

# Trailblazer Times



January/February 2011 Vol. VIII



## BVS Earns an "A"!

*Christopher McGuire, Principal*

Happy new year to all! I trust that everyone had a restful and relaxing holiday season. I would like to welcome our new students and their parents who are beginning their

BVS experience in the second semester. We are well under way for a successful second half of the school year. Congratulations to the students who completed their first semester courses on time or ahead of pace. Awesome work!

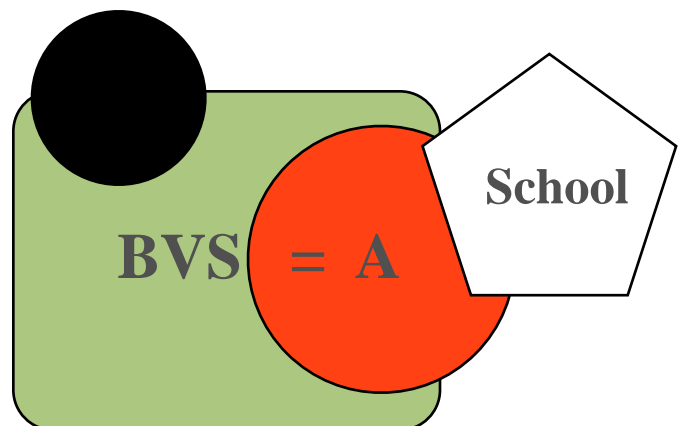
I would also like to welcome two new additions to the BVS team. Ms. Penny Nurnberg will be teaching middle school reading in the second semester. Ms. Nurnberg is an experienced teacher and reading coach who was instrumental in the success of our award-winning online reading course for high school students. I am also pleased to announce that Dr. Dierdre Satterwhite Wilson has joined our Guidance team. Dr. Wilson was the Guidance Director at Western High School before retiring in 2009 after a distinguished 36-year career in public education. I am honored to have Dr. Wilson on board to keep our high school students on track to graduate and to plan for college. Ms. Eloi, Ms. Mistretta, and Dr. Wilson collectively make up the best Guidance team in Broward County!

I am thrilled to announce that BVS has been rated an "A" school by the Florida Department of Education for performance in the 2009-2010 school-year. We learned of our "A" rating in December and we have been celebrating ever since! Our success did not occur by accident. We are an "A" school because of three key factors—excellent teaching and student support, consistent parental involvement and support, and students who rise to incredible levels of responsibility and

accountability. These are the key ingredients that lead to student achievement. Congratulations to the entire BVS team for this distinguished recognition! I am proud to be your Principal.

Students, are you looking for additional resources to enhance your learning? Check out Brain Pop at [www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com). We now have an account for all BVS students to access the myriad of tutorial activities made available online by Brain Pop. There are animated tutorials for every subject and grade level that are accessible 24 / 7. Ask your teacher for the username and password. I am also pleased to announce that BVS elementary and middle school students (2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) have access to Compass Learning software right from home. Compass Learning provides online tutorials and enrichment activities that are designed to be the perfect supplement to your online courses. Our elementary accounts have been created and students now have access to the Compass Learning resources. Middle school students, stay tuned for your account information that will be sent to you soon. You will love it!

I wish everyone a productive second semester. Students, remember to stay on pace, communicate with your teachers, and submit your best work.



## Guidance Corner



*Tanya Mistretta, Middle School Guidance Counselor*

The District Benchmark Test results are now available. Please log on to Virtual Counselor to view your results. Go to [www.browardschools.com](http://www.browardschools.com) and click on "Virtual Counselor", select student, and enter with your ten-digit student number (ex: 06.....) and date of birth with the slash-marks and full year. From the drop-down menu on the upper left, select Test Scores. Click on each subject area to view your predicted level of success on the FCAT.

**Below is the schedule for the 2011 Spring FCAT Writing, Reading, Math, & Science Test. Details will follow concerning specific dates and times.**

### **MARCH 1 - 3:**

- FCAT WRITING+ ASSESSMENT GRADES 4, 8, & 10

### **APRIL 11 - 21:**

- FCAT READING AND MATHEMATICS SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS GRADES 3-10
- FCAT SCIENCE SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS GRADES 5, 8, & 11

The Florida Department of Education has developed an online tool to help parents and families throughout the state learn about changes to our standards and assessments. Please visit the following website: [www.fldoe.org/successmeasures](http://www.fldoe.org/successmeasures)

### **School Days**

Students please join us for "School Days"

"School Days" is opened to all full-time BVS students and takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 9:00am –12:00pm.

**When:** Wednesday, February 9, 2011

**Where:** BVS/Becon

6600 SW Nova Drive  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33317

**Time:** 9:00am-12:00pm

**Schedule:**

9:00AM -11:30AM: Activity with Mrs. Wells

11:30AM -12:00PM: Please bring \$4.00 for pizza.

**When:** Wednesday, February 23, 2011

**Where:** BVS/Becon

6600 SW Nova Drive  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33317

**Time:** 9:00am-12:00pm

**Schedule:**

9:00AM -11:30AM: FCAT Science Camp with Ms. Sallette

11:30AM -12:00PM: Please bring \$4.00 for pizza.

**FCAT Explorer**

There's good news for all students taking the FCAT this year: you can get **free** reading and math practice on the FCAT Explorer. That's right: free practice for the FCAT at [www.fcateexplorer.com](http://www.fcateexplorer.com).

The FCAT Explorer is an online practice program made for Florida's public school students by the Florida Department of Education.

Both programs offer practice for the skills tested on the FCAT and feature lots of stuff to help you get the most out of your study time. You'll receive helpful feedback to the answers you choose and a second chance to answer questions to apply what you've learned. The FCAT Explorer also features helpful online tools like a calculator, a formula reference sheet, and a glossary that defines and pronounces the glossary words.

Best of all, the FCAT Explorer is online, which means you can use the FCAT Explorer on any computer connected to the Internet.

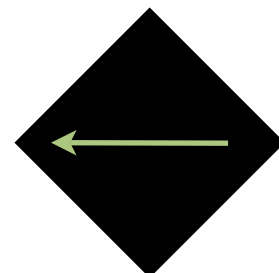
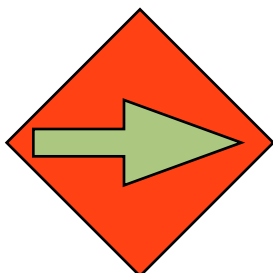
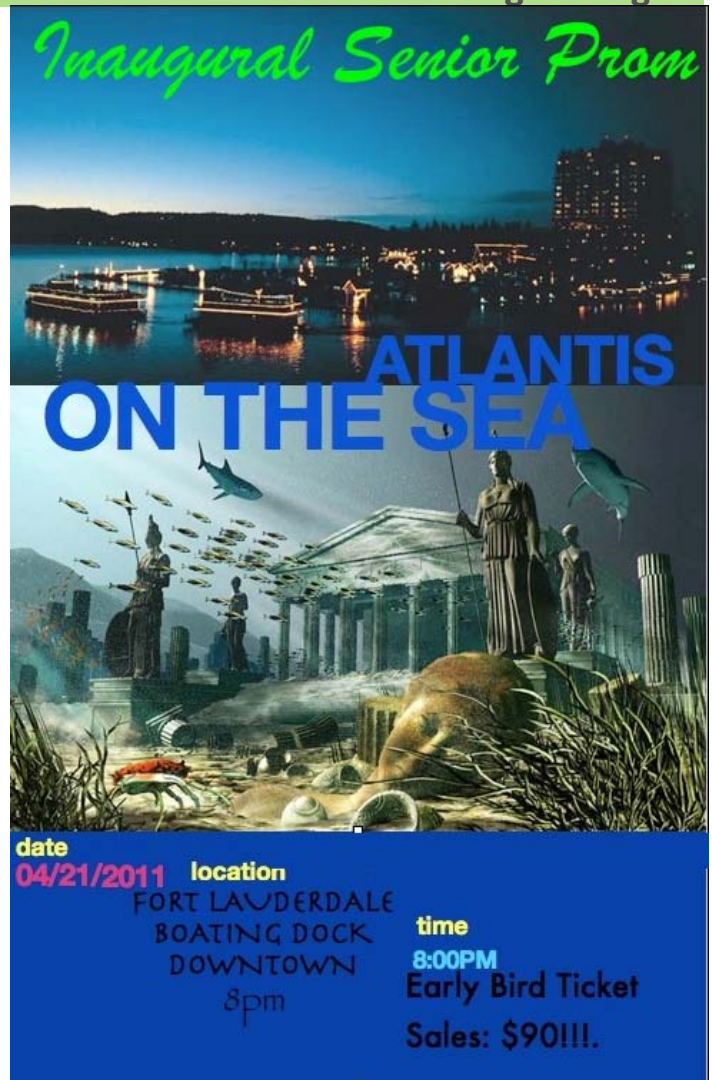
To get your free FCAT Explorer sign-in name and password, contact your guidance counselor using the information below:

- High School students email

**Broward Virtual has started collecting Box Tops!!!**

You can make a difference for Broward Virtual school every time your shop for groceries! Just clip the Box Tops coupons from hundreds of your favorite products and send bring them to Broward Virtual School.

Visit <http://www.boxtops4education.com> for more information!





Visit The Broward Virtual E-Store to purchase our school t-shirts, Glee-ful Student/Teacher Talent Show Tickets, and transcripts. You can log onto the estore by going to the BVS website at <http://www.bved.net>.

Click on the Welcome Page and there you will find a link to the E-Store. The E-Store accepts both credit and debit cards.

## Sponsor the Senior Class of 2011

The senior class of 2011 is looking for sponsors to make their dream of having a prom come true. Each sponsor will get a 76X40 banner of their design put on the fence of the Beacon TV station facing Nova Drive and College Ave.

The banners will remain on the face as advertisement for three seasons. Each business will donate \$300.00 for their banner. This is a win win situation for both our school and the business. Nova Drive and College avenue is a highly traveled area due to the South Florida Educational Center serving Florida Atlantic University, Nova Southeastern University, and Broward College.

If your business is interested in sponsoring the BVS Senior Class of 2011, please call Charles Grimes, Senior Class Sponsor, at 954-772-8124 or email him at [charles.grimes@browardschools.com](mailto:charles.grimes@browardschools.com)



All banners are professionally created, made out of weather proof materials and are fade resistant. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to advertise your business.

## Student Buzz

### My Scottish Heritage

By Cameron McLaughlin

Every year my family celebrates our Scottish heritage by attending the South Florida Highland Games and Festival. This event usually takes place in January. We put on the McLaughlin tartan and head over to join the festivities. I look forward to meeting up with friends at the McLaughlin clan booth. We join them for the opening ceremony. Scotland has a unique heritage of food and music. This is showcased at the festival. My favorite activities are the Highland games. The festival allows me to enjoy and appreciate my Scottish roots.

A part of celebrating our heritage involves wearing the clan tartan. Our family wears the McLaughlin plaid. Each year we put on our kilts, linen shirts and woolen hose (socks). The hoses are held up with tartan flashes (a type of garter). We wear a Sgian Dubh, (Scottish knife), tucked into the hose. We meet at the McLaughlin clan booth. At midday, we join with other clans. Then, together with marching bands from around the country, we all march onto the main field to the sound of bagpipes and drums. It is a spectacular, stirring ceremony. I am proud of my Scottish ancestry.

After the opening ceremony, we usually head over to the food tents. The smell of the spiced meats and the malt vinegar used to douse French fries fills the air. There are many unique and interesting foods. The most famous is Haggis. My parents enjoy this mixture of animal organs stuffed into a sheep's stomach, but I won't touch it with a five foot pole. There are other Scottish foods, like bridies and pasties. These are meat mixtures wrapped in pastry. Again, I am not adventurous enough to try them. I usually eat hot dogs instead. While we eat, we listen to Scottish folk music. This is an important part of the festival for me, even though I don't like most of the food.

My favorite part of the festival is the Highland games. I enjoy watching the caber tossing. The caber is a large wooden pole similar to a telephone pole. It has to be thrown end over end. The athletes need incredible strength and coordination. One of the other events I find exciting is the sheepdog trials. The relationship between these dogs and their owners is amazing. It is thrilling to watch them work. There are many other fascinating games that are unique to Scotland.

In conclusion, celebrating my Scottish heritage by attending the South Florida Highland Games and Festival is an important family tradition. I hope that I will be able to continue the tradition with my own family in the years to come. I am proud to wear the tartan. The unique food, music, and games associated with Scotland makes me feel proud of my Scottish heritage. I enjoy the sense of belonging. It is important to understand my ancestry.

This year the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Southeast Florida Scottish Festival and Games in Ft. Lauderdale was on January 8th 2011. Sorry if you missed it this year, but there is always next year. To find out more details contact the Scottish American Society of South Florida at: [www.SASSF.org](http://www.SASSF.org) , or write to Scottish American Society of South Florida PO box 100667 Fort Lauderdale FL 33310-0667.

## Teacher Talk

## BVS Glee-ful Student/Teacher Talent Show Set

**Student/Teacher Talent Show***Charles Grimes, Teacher*

The BVS first annual Glee-ful Talent Show acts have been chosen and students/teachers are preparing their acts. The Glee-ful Talent Show will be held on February 24, 2011 at the Nova High School Auditorium. The doors will open at 6:15 p.m. and the show will start promptly at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$7 and can be bought in our BVS Virtual E-Store.

This year's student performers come from all middle and high school grades. Student performers are Kennedy Almay, Giselle Oyler, Emily Badillo, Sarah Grant, Sage McBride, Kourtney Linhart, D'Sean McIntosh, Candace Almay, Rebecca Rechtszaid, Kyle Pulido, and Skye Anderson Gierse. We have a wide range of talent at BVS and are extremely proud to show off our students.

Mr. Grimes and Mrs. Cardenas will be the host and hostess for the show and will be performing as well. Mr. McGuire, Ms. Yanes, and Ms. Eloi will be adding their talents to the show also. It's a night not to be missed! Get your tickets early by visiting our E-Store at <https://estore.browardschools.com/OSP/BVModules/ProductTemplates/BVC%202004%20Layout/Product.aspx?productid=B3921-25>.

So curtains up and light the lights, it's going to be a great night. Order your tickets early as there will

be limited seating available. Come out on Feb. 24 and support your peers and watch your teachers dazzle you with their hidden talents. This show is rated G and approved for all ages.



Our violin virtuoso will be performing at our talent show.

## Guidance Corner



Ruth Eloi

*High School Guidance Counselor*

**College Entrance Examination:** Juniors and Seniors who plan to go to college and apply for scholarships, must have SAT or ACT test scores. BVS School Code: 100603

1. SAT: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
2. ACT: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

**Advanced Placement Exams:** All students who wish to earn the extra grade points for completing an AP course must take the exam in May. Please make sure to submit your name and the exams you wish to take to Ms. Eloi as soon as possible at [ruth.eloi@browardschools.com](mailto:ruth.eloi@browardschools.com).

### **Help with Your Classes?**

Some of you are in need of some help in being more successful in your online classes. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Try working on two classes per day instead of all six. It will help you focus and understand the material a little better. Stay on pace. Math should be worked on every day.
2. Call the teacher during office hours to ask questions. Leaving a message will allow them to call you back.
3. Attend the free online e-classes every Tuesday at 11am offered by our very own English teacher Mrs. Dawn Cardenas: [Here's the link to get to Mrs. Cardenas' live session on Tuesdays: https://sas.illuminate.com/m.jnlp?sid=679&password=M.5F9D9580AD60757403C68FF5B55AEF](https://sas.illuminate.com/m.jnlp?sid=679&password=M.5F9D9580AD60757403C68FF5B55AEF)
4. Request to enter your teacher's virtual classroom to engage in an Illuminate session so you can see a visual presentation of what you're not understanding and hear the teacher speak at the same time.

**Continued on page 10**



What does it feel like to hug a tree? Students found out at their Creative writing School Day.



Students writing poetry about the end of fall and the beginning of winter.



Greetings fellow classmates, staff, teachers and parents: My name is Candace Almy and I am a Senior here at Broward Virtual. As one of the officers of our Senior class I am responsible for Public Relations. Like most of my peers I like hanging out with my friends, talking on the phone and texting while doing just about anything. I play drums and cymbals for the Ambassador Pathfinder Club.

Most recently I became involved with a group of dynamic young women called the Delta Gems. So, who are the Delta Gems, you might ask? We are a part of Delta Sigma Theta, a non-profit sorority. The Gems were created to assist in facilitating the dreams and goals of girls, aged 14–18. As a sisterhood of young women we not only promote academic excellence but also set goals as we plan for our future. We use our collective strength to demonstrate compassion and caring by getting involved in public service. Chances are you have already met a Gem. In fact, our very own Ms. Delores Sallette, an alumnae of the Delta Sigma Theta Chapter introduced me to Gems. The alumnae provide the tools that enable us to sharpen and enhance our skills to achieve high levels of academic success thereby strengthening our resolve to become thriving citizens as we broaden our horizons beyond high school.

As a senior classmate I will be participating in the Dazzling Diamond Cotillion to earn scholarship money for college. I am looking forward to participating in the cotillion. Just imagine how excited I will be dressing up in a beautiful gown as I make my grand entrance to new chapter in my life. As a participant, I am responsible for raising \$1000.

I humbly solicit your help in achieving my goal. You may help me by making a contribution towards my efforts. The proceeds from your sponsorship will serve as a donation to the fund to benefit my future education aspirations and this particular service program. As always your donation is tax deductible and receipts will be given to you for your records. Please feel free to contact me at 954-677-8541 or at [fridaysundown@juno.com](mailto:fridaysundown@juno.com) so I can fill you in on the details.

Please consider making a tax deductible donation on my behalf to Delta Education Life Development Foundation, Inc (DELDF)

Candace Almy  
CO Public Relations  
Broward Virtual School



## Low Tech Science Experiments

*Lynn Sweetay*

*Teacher of Science*

Low Tech Chemistry

At our January School Days our students became mini chemists! Looking gorgeous in goggles, we tested the physical and chemical properties of various substances. You don't usually think of your kitchen as a chemistry lab but it is. We used salt, salt substitute, baking soda, cornstarch and calcium chloride and tested with water, iodine and lemon juice. We looked at the physical characteristics of each substance including the color, texture and state of matter at room temperature and recorded our observations. The chemical properties of each substance were tested by adding drops of iodine, water and lemon juice. We recorded any color changes, formation of bubbles, heat released or heat absorbed and whether the substance dissolved or not.



For equipment we substituted sandwich baggies for beakers, paper plates for watch glasses, plastic spoons for spatulas and used our senses for observation. Our only true chemistry equipment was goggles and droppers. As a result we had no broken glassware and little mess. Once students tested all substances, they were given an unknown mixture to test and see if they could determine what was in it. Everyone was able to determine their unknown correctly. We found out that lemon juice and baking soda makes bubbles and becomes cold, calcium chloride and water becomes hot and salt substitute and water is cold. Cornstarch turns blue when iodine is placed on it and does not dissolve but makes great glue!

In science the ability to make observations without inference then apply those observations to solve a problem is critical.

Science is about safety too and we did discuss laboratory rules and appropriate behavior. Long hair was tied back. Wafting techniques were demonstrated for safe smelling (remember observations by definition use our 5 senses) and we discussed location of fire blankets, eye washes, and showers which should always be done before starting a lab. Goggles were worn until all chemicals were put away. One of the important things in learning science is hands on activities --LABS! Our school days activities allow us to do these with our "high tech" students. Don't be afraid to try them at home.



Continued from page 7 *Help with Classes*

5. <http://catalog.browardlibrary.org/wc-bin/tutor> Broward etutor offers free online homework help to students in grade 4 through the first year of college. This service is available at all Broward County Library locations, plus remote access seven days a week from 2 PM to 10 PM. The subjects include math, science, social studies, and English. Additionally, for assistance by Spanish speaking tutors in math and science, the service is available Sunday through Thursday from 2 PM to 10 PM. Students must have a Broward County library card account.

6. BEEP: The Broward Enterprise Education Portal, or B.E.E.P, manages its online tools for students, parents and educators. Just log in with your ten-digit student number and date of birth with the slashmarks. <http://beep.browardschools.com/ssoPortal/index.html> or [www.browardschools.com](http://www.browardschools.com) and click BEEP. The site offers a wide range of age-appropriate, safe, online research tools, including:

- FCAT Explorer test preparation
- Research tools such as online encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlases, kid-friendly websites, biographies and collections of articles published in magazines and newspapers.
- Online textbooks, with resources on how parents can help students.
- Video how-to lessons on computer software, such as how to create a Powerpoint presentation.
- Online catalog of all books and audiovisual materials in all Broward County public schools.

7. Check out your local public school's afterschool program. Some clubs offer free tutoring after school from some of their best students.

8. BrainPop [www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com)

We now have a school subscription to BrainPop. BrainPop is an animated teaching and learning tool that has a vast library of recorded lessons and activities across all subject areas and grade levels. It's an awesome tool! BVS has purchased the subscription with the intention of providing tutorial and enrichment activities for our students. The link below will take you to a brief tour of what's available in the BrainPop library.

<http://www.brainpop.com/about/tour/>

Attached is a getting started guide for your reference. Here's the log in information:

site: [www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com)  
 username: browardvirtualschool  
 password: bvs2010

9. What is Brightstorm? [www.brightstorm.com](http://www.brightstorm.com)

Free homework help videos covering every topic in Math

Great Test Prep programs for SAT, ACT, PSAT and Advanced Placement exams

A community of over 130,000 learners asking each other questions and getting free homework help

*Find our very own BVS teacher Mr. Grimes in some of the videos!!!!*

How do I use Brightstorm?

Whenever you're confused and need homework help, watch the free homework help videos to quickly get unstuck. Use the Math Homework Checker to get instant answers to your Math problems—it's the best free homework help tool on the web! Use great teacher videos, practice exams, flashcards and more to prepare for the SAT, ACT, PSAT and AP exams

10. Looking for a great resource for your students to receive tutorial instruction? Check out this site: <http://www.khanacademy.org/>. There are over 1,500 recorded lessons in a variety of subjects. The link is also listed on the e-resource page on our website (along with several other resources) at [www.bved.net/e-resources.htm](http://www.bved.net/e-resources.htm).

## Character Education Traits of the Month



### Kindness and Honesty

The act of kindness can best be taught through modeling. Simple gestures like expressing gratitude, forgiving others or helping someone in need teaches others how to show kindness. Let's all try to be a little more compassionate and treat others as you would like to be treated and focus on how we can show kindness toward others.

At BVS it is important to have Academic Honest. Honesty involves playing by the rules and making choices that support the common good. At Broward Virtual, this means doing your own work, not cheating or copying, and not using others' work without giving credit.



### A Cause to Bark About

**Brenda McGrane**  
**Director of Humanitarian**  
**Outreach**

The Humane Society of Broward County is a non-profit organization providing shelter, aid, responsible adoptions, and education to the community about respect and compassion to all animals. Since being founded in 1944, this facility has taken in abandoned or abused dogs, cats, and even bunnies under their “open admission” policy which accepts all owned animals into their shelter regardless of the animal’s condition. Luckily, the number of locals kind enough to seek adoption have increased and HSBC was successful in placing an astonishing 9,923 pets into loving homes in 2007. However, HSBC can’t do it all alone. Because this organization receives no financing from the government, they rely heavily on donations from companies or dedicated volunteers. So to show our gratitude, we want to *lend a paw*.

Starting Monday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 and throughout the month of February you can help support the BVS Seniors by donating items during our “Lend a Paw” food and supply drive benefiting the Humane Society of Broward County. Items can be dropped off directly at the Becon office and will include: boxed dog and cat treats, puppy and kitten milk replacers, new or gently used bath towels, and even hand sanitizer (A full list of items will be sent out in a flyer so keep checking your e-mails). We encourage all students, teachers, and staff to contribute to this purrrfectly heartfelt cause and hope it’s the start of many community service projects to come!



A rescued boxer named Rocks