efforts. Sponsors of the event were Centre Concrete, Maria's, Pizza Mia and Weis.

Veterans Day

Celebrating Veterans Day is something important to staff and students at Bellefonte Area School District. Even if the holiday lands on a weekend, staff makes sure they find time during the week to publicly honor those who served.

At Marion-Walker Elementary School, students filled the gym, which was the site of multiple Veterans Day-type activities including crafts, guest readers, a visit from local veterans and members of the military, flag-folding demonstrations and more.

At Benner Elementary School, second-grade students spent the week of Nov. 5 learning about veterans and the importance of recognizing them more than on just Veterans Day.

Teacher Nicole Harris said students made cards at school and had the opportunity after school to visit Centre Crest to thank veterans for their service, and deliver the cards. One World War II veteran even spoke to the group about memories he had while serving in the U.S. Navy, including the time his ship was shot down and he had to swim to safety.

The week at Benner was also filled with other Veterans Day activities to honor those who served and currently serve in the military.



Nolan Weaver, a fifth-grade student, got a surprise visit from his uncle, Grey Rockey, who serves in the U.S. Army. Rockey is also a former Benner Bear. You can find the video online: <https://www.facebook.com/552506274784512/posts/1923866080981851/>

Alphabet fashion show



After a 42-day lesson focused on thoroughly learning the alphabet, students in Heather Snedden and Kimberly Rosenberger's kindergarten classes at Benner Elementary School held an alphabet fashion show to prove just how well they know their letters.

Clad in paper vests, each student was assigned a letter that he or she was required to decorate their vest in. For each lettered vest, students drew or pasted on items that represented the letter they were assigned.

They then turned the stage into the catwalk and strutted around to the instrumental music of Madonna's "Vogue" showing their vests and ending with a pose. The event was emceed by Rosenberger as she described what each student was wearing.

Schools That Teach Tour

In his Schools that Teach tour, Pennsylvania Department of Education Secretary Pedro Rivera made a stop at Bellefonte Area School District to visit with administrators, teachers and students – and from the moment he stepped on district grounds, he said the energy was “electric.”

The first stop in Rivera’s trip to the district started at Marion-Walker Elementary School where a roundtable discussion was held with Rivera and some district staff members. It then continued to the middle school, where he visited teacher Jordan Eccher’s class that is focused on engineering; and got a tour of the high school.

“It’s about students and opportunities to build success,” Superintendent Michelle Saylor said. “Not only do we believe in providing our students with a wide range of opportunities to grow, learn, and be successful beyond high school, even more importantly we strive to help them build the skills and attributes necessary for that success and thus empower and enable them to both leverage their opportunities as well as create opportunities for themselves.”

The School’s that Teach tour is part of a series of campaigns by the state. Rivera said Gov. Tom Wolf is focused on three areas, which include schools that teach, jobs that pay and government that works.



Q&A with Pedro Rivera

Question: What impressed you most about Bellefonte Area School District?

Answer: You can tell firsthand just the energy of the school district, personality of the school district (and) commitment of staff – and there was just that here. I showed up a little early, and the energy of each and every family member and student walking into school was absolutely contagious. That really is the first sign of a happy and healthy environment. Secondly, as you walk through these buildings, not only are the schools clean and in good healthy environments, but there is absolute evidence of student engagement in every hallway. As you look at every classroom we walked by, you can see kids engaged and see their work and (it) shows the environment of strong instruction happening here at Bellefonte.



Photo courtesy of Pennsylvania Department of Education

Q: What is the Schools that Teach tour?

A: The governor has shared he’s focused on three areas: schools that teach, jobs that pay and government that works. Through the Schools that Teach tour, we visit school districts across the commonwealth and really engage with the community at large. I’m proud to have visited well over 100 schools and school districts over the course of the past three years, and every time I go back and am able to make a connection to what’s happening in the field to the policies we’re enacting and recommendations were making to the general assembly.

Q: What can you take away from your visit at Bellefonte Area School District?

A: Superintendent (Michelle) Saylor and I have had a number of conversations during the past three years of happenings here at Bellefonte around her leadership and commitment of educators and staff across the district. Being here to see firsthand how teachers are engaging in their own professional development ... and just seeing the K-12 continuum and how students and teachers are engaging is just a great opportunity to inform our practice.

School bus driving rules

"This happens more than we like to think." That's a quote from Bellefonte Area school board member Rodney Musser in regard to the number of traffic violations by drivers when a school bus is stopped to pick up and drop off children. Senate Bill 1098, introduced by Sen. Patrick Browne (R-Allentown), calls for the placement of cameras on school buses to capture traffic infringements of nearby vehicles and can help to prosecute violators.

During a school board meeting in the fall, Superintendent Michelle Saylor said that, under the bill, the cameras would be installed on the "stop" arm of school buses. Recording would begin once the signal arm and red lights flash. If a violation has been captured, law enforcement officers can then review the footage and a citation may be issued.

This would come at no costs to school districts, she added.

Saylor said school districts could contract with a vendor that provides camera and installation on the school buses. Fines collected from violations would then go back to school districts or municipalities to help with safety initiatives.

At its Sept. 11 meeting, the school board unanimously passed a resolution to support the bill and urge local legislators to do the same.

On Nov. 1, Saylor issued a statement urging the community to be aware of the laws when school buses are stopped. This came following the news of a fatal pedestrian crash in Indiana that left three students dead after the driver reportedly drove through the group who was crossing the road to board a school bus.

The statement says:

With all the recent tragedies in the news resulting in injuries to children related to school buses – motorists not obeying traffic safety laws – or school bus stops, we wanted to ensure you that our transportation providers are aware of these recent events and are continually stressing the importance of safety with all of their drivers. We want to encourage you to remind your children to always look both ways before crossing and to look to their drivers to ensure it is safe. They often have a better view of the road from their bus seats. We also want to stress how important it is for each of us who drives to remain vigilant and take our time when traveling, especially during arrival and dismissal hours. Saving a minute or two by driving too quickly or by not stopping for a bus's flashing lights never offsets the risk to our children. We are deeply saddened by the recent events and will continue to do all we can to ensure the safety of our children.



The resolution can be found, here:

[https://www.boarddocs.com/pa/bellasd/Board.nsf/files/B45LWM5840B7/\\$file/SB%201098%20Resolution%202018.pdf](https://www.boarddocs.com/pa/bellasd/Board.nsf/files/B45LWM5840B7/$file/SB%201098%20Resolution%202018.pdf)

DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

Safe School Helpline

The Bellefonte Area School District has partnered this school year with Safe School Helpline to provide a way for students, staff and community members to help prevent any threat of harm at our schools. Safe School Helpline is a confidential way for anyone to report information about situations that may impact safety at our schools.

The helpline is designed to assist in reporting any wrongdoing that might impact schools. Reporting can be done anonymously by telephone, smart phone or computer by calling the helpline, using the app or visiting the website. Information reported may include bullying, violence, drug or alcohol use, theft, weapons, thoughts of suicide and more.

There are several ways to make reports:

- 800-418-6423 (800-4-1-VOICE, Ext. 359)
- Text TIPS to 66746
- safeschoolhelpline.com
- Download the free mobile app

Question and Answer with Safe School Helpline

Question: How do we know it is anonymous?

Answer: We have contracted for this service through Security Voice, an independent company with no other ties to our school.

Q: How does it work?

A: A toll-free number has been assigned for our school district. When you dial this number from your touchtone phone, you will be advised how to leave your information. You may exclude your name or other facts that could identify you. Then record your message.

Q: What type of information should be recorded?

A: Please report any facts, remarks or actions that could jeopardize the safety of our children, staff or school. Examples of threatening situations include bullying, drug and/or alcohol use, violence, weapons and thoughts of suicide.

Q: What happens next?

A: Security Voice will send a typed copy of your message to the school. The school will then investigate the report, and determine how best to act on it.

Q: When and where can I call?

A: You may call toll-free anytime, day or night – from a home or cell phone. Take care that your call is not overheard.

Q: Who can call this number?

A: Students, parents and or/teachers and staff.

Q: Can this help troubled students, too?

A: Yes. If you see a student who is troubled, or overhear remarks like, "I can't go on," please call or encourage the student to call the helpline. The call will be routed to a counseling and crisis center that provides a 24-hour intervention service. Trained counselors are available 365 days per year to talk with persons seeking assistance in coping with suicidal thoughts, depression, or feelings of loneliness and loss. Callers need only press 3 when prompted.

Q: Can I change my message later? How will you know who is calling?

A: Yes. When you leave a message you are given a case number that is yours alone. Enter that same case number when updating your message or answering additional questions.

Q: How will I know if any action has been taken?

A: After three school days, call the toll-free number and enter your case number when prompted. A recording will let you know your message was heard and may ask you for more information. Your answer will be transcribed and sent to the school administrator for further investigation. Administrative action may sometimes be confidential, but your call is always important.

Q: Can I send photos or videos?

A: Yes. You may email photos and videos to images@securityvoice.com. Please reference your case number when sending. This email address is for photos and videos only.

Partnership with Penn State Health



PennState Health

Logo courtesy of Penn State Health

Penn State Health teamed up this fall with the Bellefonte Area School District to offer a Drive-Thru Flu Clinic for the community. Held at Bellefonte Area High School, the flu shot was free for the first 1,000 people ages 3 and older, according to a report from Penn State.

The partnership developed after Penn State reached out to Assistant Superintendent Tammie Burnaford who worked with other district personnel, including school nursing staff, to help plan for the event.

"They said, 'hey, we have a lot of ideas on healthy initiatives for the district,' and wanted to start with this – it's a big start," school nurse Val Fulton said. "I think they're especially interested in the community partnership. They thought this was a great way to introduce themselves into the neighborhood and community."

The event also included activities, giveaways, donations from local businesses and more. A radio announcer from Big Froggy also held a live broadcast at the event.

Jon Gordon visit

In what Assistant Superintendent Tammie Burnaford called an "unprecedented" effort among Bellefonte and Bald Eagle area school districts allowed a nationally-renowned author and motivational speaker to be a part of an event to kick off the school year for staff.

The event included a visit from Jon Gordon who spoke to members of both districts at the Bellefonte Area High School auditorium.

Gordon is an author and motivational speaker whose clients include companies such as Southwest Airlines, SC Johnson, Wells Fargo and more; professional athletic teams such as the San Francisco 49ers, Atlanta Falcons, Los Angeles Dodgers, San Diego Padres, Pittsburgh Pirates, Miami Heat and more; and university athletic departments at Clemson University, University of Nebraska, West Point Academy, Penn State and more.

"The goal is to learn the importance of positivity in our schools and to create a more positive culture in each school and team," Burnaford said.

Meant to inspire and motivate staff, Gordon shared a message of positivity and strength found in successful teams, which Burnaford said in turn will help make Bellefonte Area schools a better place for students. In his speech, he said, "there is something about an educator, especially a positive educator that makes the biggest difference. It's about the power of positive energy to have a great impact."

Burnaford worked closely with Jim Orichosky, of Bald Eagle Area School District, who is a member of the board of directors for the PA Principals Association. The two connected after Gordon spoke last year at the association's state conference, which was organized by Orichosky, and was able to help bring in Gordon to the district to kick off opening week.



DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

CentreREADY

The Bellefonte Area School District is part of a collaborative effort with the CBICC and other educational partners to promote the CentreREADY initiative that encourages workforce education and career readiness. It's a branch of the Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County created to help foster a successful workforce for local students and businesses in the area.

"It's aligned to career readiness plans within our district," Bellefonte Area Superintendent Michelle Saylor said. "It encourages students to reach a very high standard of career readiness making sure they have the critical skills to be successful beyond our walls in business and industry, locally and beyond."

Bellefonte Area School District hopes to have graduates who meet the criteria in the Class of 2019.

"More importantly, business and industry in Centre County recognize these successful candidates as priority hires in (the) recruiting and hiring process so that's a huge incentive to our students," Saylor added.

Other partners in the campaign include Bald Eagle, Penns Valley, Philipsbug-Osceola and State College area school districts; Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology; South Hills School of Business; PA CareerLink; and more. The county commissioners also announced Sept. 12 as CentreREADY Day.

According to a report from the CBICC, CentreREADY represents a community response to local workforce needs, better matching Centre County employers with employees who possess the desired core skills and competencies needed to fuel a 21st century workforce. Information went on to say that the campaign was established after finding core skills and technical skills were often cited as lacking in the local workforce.

"The CBICC was resolved to respond to the workforce needs of employers here, to find ways in which the community could begin to address the issue," CBICC President and CEO Vern Squier said in a prepared statement.



Photos courtesy of Kimberly Wright

Eligible students involved in the program will graduate with a seal of career readiness after meeting criteria in six areas:

- Work ethic
- Tactfulness and manners
- Teamwork
- Communication skills
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Understanding supervision and the world of work

Employee Spotlight

The Employee Spotlight randomly features faculty and staff from the Bellefonte Area School District. Organized by district public relations specialist Brit Milazzo, in partnership with the human resources department, the goal is to promote the people who make the district what it is. Each season, an employee from the district's administration, professional staff and support staff are randomly chosen for the feature.

You may find these features on the district's website, www.basd.net, under the "School News" tab, and highlighted on the district's social media accounts.

Allison Rowles: Learning support teacher, BAMS

Allison Rowles hopes that when students come to her class for the first time, they can feel comfortable. That's why the longtime math and sixth-grade learning support teacher hangs up a bulletin board in her room with information that shows students just who she is outside of class – a woman who cherishes family and enjoys being active.

After all, she said relating to students can often help forge a connection with them and therefore build the confidence they need to succeed.

"It helps me become more relatable with students because the first day they're scared and not sure what to expect, so I tell them about myself – I try to be open with my students," she said.

Learning support is a program that helps students identified with learning disabilities be successful in the classroom.

"My hope each year is that by the end of the year they can feel more confident in their abilities academically, and their ability to be independent," Rowles said.

As challenging as it is rewarding, she said the best part of her job is hearing about the lives she's positively affected.

"Last year, I had a boy who struggled to be in the classroom and get his work done, and by the end of the year, I finally felt like we were making progress and he said, 'Mrs. Rowles, I'm glad you were here this year,'" she said. "That made me feel like we really accomplished something good. It's hard to see the success sometimes, but when they say something like that, then I feel like, 'yes! We've done something right.'"

Rowles was hired at the Bellefonte Area School District about nine years ago after graduating from Saint Francis University in 2007. There, she graduated with degrees in elementary and special education.

Outside of school, Rowles, of Philipsburg, is the mother of a 4-year-old son, Kyler. She and her husband, Craig, are also very active participating together in races and playing on a weekly adult volleyball team. On Oct. 21, Rowles participated in her first half marathon in Hershey with her brothers. It's something she's trained for since August.



Kris Vancas: Principal, Benner Elementary School

If you have the chance to meet Kris Vancas, it's evident just how much he loves his job. A husband and father of two children, Vancas said he also brings that fatherly mentality into school.

"There is a piece of me that loves every child here almost like a dad would," he said. "I want all the kids to feel like they belong, feel accepted and feel cared for and loved by every adult here at some capacity."

Vancas has been the principal at Benner Elementary School for seven years, taking the position after serving as vice principal at Bellefonte Elementary School for five years and as an elementary teacher in the Penns Valley Area School District for about 14 years before that.

"I cannot think of a better place to be than in an elementary school," he said. "What I see and get to experience every day with kids is just amazing. Kids are just so priceless in what they say and do."

Vancas, a graduate of Philipsburg-Osceola Area High School, went on to study elementary education at Bloomsburg University. He then obtained his principal certification and superintendent letter of eligibility.

As much as he said he loves his job, there is still nothing more important in his life than family. His wife Tina works at Penn State. He also has a daughter, Alexis, who is a second lieutenant in the Army; and his son Peyton is a student at Bellefonte Area Middle School. Vancas is also a fan of the Pittsburgh Pirates, Pittsburgh Steelers and Penn State athletics.



DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

Tammy Way: Library clerk, Bellefonte Area High School



Tammy Way is passionate about many things, but perhaps not more so than cheerleading and a global organization she's involved in called, Host Ukraine Orphan Initiative.

Way, the Bellefonte Area High School library clerk by day, is in her second year coaching with FAME All Stars cheerleading and was a longtime coach with Bellefonte youth girls cheerleading. She also is a volunteer with Host Ukraine that lead to the adoption of two sons in 2015.

Way said she became involved in coaching after her daughter Haley began cheering at the age of 4, and "fell in love with it." It's also an activity that includes a lot of traveling from November through May, including destinations in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

As for Host Ukraine, Way became involved with the initiative in 2014 after seeing an advertisement about it online. She saved the information, but wasn't committed to volunteering until her husband encouraged the family that it was a must-do. Now, it's one of the most rewarding things in her life.

"I love when we bring them for hosting," Way said. "We never say you need to adopt these kids, but I love it when parents really connect with the kid and call me to say they want to pursue adoption."

According to the Host Ukraine Orphan Initiative website, the Kentucky-based organization works with orphanages in the Ukraine to bring children to the United States to enjoy the comfort and safety of a loving family.

Steph Hillard: Cafeteria staff member, BAHS and Benner Elementary School

Steph Hillard said she can't imagine having another job than one that allows her to work with children. The Bellefonte native has worked on the cafeteria staff for four years – primarily at Benner Elementary School. This school year, she splits her time at Bellefonte Area High School in the morning before heading to Benner for lunch.

"The big kicker for me is coming in and working with the kids and seeing them grow," she said. "I'm always getting to know the kids and it's just the little things you say that can make their day. I can sometimes be the first person to make them laugh that day."

The students say the same about Hillard. Her cashier was filled with cards from students last fall after she took off some time to recover from pneumonia.

"It makes you feel good because you get to know the kids well, and they get to know and feel comfortable around you," she said.

Hillard began working for Bellefonte Area School District four years ago with inspiration from her son, Owen, who is now a seventh-grade student at Bellefonte Area Middle School. "My son went to Benner and he's what pulled me into the school," she said. "He told me there was a job at the cafeteria and said, 'I think you should come here to work so you can see me every day,' and so I did."

At the high school, Hillard works the breakfast cart in the morning making sure students get a meal before going to class. In the afternoon, she works as a cashier at Benner during lunch and gets to "see all the little kiddos coming through the line." That, she added, is her "favorite part of the day."

In her spare time, Hillard said she enjoys camping, outdoor activities, and spending time with friends and family.



Naomi Rupert: Librarian, BAMS and Pleasant Gap Elementary School



Naomi Rupert will be the first to tell you that libraries are still extremely relevant, despite phasing out things like card catalogs; they've just evolved into a place that promotes knowledge and creativity beyond checking out books and reading in silence.

The Bellefonte Area Middle School and Pleasant Gap Elementary School librarian found a passion for the work about five years ago when she began substitute teaching in a library at a school district in Indiana County. She tested in the subject after graduating in 2013 with a degree in education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

By the 2014-15 school year, she found herself as a librarian at Bellefonte Area School District, and became known around the schools as a "Jane of all trades," as she also teaches a math class, and acts as a research-finder, tech-helper, newsletter-writer and more.

Rupert does this all while balancing motherhood. She and her husband welcomed a son, Jaxon, in April.

"I always felt like I was more mature beyond my years and always the mom of the group, so now, I think about how I would want people to react to Jaxon and I think I bring that attitude of understanding and calmness," she said.

At the elementary level, Rupert teaches students library lessons such as the Dewey Decimal System and call numbers, how the library works, locating books and facilitates activities to help students become independent when navigating a library. At the middle school, she helps students with research skills, how to site and use reliable sources, and more.

Bellefonte Reads supports Jared Box Project

When Bellefonte Reads was established five years ago, organizers had a mission to help foster a love of reading in the community by hosting literacy campaigns throughout the year that connect the community through a common book. Now, in addition to promoting community literacy initiatives, committee members are doing their part to also give back.

The Bellefonte Reads committee hosted a book drive in the fall to support the Jared Box Project.

"We have been so blessed with community support that at the end of the year last year, our group felt it would be so great to give toward another event," district reading specialist and Bellefonte Reads co-chairwoman Nicole Kohlhepp said. "We didn't just want to be an organization that took from others; we wanted to give back, as well."

Through drop-off locations in the Bellefonte area, the Bellefonte Reads committee encouraged community members to donate a new book appropriate for infants to teens that was placed in Jared boxes. Books were dropped off at schools in the Bellefonte Area School District; the district administration office; and local businesses such as Burger King, the Centre County Library, Cool Beans, Dam Donuts, Maria's, Pappy Chuck's Candy Shoppe and the YMCA.

Bellefonte Reads founder and district literacy coach Jackie Wynkoop added that the one thing the organization needed most was more donations of books to fill the Jared boxes.

"The thought that we can put quality books in the hands of sick children is really special. Who doesn't want to read a book to pass the time in the hospital? It's nice to tie in that literacy piece and a great way for us to give back and spread our message."

Jackie Wynkoop

The Bellefonte Reads committee, comprised of staff from the Bellefonte Area School District and various community members, is also in charge of organizing other events. The One Book, One Bellefonte event will be held Feb. 21 at the high school where community members can pick up a free book that fits with this year's theme. Community Literacy Night will be held March 14, with a March 21 snow makeup day, also at the high school.

The goal for those events is to promote a book or series of books that appeal to people of all reading levels and encourages conversation about current issues. This year's featured book is "Refugee" by Alan Gratz. It will be accompanied by companion books,

The Bellefonte Reads committee is always looking for new ways to spread a love of literacy in the community. Next year, the group is excited about the possibility of holding a "Bellefonte Reads Under the Lights" event at the newly-renovated Rogers Stadium.

The Jared Box Project is a Centre County-based national campaign that aims to lift the spirit of hospitalized children by offering them a bin filled with items such as small gifts, toys, games and more. The project was founded in 2001 by members of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School in State College and named in memory of a student, Jared McMullen, who died of cancer. According to the initiative's website, more than 200,000 boxes have been delivered to children in hospitals across the country.



Photo courtesy of Jared Box Project

Through the drive,
188 books were donated.

District remembers Class of 1993 graduate Lt. Jonas Panik

Bellefonte Area School District colors are red and white. It also supports blue – Navy blue, to be specific – to honor and remember a Bellefonte Area graduate who died in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks at the Pentagon in Arlington, Va. That's why a bench, painted blue, was placed outside the Bellefonte Area High School building in memory of Navy Lt. Jonas Panik, of Mingoville. He graduated from the school in 1993.

Several memorials in his name can also be found around schools within the district. The Lt. Jonas Martin Panik USNR Scholarship Award was also created by his parents and given to a Bellefonte student who plans to pursue a military career as an officer by attending a military academy or an ROTC program at college.

According to the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, Panik, who graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1997, was "an outstanding intelligence professional, a true shipmate, a great friend, and a devoted and loving uncle, brother, son and husband." He's still remembered in Bellefonte as an outstanding student, athlete and citizen.

American Airlines Flight 77 was the third plane to have crashed into a target on Sept. 11, 2001 – that time, 9:37 a.m., the Pentagon, headquarters of the U.S. Department of Defense. As part of terroristic aircraft hijackings by Al-Qaeda, five hijackers also crashed American Airlines Flight 11 at 8:46 a.m. into the north tower of the World Trade Center, followed by another five hijackers who crashed United Airlines Flight 175 into the south tower. The Pentagon attack came next, 34 minutes later. A fourth flight, United Airlines Flight 93, crashed at 10:03 a.m. in Stonycreek Township, Somerset County – about 100 miles southwest of Bellefonte – after passengers fought four hijackers believed to have wanted to target the Capitol Building or White House.



You may find more information online about 9/11 at Bellefonte. Staff members also share their memories from that tragic day: <https://www.basd.net/Page/14010>



Teachers have unique ways to educate students on events of Sept. 11, 2001

The events of Sept. 11, 2001 shaped many people's lives including the staff of Bellefonte Area School District. It also affected the way many teachers teach about the events.

A few years ago, high school social studies teacher Michael Maney took a group of students to the Flight 93 National Memorial near Shanksville, Somerset County, which helped educate the students about "heart wrenching stories of people (the guide) has met who were personally affected by the events of 9/11, so it made it more powerful for the students."

When Maney first began teaching 15 years ago, he would help facilitate a writing activity that allowed students to write down their reflections from that day, using as much detail as possible including sights, sounds, emotions and more. That led to a new assignment.

About five years ago, as students were too young to remember the 9/11 events, Maney said he gave students an assignment to interview someone who was at least 18 years old on Sept. 11, 2001.

"During the lesson, I challenge students to compare 9/11 to other historic events like sinking of the USS Maine in (1898) and the attacks on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7," Maney said. "I challenge the students to find a family member or friend who was alive during both Pearl Harbor and 9/11, and have them compare the events and if both events would truly be days which will live in infamy, or if these events fade away in history as emotions fade away and younger generations were not alive during the event."

Since he began that assignment, there have been at least five people who students interviewed who were alive during both events.

You may find more information about how 9/11 affects teaching at Bellefonte Area, by visiting this link: <https://www.basd.net/Page/14016>. High school English teachers Kaysey Beury and Ashlie Crosson explain their teaching tactics.

Jeremy Herbstritt and Lt. Jonas Martin Panik U.S. Navy Memorial Track



The Bellefonte Area school board received a \$125,000 donation from Reliance Bank to put toward the capital campaign to help name the track at Rogers Stadium in memory of two Bellefonte graduates. That, paired with another \$125,000 donation from the Jeremy Herbstritt Foundation, is making the dedication possible.

The facility will now be called the Jeremy Herbstritt and Lt. Jonas Martin Panik U.S. Navy Memorial Track.

Panik, a Class of 1993 graduate, was killed in the terrorist attack at the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001. Herbstritt, a Class of 1998 graduate, was a victim of the Virginia Tech shooting on April 16, 2007. Both were members

of the Bellefonte Area High School track and field team.

The donations came during two school board meetings in November. The Rogers Stadium facility is estimated at \$7 million. It's funded in part by a \$3 million grant, \$3 million from district funds and another \$1 million from the capital campaign.

"Jonas – he would definitely be excited about this," Martin Panik said about his son.

Martin Panik was among members of both families in attendance at the school board meeting on Nov. 20 when Reliance Bank made its donation. The donation from the Jeremy Herbstritt Foundation came on Nov. 7 – a day after Jeremy Herbstritt would have turned 39 years old.

"They (the school board) worked on this project for 11 years trying to get it going, and this year, I don't what they did, but it was like magic," Mike Herbstritt said.

When asking Mike Herbstritt what his son's best event was, he said, "just the joy of running." Then he reminisced about the time his son was at Penn State admiring the university's track.

"He said, 'wouldn't it be nice if Bellefonte had a track like this?' And I didn't know what to say to him; he was just a student, and here we are doing this now in his memory," Mike Herbstritt said.

On the day of the mass shooting, Herbstritt was scheduled to be in Boston to see his sister Jennifer Herbstritt run in the Boston marathon, but decided to stay on campus in Blacksburg, Va. to complete school work.

"We were all in Boston rooting her on and Jeremy had called me a week before – he was supposed to go with us – and he said, 'dad, is it ok to stay and do school work?' And I said, 'yeah, that's your priority. I think you should stay there and we'll go to Boston,'" Mike Herbstritt said. "I still regret saying that."



Photos courtesy of LaBelle staff

Capital Campaign

To ease the financial burden of the Bellefonte Area School District and those taxpayers living within the district, a capital campaign has been established to partially fund the Rogers Stadium construction project. A goal by this summer is to raise at least \$1 million to put toward the second phase of the project – and \$3 million in total, though members of the Capital Campaign committee say it's likely an effort that will be ongoing even after the goal is reached.

Estimated to be about \$7 million, the project will be funded by \$3 million in grants from the state Department of Education and from PA Tourism, \$3 million from the district and \$1 million from the capital campaign – all without raising taxes for this endeavor.

According to campaign chairman and school board Vice President Bob Lumley-Sapanski, the first \$1 million will help fund the second phase of the Rogers Stadium construction project; the remaining \$2 million, when raised, will eventually be used to fund other athletic and community amenities such as practice fields, a new baseball stadium, a walking trail and more.

Additionally, the project was designed to eliminate the need for ongoing and costly repairs of existing facilities.

The idea of the capital campaign started in 2011 and is now run by a committee of 12 members including those from the school board, community and employees of the district. Gifts to the campaign are tax deductible up to the amount outlined by IRS regulations for charitable donations.

When completed, Rogers Stadium will provide space for athletics such as football, lacrosse and soccer; the marching band; physical education and other school events such as graduation; community use; and more.

To contribute to the Capital Campaign, visit this link: <https://www.basd.net/Page/14094>

Gift levels

- **Red and White Society:** \$250,000 or more
- **Letterman's Circle:** \$100,000 to \$249,999
- **Varsity Circle:** \$50,000 to \$99,999
- **Loyalty Club:** \$25,000 to \$49,999
- **All Star:** \$20,000 to \$24,999
- **Platinum:** \$10,000 to \$19,999
- **Gold:** \$5,000 to \$9,999

DISTRICT HAPPENINGS

Rogers Stadium



When a record-amount of rain fell in central Pennsylvania and put a damper on making sure the first phase of Rogers Stadium was completed in time for the 2018 football season, Project Manager Dave Stezin, of Reynolds Construction, helped come up with a new goal to make sure the Red Raiders could at least play their last home game on the field against rivals from Bald Eagle Area.

That happened on Oct. 26 when Bellefonte beat the Eagles by one point from a last-second field goal. There, the stadium of fans roared with excitement from the win. An estimated 3,300 people packed the newly-built bleachers that Stezin said are also about 200 feet long, are ADA accessible and includes a press box.

The installation of the bleachers was part of the first phase of Rogers Stadium construction that began in April with a total demolition of the field, stadium seating and nearby facilities.

"It's not how you start, it's how you finish, and I think if we give them a brand new stadium with all the bells and whistles that they paid for and looking forward to having, I think that will go a long way," Stezin said. The bleachers are set up on the east side of the field that Stezin said was done purposefully to help nearby residents.

"It's given them a little bit more of a feeling that they're not being encroached on in their backyard," he said. "I think that all-around, it's well thought out and going to meet the needs (of the district and community)."

District Facilities Director Aaron Barto said a job conference is held every two weeks with contractors, engineers and members from the Bellefonte Area School District where a schedule is set in two-week intervals, and the members discuss what projects have been completed and what still needs to get done.

"It's very rare that you would ever have a project that goes week-by-week without an issue, but we have great contractors," Barto said. "These guys have done tons of these fields, they've done a lot of tracks; this is just not their first project. They've been doing this for many, many years, and they do a good job."

The second – and last – phase of Rogers Stadium construction is expected to start in the spring and be completed by the 2019 football season.

Phase 1

Phase 1 started in the spring with full demolition of the original field and facilities. It also included installation of the artificial turf field, which involved the drainage beneath the field; new lighting; setup of the bleachers; and the base paving for the track.

Phase 2

The second phase, which will break ground in the spring, will include new construction to all buildings such as the field houses, ticket booths, concession stands and more. The track's surface will also be completed in this phase. The goal is to finish construction by the 2019 football season.

To learn more about Rogers Stadium construction, listen to our podcasts online: <https://www.basd.net/Page/13932>. Our public relations specialist regularly invites the district's Facilities Director Aaron Barto and Reynolds Construction Project Manager Dave Stezin to join the conversation.

To get regular updates about project construction and to see the photo gallery, visit this link: <https://www.basd.net/domain/1654>.



Remembering Coach Ed Gannon: Aug 14, 1960 – Nov. 14, 2018



Described as a “champion” of youth lacrosse, Ed Gannon coached lacrosse at Bellefonte Area School District for eighth years – three years as boys’ head varsity coach followed by five years with the middle school team. During that time, he mentored and coached his student-athletes – not just in the game of lacrosse, but also to be a better student, person and community member. The athletic department and the rest of the Bellefonte Area community acknowledge and are saddened by his sudden death. Gannon was also a longtime volunteer with Special Olympics Pennsylvania. According to his family, “he was a gift that completed (their) family and a blessing to all who were lucky enough to have known him.”



Division champions



The boys’ soccer team won the District 6 title for the first time in team history. They beat Tyrone, 2-1, in the championship game. Player Evan Nyquist was an All-State selection. He also broke the district’s single season scoring record with 30 goals. Coach Scott Martz was named Mountain League Coach of the Year.

Hole-in-one



Austin Knepp got a hole-in-one on the fourth hole at Clearfield Curwensville Country Club.

Race winners



The Bellefonte Area girls’ cross-country team won the Mountain League championship meet. Amaya Rothrock was the team’s leading finisher.

Letter of intent signing



Colton Burd signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Teammate Ashton Wetzler signed his letter of intent to play baseball at Seton Hill University. Both universities complete in Division II of the NCAA.

League MVP



Girls’ varsity soccer player Mallorie Smith, a junior, was named Mountain League MVP. She was honored at a banquet in November along with teammates Cati Besch, Mia Johnson, Maddie Morelli, Maddie Polkinghorn and Leigha Schrader who were named first- and second-team All-Stars.

Curtin Bowl



The Bellefonte Area football team took home the Curtin Bowl trophy after beating their rivals from Bald Eagle Area, 10-9, on a last-second field goal by Chris Persiko. This was the first game the Red Raiders played at the newly-renovated Rogers Stadium.

Rocky Run



You've likely seen the movie "Rocky." If not, you may still know its iconic scene of Sylvester Stallone, who plays Rocky Balboa, in the training montage as he runs up the 72 stone steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum and ends with a series of fist pumps as he looks at the city.

Take that scene and bring it to Bellefonte – sort of.

On Nov. 10, Pleasant Gap Elementary School fifth-grade teacher and Bellefonte girls' varsity basketball Coach Adam Gearhart participated in the 10-mile Rocky Run – dressed in the same American flag-like boxing shorts Rocky wore.

It's a race that usually takes place in Philadelphia, but because Gearhart couldn't make the nearly four-hour journey, he ran it locally, documenting the race through photos that were posted on social media. Gearhart said he ran the first five miles around a route through his Springfield neighborhood and then ran the next five on a route through Bellefonte that ended at the Centre County Courthouse.

"It's something I've been wanting to do," he said. "I love the 'Rocky' movies; I love the 'Creed' movies."

But there was a twist. He teamed up with the basketball program to help in his mission to raise \$500 for the Centre County Veterans Association. Gearhart said he ended up raising about \$600 and finished the race in one hour, 21 minutes and 27 seconds – in wind-chill temperatures that dipped into the teens.

Each year, the girls' basketball team hosts a Military Appreciation game with fundraising efforts that benefit local veteran organizations. Because the Rocky Run was held during Veterans Day weekend, Gearhart said he wanted to make the run more than just a race.

"It's adding the basketball aspect and the veteran aspect, and when I don't want to get up and run, I remember what I'm doing it for and that's motivating," he said.

Gearhart trained for the race since July and also completed a half marathon in Virginia at the end of last school year.



To see photos from the run, Gearhart posted them on his Twitter account, @ajgear21.



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