

Blue Ridge Banner

551 East A Street, Purcellville, VA 20132
Phone 540-751-2520 Absentee Line 540-751-2522

www.lcps.org/brms

School Hours: 8:35 a.m. to 3:23 p.m.

February
2012

From the Principal



Dear Blue Ridge Parents,

Welcome to Semester two, and February! Students are in a great rhythm as we wind down our first semester and move full steam ahead into 2012. What a great start we've experienced to the new year. February brings with it many school and community events. We are excited to celebrate Black History Month with a variety of both curricular and school-wide activities. Each day students will learn about African-American leaders in many areas of our culture. Our final capstone event is a school-wide seminar that engages students in writing a reflection poem, essay, or picture summarizing what they learned during the month. Selected works of these wonderful, cultural creations will

hang in Purcellville's Town Hall.

Mardi Gras, our school's annual student party is scheduled for February 17th. This event (see flyer page 8) combines all grades in a high energy night of games, inflatable equipment, beads, and fun. We hope all students attend.

Blended programming:

I appreciate the interest our community has demonstrated in our Blended instructional program for the 8th grade. The Blended program schedules both grade-level courses and honors courses simultaneously. Our objective with this arrangement is to develop all minds to their fullest potential, for students not to feel predetermined. Both grade-level courses and honors courses have the same curriculum. This allows teachers to differentiate instruction for each student. Each child receives the material at a level where he or she can absorb and grow.

This is not a new program to Blue Ridge, it has been piloted since 2007; however, this year is the first year it was expanded to the entire grade. The pilot's expansion was based on positive, pilot teacher input, administrative support, and pilot SOL data. Please visit our website to find examples of sample Blended lessons, informative links, and last year's SOL data.

One question that's been asked concerns whether Blended is slated for next school year in grades 6, 7 and 8. Data is still being gathered measuring the positive impact of Blended on this year's grade 8 achievement and its effect on school climate in the form of both survey data and academic outcome data. These data will be compiled in May to make a final decision for next year's grade 8 class. Grades 6 and 7 will not be blended next year (2012-2013). I will be hosting a question and answer session for any interested families on March 6 from 7-8 in the auditorium.

We welcome all questions about this program.

Counselors' Corner

SOL (STANDARDS OF LEARNING)

The Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments (SOL) for 8th Grade writing will take place on March 6th and 7th. All 8th graders will participate in this assessment. Additional Standards of Learning Assessments will be administered in May/June to all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders in social studies, reading, and math. Eighth graders will also take a science SOL. The testing dates run from May 7th to June 1st. Days for specific tests have not been scheduled yet. Students enrolled in Pre-Algebra will take the Math 8 SOL assessment. Algebra 1 students will take the Algebra 1 SOL assessment. If passed, the Algebra 1 SOL can be used toward a verified credit for high school graduation.

Counselor's Corner continued on the next page....

Administration

Principal: Brion Bell
Assistant Principal: Matt Bolen
Assistant Principal: Marlene Jefferson

Deans

House A/ 8th Grade: Katie Johnson
House B/6th Grade: Nancy Griffith-Cochran
House C/7th Grade: Doug Dillon

Counselors

Todd Peterson
Penny Cohen
Maureen Sullivan

HAPPENINGS AROUND BLUE RIDGE

Counselors' Corner continued.....

SCHEDULING

Scheduling for the 2012-2013 school year will take place during the months of February and March. The Course Selection Forms will be sent home with your child. The Program of Studies is now available online at: <http://www.lcps.org/page/1910>. You will also receive a course verification sheet (what classes your child signed up for) with the 3rd quarter report cards.



Loudoun Valley High School Counselors will be registering rising 9th grade students during the month of February also. If your student is going to Loudoun Valley next year, please plan to attend the **Rising 9th Grade Parent Information Night on Thursday, February 2nd at 6:00 p.m. at Loudoun Valley High School. Eighth grade students may also attend.**

UVA Enrichment Programs:

The University of Virginia offers a residential summer program for gifted and/or high ability students.

Session I: June 17 - June 28, 2012

Session II: July 1 - July 12, 2012

Session III: July 15- July 26, 2012

Programs will include: Investigations in Science & Technology, Investigations in Social Sciences, Investigations in Mathematics, Investigations in the Arts and Humanities. For applications and more information go to <http://curry.virginia.edu/community-programs/student-enrichment/sep/summer> or call 434-924-3182.

Application Deadline - February 15, 2012

CHARACTER COUNTS RECOGNITION- *Dynamic Dogs 2nd Quarter*

During each quarter teachers and staff nominate students whom they think represents one of the 6 character traits (caring, citizenship, fairness, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness). Then at the end of the quarter, students are recognized at a reception given in their honor. Parents will be invited, and the student will be awarded with a certificate. Below is a list of the first quarter nominations by grade level. Congratulations and keep up the good work.

Dynamic Dogs - 6th Grade

Jordan Miller
Daniel Stamer
Morgan Blankenship
McKenzie Symthe
Sarah Carroll
Andrew Crickenberger
Gabriela Francisco-Hernandez
Anthony Shaphat
Turner Leigh
Lillian Grooms
Campbell Hayes Baker
Joey Cypher
Samantha Huff
Ethan Rodriguez
Lenox Mireku
Timmy Foster

Dynamic Dogs - 7th Grade

Chloe Adams
Felicity Byington
Hanna Tadie
Kyle Krummann
Erin Slupe
Gage Buzzelli
Madeline Bills
Chris Cerne
Julia Acampora
Lanique Johnson
Freddy DeLluegas
Fiona Sweeney
Brad Sanders
Reilly Canard
Casey Lynch
Star Hutton
Caroline Morrow
Philip Proctor
Bryan Terrazas
Brendy Garcia
Keisha Beale
Melissa Maricle

Dynamic Dogs - 8th Grade

Carina Bucci
Malcolm Miller
Cooper Lush
Michael Cypher
Alex Gates
Billy Pierce
Stephen DeBlank
Drew Hunter
Blake Hesson
Sasha Gregg
Kenneth Alexander
Caroline Richards
Mark Purdy
Rebecca Roy
Francheska Molina
Hunter Byington
Josh Huerbin
Jackson Lessler
Erica Elias
Karsyn Boyer
Lindsey Sweet
Maggie Lanaghan



HAPPENINGS AROUND BLUE RIDGE , continued



February is Black History Month

During Black History Month, Blue Ridge Middle School will observe the 2012 national theme proposed by The Association for the Study of African American Life and History. This organization, founded by Carter G. Woodson, in 1915 has selected ***Black Women in American Culture and History***. Most of our activities during Black History Month will focus on the often underappreciated or even unrecognized contributions that African-American women have made to our country. Our daily announcements always begin with a musical selection, so during the month of February each selection will be an African-American female artist: Mary J. Blige, Tina Turner, Ella Fitzgerald, Diana Ross and others. Teachers will access the lyrics to the songs, corresponding video, and biography of the artist via our staff drive. Additionally, each morning during the announcements, the accomplishments and struggles of specific African-American woman will be shared: their photos and biographies are also loaded on the staff drive – organized by date so that staff can show the words and images as the announcements are broadcast.

Many classroom activities will be taking place during the month. The library will host school-wide displays and games. The entire staff will be working together to provide a truly integrated experience for our students. February 29th, as a school, we will watch a short video that honors the contributions of African-American women - from the domestic workers who were the cornerstone of American progress, to Rosa Parks who became the face of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, to abolitionist Harriet Tubman, whose courageous work with the Underground Railroad during the 1850's led hundreds of escaped slaves to safety and freedom. As a school, students will read the poem *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou. Ultimately, students, working within their teams, will produce poems, songs, pictures or other displays that reflect what they've learned during the month. Team leaders and others on the staff will select the projects that best celebrate our theme: ***Black Women in American Culture and History***. These winning projects will be proudly displayed in the Town Hall in Purcellville, Virginia.

Blue Ridge Spelling Bee and Geography Bee

The New Year started off with the annual Blue Ridge Spelling Bees. Our 8th grade winner was Sarah McAllister. In seventh grade, Samantha DeHart spelled her way to victory. In sixth grade, Annabelle Coppersmith was the spelling bee champion. Each of these three young ladies will represent Blue Ridge in the Loudoun County Spelling Bee at Stone Bridge High School on March 8, 2012, at 6:30 p.m. Blue Ridge would like to congratulate them on the school wide win and wish them the best of luck at the county bee. Great job, girls!



On January 20, 2012, several sixth grade students participated in the school wide Geography Bee. Congratulations go to the school wide winner, Varun Mosur. Varun will be notified in early spring regarding his qualification for the state level Geography Bee. The runner up was sixth grader, Adam Obedin.

Notes from home.....

Dear Mr. Bell,
Please thank your dedicated staff on duty each day at the school's kiss and ride. It was cold last week, and I appreciated that adults are still there helping kids stay safe!

6th grade parent

Dear Mr. Bell,
Wow, what a great band concert last night. The stage, poinsettias and decorations really made the evening special. I can't wait for the spring concert.

8th grade parent

Dear Administrative Team,

My husband and I would like to thank you for your time and understanding this morning regarding our son. Please know that we are deeply appreciative of your efforts to make everything better for our child and his academic future. We have never felt as welcome in this school as we did today.

7th grade parent

Mrs. Mueller,
My daughter loves your history projects! She does not seem to mind getting up early and doing research — which amazes me. We really appreciate the time you put in with the kids.

7th grade parent

HAPPENINGS AROUND BLUE RIDGE , continued

BLUE RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL PRESENTS



Annie

the musical

FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 2012 @ 7:30
SATURDAY MARCH 3: 2:30 AND 7:30
SUNDAY, MARCH 4 @ 2:30

DIRECTED BY **DOLLY STEVENS** SPONSORED BY **BRMS PIO**

TICKET INFO & RESERVATIONS: www.lcps.org/BRMS/Annie

TICKETS: ADULTS \$10, STUDENTS & SENIORS \$5

AT BLUE RIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL
551 EAST A STREET
PURCELLVILLE, VA 20132

ANNIE is a spunky Depression-era orphan determined to find her parents, who abandoned her years ago on the doorstep of a New York City Orphanage run by the cruel, embittered Miss Hannigan. In adventure after fun-filled adventure, Annie foils Miss Hannigan's evil machinations, befriends President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and finds a new family and home in billionaire Oliver Warbucks, his personal secretary Grace Farrell and a lovable mutt named Sandy.

For ticket information email annie.brms@gmail.com or stop by the Main Office for an order form.

HAPPENINGS AROUND BLUE RIDGE , continued

House A Happenings!

The eighth grade has had a great start to the second semester. Students continue to be actively engaged and challenged by Blue Ridge's dynamic teachers. In Civics, students recently completed a unit of study on elections and political parties. Our Civics teachers made real world connections using the recent Iowa Caucus and New Hampshire Primary. In their English classes, students met individually with their teacher to discuss their writing portfolios as well as assess their self-selected reading and writing goals. In Science class, students explored simple machines and different types of energy including kinetic, potential, and nuclear. Lastly in Math, students worked to solve and graph inequalities and students wrote different types of equations. Algebra I and Geometry students completed the first semester with a cumulative exam.



January was also a very busy month for our eighth graders outside of the classroom. Students took part in both the school's annual Spelling Bee and Geography Bee. Sarah McAllister was the eighth grade Spelling Bee champion, with Miriam Felps our runner up. The winter chorus concert on January 10th also showcased the talents of our students as did the band, guitar, and orchestra concerts prior to the winter break. Our Character Counts program recognized students from all grade levels on January 26th for displaying good character. These traits include caring, citizenship, fairness, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness. In addition to these activities several teachers, counselors, and coaches from LVHS have met with our students during resource and will continue to do so throughout the month of February.

February promises to be just as busy as January was. Report cards will be sent home on February 1st. Students will begin working with our guidance department on course selection for next year. Student achievement will be recognized during an evening Cornerstone Awards ceremony on February 15th. Invitations for this celebration will be mailed home for students receiving an award. February is also Black History Month. Blue Ridge Middle School will recognize the national theme, Black Women in American Culture through a variety of curricular and school-wide activities.

House B Happenings

Happy 2012! Sixth grade's new year is in full swing. January is our month of "bees". The sixth grade spelling bee was held Friday, January 13, 2012. Fourteen sixth graders competed. Congratulations go to our runner up, Justin Co-man, and our bee winner, Annabelle Coppersmith. On January 20, 2012, several sixth grade students participated in the school wide Geography Bee. Sixth grade was well represented. The runner up was sixth grader, Adam Obedin. Congratulations go to the school-wide winner, Varun Mosur. Varun will be notified in early spring regarding his qualification for the state level Geography Bee. On January 26, 2012, Blue Ridge held its quarterly Character Counts banquet to recognize our sixth, seventh, and eighth grade Dynamic Dogs. Traits highlighted include caring, citizenship, fairness, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness.



February promises to be eventful. Look for report cards to come home on February 1st. On February 17th, our PTO will sponsor the Blue Ridge annual Mardi Gras celebration, complete with amusement style inflatables, karaoke, hula hooping, limbo, and more. The Blue Ridge Cornerstone Awards recognizing outstanding student achievement will be held on February 8th for sixth graders. Invitations will be mailed home for those students receiving an award. In addition, February is Black History Month. The national theme, Women in Black History, will be celebrated at Blue Ridge. Daily announcements will feature an African American female who has contributed significantly to the culture of the United States. A school-wide culminating event will round out the month, highlighting the featured women and an activity demonstrating what the students have gleaned from this month's focus on African American women.

HAPPENINGS AROUND BLUE RIDGE

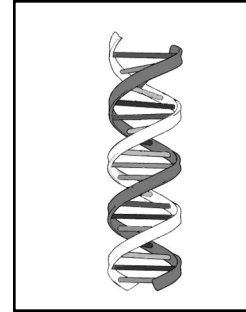
House C Happenings

The seventh grade started the 2nd semester with great excitement and enthusiasm. In Social Studies, students completed the first semester curriculum with the U.S. becoming a world power as a result of the Spanish American War. We are currently studying World War I. Students completed amazing projects covering 'all the details' of World War I. Additionally, students created propaganda posters - convincing 'the audience' to either support the war or join the anti-war movement. Next on our historical journey is the Roaring Twenties - an interesting and lively unit!!!

Students in Math 7 are starting Transformations of Shapes (translations, reflections, dilations, and rotations). Students' concepts of linearity and proportion will be challenged. In Algebra I students plan to explore Systems of Linear Equations and Inequalities. Students will apply these topics to hands-on problems in a variety of fields. Students are challenged to make predictions and examine patterns as it pertains to correlation in data sets. Fun stuff!

In Life Science students are just finishing cell cycles and meiosis. Our next topic is DNA, followed by the scientists that discovered the structure of the molecule, and finally, how it replicates.

In Language Arts, some classes are just completing a memoir unit. Some students wrote letters to a classmate analyzing a book of their choice. In addition, students continued their study of individualized spelling lists and their group study of novels through book club.



SOL Testing Corner - Writing SOL TESTS for 8th Grade Students

Most Virginia public school students in grades 3 through 8 participate in the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments. Eighth grade students take the SOL English: Writing test. This test has two parts: the students answer multiple-choice questions about the writing process, and also write an essay or Short Paper. SOL English: Writing has been administered as a paper/pencil test, but beginning in 2013 it will be given as an online computer test. Students will write their essay, and also answer multiple-choice test questions at a computer.

In preparation for the 2013 change, this year our 8th graders will take part in the SOL English: Writing Online Field Test. This field test will provide the Virginia Department of Education an opportunity to gather data about SOL English: Writing as an online test, before actually moving this test online in 2013. Because the SOL English: Writing Online Field Test is a "test of the test," students and schools will not receive scores.

Students will be administered the Short Paper, or essay, for the SOL English: Writing Online Field Test on February 14-17. The Multiple-Choice section of the SOL English: Writing Online Field Test will be given to students on March 19-23.

In addition to participating in the SOL English: Writing Online Field Test, students in 8th grade will still be administered the SOL English: Writing as paper/pencil tests, the same as in previous year. These tests will be given on March 6th and 7th. Students and schools will receive test scores by the end of the school year.

If you have any questions, please contact, Assistant Principal, [Marlene Jefferson](#).

Honor Roll

The staff would like to congratulate the excellent achievement of the honor roll students. The Honor Roll for the second 9 week grading period will be available soon on the Blue Ridge Middle School website. [Blue Ridge Honor Roll](#)



EXTREME JOURNEY SUMMER CAMP 2012

Your Mission: This summer, become a spy in the “Journey Intelligence Agency” to reveal the mysteries of history! You will assume the identities of those who lived here before us, face the same problems they faced, and then decide: **What Would I Have DONE? Should You Choose to Accept This Mission You Will:** Canoe the Potomac River, cycle the battlefield at Gettysburg, hike the trails at Harpers Ferry, bike your way down the C&O Canal towpath, investigate the landscape of Antietam, farm at a freedman's cabin, and explore James Madison's Montpelier to uncover secrets of the past. Then use the clues you discover to create your own mini-movie about what leadership means to you.



Parents:

This two-week day camp offers a unique chance for your child to visit Gettysburg and Antietam National Battlefields, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, James Madison's Montpelier, the Potomac River, and the C&O Canal under the guidance of expert interpreters who will lead hands-on cultural, recreational and creative activities.

Now in its 6th year, this program is offered in partnership with **Loudoun County Public Schools** and **The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership**. To find out more details about the camp, to view a video about this program, or to see examples of the work of previous secret agents, visit us at: <http://www.hallowedground.org/Education/Camps>



Adventure Open To: Rising 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade Students

When: July 16 through July 27 (Monday-Friday, Day Camp Only)

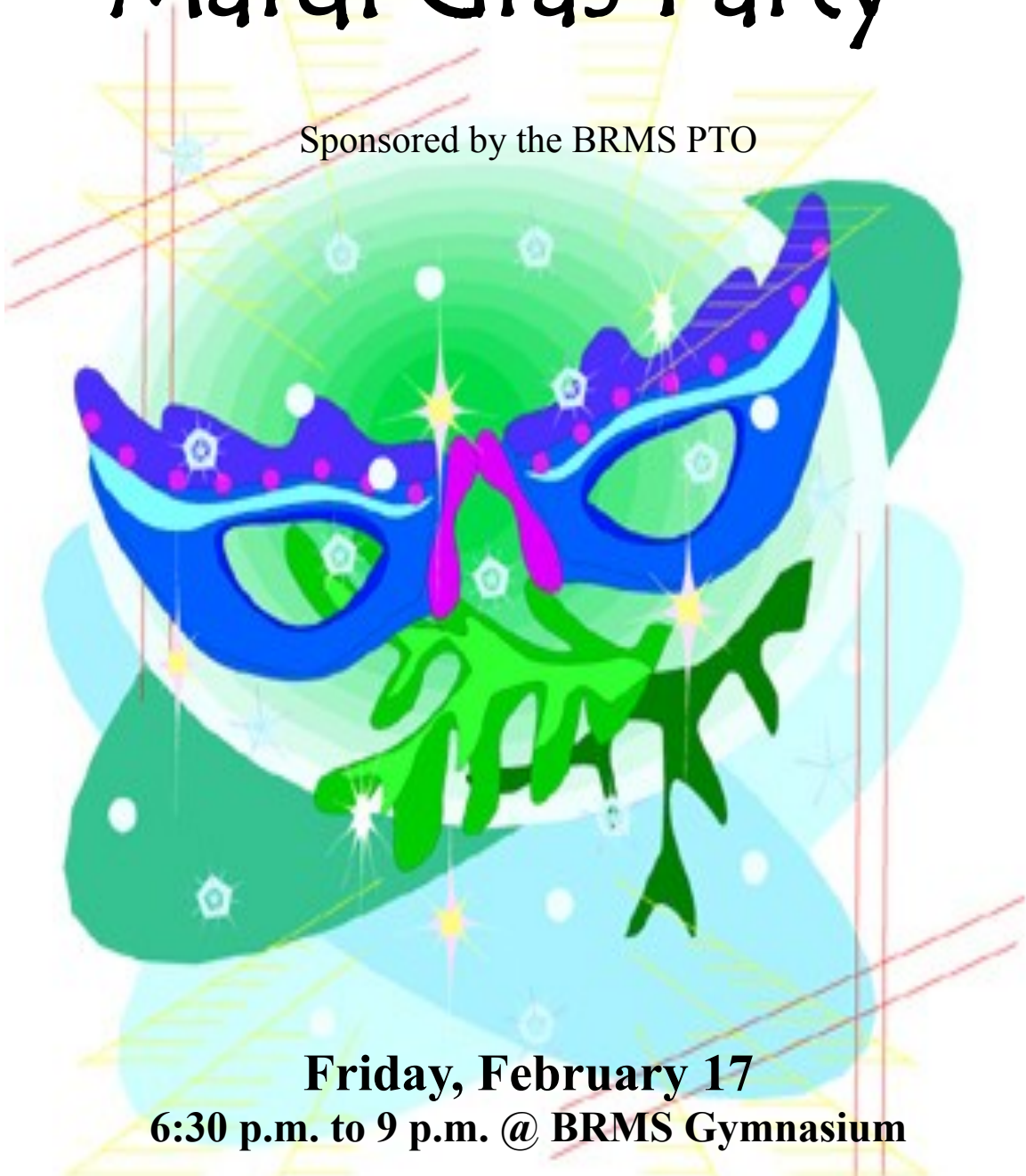
Cost: \$650 (limited scholarships available)

This price covers all charges for bus transportation, park admission, guided tours, bike and canoe rentals, snacks, and use of cutting-edge filmmaking equipment. For additional information regarding camp registration contact: Blaine@jthg.org or call (540) 882-4929.



Mardi Gras Party

Sponsored by the BRMS PTO



Friday, February 17

6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. @ BRMS Gymnasium

**Dance to tunes provided by a DJ
Inflatables, Games, Pizza and FUN!**

Prepaid Admission: \$5.00

Volunteers needed and wanted.

Tickets will NOT be sold at the door.... Listen to announcements.

HAPPENINGS AROUND BLUE RIDGE , continued

Mardi Gras Party Information—



The Mardi Gras party will be February 17th from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. It is the “Party of the Year” and is always so much fun for students and parent volunteers. There will be inflatable attractions in the Main Gym and prize-worthy contests in the Aux Gym. D.J. Shaun Maher will host the costume, hula hoop and limbo contests. Drinks and popcorn will be provided at no cost in the cafeteria. Pizza and baked goods will be sold as well. Other attractions include a tattoo booth and a photo booth. The photo booth will be staffed by a professional photographer, Mary Lanaghan of MJL Studies. Pictures taken at the party will be available to order at a later date. Information on ordering a picture will be found in the next newsletter and the Bulldog Bytes. To sign up to receive the Bulldog Bytes please contact janetvanpelt@yahoo.com.

Volunteers: contact Jane Munzell at janemunzell@gmail.com.

Permission slips will be sent home on February 1 with your student’s report card.

Tickets will be sold during lunch the week before the party. The cost is \$5.00 per ticket. In accord with LCPS policy, no tickets will be sold at the door. Families in financial hardship may contact their child’s counselor. All students are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Drop Off and Pick Ups: 6th grade pick up and drop off will be at the “Kiss and Ride”.

7th and 8th grade (and mixed grade) pick up will be at the front entrance at the bus lot. Mixed group pick up and drop off will be at the front entrance as well. Please discuss your pick up plan before you drop off your child. Cell phone reception in the building can not be relied upon. If you do send your student with a cell phone or cash, please make sure that they have a secure pocket to carry the items.

Costume Contests: Costumes are encouraged but not required. Students may change out of their costumes after the 7 p.m. contest so that they will be more comfortable. The school Mardi Gras Store will be open the week before the party. Costume accessories will be on sale for between \$1 and \$5. A special prize will be awarded for the best “hand made” mask. Other prizes will be awarded to two students of each grade. The 8th grade winners of the Costume Contest will be named the King and Queen and they will be awarded top prizes.

Teacher Dinner and Gift Baskets

The PTO will sponsor a dinner for teachers during the hour before the Mardi Gras Party. The dinner will take place from 5:30 to 6:30 in the school library. Food is being donated by our wonderful parents. Parents interested in helping with the dinner may contact Debbie Green at rdargreen@comcast.net. The teachers really enjoy this event and are very appreciative.

Teachers will have a chance to win one of several gift baskets. Parents are encouraged to send in contributions to the baskets before February 15. Items may be dropped off at the Main Office. Suggested items include: handicrafts, gift cards, gourmet food items, chocolates, kitchen and bath accessories, school supplies, coffees, teas, and other non-perishables. Gift cards to local vineyards would be appreciated as well. Please contact Cathy Coles at chiro2mom@aol.com.



Blue Ridge Middle School is now participating in the Harris Teeter *Together in Education* program. Click on the link below to connect your Harris Teeter card to our Blue Ridge Middle School account. The account number for BRMS is 1450. You may sign up on line or with your cashier at check out. You will need our account number. [Link your Harris Teeter card](#)

HAPPENINGS AROUND BLUE RIDGE , continued

2011 - 2012 School Calendar



August 29	First Day of School for Students
September 5	Holiday (Labor Day)
October 10	Holiday (Columbus Day)
November 4	End of the Grading Period
November 7 - 8	Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Days)
November 23 - 25	Holiday (Thanksgiving)
December 22-23/26-30	Winter Break (Classes resume January 3)
January 2	Holiday
January 16	Holiday (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
January 20	End of the Grading Period
January 23	Moveable Student Holiday* (Plan./Records/Conferences)
February 20	Holiday (Presidents' Day)
March 30	End of the Grading Period
April 2 - 6	Student Holiday (Spring Break)
April 9	Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Days)
May 28	Holiday (Memorial Day)
June 8	Last Day of School /End of Grading Period

Dates to Remember

February 1	Report cards sent home	
February 2	Meeting for Parents of Rising 9th graders @ LVHS	6 p.m.
February 8, 9 & 15	Cornerstone Awards for invited students	
February 17	Mardi Gras Party sponsored by the PTO	
March 2	Drama Production of Annie	7 p.m.
March 3	Drama Production of Annie	2 p.m. and 7 p.m.
March 4	Drama Production of Annie	2 p.m.
March 6	Discussion on the Blended Program	7 p.m.
March 6 & 7	State Writing SOL Testing Grade 8	
March 21	8th Grade Field Trip to the Newseum	
March 28	Internet Safety Presentation	7 p.m.
March 28 & 29	6th Grade Field Trips - "College in 6"	
April 2-6	Spring Break	
April 9	Student Holiday (Planning/Records/ Conference Days)	



Order Your Yearbook Now

You may order a yearbook online by visiting www.jostensyearbooks.com. The company may be reached by phone at 1-866-282-1516. The base price of our yearbook is \$32.00 and they are wonderful!