News Digest for April 2016
(Click on each link to open)

Coffee Time Interview with Dean Penne Mott – TV16HD

Reception held for BSCC President – Daily Mountain Eagle

Bevill State Advanced Summer Registration until April 27\textsuperscript{th} – Journal Record

‘Back To Work 50+’ information session set for April 12 – Journal Record

Bevill State Kicks off National Library Week – Daily Mountain Eagle

Bevill State Stars – Corridor Messenger

BSCC-Hamilton Black History Program – Journal Record

Inagural Trio Day held at BSCC - Fayette – Times Record

Softball tournament set in Norris’ memory – Proceeds used to create BSCC Scholarship – Journal Record

Disaster Drill set for Saturday at BSCC Jasper Campus – Daily Mountain Eagle

\textit{The BSCC News Digest is a sampling of news articles and information regarding Bevill State Community College that appears in local media. If there is and article that you see that is not listed, please send to Chris Franklin at cfranklin@bscc.edu}
Reception held for new BSCC president

Dr. Larry Ferguson, left, Bevill State Community College’s new president, talks to Dr. Al Moore, dean of Bevill’s career technical education and the Sumiton campus, at a welcome reception for Ferguson on Thursday morning.

Daily Mountain Eagle - Lea Rizzo
Bevill State Advanced Summer Registration Until April 27th

Advanced Registration for the 2016 Summer Semester is scheduled until April 27. Summer classes at Bevill State, which begin May 25, are a great option for students looking to get a jump on their college careers.

Plus, many four-year college students take advantage of Bevill State’s lower tuition and smaller class sizes during the summer before they return to their larger institutions in the fall.

Bevill State Community College offers a wide range of classes that can transfer to four-year colleges and universities. Many students in Bevill State’s service areas take advantage of the convenience of summer classes.

“One reason we have students enroll at Bevill Student during the semester is because college students come home for the summer and we are just closer for many. This allows students to benefit from a Summer Semester at Bevill State. They don’t have to drive far and give up their time,” said Dr. Russell Howton, interim Associate Dean of the Hamilton Campus.

Other benefits to taking classes in the summer include low student faculty ratio, personalized instruction, and a more nurturing educational environment.

The ability to take classes through the college’s Dual Enrollment program is also a major factor for enrolling during the Summer Semester.

Bevill State’s Dual Enrollment program allows eligible high school students to enroll in college classes concurrently with high school classes, either on Bevill’s campuses or at a high school, and receive both high school and college credit. Classes are available in academic transfer or career technical programs.

Because of an agreement all Alabama community colleges have, transferring academic classes taken at Bevill isn’t difficult.

“Bevill State Community College is very fortunate to be part of STARS - Statewide Transfer & Articulation Reporting System. STARS is a web-accessible database system that provides guidance and direction for prospective transfer students in Alabama. It allows public two-year students in Alabama to obtain a Transfer Guide/Agreement for the major of their choice. The guide helps students prevent loss of credit hours upon transfer to public four-year colleges and universities in Alabama,” said Dr. Howton.

Whether someone is interested in career preparation, academic transfer classes, online courses or courses taught in a traditional classroom setting, Bevill State Community College’s Summer Semester offers several options for those pursuing their educational goals.

Future students who have not yet completed enrollment can begin the admission process by visiting the website at www.bssc.edu/future. There they will learn admission requirements and procedures.

Future students can print and submit an application by mail or deliver it in person to the Office of Student Services on the Hamilton campus, or fill out an online application and submit it electronically.

For a list of courses that will be offered during the summer semester, as well as information on admissions and financial assistance, an online schedule of classes is available at www.bssc.edu.

The faculty and staff of Bevill State Community College are ready to help current and future students during the Fall Semester registration period.

Call 800.648.3271 for assistance, and visit www.bssc.edu for additional information on class times and offerings.
‘Back To Work 50+’ information session set for April 12

Free program includes coaching, personal marketing, networking

HAMILTON – Life can be rocky for people 50 and over who find themselves unemployed. Things have changed. There are fewer jobs and more people trying to get them.

“The search for jobs can be overwhelming,” said Rick Watson, coordinator for the Back To Work 50+ program at Bevill State Community College.

But fortunately there is hope for those who are willing to upgrade their personal marketing tools and update their skills.”

Watson said almost half of the people who went through the BTW 50+ program at Bevill State last year found jobs.

Those numbers would have been even better, but many of those who attended were simply curious about the program, but not really interested in searching for work,” said Watson.

The next “Back To Work 50+ @ Bevill State” workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, April 12, at Bevill State Community College-Hamilton.

The session is free and open to the public for those ages 50 and older. Persons wishing to attend the free information session are requested to call (855) 850-2525 to register, but walk-ins are also welcome.

“Back to Work 50+” will be held from 1-3 p.m. in room A-14. Persons will enter the front door of the college, turn down the left corridor and the room will be on the right-hand side at the bottom of the ramp. Bevill State Ambassadors will be on hand to assist.

Watson said that during the session, attendees will learn how to get valuable training through Bevill State for persons who qualify. Attendees will also be taught how to search for “in-demand” jobs and how to brush up their resumes.

Bullet points to be covered during the session include:
- Overview of how the “Back to Work 50+” program works;
- Personal marketing tools;
- Job search tools;
- Networking;
- Job interviewing discussion;
- Training opportunities;
- Coaching.

For more information, interested persons can contact Watson at (855) 850-2525.
Bevill State kicks off National Library Week

By LEA RIZZO
Daily Mountain Eagle

The Sumiton and Jasper campuses of Bevill State Community College kicked off 2016 National Library Week on Monday.

The American Library Association describes National Library Week as “a time to celebrate the contributions of our nation’s libraries and library workers and to promote library use and support.”

The theme of this year’s National Library Week is Libraries Transform, which highlights the changing roles of libraries, librarians and library workers.

National Library Week kicked off on the Sumiton campus with a proclamation highlighting the importance of libraries in communities, read by Sumiton Mayor Petey Ellis.

“Libraries are evolving in order to serve their communities and continue to fulfill their role in leveling the playing field for all who seek information and access to technology. Libraries and librarians open up the world of possibilities,” Ellis said.

He encouraged all residents of the county to visit the library this week.

Tyrone Webb, the assistant dean for library/learning resources on Bevill’s Sumiton campus, said “The library is the backbone of learning.

See LIBRARY, A4
The computers are supplemental but the books and materials [in libraries] are the core of learning.”

He added that librarians are seeing “more and more students migrate back” to the library.

“Libraries [are] part of our culture and our environment. ... We transform and we evolve with everybody. ... When somebody needs something, they come to the library. We’re the source of information,” said Rebecca Whitten, librarian for Bevill’s Jasper campus.

Dr. Larry Ferguson, Bevill’s president, said that National Library Week “is important because it enhances and further highlights the value of libraries as they have to supporting higher education.”

Bevill’s Sumiton and Jasper campuses are celebrating National Library Week with a variety of activities happening in the library for students. Some of the activities include Transform Your Body today and Transform Your Mind on Wednesday on the Sumiton campus and Transforming Your Wallet and Transforming Your Choices throughout the week on the Jasper campus, with additional activities on each campus on Thursday and Friday.

Lori Jackson and Haley Creel of the Sumiton Public Library join Tyrone Webb, assistant dean for library/learning resources on Bevill’s Sumiton campus, and Sumiton Mayor Petey Ellis to kick off National Library Week.

Penne Mott, Bevill’s Dean of Health Sciences and Jasper Campus Administration; Rebecca Whitten, Jasper campus librarian; and Dr. Larry Ferguson, president of Bevill State, gather around students at the Jasper campus library to kick off National Library Week. This year’s theme is Libraries Transform.
Students at Bevill State Community College perform in a commercial recently produced to promote the local school.

Jasper campus utilized for college commercial

Special to The Messenger
Film premieres are usually held in New York or Hollywood, but the Jasper Campus of Bevill State Community College was recently the site of a very special debut. The College unveiled its newest commercial starring 12 of its students at a premiere party that included the students, their guests, and Bevill State employees.

The new commercial is part of a new campaign for the College. The theme is "Your Story Starts at Bevill State." As many stories as possible, and the new commercial is a great way to get these stories started."

While the stories are the center of the campaign, the students who share them are the heart of it. The commercial stars students from each Campus of Bevill State. Students were asked to volunteer and were then interviewed. Over 200 students inquired about the commercial, with over 60 interviews scheduled from the inquiries.

"It was very hard to choose the students for the commercial," said Dr. Jane Smith, President of Bevill State Community College. "They all have great stories to tell."

The commercial will be shown on local television and online. It is expected to attract more students to the college and highlight the stories of its students and faculty.
"Our students have some wonderful stories to tell, and this campaign, and the commercial in particular highlights these stories," explained Dr. Chris Franklin, director of Public Relations for Bevill State. "We hope to share..."
Continued from A1

The students who were selected to participate include: Allie Gilmer and Amber Washington from the Fayette Campus; Xavier Chaney, Drew Johnson, Ryan Jones, and Loreanna McKinney from the Hamilton Campus; Lauren Dyer and Shannie Johnson from the Jasper Campus; and Karen Manley, Destiny Meadows, Kayla Simpson, and Mason Smith from the Sumiton Campus.

The commercials were produced in Birmingham by Spectrum Reach, formerly Charter Media. Spectrum was also the sponsor of the premiere party. Seven versions of the commercial were produced and began airing to coincide with Bevill State’s Advanced Summer Registration period which began March 29.

Each version of the commercial, as well as a behind the scenes video and clips of the original student interviews, can be viewed on the Bevill State YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/user/bevillstatecc/videos.
Rev. Jones has packed house singing, laughing

Diversity celebrated with award-winning blues historian

BY KATHRYN HIRSCHFELD
Staff Writer

HAMILTON - A blues historian and musician from Detroit, Mich., who has roots in Alabama, "brought down the house," on Thursday, Feb. 25, during Bevill State Community College-Hamilton's annual Black History Program.

Rev. Robert B. Jones Sr. had the entire audience at the Bevill Center laughing and singing along with him on a musical journey that explored the "tree, branches and roots" of modern music that grew out of gospel and country blues folk songs from many years ago.

During Jones' introduction by Bevill State Diversity Committee Chair Donna Swinney, who is also the director of Upward Bound, she noted that Jones has been performing for nearly 30 years as a singer, songwriter, storyteller, pastor and self-taught award-winning multi-instrumentalist.

During his show at Bevill, Jones used most of the instruments he can play, which include guitar, harmonica, mandolin, banjo and fiddle. He also demonstrated his wide range of musical styles and his gifted mimicry of churches and gives us our shared cultures?" he asked.

Jones explained that music, when it's not written down, is constantly changing. He said music that's written down becomes "classical" and is sang the same way generation after generation. In places where the music is not written down, but is passed down because there were no song books, he said the music changes a little each time.

Using different voices to provide examples of father to son to grandson, and then across the country to an accent from a Kentucky girl, Jones sang the first verses to "Amazing Grace."

"Your father sang it like this," he said. "You decide that's not fancy enough and you sing it like this. Then someone's granddaughter named Aretha sings it like AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA 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"And that's just the first two words as sung by Aretha Franklin. So, not only have you heard 'Amazing Grace,' you've experienced the folk process. If you don't write the song down, the song keeps changing. And a lot of the great music of our culture is not necessarily the music of the 1930s and the Great Depression rolled around, those same five notes and three chords were still being played by those same Boogie Woogie piano players, but up north in black churches.

"But they didn't call it 'Church Boogie Woogie,' they called it gospel," he said, strumming and singing, "This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine. This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine," as the audience began clapping.

Around 1935, Jones said a style called bluegrass became popular, "which has the blues" in it.

Moving to 1948, he said Ray Charles was "taking gospel back into the clubs" and ran out of music one night, telling his band to "just do what I say." Jones then led the audience in singing "What'd I Say," explaining that those same five notes and three chords became what's known as Rhythm and Blues or R&B.

Jones then moved to 1953, nothing that persons had not only phonograph records, but also radios and televisions. He received a big laugh from both the high school students and the older audience members when he noted there were only three stations.

"So just about everybody..."
other musicians in manner, speech and performance.

Jones said his grandmother, who was born in Alabama, brought home a record when he was 10 years old that changed his life.

“She was excited because it came from ‘down South,’” he said. “The record had guitar player Brownie McGhee and harmonica player Sonny Terry playing something called blues, but it wasn’t the B.B. King type of electric blues, it was this country blues.”

Jones then sang “Gone But Not Forgotten,” while accompanying himself on the guitar and harmonica.

He explained that while other kids around him were listening to The Temptations and The Supremes, he was listening to country blues.

“That’s when I realized that country blues had roots,” he said. “If you ask yourself a question about anything you love, that simple question is, ‘Where does it come from?’

“And that question starts to open up and you become a student of music or the arts or whatever it is that you love.”

Jones said his question about the origin of country blues took him back in time.

He began his musical journey, continually mixing in chords and lyrics as he spoke, and asked the audience to imagine themselves standing outside of an old, weatherbeaten Methodist Church in the 1850s.

“They’re singing ‘Amazing Grace,’” he said. “And every note of the song being sung lands on the beat of the music. You go down the road a little ways, and there’s another church service. This one is being held at a barn or that was written down.”

Jones explained that people would also make instruments to help them get a job done, such as chopping a tree into firewood.

He demonstrated by making a few notes on a set of quills, which he explained is one of the oldest instruments known to humankind. To accompany the quills, persons would use paddles, putting bottle caps on one side and washers on the other side.

“You would use the same kind of paddle as you’d use to get something hot out of the fireplace, stir a pot of boiling laundry or to relate to your children in less enlightened times,” he joked.

‘The tree trunk is the blues’

“American music is like a tree out in the middle of the forest and all the branches of the tree are the music you listen to, such as R & B, rap, gospel, country and pop,” Jones said. “If you follow that tree into the truck, that tree trunk is the blues. And then up underneath that tree is the roots—our roots.

“And if you think about where our music comes from, you see it’s always a borrowing or sharing, and sometimes a stealing, of each other’s music that helps to create American music.”

Selecting an instrument from those onstage, Jones picked up a banjo.

“This banjo belonged to a great musician, the late Dean Crowe, who worked with a quartet, called ‘Bill Jones and the Bluegrass Travelers,’” Jones said. “He was the father of Mrs. Swinyer.”

He noted that current banjos were developed over the last 200 years, originally being played by farmers.

JONAH, who was also a white man and “with shotgun in hand, dared anyone to harm his hardest-working man.”

Jones noted in his song that “all white men weren’t the same,” before continuing his dialogue on the subject.

“The fact of the matter is, there are always people of conscience and people of character who are willing to fight against injustice anywhere,” he said. “You have to find those people and celebrate them whenever and wherever you find them.”

Country changed by music

Jones explained that America changed its views on race, in part, because the country saw the injustice. But he noted, sometimes the country also changed in unusual ways and for unusual reasons, such as music.

He noted that in the 1920s, with the popularity of the phonograph record, “music that had been made in Mississippi could be heard in New York for the first time.”

He said “Boogie Woogie” piano players emerged, playing only five notes and three chords.

“And those five notes and three chords helped make American popular music,” he said, playing a piece from “Cannonball Blues.”

Jones said that by the time he was watching the same things at the same time,” he said.

Jones said that one night a show host announced “We have a really good show for you tonight” (Ed Sullivan) and a young man from Tupelo, Miss., stepped out and began using three chords and five notes.

“One for the money, two for the show, three to get ready, now go cat go. But don’t you step on my blue suede shoes,” Jones sang, rolling his hips as the audience roared with laughter.

“Thank you very much,” Jones said, before asking, “Who was that guy?” When the audience yelled, “Elvis,” Jones asked, “Elvis was the kind of what?” After they replied, “Rock and Roll,” Jones noted that there is a black king of Rock and Roll who is still alive and lives in St. Louis—Chuck Berry.

Jones said Chuck Berry “sort of stole Bill Monroe’s ‘lick’ and put it on an electric guitar and played the blues really fast, creating even another new sound.

Jones sang, “Deep down in Louisiana close to New Orleans, way back up in the woods among the cypress, there stood a log cabin made of earth and wood, where lived a country boy named...”
one is being held at a barn or under the trees.

“This was called ‘the invisible church’ and it was frequented by those who were enslaved in 1850. And it might be the same song, ‘Amazing Grace,’ but it comes out a little differently.

“It’s sang in a different way and not on the beat of the music. What changes that song so much between the

Banjo player and maker
Donna and Rob Swinney (left) are shown on Feb. 25 at the Bevill Center with Rev. Robert B. Jones Sr., (center) and artist Missy Miles, who made the gourd banjo Jones is holding and which he played during his performance. Donna Swinney is the chair of Bevill State Community College-Hamilton’s diversity committee.
Johnny B. Goode.

He noted, “So strangely enough, you cannot have rock and roll without the blues. You can’t have the blues without gospel music, you can’t have gospel without the spiritual and so on. You can’t have one without the other. So things started to come together in an interesting way.”

Jones said students were segregated during dances in gyms in the 1960s, but “tore down the roof” dancing when they heard the five notes coming out of Detroit that open the song “My Girl” by The Temptations.

“It’s sometimes hard for us to put aside our preconceived notions,” he said, “But if you really like somebody’s music, it’s really hard to hate that person. So you start to come together. And this music was also happening at the same time when Rev. (Martin Luther) King and Dr. (Ralph David) Abernathy and all those people were marching.”

Jones said he also likes being able to create new songs from old-style music.

“You can tell stories that were never told before, using the old music,” he explained. Providing an example, Jones sang “Arnesia’s Song,” which he’d written for his 24-year-old daughter, Arnesia, about her great-grandmother of the same name “who he hears in the laughter of his daughter,” and who learned her mothering ways by caring for children for whom she was barely older than.

Jones also explained how, in the 1940s, Vera Hall was talked into recording “Another Man Done Gone,” after saying she didn’t sing the blues. He also used the same music from that tune to sing a new song he’d written, “Another Young Man Gone,” about a young black man being shot 16 times “and they could not name his crime.”

**Remix of 1928 song**

Jones said he feels that the idea of diversity, the music we listen to and enjoy and our shared culture, are among the best things about the land we live in.

“He concluded his presentation with a song recorded in 1928 called “The Death Letter Blues.” Jones first performed part of the song as recorded in 1928, repeating each lyric twice.

Looking at his watch and noting the short time remaining, Jones said he would now modernize the song, singing each verse only once and speeding up the tempo while fading the music out.

“In which case, this becomes 1928 Death Letter Blues—2016 The Remix,” he joked, beginning with singing and ending with rapid rap lyrics and mannerisms that had the audience laughing, clapping and giving him a standing ovation.

More information on Jones can be found at www.revrobertjones.com.

For those wishing to see him in person, Jones will be performing at the 6th Annual Front Porch Storytelling Festival at the University of North Alabama in Florence on May 20-21. Tickets and more information are available at www.una.edu.
Inaugural Trio Day held at BSCC - Fayette

The first ever Trio Day for Upward Bound students was held Saturday, April 2 on the Fayette Campus of Bevill State Community College. BSCC currently has eight Trio projects grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education housed on its main campuses. The mission of Trio is to help low-income students enter and graduate college.

The BSCC-Fayette Upward Bound serves nine schools including Fayette County High School, Berry High School and Hubertville School in Fayette County, Winfield High School in Marion County, Lamar County and South Lamar School in Lamar County and Gordo, Pickens County and Aliceville High School in Pickens County.

The Hamilton program serves nine high schools in Lamar, Marion and Winston County and the Sumiton program serves nine high schools in Walker and Jefferson County.

Anne Uhlmans, director of the Fayette Upward Bound Math and Science program, stated that the Trio students and staff all enjoyed the team building and leadership activities that were led by the Paradigm Shift personnel. "Paradigm Shift has created activities that get the students involved and are appropriate for them," said Uhlmans.

"Trio programs are to reach those students that have the potential to achieve their dreams, but maybe not the support and usually slip through the cracks when it comes to planning their future, their goals and accomplishments," said Uhlmans.

Desirea Jenkins, an UBMS student from BHS, stated that she enjoys experiencing new things and meeting new people. "Upward Bound has allowed me to raise my ACT score and realize what I want to do in the future."

Lana May, director of the Fayette Upward Bound, commented that all the directors felt the day was a success and agreed to hold an annual Trio Day going forward. "The directors had all attended workshop sessions with the Paradigm Shift sponsors and had wanted to bring this experience to our students," said May. "We knew our UB participants would greatly enjoy and benefit from the exercises and activities. A collaboration among Trio programs is encouraged by the Department of Education in Washington. Sharing the expense made the day economically feasible for all four programs."

May added that Upward Bound not only assists participants with academic, career and culturally enriching activities but helps with their social growth as well.

Nicole Cook, a junior at BHS, commented that she enjoyed getting to meet new people at the event. In reference to her experience with Upward Bound, Cook said, "my grades have improved and I am less socially awkward." She plans to major in pre-pharmacy.

Quaddarius Lacy, a student at PCHS, commented that he enjoyed being together with the other students and learning new things. "The event helped me get to know people," said Lacy. He added that he will seek a career in the nursing field.

"Trio Day was an absolute success as far as students and staff are concerned," said Donna Swinney, director of the Hamilton Upward Bound. "The Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science directors have talked many times in the past about collaboration between our programs from Sumiton to Fayette to Hamilton. It finally came true Saturday, April 2 on the Fayette campus."

Swinney added that as students began interacting with one another they realized that they were making new friends that have the same goals and aspirations. It made the day a great success."
other they realized that they were making new friends that have the same goal to be the first in their family to graduate from college.

“A special thank you to our Project Coordinator, Katelin Bell, her husband, Chad and my husband, Rob for assisting with this history making event,” said Swinney. “Our students are most deserving and appreciative of special events such as Trio Day!”

Sarah Outz, a senior at Hackleburg High School, stated that she has enjoyed going to new places and meeting new people while in Upward Bound. “Being in Upward Bound has taught me better study habits,” said Outz. “Without Upward Bound I would not be able to take a full course load this summer.”

Ashley Blanco, a senior at Phillips High School, stated that she enjoys the seminars and meeting new people as part of Upward Bound. “It has allowed me to open up to new people and has helped me with my school work.”

Selection criteria for Upward Bound participants includes low-income, potential first-generation college student and academic need. Two-thirds of the selected participants must be both low-income and potential first-generation college students with academic need.

For more information on the Trio programs visit www.bssc.edu
Softball tournament set in Norris’ memory
Proceeds used to create BSCC Scholarship

By TRACY EŞTES
J-R News Editor

WINFIELD - Honoring the memory of a local student who touched the lives of many, the Bevill State Outdoorsman Club will sponsor a co-ed softball tournament to raise funds for a scholarship in his memory.

The event will be held on Saturday, April 16, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Ivan K. Hill Recreational Park in Winfield.

An entry fee of $150 per team will be charged with the winners receiving a trophy and accompanying T-shirts.

There will be no charge to those wishing to watch games, but donations will be accepted to be used toward the cost of awarding a scholarship in the memory of Colin Norris of Winfield.

The new scholarship will be created by the outdoorsman club and will be awarded to a club member on the Fayette campus.

Norris was killed in a one-vehicle accident near his home in October. He graduated from Winfield City High School in May 2015. He was the son of John and Dana Norris and the second of three brothers.

He had served as president of the outdoorsman club on the BSCC campus in Fayette with club members choosing to host the tournament in his memory.

“Colin meant so much to me,” said Tim Estes, who serves as a science instructor at Bevill State as well as sponsor of the Outdoorsman Club.

“He seemed to love college life. He was involved in so many things on campus. He made friends easily, but more importantly, he kept friends.

“Colin has such a big heart. He positively influenced those around him. He was really a throwback to a time when the college students seemed to want to stay on campus and just be involved. I liked that so much about him.”

Estes also noted the fact his friendship with Colin’s extended family dates back decades.

Teams playing in the event will be guaranteed three games, two for seeding and at least one additional game.

Every team must consist of no more than 12 players with at least four being women. Two women must play in the infield. Regular 12-inch balls will be used in the tournament with each team asked to provide its own equipment.

Any ball hit back at the pitcher will be ruled an out with a foul ball on the third strike also ruled as an out. Any walk issued to a male player will be followed by a free pass also issued to the next female batter in the lineup.

Games will last for either six innings or one hour, whichever comes first with a four home run limit. All extra home runs above the limit will be charged to the team at a rate of $10 each.

Persons wishing to learn more about the event are asked to call Estes at 205-932-3221, ext. 5130, Linda McCarley at 205-932-3221, ext. 5121 or Nick Carothers at 412-4982.

To learn more about the club, call Estes for more information. The club sponsor noted the club’s fall campout held at the Bankhead National Forest in October was the last club event Norris attended.

In his honor, the club has worked for the remainder of the school year without the direction of a president, as two vice presidents have led the organization in Norris’ absence.
Disaster drill set for Saturday at BSCC Jasper campus

By LEA RIZZO
Daily Mountain Eagle

A disaster drill involving multiple local emergency agencies will be taking place on Bevill State Community College’s Jasper campus on Saturday starting at 9 a.m.

“We’ll be running a disaster drill that will basically test all of the agencies’ capabilities and what to do with a large scale, mass casualty incident,” said Chris South, an EMS instructor at BSCC and a member of Regional Paramedical Services.

The disaster drill will involve members of RPS and the Walker County Emergency Management Agency as well as the city of Sumiton’s hazardous materials unit, students from Bevill's nursing and EMS departments, the Jasper fire and police departments.

See DRILL, A4

File photo

Paramedic students respond to a planned mass casualty scenario in a drill held at the Walker County Emergency Management Agency building last May.
and Walker Baptist Medical Center employees. Approximately 60 of the students are part of Bevill’s dual enrollment program and are still in their senior year of high school.

South emphasized that people don’t need to be alarmed by the presence of multiple emergency agencies on Saturday.

“There’ll be hundreds of people there. ... It’s not an actual emergency, there’s not explosions at the college or anything. It’s just a drill,” he said.

The drill should last around three hours and end by noon.

South was unable to release specific details about the drill and can’t reveal what the scenario is until Saturday when the drill begins because the participating agencies can’t know what they’re facing beforehand.

Due to the drill, Indiana Avenue will be closed from Friday evening until Saturday afternoon.

The public is welcome to attend the drill. There will be a viewing area for anyone interested in watching the exercise.

“We think it’s a great idea for the public to see what their first responders and what their tax money is doing,” South said.

This is the second year for the agencies to hold a disaster drill. The first one took place in 2015 at the EMA building in Jasper. However, South said this year’s drill will be on a grander scale and will involve more people.

Anyone looking for more information or interested in volunteering during the disaster drill can visit www.csouthfx.com to register.