



Your Battle Ground PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Report to the Residents of Battle Ground School District • December 2009



Board sends levy request to voters

The Battle Ground School Board voted Dec. 5 to put a three-year maintenance and operations levy on the Feb. 9 ballot. If approved by voters, it will replace the 2007 levy when it expires on New Year's Eve 2010.

School levy money is used for multiple maintenance and operations purposes. Among the uses for levy money approved by voters in 2007 are:

- Teachers
- Classroom support such as teachers' aides
- Classroom supplies and textbooks
- Campus-security monitors and patrols
- Maintenance of buildings and grounds
- Technology support and instructional software in schools
- Extracurricular and enrichment activities
- Staff training and professional development

The present levy expires at the end of 2010.

The new levy request is for \$20.5 million in 2011, followed by \$21.53 million in 2012 and \$22.6 million in 2013. The rate of taxation per \$1,000 of assessed property value is estimated at \$2.99 the first year, \$2.88 in 2012 and \$2.78 in 2013.

The voter-approved Battle Ground School District levy for 2010 is estimated to be at or near \$2.18 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Cuts made in best-case scenario

The Battle Ground Board reached its decision Dec. 5 after weighing what students need and what voters would be willing to pay. With input from the public and employees at the meeting, directors made an initial round of cuts



Battle Ground board members gather to sign the levy resolution. Board President Sam Kim is seated. Standing, from left, is Superintendent Shonny Bria and board members Steve Pagel, Karen Lehman, John Idsinga and Monty Anderson.

amounting to \$4 million in the best-case proposal outlined in a new three-year strategic plan.

After more discussion and trims, an across-the-board reduction was applied to remove another \$4 million.

To help deal with the 2009 cuts in state support — about \$5.7 million worth in Battle Ground — employee groups in the school district agreed to pay cuts or unpaid-leave. In addition, course offerings and other student-centered programs have been cut or reduced and various student fees have increased.

How to contact your Battle Ground School Board members: [Back page.](#)

BG centennial celebration wants you!

Warning: If you don't make it to the party on Jan. 9, you'll have to wait a hundred years for the next one.

What: Battle Ground School District Centennial celebration.

When: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010. Program at 11:30 a.m., to show video and honor district "Heroes," followed by cutting the massive Centennial cake.

Where: Battle Ground High School main (southwest) entry, adjacent corridor and cafeteria.

Who: Public welcome, especially former students and employees of the school district or of any ex-district that merged into the Battle Ground district.

How much: Admission is free.

Why: To celebrate 100 years as a school district, which began in 1909-1910 after consolidation of the Dublin and Maple Grove districts, which met at Main Street.

Eats: From noon to 3 p.m. For \$3, get beverage plus your choice of spaghetti or pizza with bread stick and salad, or hotdog with chips and vegetable sticks.

Highlights: Small, impromptu and informal "reunions" as old friends run into each other; program at 11:30 a.m.; historic exhibits by each school in the district; music by various school groups; BGSD Centennial T-shirts and Battle Ground-area history books for sale. BGSD-historic-facts scavenger hunt for youngsters.



BG students stand out at Science Olympiad

Battle Ground students captured almost half of the possible awards in the elementary Science Olympiad at Clark College Nov. 14, including first-place in both barge-building and bridge-building competitions.

Battle Ground School District teams from Tukes Valley and Captain Strong primaries and CAM Jr.-Sr. High captured a total of seven first-, second- or third-place finishes out of 15 possible in the five events. They were among some 300 competitors from 17 Clark County schools. Here are Battle Ground teams that finished in the money:

- **Aerodynamics:** 3rd place, Tukes Valley Primary "Silver" team.
- **Barge building:** 1st place, Captain Strong Primary "Blue" team; 3rd, CAM Jr.-Sr.High.
- **Bridge building:** 1st, Tukes Valley Primary "Green"; 3rd, CAM.
- **Crime busters:** 2nd, CAM
- **Gummi Bear long jump:** 3rd, CAM.

"Our teams did great," said Mari Hess, fourth-grade teacher and a Science Olympiad coach at Tukes Valley Primary. Tukes Valley student teacher-coach Jodie Housley added, "The kids were wonderful and it was a great learning experience for everyone involved."

"I am very pleased that our students were responsible, reliable and worked well in a group and had great sportsmanship throughout the day," said Captain Strong teacher-coach Susan Crill.

Other coaches, equally proud of their young charges, were: Captain Strong Primary teacher Katie Prill and parent-coaches Dawnese Sahota and Cindy Raske; Tukes Valley Primary teacher Kathy Davis and parent-coach Jewel Sholer; CAM teacher-coach Rachel Karlsen. Several other parents at the schools helped with various preparations, including Teri Kelly, who made Science Olympiad aprons for the Captain Strong team.



Battle Ground's Captain Strong Primary School "Blue" team, first-place winner of the barge-building competition at the Nov. 14 elementary-schools Science Olympiad at Clark College. Front row, from left: Kylie Sahota, Lauren Haggood, Leah Cortez, Killian Griffin, Malia Meyer, Spencer Cloke. Second row, from left, Colin Ocker, Kyle Barton, Everett Buck, Chi Chi Minden, Gwen Morris, Alex Perry. Back row, from left, parent volunteer Dawnese Sahota and third-fourth grade teacher Susan Crill.

Celebrating

Consolidations mark district's history

As the Civil War raged in the East, they came to the rugged, forested, unspoiled land northeast of Vancouver to make their homes and raise their children. They were the Tukes, the Cresaps, the Van Attas, the Bowmans, Wards, Gasaways, Andersons, Checklys, Gerbers, Groats, Wilsons, Skarstedts, Richters and Onsdorffs, among others.

Initially, these pioneer families schooled their children in homes, then in churches and then crude, one-room schools with wood-burning stoves. Later, a second generation of schools would be made of batten board frame and clapboard siding.

In 1863, Brush Prairie might have become the first school district in the northeast part of the county. Two years later, the community built its first school building. In 1871, Maple Grove formed a school district that included present day downtown Battle Ground, Meadow Glade, Cherry Grove, Dollars Corner and parts of Dublin and Crawford (Battle Ground Lake) areas.

Lack of good roads made travel difficult in the rainy months. Schools and

communities were isolated. Early on, school was conducted only in the good-weather months because of the terrible winter mud.

One of Battle Ground's early pioneer teachers was Esther Skarstedt Brown of Maple Grove. She had attended school up to the sixth grade when she was encouraged by her teacher to take the eighth grade examinations. She passed with flying colors and in 1901 became a teacher in the Alpine School District in Roxwell, north of Venersborg and east of Crawford.

Her six-month contract was for \$30 per month. (Men at that time made \$35 per month for the same job.) She had 17 children in her class, 14 of whom had never been to school. Nine of the students spoke only Finnish.

Discipline was serious business; teachers used switches on misbehaving children. Brown later taught at Glenwood with 62 children, many of whom were older than she. But she was making more money — \$40 a month.

School consolidation

Operation and maintenance of the rural, one-school districts were inefficient. Although communities struggled to

maintain their own school districts, land and building upkeep, teacher salaries, textbooks and supplies were hard to afford.

The economy of scale, along with improved roads, contributed to the consolidation movement in the early decades of the 20th century, with its local roots in the 1908 merger of the Maple Grove and Dublin districts.

Dublin School was north of Main Street at Parkway and 249th Street. Maple Grove school was south of 199th Street, not far from present day Maple Grove schools. The dividing line between the districts was Main Street, more or less.

While the consolidation made economic sense, some Maple Grove residents opposed it. Dublin's population was predominantly Irish Catholic and Maple Grove was primarily Protestant, a division that is said to have led to opposition to the consolidation.

On March 3, 1909, the Clarke County Board of Commissioners rejected an appeal by 58 residents and voted unanimously to approve the consolidation on the recommendation of Oscar McBride, county superintendent of schools. That was the final step in establishing School District No. 64, which would later be called the Battle Ground School District.

For the next 61 years, small districts would consolidate with No. 64. According to Louise Tucker, author of *Battle Ground... In and Around*, some 54 school districts were once considered to be in the Battle Ground area. Often school districts would consolidate with a neighboring district first before eventually being absorbed into the Battle Ground district.

The district continued to grow with Clark County, including the consolidation of other districts, the most recent being Yacolt in 1975. Prairie High School was built in 1979. The newest schools, Chief Umtuch Middle and the Tukes Valley schools, opened in 2008.

Present-day Battle Ground School District — with 20 schools, 13,000-plus students and covering 271 square miles (43 percent of Clark County) — is a far cry from the one-room log structures of the late 1800s.



Yacolt High School science class in 1917.

Photo courtesy of Clark County Historical Society



ABOVE: Esther Skarstedt Brown and her class pose in front of Glenwood School in 1902. The building still stands at Northeast 134th Street and 87th Avenue.

Photo courtesy of Clark County Historical Society

RIGHT: Glenwood School has been remodeled a few times since Esther's day but it still has the school belfry and the white clapboards. Gary Erickson, a teacher at Laurin Middle School, lives there today.



Finding a new purpose for old school buildings



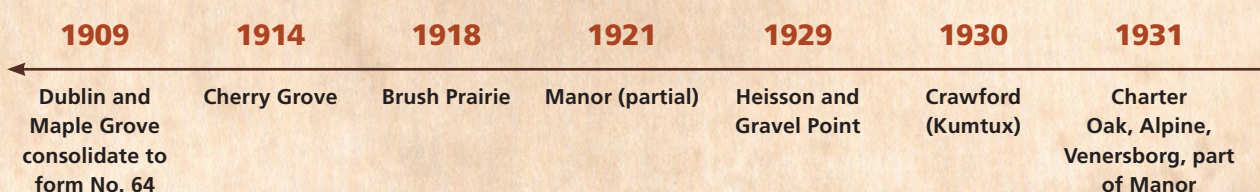
ABOVE: Venersborg School, now used for a community hall, is finally getting indoor plumbing!

BELOW: The 1937 Pleasant Valley School is now the residence of Jim and Linda Troxell, who have lived there since 1975. "Our kids didn't like living in a school but we loved it", says Jim Troxell. The flagpole at the residence is original to the school.



Creating and growing a school district: A timeline of consolidations

Here are the major school district consolidations that have made Battle Ground the third-largest district in the county in terms of enrollment (13,000-plus) and largest in area (271 square miles — about 43 percent of Clark County). Earlier consolidations are shown in parentheses.



100 years!



The crucible

Northwest corner of Main and Parkway



The plot of land that was home to the first school built in 1910 by the new District No. 64 remains, for many, the heart of the Battle Ground school system.

Originally two acres purchased from Charles McReynolds, the district's holdings in that area have expanded to ninety-six acres and are home to school buildings, District Stadium, Community Education, operations and facilities offices, the print shop, community athletic fields and more.

This plot, between Parkway and state Highway 503 and between Main Street and Onsdorff Boulevard, has expanded and evolved over the decades as it has been the school home to tens of thousands of students, from pre-school to adult education. It is the birthplace of myriad memories for generations of local residents.



The original Central School, built in 1910, sat at the northwest corner of Main and Parkway.

Photo courtesy of Jane Onsdorff Johnson Malmquist



The first Battle Ground High School was built in 1928 on Parkway, just north of Central School.

Photo courtesy of Mel Conner

The first school

School District No. 64 was formed in 1908 from the consolidation of Maple Grove School District, south of Main Street, and Dublin School District, north of Main. It began operation in the 1909-1910 school year.

Under the direction of School Board members William Bramhall, G.C. Scotton and Peter Onsdorff, the McReynolds property was purchased almost immediately and construction of the original Central School was begun at the corner of Parkway and Main and completed in 1910.

Both symbolically and literally, that first school linked the communities of Dublin and Maple Grove with each other and with the burgeoning downtown Battle Ground area that was soon to become the heart of the new district.

Just two years later, the building was raised up in order to add a full basement for additional classrooms and a gymnasium. Other additions ensued. By the 1915-16 school year, Battle Ground achieved accreditation up to the 12th grade. According to Louise McKay Allworth Tucker's book, *Battle Ground. . . In and Around*, the first high school graduates were William Scotton, Don Strode, Guy Wilson and Vina Simonson.

Other schools follow

In 1928, Battle Ground built a two-story brick high school just north, on Parkway. By 1934, a new junior high school was built and was connected to the high school.

Reynold Mason, 86, originally of the Bee Tree area northwest of Lewisville Park, remembers attending the new junior high. In 1936, the last vestige of the original 1910 school was razed.

Still standing along Main Street is the gable-roof former bus barn, built in 1934. Mason remembers his bus in the 1930s not having any glass in the windows and only canvas curtains.

"It was really cold in the winter riding in that bus! I don't miss that," he said. Later when the

district outgrew the bus barn, the building was used for home economics and shop.

During the Depression, Battle Ground schools added Central Elementary, built with Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds. The one-story brick building still stands on Parkway, south of Fourth Street, but is no longer in use.

In 1953, the new Battle Ground High School was completed. Its last remodel was in 1995. Vivian Witt, who graduated in 1974 and is now the Facilities Department secretary, recalls that the girls played their basketball games in the East Gym. The boys played in the West Gym, which was transformed in the 1995 remodel to the present cafeteria.

On the western edge of school district property, the original Chief Umtuch Primary School opened during the 1972-1973 school year, with students packing up their supplies and walking from the Depression-era Central Elementary School to their new home. It was torn down after the 2006-2007 school year and Chief Umtuch Middle School was erected on the site, opening in 2008. It serves the same geographic area as the nearby old Lewisville Middle School, built in 1965 and still standing. It is being used for other district offices, meetings, seminars, etc.

Just north of Chief Middle School is Captain Strong Primary, which opened for the 1990-91 school year. This same general area is home to CAM Jr.-Sr. High School (Character, Academics, Marketplace) and HomeLink Battle Ground.



Battle Ground High School Football team in 1931 or 1932.

Photo courtesy of Mel Conner

Memories of early Battle Ground from those who were there

Mel Conner

Mel Conner, 72, attended Central Elementary, which was a Depression-era Works Progress Administration building. It was almost new when he attended as a first grader in 1943. He recalls that the students had no cafeteria; an addition would come later.

Conner remembers his elementary teacher, Belle Staley Lawrence, who was only 18 when she started teaching. She was one of the best teachers he ever had.

"She knew how to spell discipline," says Conner, who graduated from Battle Ground High School in 1955 in a class of 125, all of whom he knew well. Conner is proud that the high school is still the center of town and the home of many community activities.



Belle Staley Lawrence and her 6th grade class. Mel Conner is in the back row, seventh from the left.

Photo courtesy of Mel Conner

Ray Bergren

Ray Bergren, 92, was born in North Dakota and moved with his family to Brush Prairie in 1923. He began his educational journey in the spring of 1924 and only spoke Finnish. It would take him a year to master English.

"I won a flashlight for getting the best grades in school," Bergren said.

He graduated from Battle Ground High School in 1936, having lettered four years in football, a game he had never played until high school. He went on to enjoy a rich career in the Vancouver shipyards and would later serve as a mechanical inspector for an off-shore drilling company in Finland, taking him back to his ancestral home.

1932	1937	1941	1942	1944	1945	1955	1957	1975	SOURCES: <i>Battle Ground ... In and About</i> by Louise McKay Allworth Tucker, 1976, <i>Seven Bells Did Ring</i> by the Historical Committee, Glenwood-Laurin PTA, 1971, and <i>Fort Vancouver Historical Society Quarterly</i> , Vol. 6, 1963.
Bee Tree and Rock Creek	Lucia	View	Tum Tum Consolidated (Dunnigan, Fargher Lake, Amboy and Chelatchie Prairie)	Manor (partial)	Union and Good Hope (Pioneer)	Glenwood and Barberton (Salmon Creek and St. Johns)	Pleasant Valley	Yacolt (Riverview and Dole)	NOTE: Other school districts once in the Battle Ground area were consolidated to Green Mountain, La Center, Ridgefield and Evergreen School Districts.

BG School is among state's most-improved

Battle Ground's CAM Jr.-Sr. High school was among 104 schools in Washington honored in September for being among the 5 percent highest-improving schools in the state in reading and math test scores.

The recognition is based on WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning) scores since 2003. The selection was a joint project of the Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE) in Redmond, Wash., and the Washington chapter of Phi Delta Kappa (PDK), an organization of educators.

CAM, 715 N.W. Onsdorff Blvd, is an academically rigorous alternative school serving about 400 students. CAM stands for Character, Academics, Marketplace.

CAM Principal Colleen O'Neal said, "This award reflects the dedication of CAM's staff, students and parents in the pursuit of excellence in education."

BG Public Schools have two National Merit semifinalists

Question: One day, when Patrick Moynihan was a little kid, he asked his parents why the leaves on the trees are green. The response was similar to which of the following? (Clue: Patrick is one of two 2010 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists from the Battle Ground School District):

- A.** "I dunnow, Patrick. I'm watching this TV show right now anyway."
- B.** "That's an excellent question. Good luck with it. Let me know what you figure out."
- C.** "Let's look it up together and see what we can learn."

The answer, of course, is "C" and Patrick puts it this way: "My parents treated everything as a learning opportunity. As a kid, when I asked why the leaves are green it turned into a science lesson about chlorophyll."

Jenna Brown, the district's other National Merit Scholarship semifinalist and Patrick's schoolmate at CAM Jr.-Sr.High in Battle Ground (Character, Academics, Marketplace) shares his appreciation for learning. She and Patrick also share an appreciation for demanding, mind-expanding teachers, such as — but not limited to — Eric Albers, Shirley Bjur and Dean Summers.

Patrick and Jenna are among 19 National Merit Scholarship semifinalists from Clark County and 16,000 from the entire country.



Jenna Brown and Patrick Moynihan

In the spring, about 8,200 of them will win a total of \$36 million in scholarships.

Patrick's and Jenna's love for learning is wide as well as deep.

About math, Jenna says, "I love designing things and seeing mathematical relationships."

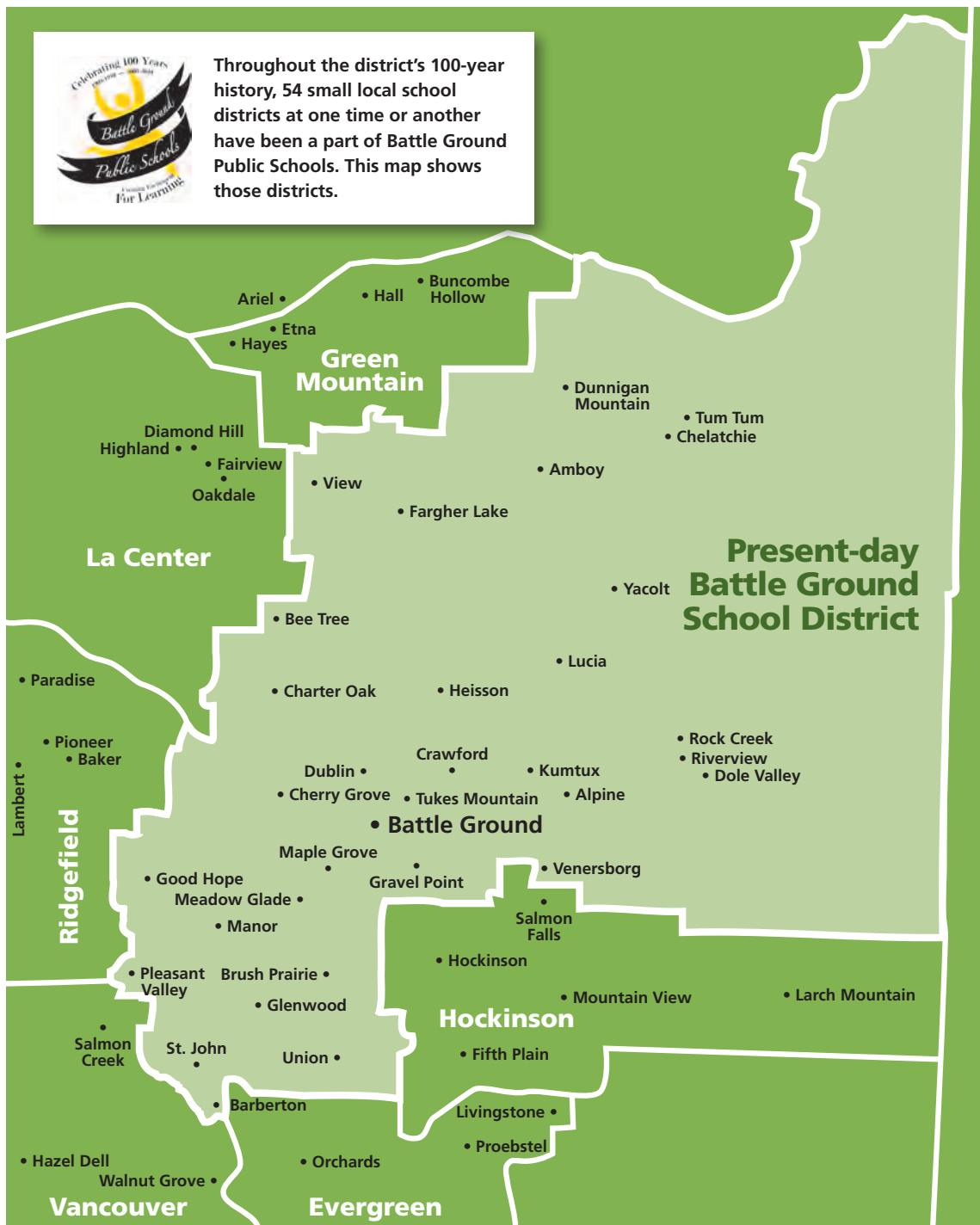
For the Brown family, connections with CAM run deep and teacher Dean Summers is part of that history. He has taught in Battle Ground schools since 1968. One of his students at Battle Ground High School was Jenna's mother. Jenna has four siblings, one a CAM graduate, one a CAM freshman and two younger ones for whom CAM is still to come.

Patrick and Jenna have the same favorite president: Teddy Roosevelt.

Favorite books? For Patrick, it's "Animal Farm," the 1945 classic by George Orwell. Jenna's less-conventional response: "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," an 1869 short story by American West chronicler Bret Harte.

Patrick plans to spend next year at Augustine College in Ottawa, Canada, and then major in drama and business administration or management at the University of Southern California (first choice) or New York University.

Jenna hasn't decided where she will continue her education, but says "I: recently fell in love with LeTourneau University" in Longview, Texas "known for its excellent engineering program."



2008-2009 BATTLE GROUND PUBLIC SCHOOLS' REPORT CARD: This report is required by the federal No Child Left Behind law. It covers activities, test scores, staff and student information from the 2008-2009 academic year. It is accessible in full detail at the Web site of the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at www.k12.wa.us. Then, click on "School Report Card" half-way down the right-hand column. Then, in the "Summary" search window at top left, scroll down to Battle Ground. Or, you can go directly to the information for a specific school by typing the school name in the search window at top right under the "Tools" window.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY NOTICE: The Battle Ground School District provides equal opportunity in programs and employment and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin/language, creed/religion, sex, sexual orientation-including gender identity, disability, or the use of a service animal by a person with a disability, age, marital status, honorably discharged veteran or military status and HIV/Hepatitis C status. Marcia Christian, Pam Judd and Jane Mercier have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination. They can be reached as follows: Marcia Christian, Title IX Sexual Harassment Coordinator, 360.885.5415, christian.marcia@bgds.k12.wa.us; Pam Judd, Title IX Equity Coordinator 360.885.5395, judd.pam@bgds.k12.wa.us; Jane Mercier, Section 504/ADA Coordinator 360.885.5334, mercier.jane@bgds.k12.wa.us; or a letter may be submitted to the designated coordinator at the Battle Ground School District, PO Box 200, Battle Ground, WA 98604.

How to contact Battle Ground School Board

Three new members of the Battle Ground School District Board of Directors were sworn in Saturday, Dec. 5. Monty Anderson asked the man he defeated in the election, Frederick Striker, to do the honors and Striker accepted. John Idsinga, a former Battle Ground mayor, was sworn in by the present mayor, Mike Ciraulo. Steve Pagel was administered the oath of office by longtime family friend and Clark County Auditor Greg Kimsey.

Letters, e-mails and phone calls for the directors will be forwarded by Julie Backous at Battle Ground School District. She is accessible at backous.julie@bgds.k12.wa.us or via mail at P.O. Box 200, Battle Ground WA 98604. Board members also may be contacted directly:

- **District 1, Monty Anderson;** monty@tapaniunderground.com; 360-686-8066.
- **District 2, Karen Lehman;** karenjane22@hotmail.com; 360-904-7633.
- **District 3, John Idsinga;** jidsinga@pacifier.com; 360-687-9549.
- **District 4, Board President Sam Kim;** bgschoolboard@gmail.com; 360-896-7119.
- **District 5, Steve Pagel;** pagelsjaaks@aol.com; 360-573-7758.

BG musicians picked for all-state honors

Five student musicians from high schools in the Battle Ground district and three from middle schools have won all-state-musician honors from the Washington Music Educators Association.

The high schoolers are among almost 1,000 chosen from 2,446 applicants statewide. The middle school students were among approximately 400 selected from 1,004 applicants.

- **High School division** — Battle Ground High School: Ruth Ferguson, symphonic choir (soprano). Prairie High School: Stephanie Alexander, concert band (French horn); Lana Ferris, symphony orchestra (French horn); Tim McCarthy, wind ensemble (trumpet/cornet); Evan Abeling, symphonic choir (tenor).
- **Middle School division** — Chief Umtuch Middle: Kaleb Armstrong, concert band (trombone); Tukes Valley Middle: Alexandra Babcock, concert band (trumpet); Laurin Middle: Therese Bock, treble choir (soprano).