

# BARB'S Wire

September 27, 2013

*The more generous we are, the more joyous we become. The more cooperative we are, the more valuable we become. The more enthusiastic we are, the more productive we become. The more serving we are, the more prosperous we become.*

~William Arthur Ward

The employees of SouthArk embody all these attributes!

As of late, I have seen these qualities of generosity, cooperation, enthusiasm, and service displayed in so many different ways at SouthArk. The phenomenal display of organization and service for the SouthArk Outdoor Expo by our many college and community volunteers, the regular diligence and patience displayed by our employees as we register students every semester, the enthusiasm of our faculty for the success of students and learning, the many service projects in which SouthArk employees or students give back to our community...the list could go on and on.

**Thank you all for your kind and generous spirits!**

**SouthArk Outdoor Expo:** We say it every year, but I think it was the biggest and best yet. Over \$75,400 was raised to support the Foundation, scholarships and college initiatives. Special thanks to title sponsor Loftin Construction. We had 66 total sponsors – \$29,000 in-kind sponsors; \$75,000 total cash sponsors. We also had 39 Exhibitors and 31 Vendors, 40 Rib Cook-off teams competed (372 rib racks grilled and sold), 118 participants in the Major Ronald Culver Hero 5k run/walk, 75 photo entrants, 24 duck calling competitors, as well as great entertainment: 9 bands, 2 dance schools, 1 karate school. Of course, our headliner, Jason D. Williams was loads of fun, energy, and great piano playing! It was a stupendous day for everyone. **Thank you to ALL 400 volunteers!**

**United Way Campaign:** Dr. Tim Kirk, SouthArk's United Way loaned executive and campaign chair, is kicking off the 2013 campaign at SouthArk. We appreciate all of you that donate to the United Way. This agency provides funds to support so many valuable organizations and agencies in our area.

**Relay for Life:** The Relay for Life team has already started fundraising. They raised \$250 selling water and snacks at the Outdoor Expo. Way to go!

**March of Dimes:** I enjoyed joining Donna Hendricks for the kick-off of the March of Dimes campaign. Donna is serving as SouthArk's chair. Three of our PBL students attended, as well. Stay tuned – there may be a challenge to other student organizations to participate in this worthy cause.

**Fall Enrollment Update:** The UNOFFICIAL enrollment for the fall of 2013 is 1652, a decrease of 5.7% in headcount from fall 2012. Our student semester credit hour (SSCH) production also decreased. However, we have seen an increase in number of students taking online courses. Sixteen of the 22 community colleges reported a decrease in enrollment. This is a trend being experienced across the U.S. Most colleges are attributing the decrease to an improved economy and changes in financial aid policies.

Please remember that we must all be involved in marketing the programs of the college and recruiting students to our campus.

**DOL Grant:** SouthArk will receive \$3.9 million and serve as the lead college for this grant focused on building a strong workforce for the Advanced Manufacturing sector in the southwest quadrant of Arkansas. As the lead college, SouthArk will be responsible for establishing the overall procedures for grant implementation, defining outcomes, assuring fiscal accountability, and establishing an evaluation and reporting system. SouthArk will develop a communication system for both internal communication among member colleges and for external communication to employers and the public through a web portal. Four innovation teams will be formed for employer/stakeholder engagement, curriculum development, continuous improvement, and career pathway improvement to include articulation and transfer. A foundational aspect of the grant is employer and stakeholder engagement throughout the process.

SouthArk will work with employers in the region to revise, improve, or develop curriculum to prepare graduates for STEM fields such as electro-mechanical technicians, welders, and process operators. These are high-skill, high-demand, and high wage positions which are needed by the industries in our region. The college will offer courses and training ranging from non-credit industry-specific training to credit programs leading to certificates and associate of applied science degrees. The grant will fund 11 positions at SouthArk.

#### **Facilities/Plant Updates:**

-Offices are being constructed for Ms. Ann Southall and Ms. Shelia Risher in the Maintenance Building (Van's) located on Hillsboro Street. The Procurement Office and Accounts Payable will be located in this facility.

-The College is in the process of securing approval for an architectural firm for renovations of the McWilliams (Callahan) House. Jameson Architects, P.A. from Little Rock was the firm selected after the SouthArk committee reviewed qualifications and interviewed. Renovations for the roof renovations and a master plan are funded through a grant through Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council (ANCR).

-The College has executed the construction contract with JMD Construction Services, LLC for the work on the College

parking lot at Summit and Block Street. The new parking lot will allow for 100 spaces.

-This summer a painter caulked and painted the upper windows and wood on the gymnasium. This improved the appearance of the facility and will help preserve the historical building.

**Benefits Day:** The College will be hosting a “Benefits Day” on November 4, 2013. Employees are able to visit directly with our benefit vendors.

**Health Insurance:** On Wednesday, September 18, Ms. Becky Riggs sent out information pertaining to the new Health Insurance and Affordable Care Act. The information pertains to the new health insurance market place coverage options and your health coverage. If you have questions concerning the new health care law, please contact Ms. Riggs at 870-864-7146, or you may call QualChoice at 1-800-235-7111.

**Campus Conversations:** Again this year, we will be holding a series of informal “conversations” on the east and west campuses to visit about some specific topics, but also to talk about issues of concern to you. The topic, times, and places for the October “conversations” are:

*The SouthArk Strategic Plan – Are we meeting our goals?*

**East Campus** – Center for Workforce Dev., Room 121  
October 17, 2013 – Thursday – 10:45 a.m.

**West Campus** – ECC, Cypress & Oak Rooms  
October 18, 2013 – Friday – 8:30 a.m.

**Articulation agreements:** The College of Education at Southern Arkansas University has partnered with SouthArk Community College to offer the Bachelor of Science in Education degree in Early Childhood Education at the El Dorado campus. Through these partnership programs, SAU faculty teach courses and advise students at the SouthArk campus, offering students living in those areas the opportunity to further their education without traveling to the main campus. The programs are designed for nontraditional students with courses being offered at night, weekends, and online. Other programs are being developed by our two institutions.

**ARE-ON** (funded by federal BTOP grant): Last week SouthArk officially connected to the ARE-ON backbone; our Internet and compressed video traffic now flows through this advanced state-wide network with connections to every other College and University campus in the state. Moreover, our east campus colleagues now enjoy the same level of network access as those of us housed on the west campus; our inter-campus fiber connections have made our two locations a single unified network. Finally, costs for these improved telecommunications services are less than 60% of the cost for the previous solutions.

**Emergency notification system:** SouthArk has selected the Alertus’ emergency notification solution. This system will initially consist of exterior “giant voice” speakers and blue light emergency phones on both campuses, emergency alert beacons in all buildings, and desktop notification on all college computers. As the system grows and upgrades are made, it will be linked to the building fire alarms and office telephones. Contractors will be on campus in the next few weeks to finalize construction documents with installation following shortly thereafter. College plant funds and General Improvement Funds (GIF) provided by Senator Bobby Pierce are being used to fund this important safety equipment.

**Windows 7 and Office 2013:** SouthArk will be moving forward to convert from Windows XP to Windows 7 as Internet Explorer 8 is becoming increasingly incompatible with Blackboard and MyLabsPlus. In addition, XP is no longer supported by Microsoft and will not correctly function on newer hardware. Similarly, Office has been upgraded to 2013. Upgrading workstations to Windows 7 requires a “clean install” and will require us all to review our install programs and update them as well. Older printers and scanners may need to be replaced as drivers may not be available. Classroom instructor stations will be upgraded in the next few weeks and all classroom workstations over the winter break; office machines will be upgraded as schedules permit. Faculty is strongly encouraged to review their academic software selections and obtain upgrades for reinstallation.

#### **SHOUT OUTS!**

**Thanks to our SouthArk Choir** for providing beautiful music at SouthArk Outdoor Expo!

**Thanks to Scott Larkin** for hosting another year of SouthArk’s Got Talent! Wednesdays at the Bistro are not to be missed.

**Thanks to everyone** involved in writing the **Department of Labor grant proposal**. It takes a team to be successful!

**Thanks** again to everyone who volunteered and participated in the **SouthArk Outdoor Expo!** Cynthia and her team once again organized a tremendous event.

**It is another GREAT and EXCITING YEAR at SouthArk!**

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*Barbara R. Jones*

## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

### October 4, 2013 – Friday

- MFG Career Fair  
9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. – East Campus  
Center for Workforce Development

### October 10, 2013 – Thursday

- Fall Festival – Sponsored by SGA

### October 12, 2013 – Saturday

- Hispanic Community Outreach  
Noon – 4 p.m. El Dorado Conference Center Student  
Center Lawn

### October 15, 2013 – Tuesday

- 3:45 p.m. Board of Trustees Meeting
- Theodore Jones “Keeping History Alive Banquet”  
(sponsored by South Arkansas Historical Foundation)  
6:30 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

### October 22, 2013 – Tuesday

- Union County College Night  
El Dorado Conference Center

### October 31, 2013 – Thursday

- Students-in-Recital  
Noon – El Dorado Conference Center

### November 4, 2013 – Monday

- Employee Benefits Day  
10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. – Atrium

### November 15, 2013 – Friday

- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society  
Induction Ceremony  
6:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

### November 19, 2013 – Tuesday

- 3:45 p.m. Board of Trustees Meeting

### November 21, 2013 – Thursday

- Lecture Series – Jerry Mathers of  
“Leave It To Beaver”  
7:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

### November 23, 2013 – Saturday

- Mistletoe Market  
El Dorado Conference Center

### November 25, 2013 – Monday

- CNA Pinning Ceremony  
6:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

### November 26, 2013 – Tuesday

- Students-in-Recital  
Noon – El Dorado Conference Center

### December 4, 2013 – Wednesday

- Employee Holiday Reception  
El Dorado Conference Center  
Time TBA

### December 5, 2013 – Thursday

- LPN Pinning Ceremony  
6:30 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center
- 7:00 p.m. - El Dorado Christmas Parade

### December 6, 2013 – Friday

- State Board of Trustees Training  
Pulaski Technical College – North Little Rock
- Between the Lines  
2:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

### December 11, 2013 – Wednesday

- Foundation Board Meeting  
Noon – El Dorado Conference Center

### December 12, 2013 – Thursday

- Commencement  
7:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

### December 19, 20, 21 – “Amahl and the Night Visitors”

- (made-for-TV opera by Gian Carlo Menotti)  
produced by the Music Department of South  
Arkansas Community College and featuring faculty,  
staff, and their families  
South Arkansas Arts Center  
7:30 p.m.