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Bowie Alumni Newsletter

Vol. 21, Winter 2020



From the Editor of the Bowie Alumni Newsletter

Susan (Spikes) Bickel



Evelyn (Spikes) Lathram has shared the following information on December 1, 2020:

Sadly, due to the out of control spread of the Coronavirus, our in-person meetings have been canceled. As I write this, there is news of at least 2 vaccines waiting for FDA approval before they will be distributed in the US. Because of the uncertainty of the timeline for the general population to be vaccinated, there are no plans to resume our in-person luncheons for the foreseeable future.

The Coronavirus has disrupted our lives in so many ways. This newsletter has many stories about the effects the virus is having on our Bowie schools.

However, there are good stories too, that bring joy to the lives of our friends and families who live in Bowie.

The early residents of Bowie built a culture around education and hard work. Many teachers chose to call Bowie their home and they continue to do so today. Their influence in the lives of young and impressionable students has served Bowie well for over 100 years. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

Bowie was built by strong and resilient people, who wanted their children to receive the best education possible. No matter the hardships, they were determined to provide quality of life for their families and fellow citizens.

We are the descendants of those pioneers. They weathered the Depression and a world war. They persevered because they had a greater goal in mind.

COVID has presented many challenges for all of us, but we are stronger than this virus. Our sacrifices can make a difference. We may be down now, but there is hope in the promise of a better future.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and more optimistic New Year.

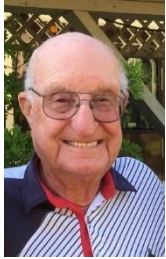
>Susan

THOSE WE WILL MISS:

Carlos Chavez 1930- 2019

Carlos Chavez, 88, born on November 17, 1930, in Bowie, AZ, passed away December 29, 2019. He resided in La Palma, Calif., at the time of his passing. Arrangements are under the direction of Forest Lawn, Cypress, California. He was in the class of 1948.

Delbert James (Skip) Fousel (1922 - 2019)



Delbert James (Skip) Fousel passed away early in the morning of October 31, 2019. He had been battling cancer for seven months. He is survived by his daughter, Linda Lundquist of Tucson, AZ; his son & daughter-in-law, Keith Fousel & Shirley Fousel of Showlow, AZ; eight grandchildren, and 18 great-grandchildren. Born in

Pickett Prairie, Oklahoma on February 26, 1922, his family was part of the great migration westward in the dust bowl days. He was raised in Bowie, AZ, along with his four brothers and one sister. He flew B-25s for the Army Air Corps from 1942 until 1945. He married Jeane Worthington in Lordsburg, New Mexico, in 1946. They settled in Tucson in 1953 where he went to work for Tucson Gas & Electric. He retired in 1984, and they spent their retirement years RV-ing to all 50 states and the provinces of Canada. He was a true Renaissance man who worked hard to support his family, he loved music, airplanes, and fishing. He was 97 years old. A Memorial Service and Celebration of his Life will be held at East Lawn Mortuary, 5801 E Grant Rd, at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 16, 2019. Arrangements by EAST LAWN PALMS MORTUARY.

Funeral Home

East Lawn Palms Cemetery
5801 East Grant Road #C Tucson, AZ 85712
(520) 886-5561

Published in the Arizona Daily Star on Nov. 12, 2019

Genie Foote, 1932 ~ 2020 Long-time

resident of Bowie, Hazel Eugena Foote 87, of Buckhorn, New Mexico passed away at her home on January 7, 2020. A Funeral Service will be held at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Gila, New Mexico, on Thursday, January 16, 2020 at 2:00 PM. Genie is preceded in death by her parents Harry and Ora Mae Oliver, her husband Jack Ellsworth Foote of 63 years, and 9 of her siblings. She is survived by her daughter Mary Foote, her son Jon (Vicki) Foote, 3 grandchildren

Kenny Abney, Will (Melanie) Foote, Wes (Katie) Foote, 7 great grandchildren and her sisters Dorothy Mae McGill of Oro Valley, AZ and Juanita Crocker of Carson City, NV.

Genie was born on January 13, 1932 in Van Buren, Arkansas to Harry and Ora Mae Oliver, she was the 4th child of 12. Genie was very talented and artistic at quilting and making the most beautiful western shirts. She also had a great love for gardening, silversmithing, and lapidary. Genie won multiple prizes for her canning, quilts and gardening throughout the years.

On December 20, 1947 Genie and Jack eloped to Nogales, Mexico where they got married, she was 15 and he was 20. They moved to Arizona where they raised their children on a cattle ranch. Genie loved all animals and always had a welcoming home for the children all around her. They later moved to Goldfield, Nevada where she became a postmaster as well as a real estate agent. She and Jack decided to finally retire to Buckhorn, New Mexico in 1985 where they lived for 35 years.

Genie was a very active member of LDS Churches and she will be greatly missed by all that knew and loved her. Bright Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements, "Traditional services and care for your family and friends." 210 W. College Ave., Silver City, New Mexico. Remembrances can be made at www.hbrightfuneral.net

Roy Abbott, husband of Kim Abbott, passed away, November 9th, 2020, in Flagstaff, AZ.

Janice Welker November 18, 2020

Dear Friends-

The Family wants you to know that Janice quietly passed away this morning in her home with Lamar by her side.

Due to present circumstances, Janice's services will be private, limited to family.

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

The Welker Family

Dora Atherton 1939-2020

White Mountain Independent - Dec 4, 2020

Dora Agatha Atherton (Harmon) died on November 21, 2020 in Mesa, Arizona after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease and Dementia. She was 81 years old. Dora was born in Bowie, Arizona on Nov. 1, 1939 to Ernest Harmon and Mary Euline (Allen).

Dora spent her younger years in Bowie, attending the Methodist Church and Bowie Schools. She graduated high school in Tucson, Arizona.

Dora loved the Bowie mountains and all of the family gatherings at the Masonic campground at Dos Cabezas Mountains. Climbing, walking and seeing where her Allen family once lived.

In February 1957 she married Ralph Lloyd Lord and they lived in Tucson. After leaving Tucson, they lived in Whiteriver, Arizona, a year in Thayer, Missouri, then she spent most of her adult life in Lakeside, Arizona. Dora worked for BIA in Whiteriver running a Day Care Center, Show Low Schools, Con Tel, Walmart and Bashas'.

Dora was also a member the Eastern Star, Mizpah Chapter #57 in Show Low, Arizona. She enjoyed being with her friends.

Dora loved any kind of puzzles, always having picture puzzles set up in her home and a crossword puzzle nearby. Most of all she dearly loved her family!

Dora is survived by her children, Valerie Fuller of Mesa, Jo O'Connor (Tabo) of Gilbert, and Clayton Lord (Mela) of Phoenix; 7 Grandchildren Travis O'Connor of Lakeside, Robert Fuller (Tiffany) of Mesa, Nathaniel Lord (Sharon) of Scottsdale, Melissa Borquez of Phoenix, Joseph O'Connor (Jennifer) of Mesa, Chris O'Connor of Mesa, and Edward Fuller (Vanessa) of Mesa. Dora also has 16 great-grandchildren: Kyra, Arabella, Trinitii, Jameson, Leonardo, Layla; KJ, Addison, Caitlin, Ian, Corban, Quillan; Ethan, Zachary, Vincent and Liliana. Her siblings Charles Harmon; Ernestine Crews (Edward), Joe Harmon (Pat), Gloria Griffin, and Robert Chavez.

No Public Services will be held.

Bowie Area News:

HISTORICAL CHECK:

BANK OF BOWIE

(reprinted with permission of OutdoorsSW.com from their August 2020 issue)

BY SHERRY E ENGLER

What do pistachios, and an old check dating back to 1929 have in common? A small -- an exceedingly small -- town in southeastern Arizona called Bowie.

A fortuitous gift -- a piece of history, a document signed in 1929 -- has plagued my mind with questions since the first moment I held the old check in my hand to examine the precious memento of

Arizona history, a souvenir from the Bank of Bowie. The yellowed, tattered check is representative of more prosperous times in the small southern town of Bowie, Arizona, located off Interstate 10, near its neighboring state of New Mexico.

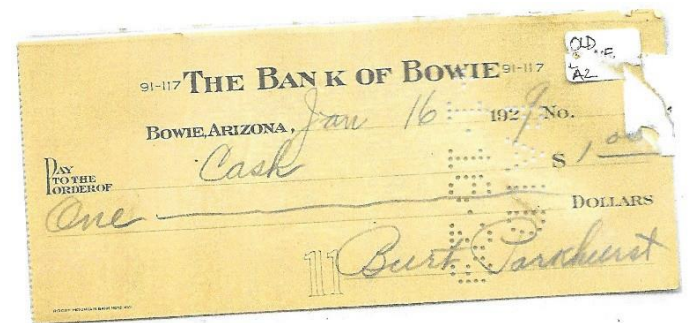
Lying north of the Dos Cabezas Mountains near the San Simon Valley, Bowie strives to maintain with a lesser presence today than yesteryear when it bustled heartily with a train station, destination motels and yes, even the Bank of Bowie, all of which have long been forgotten. Once a lively commerce station, Bowie today is mainly a tiny agricultural town, producing pecans and pistachios from stretching groves of trees and wine -- homegrown from the local groves of grapes produced by the area wineries.

But in the year of 1929, Burt Parkhurst and his wife Dicie Dooley Parkhurst owned the local shoe shop in Bowie. In the early 1900's, Bowie sported an opera house, a telephone exchange station, a garage, a drug



Fort Bowie Ruins at the Fort Bowie Historical Monument – National Park Service

store and yes, the Bank of Bowie. The antiquated bank note from the Bank of Bowie was written for cash by Burt Parkhurst for a total of \$1.00 on January 16, 1929. Finalized by small pin holes in the document, "PAID" is stamped on the right-hand side vertically with the numerals 1-16-29 punched below. Awesome! Absolutely awesome!



Yet, questions, questions and more questions plague my mind. Why did Burt Parkhurst write a check for \$1.00? Who was Burt Parkhurst? What might have

life been like in Bowie, Arizona in 1929?

Interestingly, in 1929, \$1.00 had the worth of \$15.03 in today's world. Maybe, Burt Parkhurst needed cash for groceries, or to purchase shoes for his store? Burt and his wife Dicie had a daughter named Ethel Parkhurst. Ethel, known locally as "Parky," would serve as Bowie Postmaster from 1949 to 1970. (The Bowie postal service was started on June 1, 1914.) According to records, Burt Parkhurst was laid to rest in Bowie Desert Rest Cemetery in October of 1933. He is recorded to have been born October 10, 1875 and passed October 24, 1933.

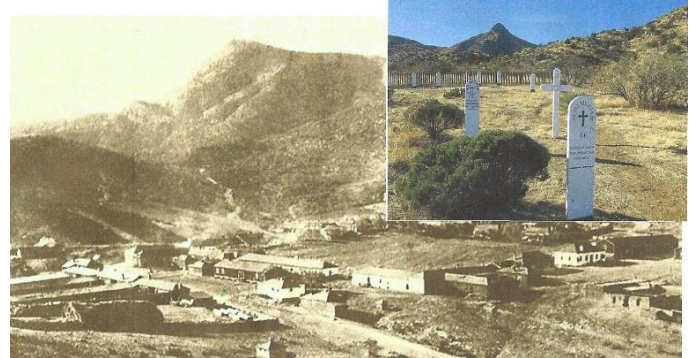
The history of Bowie is rich, extraordinarily rich. In 1862, the military saw a need to establish Fort Bowie in Apache Pass. Mainly made up of tent like structures, the Fort persevered until 1868, when the Fort became more permanent with durable adobe and wooden structures. After the surrender of Geronimo -- the Apache Chief -- in 1886, Fort Bowie was abandoned in 1894 to be dilapidated and looted at the hands of Father Time. Fortunately, in 1964, the National Park Service acquired the lands to preserve history. The Fort Bowie National Historic Site is closed currently due to Covid 19; however, when operating normally, there is a 1.5-mile trail leading up to the Fort. The trail gently leads one into the adversities of an historical era. As one walks about the preserved adobe ruins, voices of conflict whisper through time. There is Fort Bowie Cemetery which has been preserved with determination. At the time of abandonment in 1894, it is thought there were perhaps as many as 112 graves, marking the existence of young military men -- as well as a murdered miner -- and others.

Thus, in 1880, the small establishment of Teviston -- named after James Tevis, the Butterfield Overland Stage Station operator -- was founded by the Southern Pacific Railroad, approximately thirteen miles north of Fort Bowie by way of Apache Pass Road. After some conflicting names, such as "Bean," many concurred to rename Teviston after Fort Bowie, naming the train station Bowie in 1881. Bowie, Arizona also had famous historical figures visit. Pancho Villa, as well as Geronimo, passed through the Bowie Train Station.

Not only did Bowie have notorious visitors in early times, Bowie also boasts the recognition of being the hometown of Rambo. In the five Rambo series movies, Sylvester Stallone, who plays Rambo's character, mentions Bowie, Arizona as being Rambo's hometown. In 2019, the movie, "Rambo: Last Blood," claims ties to the Hollywood version of Bowie, Arizona in which there was a celebration on September 17, 2019 of what is, in reality Bowie, Arizona, as "Rambo Day."

By now, perhaps, the question you are thinking is,

"Where did you find the check from the Bank of Bowie? Our generous neighbor found the check in his travels. Unselfishly, he gave the check to Don, my husband, because he knew Don has family connections to Bowie. Perchance, our neighbor represents what makes living in the Southwest so wonderful: neighbor thinking of neighbor!"



Ft. Bowie in 1894. Inset: Desert Rest Cemetery at Ft. Bowie National Historic Site - National Park Service



Home on the Range Motel, Bowie, Arizona

For more information on Bowie, Arizona, the Images of America BOWIE book, the website Fort Bowie National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service) and the website Memorials in Bowie Desert Rest Cemetery are loaded with many historical facts and photos. Speaking of great photos, I found two postcards of Bowie, one of Geronimo's Castle, built in 1940 by Clifford Head and one of the Home on the Range Motel, a destination vacation spot for many seeking thrills in the West.

Speaking of thrills of the West, I find it hard to stop typing due to my enthusiasm for all the historical facts prompted by the 1929 Bank of Bowie check signed by Burt Parkhurst. But until next time, may you find enthusiasm in simple things; may your neighbors be thoughtful of you and, if you travel to Bowie, remember it is Rambo's hometown! Blessings to you and yours!

A Glimpse into the Past: A final rest for Fort Bowie

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/lifestyle/a-glimpse-into-the-past-a-final-rest-for-fort-bowie/article_1b931dda-298b-5588-874f-7ab96cfae45f.html

By Kathy Klump Sulphur Springs Valley Historical Society, Feb 5, 2020

The Army sought employees to help disinter deceased soldiers and family members from the recently abandoned Fort Bowie in 1895.



Contributed Photo/Sulphur Springs Valley Historical Society

The Sulphur Valley News, on Jan. 29, 1895, reported that the chief quartermaster of the Department of Army is advertising for proposals for disintering, disinfecting, boxing and removing the remains of soldiers and their families, and crating and removing the headstones from the abandoned post of Fort Bowie, and delivering same at Bowie Station.

Advertisement, with the instructions how to get the necessary information, could be seen in the next issue of The Stockman.

The quietness of the community was broken Sunday when it became known that Bob Maclay and Miss Rosa Lange had suddenly left for New Mexico, where the nuptial bond could be tied without the protestations of the would-be bride's stern parents, but the knot was never tied.

Maclay was well known here, and was employed in the exchange at Fort Grant. Friday evening, he came down from the post, and left Saturday on a freight train for Bowie, where he was to meet the girl of his choice on Sunday morning according to pre-arranged plan. The start was made fine enough, but the absence of the young lady led to a search, and it was learned she had gone East.

The telegraph was promptly used to the effect that when the runaway couple reached Lordsburg, N.M., an officer of the law was in waiting to take the young lady in charge, where she was detained until the arrival of her father Monday morning. They all returned home last evening, and the family was grief-stricken at the action of the daughter, who is not yet 17 years of age.

Maclay takes a philosophical view of the situation, and

was not saddened by one failure.

J.F. Crowley was the victim of another robbery, this time at the Elite Saloon. Mr. Crowley sleeps in a room adjoining the saloon, but was not disturbed by the burglars.

A hat and overcoat were handy nearby, and these garments were appropriated by his visitors. Some \$16 in change was abstracted from the cash drawer. Entrance was had through the rear door and, to gain entrance into the back yard, an eight-foot wall had to be scaled.

At the time of the report, there was no clue to the robbers.

Compiled from the archives of the Chiricahua Regional Museum and Research Center, 127 E. Maley, Willcox.

Antique steam train stopping in Willcox, Bowie this weekend

https://www.willcoxrangenews.com/news/article_1596cd6e-eed9-11e9-8905-2fb537772f0e.html

By Ken Showers, Arizona Range News, Oct 15, 2019



The Big Boy No. 4014 steam locomotive will be traveling through the area this weekend, with stops in Willcox, Bowie and Lordsburg, N.M.

Contributed Photo

WILLCOX — There's a big boy coming to the area as the Transcontinental Railroad celebrates its 150th anniversary this year. This weekend, the No. 4014 Big Boy steam locomotive will make a stop in Willcox as part of its journey through the Western United States in honor of the anniversary. Initially retired in 1961, the locomotive was brought back into service this year in March after years of restoration work.

"Big Boy No. 4014 was delivered to Union Pacific in December 1941. The locomotive was retired in December 1961, having traveled 1,031,205 miles in its 20 years in service. Union Pacific reacquired No. 4014 from the Rail Giants Museum in Pomona, Calif., in 2013," Union Pacific wrote in announcing the tour. On Sept. 27, the locomotive began its journey that will eventually take it through Arizona and New Mexico beginning in October.

Those interested in seeing a piece of history can see locomotive No. 4014 roll into Willcox on Oct. 19 at 11 a.m. very briefly before departing for Bowie, where it will arrive at noon for another half-hour. The

train will come to rest for the afternoon in Lordsburg, N.M., at 3:30 p.m. before departing the next day. Early birds can also catch the train on display in Tucson the day before, Oct. 18, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. “Due to the dynamic nature of these operations, running times and scheduled stops are subject to change,” Union Pacific wrote.

Find more information on the stops and the locomotive at <https://www.up.com/heritage/index.htm> under “steam.”

Bowie School News:

Willcox, Bowie host Friday night fun

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/willcox/willcox-bowie-host-friday-night-fun/article_af92121d-ed0a-51f0-9b4b-bc80d4de6d19.html

By Jenifer Colby Special to Arizona Range News
Feb 18, 2020

WILLCOX — While parents enjoyed date night on Valentine’s Day, their kids had a blast with WASA and Bowie School District.

Willcox Against Substance Abuse hosted its first Parent’s Night at the Willcox Community Center last Friday at 6 p.m.



Allies member Dakota Finley helps with crafts at Parent’s Night on Valentine’s Day.

Jenifer Colby Photo/Special to Arizona Range News

With the help of the Willcox High School Allies group, WASA provided crafts, games, snacks and a movie. Children spent time with the Allies as they designed faces on plates, played board games and had fun with a giant parachute.

“Parents get to enjoy a night out while their kids are in a safe place. We keep the costs down enough to just cover our supplies so that everyone can come, enjoy and have a good time,” said Sally White, who directed WASA for more than 30 years.

Bowie’s first Sweetheart Dance was held that same

day, also at 6 p.m.

The Bowie school gym was filled with Valentine’s Day decorations, food, music and a photo booth.

“One of my goals as a superintendent this year was to provide more family-focused community activities. It is important for the school to be a positive hub for everyone who lives in the Bowie community,” said Bowie School District Superintendent Wendy Conger. “It is my hope that community events such as this one develop meaningful connections among teachers, staff, students and families. Schools, parents and the community should work together to promote the health, wellbeing and learning of all students.”

School districts busy recruiting new teachers

https://www.eacourier.com/news/school-districts-busy-recruiting-new-teachers/article_f53e9310-7f3a-11ea-80a9-9b52ad891305.html

By Kim Smith, editor@eacourier.com Apr 17, 2020

Schools nationwide may be shut down until the fall, but just as teachers are continuing to educate, administrators are still going about their business, including recruiting new teachers.

Even without having to conduct interviews over the phone and via apps like Skype, recruiting teachers is tough, local superintendents agree.

According to the most recent Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association’s survey released in December, 24% of teacher vacancies across the state this year remain unfilled, and more than half the vacancies are filled by teachers who do not meet the state’s certification requirements.

Part of the reason, the survey found, is the state’s teacher pay remains one of the lowest in the country, even with the recent education budget increase.

Some superintendents are using varying incentives to draw teachers to their districts. Wendy Conger, Bowie Unified School District superintendent, has already filled the one teaching position she has coming open. Her six teachers are split between 70 students who range in age from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

Being so remote can be problematic, but Conger said she offers new teachers something other districts do not. She provides a small gas stipend for teachers who live outside Bowie and, more importantly, the district owns a furnished house they offer to new teachers rent and utility free. They also just had WiFi installed.

Two teachers she hired from the Philippines currently live in the home – a third was able to move into another home once her husband arrived, Conger said.

Conger also said she has worked hard to make Bowie Unified a friendly, helpful and welcoming place to work. The fact they work a four-day week is also attractive to many teachers, she said.

“We were having problems getting anyone to apply for awhile,” Conger said. “The climate needed a lot of work so I worked on hiring people who wanted to be part of a team.”

During her first year with the district, five or six teachers quit, leaving the students with non-certified paraprofessionals and substitute teachers, she said.

Creating a tight-knit team of dedicated, certified teachers was instrumental in raising the district’s state report card grade from an “F” in 2016 to a “B” now, she said.

It’s also improved attendance at community meetings, Conger said. Instead of three people showing up to talk about the district, more than 30 are attending now.

“I’m trying to make this a better place where people want to be here,” she said.

A.J. Taylor, director of instructional services at Safford Unified School District, said he has eight open spots, roughly half of what the district has had over the last four or five years.

It’s hard to predict from year-to-year the number of positions that open up, he said. Sometimes it’s tied to what’s going on at Freeport-McMoran; a lot of times it’s tied to pay.

“I think we’re hanging on to people more this year with the increases in pay because of Gov. Ducey’s 20X2020 (teacher raise) initiative,” Taylor said.

Taylor said the district, which has roughly 150 teachers on staff, entices new teachers by pointing out its state report card results, benefits package and its professional development program. He also talks a lot about Safford’s small-town atmosphere and numerous outdoor recreational opportunities. Sean Rickert, superintendent for the Pima Unified School District, said he has a handful of open positions. A couple of his teachers are leaving the profession and he’s creating two more teaching positions to his roster of 55 teachers.

“I like to focus on the culture of Pima and having a four-day week is a big plus, too,” Rickert said.

Anyone who applies to work for PUSD will quickly learn that the people in Pima are quick to look for ways to help each other, Rickert said. Whether it’s the teachers, local businesses or the community at large, they are highly supportive, he said.

They will also learn the school district focuses on “growing teachers,” Rickert said.

In other words, the district has a strong professional development program that gives teachers the tools they need to be successful now and, in the future, Rickert said.

Some of the best teachers the district has are those who came to the district from other careers, he said. Through the professional development program, they learn best practices, right along with the rest of the teachers.

The teachers themselves are the biggest help, Rickert said. They help spread the word about the district.

“I think our biggest edge is that the people who work here know they are valued,” Rickert said. “They often reach out to other teachers who they know don’t feel valued and they bring them on board. We don’t actively go looking for them, but from time to time we do hear about staff who have become happy for one reason or another.”

While Rickert said he’s appreciative of the governor’s pay initiative, the problem is that salaries were increasing in other professions at the same time.



A. J. Taylor

“I can’t control the state’s revenue stream and I can’t control how much the state contributes to teachers’ pay, but I can control how we treat teachers and I can make them feel valued and give them a say.”

Thatcher Unified School District Superintendent Matthew Petersen echoed

much of what Woodall said.

He recognizes it’s important for teachers to feel respected. When recruiting teachers, he often talks about the climate and culture within the district.

TUSD, which has 100 teachers and just shy of 1,800 students, has a mentoring program for teachers new to teaching and new to the district, Petersen said.

He currently has one open position at the high school.

Although the district offers comparable pay to other districts, Petersen said the district is considering creating a signing stipend for harder-to-fill positions such as math and special education.

David Woodall, Morenci Unified School District superintendent, feels like he is in pretty good shape this year. He usually loses 10-12 of his 80 teachers annually, but this year he’s only losing five teachers and he’s already hired three replacements.

“Morenci is a very unique place because it’s fairly isolated and it’s a mining community,” Woodall said. “We want to find people who really want to live and work here and we’ve got to work hard to do that. We’re not interested in people who want to live here a year and move on.”

Many times he’s relied upon his existing staff to find teachers; more often than not his new teachers have some sort of a family connection to his long-time staff, he said.

He’s also hired former alumni over the years.

Duncan Unified School District Superintendent D. Eldon Merrell, who has 400 students, considers himself lucky. He hasn’t lost a high school teacher in three or four years and he typically only loses one to two at the elementary level. This year he’s on the hunt to replace one teacher who is choosing to retire.

He has found that living in such a small community is a bonus. Unlike other districts, he can usually find teachers locally; he doesn’t have to go to job fairs, he said.

Christine Guinane: Teacher of the Year finalist

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/willcox/christine-guinane-teacher-of-the-year-finalist/article_06a12201-0fcc-5659-8d88-bca63fbeb471.html

By Brooke Curley Arizona Range News
Apr 17, 2020



Bowie teacher Christine Guinane is a finalist for the 2020 Teacher of the Year award.

Bowie teacher Christine Guinane is a finalist for the 2020 Teacher of the Year award.

Cochise County Teacher of the Year finalist Christine Guinane has a passion for rural

education and expects to remain teaching in the rural classroom for the rest of her career.

Guinane, a 14-year veteran, joined the Bowie School district last year from Pierce. She teaches special education as well as geometry and algebra.

“There’s always a student that pops into your head, then you get up and keep going. There’s always that student out there that needs you,” said Guinane.

Due to COVID-19, Guinane is putting together paper

packets for her students to take home and complete. Although Guinane said it’s hard being away from her students, she keeps in contact through text message, pictures, and over the phone when it comes to homework questions.

“I worry about them. That’s the hardest part of being an educator is the students you just don’t know what’s going to happen to them. You always have one,” said Guinane, regarding a student who may face food insecurities or a difficult family life at home. “Everyone has students, that school is their relief. For those students my heart is breaking. The world has been turned upside down.”

On the brighter side of packet learning, Guinane said she hopes this brief period of at-home education will assist her students in becoming independent thinkers. Still, she will be glad to get back into the classroom.

The final award ceremony has been postponed for Teacher of the Year, and the final winner of the award has not been announced yet.

Bowie Superintendent Wendy Conger said Guinane engages with her students to keep them motivated and is one of the best special education teachers in the county. Conger said she nominated Guinane because of her efforts in the special education field and how hard she works.

“Ms. Guinane cares about all of her students. In addition, she encourages others to see the whole child,” Conger said.

Conger also said she is proud of Guinane for believing in all children’s learning capabilities.

“With over 30% of the district’s population identified as special needs, I can certainly say the Ms. G. works very hard to ensure that their needs are met,” said Conger.

She admires Guinane’s energy for teaching as well as learning, and her ability to collaborate well with others, Conger said.

Bowie school reviving a face lift and new books

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/willcox/bowie-school-reviving-a-face-lift-and-new-books/article_8f456f00-51ff-5ea5-bb5d-faf121f919e1.html

By Brooke Curley Arizona Range News
May 7, 2020

The way Bowie Unified School District Superintendent Wendy Conger sees it, the school

library really wasn't a library anymore, it was a dirty storage room full of broken tables and outdated books.

At the same time, the school was struggling with low reading test scores and teachers were scratching their heads trying to figure out how to get students reading.

Enter Patsy Nyberg. The Bowie teacher and grandmother decided to apply for a \$5,000 Lowe's grant to update and restore the library last year.

"The question was how do I get these kids interested and sitting down and reading? This would be one way to engage the children to want to read, updating with fun new books," said Nyberg.

To everyone's delight, the school received the grant.

Health issues delayed the project, but Nyberg has been hard at work in recent weeks turning the library into a magnet for kids.

With a 16-foot tall wall as her blank canvas, Nyberg brought to life images from the "Hungry Caterpillar."

"The space was so cool and big and the 'Hungry Caterpillar' was one of my favorite stories. That book is so loved and I loved it for its color. When you see it, it's really delightful," said Nyberg.



Bowie teacher Patsy Nyberg brings the walls of the school library to life with a large mural. Wendy Conger

Nyberg moved from Phoenix to Cochise Stronghold to teach school and has a bachelor's degree in fine art. Her background gave her the tools she needed to create the mural on the library wall.

Using five gallons of paint, the wall is now a plethora of different colors and depicts the caterpillar, butterfly and sun. Not only did Nyberg paint the room, but she has ordered new furniture and will order approximately 300 new books.

"The library was old dusty, dirty and uninviting. Now it's becoming a vibrant place for a community

room," Conger said "It's not going to be a dusty dirt dungeon anymore. Patsy is amazing. She was standing on a 20-foot scaffold painting that thing by hand. She even brings reading dogs into the classroom, you know those snugly dogs. She's that kind of person, she's really a cool lady."

Bowie schools has a total of 70 students enrolled, 22 of them being high schoolers. The Bowie High School was built in 1922, the gym was built in 1940 and the original elementary building was built in 1912.

Many of the books in the library were incredibly outdated, Nyberg said.

She sorted through all of them, discarding all of the science books since they were outdated. One of the books was about computer programming in the 1950s, describing a computer which could fill a room with its hard drive, she said.

Although it was amusing, Nyberg said a student couldn't write a report while using a computer book from the 1950s. Overall, Nyberg said she had to weed out hundreds of books and roughly 25 percent of the library.

Nyberg said she also discarded books due to their inappropriate cultural concepts.

Although she didn't want to go into it a great detail, Nyberg said some of the books described ethnicity and tribal roles in stereotypical words and degrading ways. One book describes a Native American woman as being a "squaw."

There was nothing in the library published within the past 20 years, she said.

Nyberg was quick to say she believed the staff at the school is doing everything possible to assist the students, but in the case of the library, she saw a cause she could help. Typically, the teachers at the school own individual classroom libraries.

The school library didn't have a single graphic novel, and the books were not accessible to youngsters, she said.

She kept one-quarter of the grant funds for purchasing new books. She'll be placing an order within the next week. She'd like to surprise the children with new non-fiction books as well as popular fiction and hopes to continue to add to the collection with future grants and donations.

She would like to order the "Dogman" series, as well as the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid", and "Dork Diaries". Nyberg hopes the new library will encourage the students to read more, especially at home with their parents.

She'd like to have a grand opening at the beginning of September and the public will be invited to the party.

Nyberg continues to work on the mural and library. She really misses the kids and the project is helping her deal with her loneliness.

Bowie's Class of 2020 to be featured on Tucson TV station

By Kim Smith; Arizona Range News,

May 30, 2020

Not only did the community of Bowie go all out to help Bowie High School's Class of 2020 celebrate their graduation, but now a Tucson TV station is pitching in, too.

KOLD News 13 reached out to Bowie Superintendent Wendy Conger to see if her five graduates would be interested in having a 15-minute segment about them air after an upcoming newscast.

Although there was a fee attached, Conger leapt at the opportunity.



Board President Mike Meyers, Superintendent Wendy Conger, Morgan Murray, Alyssa Landt, Houston Klump and Destiny Bragg

On Thursday, Houston Klump, Alyssa Landt, Destiny Bragg and Morgan Murray will head to KOLD's studio in Marana with their favorite pictures, don their caps and gowns again and participate in a graduation ceremony, complete with speeches. The folks at KOLD will then put together a segment for airing sometime later this month.

Although Judy Tumlinson has since moved away, she'll be included to the extent possible, Conger said.

"I just think it's the coolest thing ever," Conger said.

The \$1,000 fee is "worth every penny" because it will give the kids an opportunity they've never had, she said. Neither she, nor any of the kids, have been in a TV studio before or seen a teleprompter.

Sandy Drewry, a media sales consultant for KOLD, said Tucson Unified and Amphitheater unified school districts have participated in the project, along with some private high schools. She's not quite sure when the segment will air, but promised it would be within the next couple of Saturdays after the 6 p.m.

newscast.

"These poor kids have not been able to have regular graduations and this was the least we could do to reward them," she said.

Regardless of when schools start, it won't be business as usual

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/willcox/regardless-of-when-schools-start-it-wont-be-business-as-usual/article_060455b2-bb28-11ea-b48e-33071476d5a5.html

By Brooke Curley Herald/Review

Jun 30, 2020

Gov. Doug Ducey has named Aug. 17 as the day he hopes schools will be able to open this year, but whether it happens that day or not, officials agree it won't be business as usual.

Willcox School Superintendent Kevin Davis isn't 100 percent certain when his students will resume learning or how. "Most likely we will try to start on August 10th with online, then transition to on site as allowed, but those plans are not set yet. We will gather information from staff and parents to determine their needs and recommendations, and go from there," said Davis by email Tuesday morning.

When asked about the safety precautions Willcox Schools will implement in the fall, Davis said they are still under discussion.

"We are developing plans and monitoring recommendations from authorities daily. We will try to communicate with parents, students and staff to determine the best way forward," said Davis through email.

Bowie Superintendent Wendy Conger said the school has already purchased thermometers as well as individualized desks for the students. Each student will have their temperatures taken before school starts each day. Also, water dispensers were purchased by the school district and placed in each classroom to minimize the spread of germs by a water fountain.

"We've bought directional signs for the hallways, we're going to be serving meals in the classroom, and we've purchased first aid kits for each classroom so the students don't have to go to the office," said Conger. "We're trying to make this thing positive and think outside the box."

Conger said Bowie schools will begin classes on August 17. "99.9 percent of our students do not like online learning," said Conger. "If we need to add the four days into our schedule later in the year then that is what we'll do."

Architectural firm: Bowie schools are at the end of their 'useful life'

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/schools/architectural-firm-bowie-schools-are-at-the-end-of-their-useful-life/article_01f90898-c099-11ea-995a-cbad6b5127c9.html

By Brooke Curley Herald/Review,
Jul 7, 2020

A Tempe architectural firm was so alarmed by the condition of Bowie Unified School District schools he sent a letter to Gov. Doug Ducey and the Arizona State Schools Facility Board pleading for funds on behalf of the district.



Bowie School Superintendent Wendy Conger stands in the auditorium at the Bowie High School building which has a crumbling ceiling and wall.

David Conger photos

“Bowie Unified is comprised of seven buildings ranging in age from 1912 to 1965. There is a building on the SFB website listed as being

built in 1987, but it is not a building. It is a converted Conex Cargo Shipping Container with an unsafe wooden structure on top. Overall, the buildings at Bowie are in extremely bad shape and in some cases beyond repair. The staff and students truly deserve better and as a State we owe them better,” wrote David Peterson, project director for ADM Group.

Peterson pointed out there are failing roofs in each building, ADA issues campus-wide. He said there are electrical system issues at the high school, the sewer/septic system isn't functioning campus-wide. The district has no Internet, security fencing or intercom system. There are also unsafe windows in the gym/cafeteria and a sink hole in the teacher housing yard from a collapsed septic system.

“It's at the end of its useful life. I've done quite a few (evaluations) and I would have to say it is in the worst condition of all the school facilities I've evaluated across the state,” Peterson said in a July 1 interview. “That drove me to write the letter and get it out as quick as I could.”

On Tuesday morning, Superintendent Wendy Conger found herself reaching out to the Schools Facility Board for an emergency. The control pumps on the campus' sewer tanks failed completely and sewage was backing up into the high school toilets. She estimated the cost of replacing the septic pumps and pumping the system at \$15,000.

The district has been battling a growing number of issues for years, Conger said.

The price of repairing many of the items on Peterson's list is high and they frequently break over and over again, Conger said.

Two students were trapped in the high school elevator in mid-March. The fire department was called, but after repeated tries at pressing the elevator buttons the students were able to exit the elevator, Conger said. She thinks there's an electrical short in the wiring.

Without a working elevator, a student with special needs can't access the upper floor of the high school.

On Monday Conger was approached by the parents of a Willcox student with special needs who were interested in open enrollment with Bowie schools. Conger had to tell the parents her school was not up to code and she couldn't accept the open enrollment student.

“It sparked my mind to say we really need to get these ADA bathrooms,” said Conger. “They asked if we had a special education bus and I had to tell them no and that we didn't even have the facilities right now.”

The SFB told Conger they'll help her apply for an emergency grant to deal with the septic pumps.

When asked about Peterson's letter, the agency released a statement.

“The SFB is aware of the deficiencies Bowie is facing and is committed to partnering with them to address these issues. A liaison was scheduled to complete an inspection prior to the pandemic. While in person inspections have been temporarily paused due to COVID-19, we are piloting a virtual inspection program at this time that will allow the SFB to still conduct these inspections safely and more often...” wrote spokeswoman Megan Rose.

Rose said the board will be working with the district to address building issues through a building renewal grant program which provides funding for building deficiencies within Arizona public schools. She said this year the board received \$107.5 million in funding for the Building Renewal Grant program.

“This historic level of funding for the BRG program that was approved by Governor Ducey and Legislature is to assist school districts like Bowie Unified,” she wrote.

Conger said she has not been contacted about a virtual evaluation of the school buildings. Although the septic system may be fixed by August, many of the other issues pose safety hazards to her students, she said.

In a separate statement, Patrick Ptak, communications director for Ducey's office, wrote:

“We want to make sure that schools have the resources they need to provide safe, engaging environments for their students. These issues can be complex, with multiple sources of capital for building upkeep and different requirements at the federal, state and local levels. We’ve asked the School Facilities Board to look into this report further and see what kind of support the state can provide.”

The importance of the school district, which serves 60 students in a community of roughly 600 people, can’t be overstated, Conger said. For example, the district, has an active FFA program and a community clothing closet where students and community members can pick up free clothing items.

“I’ve tried to build that school as a positive culture and a hub for Bowie. A heartbeat. There’s nothing in Bowie. The school is it,” said Conger. “We need to keep the school as a vital hub of the community. Right now I’m seeing that we have not been able to do that, not since COVID.”

BUSD superintendent losing faith help will arrive

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/busd-superintendent-losing-faith-help-will-arrive/article_3f8aa6bc-cae9-11ea-9be6-9bd73eeef49.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share

July 29, 2020

By Brooke Curley Herald/Review

Weeks after being told her school buildings are “at the end of their usable life,” Bowie Unified School Superintendent Wendy Conger has a looming deadline and is quickly losing hope she’ll get help from the state.

Last month, a Tempe architectural firm director was so alarmed by the condition of the district’s school she sent a letter to Gov. Doug Ducey and the Arizona State Schools Facility Board pleading for funds on behalf of the district.

The SFB originally promised Conger a representative would be conducting a virtual tour of the campus to look at all of the problems. However, the board reached out to Conger last week and instructed her to identify six projects that required immediate attention, obtain three bids for each project and submit the bids and grant applications to the board by Aug. 1.

While she’s identified the projects, obtaining the bids and filling out the required paperwork by Saturday will be impossible, Conger said.

She sent out invitations to bid to multiple contractors on Monday. Megan Rose, spokesperson for the board, said that if Conger misses the deadline the

board will not be able to review the application in the August meeting. Instead, the application will be viewed at the September SFB meeting.

Conger’s students are returning to school Aug. 10. Due to the small size of the district, they are moving forward with in-person instruction.

The school district is comprised of seven buildings that were built between 1912 and 1965.

David Peterson, project director for ADM Group, said they were all in “extremely bad shape and in some cases beyond repair.” He identified failing roofs, electrical issues, connectivity problems, unsafe windows and a laundry list of other issues.

“It’s at the end of its useful life. I’ve done quite a few (evaluations) and I would have to say it is in the worst condition of all the school facilities I’ve evaluated across the state,” Peterson said in a July 1 interview. “That drove me to write the letter and get it out as quick as I could.”

The six projects Conger has selected for the board’s assistance in funding:

Repairing the high school’s roof

Repairing elementary school’s roof

Installing a new intercom system

Replacing the broken elevator in the high school building

Repairing the 20 foot deep sink-hole near the teacher’s housing

Filling in the pool, which is beyond repair

The superintendent said that in the high school’s case, a roof repair will include relocating electrical lines, sealing the walls and removing and installing an evaporation cooler.

“It’s not just repairing the roof. So I think once they see what is involved in repairing the roof, this might be a \$100,000 job,” Conger said.

Her biggest fear is they will see the price of each bid and reject all of the projects, Conger said.

“I don’t see that school reopening if they don’t turn around and try to make it better,” said Conger. “I’m hoping that they do, because the kids need it.”

Conger said she was feeling overwhelmed and now understands why it has taken so long for Bowie to receive funding for repairs. Instead of having a virtual inspection from the board to assess the damage and assist in grant application, Conger is having to do the majority of the groundwork herself.

“This is the most stress I’ve been in in 32 years,” she said. “This is probably why there has been years and years of neglect.”

In early July the SFB awarded the district more than \$15,000 in the form of an emergency grant for the replacement of the district's septic pumps.

Bowie students distance learn in classrooms

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/willcox/bowie-students-distance-learn-in-classrooms/article_4a38b74c-dc0b-11ea-924b-3b75054c0530.html

[By Alexis Ramanjulu, alexis.ramanjulu@myheraldreview.com](mailto:Alexis.Ramanjulu@myheraldreview.com)

Aug 11, 2020

Photos By Mark Levy Herald/Review

BOWIE — Wendy Conger, superintendent of Bowie Unified School District, and her staff welcomed their students back to campus Monday morning for the first time since March.

“It’s been a technically smooth day,” Conger said Monday morning. “Despite all (the changes), everyone was smiling.”

The day started with Conger following the district’s brand-new bus to pick up 25 students. Conger said she wanted to follow the bus because it was new for the district and she wanted to ensure the correct students were picked up as well as ensuring students were accompanied by parents and not just left to wait.



Kindergartner Lillyanna Boxx learns her lessons while on the computer during the first day of school Monday at the B Unified School District.

Students who rode the bus had their temperature checked, were required to wear masks and were seated in every other seat since they had room to.

Conger praised the parents who dropped their children off at school because of their compliance with the new rules and moving swiftly through the drop-off lane. Parents were not allowed on campus or out of their vehicles per the new safety protocols for the new year.

Conger said parents have a five-minute window to drop their child off before the gates were locked. Late students will have to be escorted to the front office. Conger added parents are supportive of having their

children return to school and all but one of her staff returned for school due to health concerns.

Cassandra Hovey has two daughters enrolled at BUSD, one in sixth grade and a sophomore. She said she is thrilled her kids can return to school because they wanted to go back and getting them to do their school work in the spring was a challenge.

“I’d rather them be at school,” Hovey said. “Trying to homeschool was more of a fight. If they are home, they don’t want to do any school work.”

Monday marked the beginning of the year and “distance learning” in the classrooms. Conger said most of her students rely on public places like the school or library for internet access, which is needed for virtual learning. Since they don’t have access to it in their homes, the school is being used as a place for students to go as well as provide a social atmosphere for students who haven’t seen their peers.

Conger said it was important to make this process as close as possible to what school is typically like, since they have an increase in kindergarten students and the expectation of having a kindergartener sit in front of a screen and complete work all day isn’t reasonable.

You have to make sure they feel comfortable and safe,” Conger said.

The Cochise County Office of Emergency Services is recommending to all county schools to delay in-person learning do distance learning as the county as a whole does not meet the benchmarks provided by the state health department. Conger said she is sticking with their plan of distance learning in the school building because her students need it.

“I’m not backing down,” she said. “We’re here to teach.”

Conger added there hasn’t been any complaints from community members about having the students in school. Conger said her students need help with their school work and they can’t expect students to complete online work without the internet, which most of her students don’t have at their homes.

Conger said the government would “have to come force me” if they want to keep students from attending in-person classes.

She added 20 percent of her students require special need services and the only way to give them the help they need is to have them on campus.

BUSD enrollment is up from last year and on Tuesday they had 60 students registered. Most were on campus but some have chosen to do distance learning from their homes on computers or even learning packets. Conger said the enrollment number could increase as they are an open enrollment school and the true first day slated for in-person instruction

is Monday.

Of the 56 students, 19 are high schoolers and there are 10 new kindergarten students. The increase in kindergarten students prompted Conger to remove preschool so the preschool teacher could help with K-2.

New safety protocols include having breakfast and lunch delivered to students to eat in the classroom, temperature checks and mandatory masks for those in the school. Breaks are given to students from individual screen times as well as “nature walks” to allow students time outside.

“It’s like no school I’ve seen,” Conger said. “We’re taking kids’ temperatures and it’s sad. It’s like a medical facility.”

Hovey said the precautions the district has put in place have made her feel comfortable sending her children back to school, as well as the communication between the district and families.

“You can take as much precaution (as possible) and still get this virus,” Hovey said.

Bowie school board puts pool decision on hold

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/schools/bowie-school-board-puts-pool-decision-on-hold/article_1082daaa-12fc-11eb-b30e-bf9d71595a97.html

By Jon Rice, jon.rice@myheraldreview.com
Oct 20, 2020

BOWIE — Bowie Unified School District’s board met last Tuesday night to discuss what to do with their 84-year-old pool that currently is in dire need of repairs or replacement.

The board ultimately decided to hold off on taking any action until after the election, when a new board will be sworn in.

“The school board has directed me to not do anything with the 84-year-old school pool,” Superintendent Wendy Conger told the Herald/Review following last week’s meeting. “They have decided to let the five new board members decide in January 2021. All five board positions are open.”

Both Patio Pool Supplies and David Peterson, director of Architecture, Design, Management, have cited the pool as being in violation of federal laws governing the operation of a public pool.

Inspection reveals issues

In a letter dated March 6, Patio Pool supplies referred to the Bowie pool as having several problems. “The existing equipment is not large enough to filter and circulate the water to meet current guidelines,” reads the letter, signed by Patio Pools Construction Supervisor Vincent Waters.

“The drain in the deep end is not compliant to meet the federal Virginia Graham Baker laws. Simple things like no depth marker tiles on the interior.”

The issues don’t stop there.



Bowie's 84-year-old pool has many issues that will take \$200,000 or more to fix, according to one pool expert.

Courtesy Wendy Conger

“To further complicate the situation, the recent flood of water from the pool indicates there is a major leak which would require investigation and major repairs,” the letter states. “However, repairs cannot be made to the pool without making it meet all the current state and federal regulations for a public pool.”

Patio Pools estimated the cost of the repairs or replacement will be at least \$200,000, according to Waters’ letter.

“While this is not an exact estimate, we conservatively feel that it would have an estimated cost of \$200,000-\$250,000 to repair and update the pool,” Waters wrote. “An alternative to that would be to build a new pool within the current structure, this too would conservatively have an estimated cost similar to the renovated pool.”

The issue with the pool is just one of many problems that have been identified at the aging school.

“I have spent thirty years in Educational Facilities in Arizona in both Mesa Public Schools and at Scottsdale Unified,” Peterson wrote in a letter to Gov. Doug Ducey back in June. “I know first-hand how the condition of the facilities impacts the educational environment. I must say that I was saddened and taken aback by the conditions that I observed at Bowie Schools.”

Waters noted that bringing the pool back up to speed would be a major improvement for the area, despite the challenges.

“We very much understand how beneficial a functioning swimming pool would be for the school district and the city residents,” he said in his letter. “Unfortunately, there are no simple fixes for the pool

so that it would be a safe and fun environment.”

While a decision is pending on the pool, Conger said she will continue to work on the other issues her campus and students are facing.

“Meanwhile, I will focus on other priorities: school climate, taking care of staff and students, leaking roofs, updating bathrooms to ADA compliance, repairing the broken elevator in the 98- year-old high school, and repairing the cesspool at a nearby school property,” she said. “Not to mention replacing the broken water pump at the school farm. The animals need water”.

Bowie Unified superintendent to step down after spring semester

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/willcox/bowie-unified-superintendent-to-step-down-after-spring-semester/article_711bc300-2921-11eb-a805-db22005c5467.html

By Jon Rice jon.rice@myheraldreview.com

Nov 19, 2020



Wendy Conger, superintendent of Bowie Unified, dressed up in a cowgirl outfit for the Tombstone Parade in October. Courtesy of Wendy Conger

BOWIE — After 33 years of service to education. Six of those years to Bowie Unified School District, Superintendent Wendy Conger is tendering her non-renewal effective at the end of the spring 2021 semester.

Conger has asked for a superintendent search to be completed through the Arizona School Boards Association.

“Bowie Schools definitely needs a unique leader to meet the upcoming and unforeseen challenges in rural education,” Conger said. “I wish them the best of luck and certainly do thank them for all of the learning opportunities provided to me. It’s been an exciting six-year ride. Go Panthers!”

In her non-renewal letter to Bowie school board President Mike Myers dated Nov. 9, Conger opened with, “It is with mixed emotions that I notify you that I am not seeking renewal for my position as Superintendent of the Bowie Unified School District effective June 30, 2021. I will not be seeking renewal of my contract and will complete my contractual responsibilities through that date. I have appreciated being part of the Bowie Unified School and at the completion of my contract on June 30, 2021, it will be time for me to move on to other opportunities.”

Conger addressed the rest of the leadership team at Bowie Unified.

“We have provided strong leadership establishing

a sense of direction and putting students first in every decision we make,” she said.

“With our leadership we have accomplished: filling all teaching positions with high quality staff, receiving certification for the Bowie High School as an Arizona Online Certified School, maintaining governing board approved student: teacher ratio during pandemic times, awards of over hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants, decreasing expenditures while maintaining a balanced budget with minimal student impact, implementing professional development for administrators and teachers to create achievement and enhancement of effective teaching and learning; most of it provided free of charge, raising Bowie Elementary’s letter grade from a ‘D’ to ‘B’ from ADE site visit, awarded most improved school by the Cochise County Superintendent’s office 2019, increased enrollment over any period of time (currently 70 without preschool), increased security on campus, increased safety of all school vehicles including revival and certification of the school bus.”

2020 Scholarships awarded to Bowie students.

Scholarships were awarded to Matteo Romero to continue his education at Northern Arizona University, and to John Huston Klump to begin his higher education at Connors State College, Oklahoma. The AR and Nellie Spikes Scholarships are available to graduates of Bowie High School; or graduates of Willcox High School or San Simon High School who live in Bowie. They can be renewed for up to 3 years after the initial award. The scholarship is administered by the Arizona Community Foundation.

St. David Superintendent finds success in building partnerships

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/benson/st-david-superintendent-finds-success-in-building-partnerships/article_35f4baf2-d0fc-11ea-b0a1-938dab34e8c6.html

By Dana Cole dana.cole@myheraldreview.com

Jul 30, 2020

SAINT DAVID — St. David Unified School District has a new superintendent.

Kyle Hart, a St. David resident who serves as superintendent for Pearce and Valley Union school districts, was hired by St. David School District Governing Board members for a vacated superintendent position at the July 14 school board

meeting.

Hart served as an administrative adviser for St. David during an interim period when the district's former Superintendent Arleen Kennedy was on administrative leave. He was asked to continue the advisory role after Kennedy submitted her resignation in May. Kennedy served as district superintendent from July 2018 until her resignation nearly two years later.

St. David Assistant Principal Jonathan Watts stepped in as interim superintendent while the district searched for Kennedy's replacement. During that time, the governing board voted to enter into a short-term contract with Kyle Hart as an adviser to Watts until the school district could find another superintendent.

Hart will continue serving as superintendent for Pearce and Valley Union in what he describes as "a unique partnership" that he believes will benefit all three school districts.

"These are relatively small school districts, so forming multiple partnerships saves the districts money they would be putting into a full-time administrator," he said. "The money districts save can go towards teachers' salaries instead of administrative costs, which is one of my goals for doing this."

Born and raised in Northern California, Hart attended Brigham Young University where he earned a bachelor's degree in social psychology. He then earned a master's in educational leadership through Northern Arizona University.

Before relocating to Cochise County, Hart taught at Arlington Elementary School, a small kindergarten-through eighth-grade public school located about 50 miles west of Phoenix in Maricopa County. He taught there for five years and served as principal for seven.

Hart relocated to this area because he was interested in working in another small district while implementing some of the philosophies that proved effective in Arlington.

"While there, I worked with Chad Turner, who was my mentor and work partner and he encouraged me to try taking Arlington's philosophies to other small school districts.

"I'm in my eighth year at Pearce as the district's superintendent and principal, and I'm going into my

sixth year at Valley Union."

Hart said he now sits as the county's number one tenured superintendent at Pearce, as well as number three at Valley Union.

The Pearce-Valley Union partnership has allowed both districts to save money on administrative services, which is used for teachers' salaries and signing bonuses, said Hart, whose administrative services are paid to the Pearce school district by Valley Union.

"It's a flat rate and substantially less than what Valley Union would be paying a full-time superintendent with all the benefits," he explained. "Of the \$64,000 that Pearce receives from Valley Union, I take \$24,000 of that amount and the remaining \$40,000 goes to teachers and staff. It's a creative way to pay our good teachers more while developing a positive school climate."

As he prepares to step into his role as St. David's superintendent, Hart says he looks forward to working with the staff and administrative team already in place at the district.

"This new partnership between Pearce, Valley Union and St. David is rather unique, but we live in a unique county with small, rural school districts that typically experience a lot of turnover at the administrative level," Hart said. "I have no plans to leave. St. David is paying Pearce a flat

\$50,000 for my services, which is far less than what the district has paid past superintendents."

Of that amount, Hart said he will receive \$20,000, with the remaining \$30,000 going to the Pearce School District staff. In addition, Valley Union's teacher pay has increased substantially in the past five years due to this partnership.

"If this turns into a long-term relationship at St. David, my hope is we'll be able to attract and retain good teachers there as well," he said.

Pointing to the Pearce-Valley Union partnership, Hart said both districts have benefited through additional grant funds for buildings and school buses, as well as from state funding sources that may not have happened for those districts on an individual basis.

"Through the grants and supplemental aid, we received a combined total of \$800,000 for both districts," he said. "I hope to continue growing these kinds of funding opportunities with the addition of St. David in this partnership."

Pearce school district has about 130 students and 22 employees, while Valley Union's enrollment is around 140 students and 35 employees. With its 360 students and 60 employees, St. David is the largest of the three.

Since he lives in St. David, Hart plans to have a presence on that campus three days a week, but that could change once school starts.

"The key factor that makes this work is that I have great administrative teams at all three sites," Hart said. "I've managed to surround myself with people who are better and smarter than me. I'm looking forward to this new challenge when school starts this fall."

Bowie Memories:

The following story is taken from the memoirs of George A. Spikes, my father.

George was born in 1921 and grew up in Bowie. He received his education in the Bowie Public Schools.

I remember him telling me that after he graduated and enrolled at the University of Arizona, he found that his Bowie education was superior to many students who were registering to attend the university at the same time.> Susan (Spikes) Bickel

The high school was a well thought out building that was appropriate for a small town. It had a wide flight of steps in the front and was U-shaped with an auditorium in the middle. Many meetings and all high school graduations took place in that auditorium.

Upstairs on the second floor were the liberal arts and fine arts classrooms. A Mr. Hill taught Spanish and Elizabeth Knappe taught English and literature classes. Four years of science classes were offered— general science, zoology, chemistry and physics— and you could take two years of mathematics, which is what I did. Mr. Lendon O. Enloe taught science and music.

Mr. Enloe was a very influential person in my life. He was an excellent man in his own right. I trace my interest in music and science and my skills in photography and woodworking to Mr. Enloe.

When I was in high school, I decided to become a physician. I talked to Mr. Enloe about it and he was supportive. After graduating from Bowie High School in 1938, I went to Tucson and entered the University of Arizona as a pre-med student. I was 16 years old and scared to death. I worried that I was going to be out of my league academically, but I wasn't. I not only kept up, but I did better than most of the other students. Being smart helped, but the training I received from Mr. Enloe in my classes at Bowie was the real reason.

Spikes, George A., *Servant to Society, The Life of George A. Spikes, M.D.*



(photo supplied by Dewain Lockwood)

Top: Bill Scott & Dave Wisner

Next: Orville Robeson, Dr. Fred Pariah, Doug Welker, Carl Grusendorf, Vic Boll, Carl Olander, Dutch Lockwood, L.O. Scott

Third: Mary Lou Spikes, Virginia McCarthy, Midge Enloe, Nat Grusendorf, Mary Jones, Gladys Robeson, Marguriete Boll, Bobbie Welker, Velma Ann Lockwood, Katherine Orr, Opal Cooke, Mary Tunnel, Jesse Scott, Welcome Scott, Frank Tunnel

Fourth: Jack Spikes, Chet McCarthy, Paul Jones, Paul Orr, Judge Tom Cooke, Lendon Enloe

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- Husband and wife alumni and family members living in the same household will need to pay only one annual membership fee. If the family wishes to pay more, it will be gladly accepted to help cover expenses.
- Failure to pay the annual membership fee will NOT prevent an alumnus from attending a reunion, a luncheon or other alumni activity.
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