

Major construction coming in 2020

Boone getting turf field, performing arts center, and other improvements

Morgan Daniels

On Feb.14, an assembly was held at Boone to not only celebrate the cheerleaders performance at nationals, but to inform the students of a major announcement.

With nearly the whole school gathered in the gymnasium, principal Tim Schlotman revealed the major renovations that Boone's campus will undergo within the next few years.

Over the summer, the district plans to begin construction on a new two story building that will house a 400-seat auditorium and band and choral rooms.

The second project will include new turf fields for all Boone County schools, and the possibility of a track rebuild for both Boone and Conner.

Schlotman said that the current band room will become a much needed athletic field house, and that the back hallway lockers will be renovated and improved.

He also mentioned that the school's lobby area will receive a touch up.

According to the Northern Kentucky Tribune (NKY Tribune), the new building will be located on the south end of the campus between the baseball field and the parking lot.

The new addition will include ancillary spaces, concessions, and restrooms, as well as a pathway that ties into the back wing.

The current auditorium, which was part of the school's initial design when it opened in 1954, will be repurposed into four to six multimedia classrooms.

"Everybody is excited," Schlotman said. "(These renovations) are much needed improvements."

Junior band member John Wharton said that the renovations are a "really good thing for the whole school."

He also said that the new additions would "increase student morale" and be something that the students could take pride in over the upcoming years.

These upgrades stem from a large sum of money that the district acquired as a result of a tax settlement from a major unnamed company, Schlotman said.

According to the NKY Tribune, Boone County Schools got \$16 million worth of revenue that will fund various large projects.

Boone is receiving the largest portion of money, with an estimated \$6.2 million going towards campus renovations.

According to Linda Schild, the director of finance for Boone County Schools, the funds remaining after the district high schools get new turf football/soccer fields will go towards SEEK (Support Education Excellence in Kentucky) funding to prevent position cuts.

Students excited for new arts space

If the cheering and clapping after Schlotman made the announcement about the new music suite is any indication, the students are eager to experience the upcoming renovations.

Although senior band member Aiden Shinkle won't experience any of the upgrades personally, he is still excited for what the new auditorium and band/choir room mean for the music programs.

"The auditorium is horrible, so the choir has a hard time doing things," Shinkle said.



One of the facility upgrades involves replacing the natural grass at Irv Goode Field with turf after the fall 2020 athletic season. Administrators hope that the turf project will be finished in time for the fall 2021 season.

"The actual auditorium is designed for speeches, so it sounds horrible and (the band) can't even all fit on the stage."

There are around one hundred members between the two bands combined, so the commons has been the programs' performance space for years.

Despite that, not even the cafeteria holds enough space for everyone to come and enjoy the bands' concerts all at once.

"Sometimes we have to turn people away from the concerts because we can legitimately not fit that many parents in the cafeteria," Shinkle said.

Shinkle didn't have an issue with the current band room, but did comment that the new additions would allow everyone to be able to fit comfortably during performances.

Shinkle is not the only one excited for the band to have a new rehearsal and performance space.

"For the band room, I am most excited about having a space that will function better than our current room, and being connected to the rest of the school," band director Dan Barnhill said. "The band and choir students will be proud to have a rehearsal and performance space that is functional and exhibits their best musical qualities."

While the band has at least had their own practice facility for a while, other programs at Boone haven't been as lucky.

The music programs plus the theatre clubs have had to share the auditorium space for years.

Many of the school's organizations have had to practice in subpar conditions and could not thoroughly prepare for their performances.

Schlotman said that it has been in the plans for a while to do something with the auditorium, but the funds had never before been available.

Once the district acquired the tax return money, however, the renovation finally became possible.

"For the auditorium, I am most excited about no longer having to perform high level music in a cafeteria," Dan Barnhill said. "The auditorium will provide a great space for many different groups in our school and community."

Choir director Lauren Barnhill said that the whole school will benefit by having an auditorium that is not used as a classroom. It will open up space for other groups to use, such as guest speakers, awards nights, traveling shows, and in-school performances.

Still, Lauren Barnhill feels that the choir students will be most heavily impacted by these improvements.

"I am excited about the addition of our new choir room and auditorium because I was told so many times that it would never happen," she said. "In my 12 years teaching at (Boone), I have considered moving to another school on several different occasions simply because of the poor conditions in which I teach. Our school is far behind other schools in our district in these areas and even farther behind other schools in the state. We are the only successful high school choral program that I know of that meets without a classroom."

Wharton believes that after twenty plus years of not having a space of their own, the

choir deserves their own stable rehearsal room.

Lauren Barnhill said that with the addition of a larger auditorium and choral room, her members won't have to constantly be moving around the choir props whenever there are other activities going on in the auditorium.

"Many people don't realize that any time there is a play, we have to completely change how and where we rehearse, which is a huge obstacle for our program," she said.

Her class shares the auditorium space with drama classes, school plays, award ceremonies, and productions from other schools.

Having a choir classroom will also mean having the ability to do more things, because the choirs won't be reinventing their classroom several times throughout the year. It will allow the members to focus on the content of their class and not worry about how or where they will practice or perform.

According to Lauren Barnhill, a personal choir classroom will do much more for her students than just simplifying and lessening the struggles during rehearsal.

"Having a space of our own makes my students feel more respected by our district," she said. "I am happy that they will have a performance space that reflects the high quality of music that they perform."

The auditorium only seats 280 spectators and has no backstage space, exits, or storage. At one point, the district had to build a wall that would allow students to be able to exit from backstage during a performance; these are all issues that would be expected with an auditorium built over 70 years ago.

"I hope that this addition means that our district is setting a new standard for arts support within our district," Lauren Barnhill said. Dan Barnhill agreed.

"It is so exciting to have a facility that will take our exemplary music programs to the next level," he said.

Natural grass field will be turfed

The combination of a week of soccer and Friday night football games during fall takes a toll on Boone's grass field.

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LAUREN BARNHILL
Choir Director

Changes at a Glance

- **New two story addition with 400 seat auditorium and separate band and choral rooms** - This will replace the existing trailers beyond the baseball field.
- **New turf field/possible track remodel**
- **Athletic field house** - This will replace the current band room.
- **New lockers in back hallways**
- **Lobby area remodel**
- **New multimedia classrooms** - This will replace the existing auditorium.

'Burnsy' in 28th year as Boone's athletic trainer

Tom Burns has long history of service to Rebel sports teams

Morgan Daniels

Any athlete or coach at Boone has likely heard the infamous nickname "Burnsy" and all the wonderful things associated with the name.

Tom "Burnsy" Burns, 58, has been the face of athletics at Boone for the past 28 years in the form of the school's athletic trainer.

Right off the bat, Burnsy knew exactly what he wanted to pursue out of high school.

At age 15, he began his athletic training career, and has thus far continued it for the past 43 years.

"I loved athletics, but I was not very good at it," Burnsy, who played high school tennis for two years, said when asked why he became a trainer.

For nearly three decades, Boone's athletes have had the privilege of being treated by Burnsy.

He said he has remained at Boone for such a long time because the kids, administrators, and school are great.

Burnsy's roles as athletic trainer consist of evaluating and preventing injuries, providing care for students, and, he joked, doing laundry.

His favorite part of the job revolves around the athletes, and he enjoys seeing the students succeed and grow.

"It's great when the kids come back and have done great in life," Burnsy said.

If the various notes from past athletes taped on his wall are any indication, the kids receiving his care greatly appreciate all he does for them.

As for the negatives, Burnsy said athletic training can be difficult sometimes when dealing with stubborn coaches, athletes, and parents.

Losing freedom by having to be present at every practice and game, especially when last minute games are added, can also be a difficulty in regards to Burnsy's career.

"Hours can be long and tedious," he said.

Despite that, Burnsy has earned nothing but praise for the work he's done for Boone.

Junior Molly Switzer has spent her fair share of time with Burnsy over the past two years as a result of two ACL tears.

"(Burnsy is the) best trainer in the whole district because you can really tell that he cares about us and he always brings a smile to everyone's faces," Switzer said. "He always asks how we are, he's always upbeat, and he does so much for us all."

Burnsy often travels with the basketball and soccer teams on overnight tournaments (one time even on his birthday), and has been known to leave encouraging notes in the softball team's dugout before important games.

When interviewed about his experience with Burnsy, girls soccer coach Mike Hughes had plenty to say.

"Since I've been here since '07, he's probably done as much for our program as I've done as head coach," Hughes said.

According to Hughes, Burnsy is always helping his team on the sidelines, available for a call before



TOM "BURNSY" BURNS
Athletic Trainer



Boone athletic trainer Tom "Burnsy" Burns wraps the knee of sophomore softball player Abby Sproles before practice on Feb. 20. Burnsy has been serving Rebel athletes for 28 years.

and after school (even at 10 o'clock at night), organizing paperwork for the athletes and programs, and making sure the kids are healthy and ready to play.

Across all the interviews, one common word kept coming into play when describing Burnsy: committed.

"(Burnsy is as) committed to having success here at Boone County High School as anybody I've ever met," Hughes said. "Everything is always about helping the programs, helping the school."

Baseball coach Wayne Huff had a multitude of words to describe Burnsy: fantastic, amazing, and the best to name a few.

Huff said that Burnsy should get paid more for all he does for Boone's sports programs.

In his office, Burnsy has many awards covering his wall, but perhaps the most important frames are the photographs of him with his past athletes, gifts from the graduated kids.

"(I'm) not in it for the awards," Burnsy said, which speaks to the man as a person.

Boys cross country coach Kelly Read and Huff both had instances in the past where they had been injured and Burnsy stepped up to help them out.

Burnsy gave Read stretches for his injured back and aided Huff

when he badly hurt his knee after a baseball practice.

As a person, Hughes referred to Burnsy as top-notch.

Burnsy is frequently found greeting the students, asking about their days, listening to their problems, picking the teams up after a difficult loss, and overall being a great role model and influence for the students.

"He is as quality a man as I've ever met," Hughes said. "Everybody loves Burnsy ... I think that would be mutual across the lines if you ask."

Burnsy said he has eight years left of athletic training, all of which he plans to spend at Boone.

News of the Huh??? A monthly collection of strange stories from around the globe

Catherine Johnson

911 Phone Service

Ohio woman Seloni Khetarpal was arrested Feb. 13 after repeatedly calling 911 when her parents cut off her cell phone service, which they pay for.

Khetarpal, 36, was warned by an officer to only use the number for emergencies. She called back two hours later, insisting that it was "a legitimate issue."

Khetarpal has been charged with disrupting police services, a fourth-degree felony.

(Staff Report/Associated Press)

Leaning Tower of Dallas

A building in Dallas refused to fall despite implosions and multiple hits from a wrecking ball, earning the social media title "Leaning Tower of Dallas."

Dozens of people gathered in downtown Dallas on the morning of Feb. 24 to watch the demolition company attempt to take down the tower with a 5,600-pound wrecking ball. The tower, now leaning at an impressive angle, held steady.

The demolition is now predicted to take weeks. Not all of the explosives in the building were triggered in the initial explosion, and it's too dangerous to place more.

(Staff Report/Associated Press)

Secret Underground Cigarette Factory

Police dismantled the European Union's first secret underground cigarette factory 13 feet under a horse stable in southern Spain.

Spanish police and Europol said 20 people from Britain, Ukraine and Lithuania were arrested. Workers were forced to work under dangerous and toxic conditions and were unable to leave the facility on their own.

The factory produced 3,500 cigarettes an hour. More than 3 million cigarettes, quantities of marijuana and hashish and three weapons were seized during the raids which took place Feb. 13-14.

(Staff Report/Associated Press)

Stolen Hearse

A Los Angeles man stole a hearse with a body still inside, then took it for a car chase. The crime ended with a crash on a busy free-way.

The hearse was stolen on Feb. 26. A tweet from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department pleaded with the thief to bring the body back.

James Juarez was arrested after he crashed the hearse on Feb. 27. No one was seriously injured.

The body was recovered undisturbed.
(Stefanie Dazio and John Antczak/Associated Press)

Chuck E. Cheese Hair Lawsuit

An Oregon woman is suing Chuck E. Cheese for \$1,000 for negligence after her hair got caught in a machine.

Ashreana Scott was at the family fun center on Dec. 8 when her hair got caught in the machine where customers can deposit tickets. According to the lawsuit, Scott was stuck for 20 minutes before an employee freed her.

Before filing the lawsuit, Scott issued a written demand to Chuck E. Cheese's insurance company to pay the negligence claim. According to court records, the company refused to settle.

(Staff Report/Associated Press)

8 Foot Beehive

A Virginia animal control company removed a beehive from a Richmond apartment ceiling on Feb. 24 that was 8-foot-long.

The company said the hive produced 80 to 100 pounds of honey, though only 15 to 20 pounds was salvaged. The hive was likely around two years old, and was large enough to house 100,000 to 150,000 bees.

Though the company has a "no kill" policy with bees, the queen was unable to be found after an extensive search, and the colony could not be saved.

(Staff Report/Associated Press)

CONSTRUCTION: Turf installation will start after 2020 fall football and soccer seasons wrap up

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Fortunately, the time has finally come for the dirt to be replaced with turf.

After the last football or soccer game of the 2020 season, the construction of the new turf field will begin.

To what extent the track will be modified is dependent upon the deconstruction process, said athletic director Lance Melching. That would mean no home track meets for the 2021 season.

From soccer to softball, the renovations will impact many of the school's athletic teams.

"Because we're landlocked and we do not have a practice field, football and soccer and baseball and softball all have had to share the same spaces," Melching told the NKY Tribune. "As you can imagine, that puts quite a burden on those fields and none are in great shape by the end of the fall season. Now we will be able to lessen the burden on the existing fields as well as keep our kids on campus more often."

Both the boys and girls soccer teams have to drive to the Boone County Peewee Football Field after school for practice, while the football teams have to use the baseball

and softball outfields as a training space, consequently putting holes and divots in the dirt. Not only would a turf field allow training to be held at Boone, but the renovation would increase the quality of play for all Boone sports affected.

"(Having a turf field would be an) excellent opportunity to allow our athletes the competitive balance with all the other schools in the area," girls soccer coach Mike Hughes said.

He has been hoping for a turf field since he joined the program in 2007, a dream that nearly all of his teams have shared.

For Hughes' team, having a

turf field will allow his players to train and play on a quality surface, as well as give them the opportunity to play at their highest level.

He said that playing on a turf and grass field are entirely different experiences, and that most of their opponents train on a turf field.

Sophomore goalkeeper Hailey Carter agreed. She said that diving during a game will be much easier because the ball will not take unexpected turns when it hits holes, and she will no longer be diving on top of mud and rocks.

Carter said that not only will it be easier to get to practices, but less games will be canceled due to a

muddy field, and training on the home field will yield better results for her team.

Hughes said that injury wise, females are 75% less likely to get injured on a turf field compared to a grass field.

For the football team, freshman Jamarion Hocker said that having a turf field would make the game easier.

He said that with a turf field, the players wouldn't slip and slide in the mud when trying to cut and make throws.

Both Hocker and Carter said they are excited to be given this opportunity.