# BVHS Newsletter

**Mission Statement:**
Build a community of stakeholders who value education and graduate students who are college/career ready and are dedicated to life-long learning.

Empowering all students to make meaningful contributions to the world!

# January

## From the Principal;s Office

A Fresh Start for a New Year

As we turn the calendar to January, I want to wish all of our students, families, and staff a very happy New Year. The start of a new year and a new semester brings with it a renewed sense of purpose, fresh opportunities, and positive energy as we continue our work together.

January marks the beginning of the second semester—a true fresh start. Students are settling into new schedules, engaging in new elective courses, and setting goals for the months ahead. This is an excellent time for reflection, refocus, and recommitment to academic growth, personal responsibility, and positive relationships within our school community.

This semester, we are rolling out enhancements to our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). These initiatives are designed to ensure that every student receives the right support at the right time. Our focus includes:

- Academic support to help students stay on track and achieve success
- Attendance support to promote consistent engagement and accountability
- Behavior support to maintain a safe, respectful, and positive school environment
- Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) supports to help students develop resilience, confidence, and healthy decision-making skills

These systems reflect our commitment to meeting the needs of the whole child and supporting each student's success both inside and outside the classroom.

As we begin this new year together, I encourage students to set goals, challenge themselves, and take pride in their growth. I am grateful for the continued partnership of our families and the dedication of our staff as we move forward.

As Vikings, we move forward with strength, unity, and determination—ready to face new challenges, support one another, and finish the year strong.

Once a Viking, always a Viking.

Proud to serve as your principal.

Blacklick Valley JSHS
*Home of the Vikings!*

## Key Dates:

- Christmas Break Ends and School Resumes January 5th
- No School - January 16th and 19th

# VIKINGS

## January

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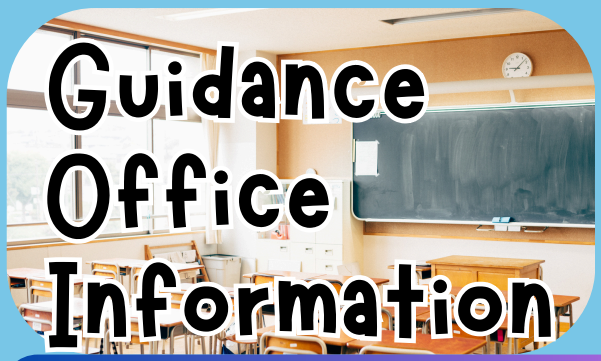
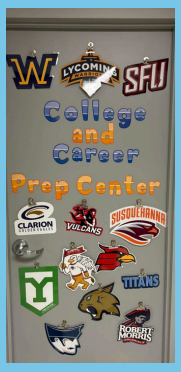
| "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts." ~ Winston Churchill<br><br>The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dream." ~ Eleanor Roosevelt | | | | 1<br> | 2<br>No School - Christmas Break | 3 |
| 4 | 5<br>School Resumes | 6<br>Courthouse Field Trip - Ms. Gregory<br><br>Winter Band and Chorus Concert 6PM | 7<br>♪District Chorus ♪<br><br>Freshmen to Admiral Peary AM | 8<br>♪District Chorus ♪<br><br>PHEAA - 11th grade presentation Activity Period<br><br>Martin Baker "Spin to Win" During Lunch | 9<br>♪District Chorus ♪ | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13<br>PHEAA - 10th grade presentation Activity Period<br><br>Forensics @ Richland HS<br><br>FAFSA Completion in HS Library 6-7pm | 14<br>SCF Valve Tour | 15 | 16<br>No School - Act 80 Day | 17 |
| 18 | 19<br>No School -<br> | 20<br>Martin Baker America Tour | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28<br>Forensics @ Cambria Heights | 29 | 30 | 31 |




Need information on colleges, careers, counseling, summer programs, financial aid, or the military? Visit Ms. McGhee in the guidance office and check out the bulletin boards in the social studies hallway!




Attention sophomores, juniors, and seniors! Martin Baker will be here on January 8th for a Spin to Win event during your lunch! Make sure to stop in and see them!

Martin-Baker America

On January 8th a representative from PHEAA will come to Blacklick Valley to give a Financial Aid Presentation to all 11th grade students during Activity Period.

PHEAA

On January 13th a representative from PHEAA will come to Blacklick Valley to give a Financial Aid Presentation to all 10th grade students during Activity Period.

PHEAA

GLOBAL SFC VALVE
MAKING THE RIGHT CONNECTION

Interested in touring Global SFC Valve on January 14th? See Ms. McGhee!

Interested in touring Martin-Baker on January 20th? See Ms. McGhee!

Martin-Baker America

Ready to practice your interview skills? Representatives from PA Career Link will come to BV on January 22nd to have mock interviews with all senior students.

On January 14th, a group of 7th and 8th graders will represent Blacklick Valley at a regional leadership conference!

## Ms. McGhee

If you need any help feel free to contact me.

breanna.mcghee@bvvikings.org

749-9211 ext 227

Esports Seating

Founded in 2000, DonorsChoose allows public school teachers to request materials and resources for their classrooms. It connects teachers with donors who want to support their projects, making it possible for anyone to help students in need. More than half of all U.S. public schools have benefited from this platform.

Many BVHS teachers work in partnership with Donors Choose to help provide students with materials, supplies, and opportunities that they would not normally be able to have for their classrooms.

Each month we'll feature a teacher and their project. If you or anyone you know is interested in donating, please use the links provided.

Our esports team spends long hours practicing, strategizing, and building skills together, and a comfortable couch would make a huge difference in how our space supports them. Right now, students often sit on the floor or hard chairs between matches and practice sessions, which makes it hard to stay focused and relaxed. A couch would create a welcoming, comfortable environment where students can reset, collaborate, and feel like they truly belong on a team.

Our goal is to build an esports program that teaches teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and perseverance—skills that transfer far beyond gaming.

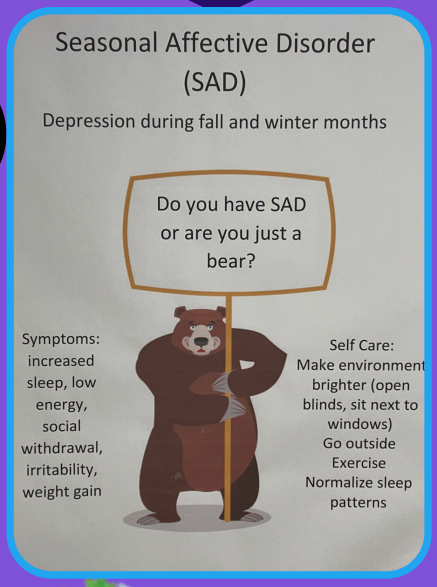
Having a proper team space with comfortable seating supports both performance and well-being. It gives students a place to review gameplay, discuss strategy, support each other after tough losses, and celebrate wins together. Small upgrades like this help turn our room into a professional, motivating environment for students

Esports Seating
Mr. Havener
This project is active until April 17, 2026

CLICK HERE

# Staying Healthy:

Need to get your teeth cleaned? The mobile dentist will be here on February 19th and 20th!



# Announcements:

Alternative Community Resource Program

*Helping Youth & Families*

The Alternative Community Resource Program (ACRP) is offering a year-round Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Group Program at its Ebensburg location for children with an autism diagnosis or behavioral health diagnosis. This program is designed to support the development of communication, adaptive, social, and play skills in a structured, supportive environment.

The ABA Group Program serves children ages 4–21 and operates as an after-school program on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45–6:45 p.m. During the summer months, the program runs three to four days per week, with an official schedule to be determined. Sessions are held at the ACRP Ebensburg Office, located at 118 West High Street, Ebensburg, PA 15931, and maintain a 3:1 child-to-staff ratio to ensure individualized attention and support.

The program focuses on individualized skill acquisition, while also emphasizing social skills and self-regulation strategies. Targeted areas may include functional communication, receptive and expressive language development, adaptive daily living skills, conversation and play skills, emotional identification and regulation, empathy, problem-solving, personal boundaries, self-control, and cognitive flexibility.

For safety reasons, the program is unable to accommodate children who require one-to-one support or who engage in severe aggression or elopement. Transportation eligibility may be discussed during the intake process. In addition to the school-year program, this ABA Group Program will also be offered as a Summer 2026 program.

Families interested in enrolling their child are encouraged to contact:

Germaine Johnson, Case Manager
gjohnson@acrpkids.org
814-472-9330 ext. 3503.

When calling, families should be prepared to discuss program scheduling preferences, insurance information, current IBHS services (if applicable), and basic communication and behavioral concerns

# Deck the Halls

During the month of December, students have been working alongside their teachers to "deck the halls" of Blacklick Valley High School. As part of our School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) initiative, students, faculty, and staff came together to bring holiday cheer and a strong sense of community to our hallways.

The experience has been a great success, with BV pride snowing down all around us. We hope this is one winter storm that becomes a lasting part of our Blacklick Valley Viking traditions.

# FORENSICS TEAM KICKS OFF THE SEASON WITH STRONG FIRST FINISH

Our Forensics team launched the 2025–2026 season with its first competition last night at Somerset High School. Students represented our school with confidence, poise, and professionalism, making this a strong start to the season. Congratulations to all of our competitors for their hard work and dedication as they continue to develop their public speaking and performance skills.

A special congratulations goes to Kayla and Savannah Woods, who earned third place in Duo Dramatic Interpretation, and to McKenna Miller, who placed second in Dramatic Interpretation. We are proud of their accomplishments and look forward to watching the team continue to grow throughout the season.

Forensics is a competitive speech and performance activity that allows students to explore skills such as public speaking, acting, interpretation, and critical thinking. Events range from dramatic and humorous interpretations to original speeches and extemporaneous speaking. Students build confidence, creativity, and communication skills that benefit them both in and out of the classroom.

Students interested in joining the Forensics team are encouraged to see Mrs. Strazisar or Ms. McGhee for more information. No prior experience is necessary—just a willingness to learn, perform, and challenge yourself.

Kayla and Savannah
3rd Place
Duo Drama

McKenna
2nd Place
Dramatic Interp.

## Forensics Judges Needed for District and Regional Qualifiers

Our Forensics team is seeking community members, parents, educators, and alumni who are interested in serving as judges for upcoming district and regional forensics competitions. Judges play a vital role in supporting students as they showcase their public speaking and performance skills.

The District Qualifier (State Qualifying Tournament) will be held at Richland High School on Friday, February 13, typically during the afternoon and evening hours.

The Regional Qualifier (National Qualifying Tournament) will take place at Saint Francis University on March 2 and 3 and requires full-day availability.

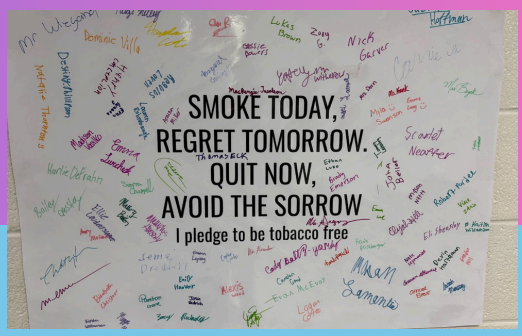
No prior forensics experience is required—judges will receive guidance and materials to help them evaluate performances confidently and fairly. If you are interested in judging or would like more information, please contact Mrs. Strazisar at jessica.strazisar@bvvikings.org.

## ESports All Stars

Congratulations to Owen Heming and Kaelob Cook who finished 15th overall in the PIEA State Playoffs in Fortnite Duos.

Out of nearly 180 players, they earned their way to the playoffs, where they competed and won against PA's best in Blacklick Valley's inaugural season.

## From the TRU Advisors! Ms. McGhee & Mrs. Lieb




Ms. McGhee and I are thrilled to be running TRU, our newest organization at Blacklick Valley high school. TRU stands for Tobacco Resistance Unit. This organization is a Pennsylvania-based youth movement (ages 12-18) with a main focus on preventing tobacco and nicotine use in schools. Together Ms. McGhee and I have developed TRU working groups with our BVHS students to complete various activities, events, and, social media bulletins all focused on tobacco prevention.

Our TRU working groups consist of a social media/BVTV cohort, a community service cohort, an events/activities cohort, and a flex cohort who help the other cohorts when needed. The cohorts have been very active the past few months creating BVTV advertisements as well as digital posters for our TVs around the school. Our entire TRU cohort consists of the following BVHS students: Paige Kelley, Eli Sheesley, Nathan Szymusiak, Noah Popich, Sarah Mourey, Averi Yewcic, Megyn Nixon, Mackenzie Bardell, Kamryn Kasecky, Lauren Rohrabaugh, Mackenzie Jacobson, Stella Landzendorfer, Madison Vasilko, Serenity Rager, Zoey Richards, Kirsten Williamson, and Sierra Chappell.

These students have various events and activities planned for the new year! If you have any questions or want to know how to get involved please see me or Ms. McGhee. We are excited to grow this organization here at BVHS!

# From the Music Department:

Vikings Music is Resonating Throughout the Valley, County, and State

On Tuesday, January 6th, our student musicians presented their holiday concert featuring the band and chorus ensembles. Once again the talents of these young men and women entertained our community.

We are also proud to announce the results of the recent District Band auditions. Congratulations to Emma Lepley, Kayla Woods, and Averi Yewcic, who all qualified for this prestigious festival through their outstanding performances.

The District Band Festival will take place February 4–6 at Cambria Heights. We congratulate these students on their hard work and dedication and wish them continued success as they represent Blacklick Valley.

# From the English Department:

On Tuesday, January 6, eighth- and ninth-grade students in Ms. Gregory's English Language Arts classes traveled to the Cambria County Courthouse and the Cambria County Prison as an enrichment activity to conclude their study of Twelve Angry Men by Reginald Rose.

During their courthouse visit, students had the opportunity to sit in on court hearings and observe the procedures that take place daily within the judicial system. They were addressed by several members of the courthouse staff, including Judge Carbonara, who encouraged students to take advantage of job-shadowing opportunities offered through the courthouse. Students also heard from Judge Fleming, along with other court employees and officers, who shared insights into their roles and responsibilities.

Following their time at the courthouse, students toured the Cambria County Prison, where they gained an understanding of the facility's operations. Students were served lunch and had the opportunity to interact with several correctional officers, rounding out a meaningful and educational experience that connected classroom learning to real-world applications.

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who helped make this experience possible. It is our hope that this visit can become an annual event, providing students with continued opportunities to learn about the judicial system, their role within it, and the variety of career paths available through the courthouse.

# From the Art Department:

## Luther Ford Art Contest

Recently, our students took a trip to Luther Ford in Homer City to participate in a special student art contest. Student artwork is currently on display, showcasing creativity, talent, and school pride within the dealership.

The contest winner was announced after the holiday break, and community support plays an important role in the outcome. Anyone interested in voting was able to do so by visiting Luther Ford's Facebook page and leaving a comment under the Art Contest post. Each comment counts as a vote and helps support our students' hard work and creativity.

We encourage students, families, and community members to take a moment to view the artwork online and show their support. Thank you to Luther Ford for providing this exciting opportunity and to everyone who took the time to vote!

# From the Science Department:

On November 25, 2025, 11th- and 12th-grade students enrolled in Anatomy & Physiology, Physics, and Calculus attended the 32nd Annual STEAM Day (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) at Saint Francis University.

Throughout the day, students participated in a variety of STEAM-focused breakout sessions. The event began with a keynote presentation on artificial intelligence, attended by all BV students. Following the keynote, students explored different areas of the campus while engaging in hands-on activities, including CSI Loretto Crime Lab: Forensic Investigations, Exploration of Biology: Meeting the Animals of the SFU Biology Labs, The Perfect Wave engineering challenge, E-sports, and Cybersecurity.

In addition to exploring diverse STEAM topics and career pathways, students gained a firsthand glimpse of college life by navigating the campus and experiencing university-level learning environments.

32nd Annual STEAM Day
Blacklick Valley Jr/Sr High School

# From the Athletic Department:

## SUPPORT SWPBIS AT THE BASKETBALL CONCESSION STAND

For the remainder of the basketball season, our School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) team will be running the concession stand at home basketball games. This initiative provides a fun and meaningful way for our school community to support positive student behavior while enjoying the excitement of the season.

All proceeds from concession sales will directly benefit the SWPBIS program, helping fund incentives, activities, and supports that promote a positive, respectful, and engaging school climate. SWPBIS focuses on recognizing positive behaviors, encouraging responsibility, and creating an environment where all students can succeed academically and socially.

We encourage students, families, and community members to stop by the concession stand at upcoming games and show their support. Every purchase makes a difference—thank you for helping us continue to celebrate and reinforce positive behavior throughout our school.

## Blacklick Valley Basketball Season Brings Energy, Effort, and Viking Pride

The Blacklick Valley basketball season is in full swing, and both the boys' and girls' teams have been bringing energy, determination, and Viking pride to the court. Night after night, our student-athletes continue to demonstrate what it means to represent Blacklick Valley—through hard work in practice, teamwork during competition, and sportsmanship on and off the floor.

The girls' basketball team has shown resilience and growth throughout the season, building momentum as they continue to develop chemistry and confidence. Their commitment to fundamentals, communication, and effort has been evident in every game, and their determination to compete until the final buzzer reflects the strong culture being built within the program.

The boys' basketball team has also delivered exciting performances, combining intensity, hustle, and teamwork in each matchup. Their focus and discipline on both ends of the court have led to competitive games and steady improvement as the season progresses. The players' willingness to support one another and push through challenges highlights the value of preparation and commitment that defines Blacklick Valley athletics.

Both programs exemplify the importance of student involvement, school spirit, and community support. The atmosphere at home games—filled with cheering students, families, and fans—creates an environment that motivates our athletes and strengthens school pride. We encourage everyone to continue attending games, supporting our teams, and celebrating the dedication of our student-athletes as they represent Blacklick Valley Vikings throughout the remainder of the season.

# From the Athletic Department:

## Support our Viking Athletes in January

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| Success isn't just about what you accomplish in your life, it's about what you inspire others to do."<br>- Mark Taylor<br><br>"The difference between a successful athlete and the rest is the commitment to practice." - Riley Johnson | | | | 1 | 2 | 3<br>Wrestling<br>Everett (A)<br>V - 9AM<br><br>Southmoreland Tournament (A)<br>JH - 8AM |
| 4 | 5<br>Girls' BB Purchase Line (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM | 6 | 7<br>Boys' BB Meyersdale (A)<br>JH - 4:30PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM<br><br>Wrestling<br>River Valley (A)<br>JH - 6PM<br>V - 7AM | 8<br>Girls' BB Ferndale (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7PM | 9<br>Boys' BB Ferndale (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7PM<br><br>Wrestling<br>V - Mid Winter Mayhem | 10<br>Wrestling<br>V- Mid Winter Mayhem<br>TBD<br>JH - Meyersdale Duels<br>9AM |
| 11 | 12<br>Girls' BB Northern Cambria (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>V - 6PM | 13<br>Boys' BB Shanksville (H)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM | 14<br>Girls' BB Shade (H)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM<br>SENIOR NIGHT<br><br>Boys' BB Rockwood (A)<br>JH - 4:30PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM<br><br>Wrestling<br>Conemaugh Twp (H)<br>JH - 6PM<br>V - 7AM | 15<br>Boys' BB Salisbury- Elk Lick (A)<br>JH - 4:30PM<br>V - 6PM | 16<br>Girls' BB Glendale (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM<br><br>Boys' BB Glendale (H)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20<br>Girls' BB North Star (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7PM<br><br>Boys' BB Northern Cambria (H)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM | 21<br>Boys' BB North Star (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM<br><br>Wrestling<br>Marion Center (A)<br>JH - 6PM<br>V - 7AM | 22 | 23<br>Wrestling<br>V - West Branch Ultimate Warrior Tournament 1PM | 24<br>Wrestling<br>V - West Branch Ultimate Warrior Tournament 9AM<br><br>Bellevilli Mennonite<br>Girls' BB (H)<br>V - 1PM<br>Boys' BB (H)<br>V - 2:45PM |
| 25 | 26<br>Girls' BB Meyersdale (H)<br>JH - 4PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM | 27<br>Boys' BB Turkefoot (A)<br>JH - TBD<br>JV - TBD<br>V - 7:15PM<br><br>Wrestling<br>Berlin (H)<br>JH - 6PM<br>V - 7AM | 28<br>Girls' BB Turkeyfoot (A)<br>JH - 4:30 PM<br>JV - TBD<br>V - TBD | 29 | 30<br>Girls' BB West Branch (A)<br>JH - 4PM<br>V - 6PM<br><br>Boys' BB Harmony (H)<br>JH - 4:30PM<br>JV - 6PM<br>V - 7:15PM<br>SENIOR NIGHT | 31 |