

ESCONDIDO: Daily news show keeps Bear Valley students in the know

Channel B broadcast to middle school classrooms

By GARY WARTH - gwarth@nctimes.com | Posted: Monday, January 11, 2010 6:00 pm

While some schools still rely on bulletin boards for campus announcements, Bear Valley Middle School students tune in each morning to Channel B on their classroom television sets to learn what clubs are seeking members, when try-outs will be held for sports teams and if the weather will be nice over the weekend.

But the show is more than just a series of announcements read out loud. Each announcement features music culled from a library of 4,000 songs and a picture selected by a team of students. Pieces sometimes are delivered by guests and regular contributors often do skits. There's also a weekly lesson in sign language.

It's all done by two classes of students who make producing, video editing and acting look easy, despite a daily deadline.

"OK, ready on the set," producer Maddy Mangione said as fellow eighth-grader Luke Nazaroff manned the camera. "Roll tape."

The students were in a small room barely large enough for the desk, camera and four stage lights Monday morning to tape the opening and closing segments of the next day's show. Teacher Dale Barney said Channel B, which stands for Bear Valley, may be the county's only daily show produced by students in middle and junior high school.

While one team filmed in a studio, students back in Barney's classroom were busy searching for photos, music and even film clips to integrate into their broadcast. Other students were busy over-dubbing vocals and using Final Cut Pro to edit their digital production in a small back room.

"These kids are very creative and very intelligent," said Barney, who took over Channel B three years ago when it was a live broadcast.

Rather than having students simply read announcements behind a desk, Barney created a delayed show that features cutaways to images, music, remote shots and special features.

He introduced the weekly "What's Your Sign" segment to teach sign language so students could learn to communicate with the nine hearing-impaired children on campus. A "shout out" segment highlights talents of specific students, including one who is a whiz with a Rubik's Cube, Barney said.

In his first year with the program, Channel B won an Innovative Video in Education award from the County Office of Education for a document students made about how their news program is created.

Students must apply for the 20 open spaces available only for seventh- and eighth-graders. Last year 70 students applied for the class.

Jonathan Hitzhusen, 14, learned to edit video when he was 10 while assisting his father, a missionary who filmed his trips abroad.

"I took classes from the Apple store and learned a lot by messing around with it," he said.

"Jon and Taylor (Uva) are scary smart," Barney said about two students who handle editing. "They'll teach us. Digital is their second language. Jon's constantly downloading different apps to the computer that we didn't even know existed."

Eighth-grader Catelyn Goodwin said she applied for the program because she always liked entertaining, but now enjoys being behind the camera more.

"I've always been bossy," she said. "I've always liked getting things done."

Catelyn said she was very nervous when she first was behind the camera, but now cannot remember how many shows she has done.

The class produces 185 shows a year, Barney said.

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