#### Garnet Valley School District Community Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue 2 February 2006



# Garnet Valley Adult Education Flyer inside.

Fitness, Microsoft Word and Excel, US Coast Guard Auxiliary - Boating Safely, and Personal Development.

Classes start February 27 -March 2.

#### Inside this issue:

School Board News Differentiated Instruction	2
FBLA News Crisis Planning	3
PANA/Healthy Lifestyles GVHS Alumni Council	4
School News	5
Construction Update	6
Parents Right to Know Bond Information	7

# Voices of the Valley

## **Book Drive - So Many Helping Hands**

All five Garnet Valley schools participated in the "Literacy Lifeboat Book Drive" to benefit schools devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The drive was organized by the Delaware County Intermediate Unit and the District Superintendents. Garnet Valley collected over 3,000 new books for the Franklin Upper Elementary School in Meadville, Mississippi for use in their classrooms.

The book drive was supported through very generous donations from Garnet Valley families, students, teachers, staff, and local businesses. Stover Printing, in Bethel, made bookplates that were personalized with a handwritten note from the student donating the book in Garnet Valley and affixed to the book. Heritage Moving Systems, based in Concordville, donated the boxes used to collect and ship the books. Shipping costs were funded through a doughnut sale held by the Garnet Valley High School French Club teachers and students. The Garnet Valley Maintenance Department provided "muscle power" to collect the boxes of books from all the schools and deliver them to the post office. It was truly a great community effort!



GVES fourth grade students, Aaron Parenti, Sandy Howe, and Evan Kiscaden bring in books for the Literacy Lifeboat Book Drive.

Picture not available.
Board Policy prohibits student pictures being posted on the web.

The students from Franklin Upper Elementary School in Meadville, MS enjoy checking out the books from the Garnet Valley School District.

Make sure that YOUR emergency info is updated!

#### New Telephone Communication System In Place

Garnet Valley School District has implemented a new telephone communication system called the *Global Connect School Communication System*. The new system allows parents/guardians to receive personalized telephone messages providing timely information

regarding school closings and emergency communications. Every household with a student in the district should have received a letter with special instructions on how to update emergency contact information for their family. If you have a child attending a Garnet Valley School, please make your changes **TODAY** if you haven't already done so.

Please call 610-579-7306 if you did not receive the letter.



#### Dr. Loretta Scuderi

Dr. Loretta Scuderi, a Garnet Valley School Board Member since July 1998, passed away on September 29, 2005. Dr. Scuderi was a strong advocate for the education of young people in the district and stressed the need to balance costs within the budget.

Dr. Scuderi's career started as a teacher in the Philadelphia School District in 1958. She began teaching as soon as her sons, Joseph and Peter, started school. As her career as an educator progressed, she

became a principal and later was appointed Superintendent of Districts 3, 7 and 8 in Philadelphia. Dr. Scuderi and her husband, retired U.S. Magistrate Judge Peter B. Scuderi of the U.S. Court for the Eastern District of PA, moved to Glen Mills in 1992. Dr. Scuderi was the deputy chairperson for the Education Committee and a member of the Finance Committee. She provided a personal touch to the School Board, often writing notes to students congratulating them on their accomplishments.

Being a true proponent of quality education for everyone, Dr. Scuderi was deeply committed to the Garnet Valley community.

#### **New Board Members in 2005**



The two newest members of the Garnet Valley School District Board are Mary Kay Beirne, who replaced Jodi Dix in February 2005, and Charles Abel, replacing Dr. Scuderi in September 2005. The Board is excited about the fresh perspective the new members bring to the Board and look forward to working together for the best interests of the Garnet Valley community.

# Differentiated Instruction A Customized Method of Teaching

Differentiated Instruction is a major avenue whereby teachers can meet the varying needs of their students. In Garnet Valley, Differentiated Instruction, or DI, as it is commonly

called, is viewed as an important initiative and teachers are being trained in DI strategies to better customize instruction. "One size rarely fits all," DI consultant, Christy Doubet, shared with GV teachers at a recent inservice. "We need to identify what we want all students to know, understand and do as it relates to a unit and then vary our strategies." Ms. Doubet went on to say, "as educators, we need to identify the big ideas embedded in our content areas even before we begin to introduce a unit. If we do this, we will be able to keep our eve on the ball, and judge which students are in need of extra help, and which students need an alternate approach or to forge ahead at a more rapid rate."

Teaching in this fashion is a highly artistic act, and approximately thirty teachers have volunteered for extra training and coaching by Ms. Doubet, a doctoral candidate at the University of Virginia, and a colleague of the world renowned Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson. This cadre

of GV teachers, in turn, serves as a resource to their colleagues as "trainers" of peers, presenting at faculty meetings, and collaborating on certain projects.



GVSD music teachers at DI Inservice—Tamara Lynn (CES), Marie Sorber (CES), student teacher Beth Minnick from WCU, Joel Lenderman and Angela DeMarro (GVES)

Special education and IST teachers have long served as a valuable resource to teachers of inclusion students. Teachers of the gifted, also, provide ideas for "ratcheting up content" within regular education classes. Several notable recent examples have been collaboration

between Mr. Tom Dame and Mrs. Karen Hansell at GVMS. Mr. Dame, seventh grade science teacher, also an experienced structural engineer, built a resonator and both he

> and Mrs. Hansell worked with both a gifted seminar and regular education science students to teach the principles of resonance as they relate to earthquakes and other natural disasters.

At Bethel Springs Elementary School, Mrs. Rebecca Brown and Mrs. Dee Contipedero collaborated to appropriately differentiate for students to approach a common theme through the use of diverse novels. Ms. Brown and Mrs. Bracalenti collaborated on a problem solving theme for regular education math classes. Similarly, at GVES Mrs. Jen Valerio and Ms. Laura Reisch collaborated to

bring differentiated strategies to a math problem solving unit. Ms Cathie Cooper and Mrs. Carol Law, similarly work with colleagues at Concord School and GVHS respectively to fine tune regular education teaching strategies to meet individual needs.

## Crisis Planning at Our Schools

The Garnet Valley School District continues its diligent efforts in the area of crisis planning. Refinements to the comprehensive plan are made on an ongoing basis, and these refinements are always based on state of the art research, training and feedback through building and district-wide crisis teams.

During this past year, key members from each department and school building participated in a series of Table Top exercises led by county and regional leaders. School officials, police, fire, township and emergency management personnel simulated a series of potential disasters, then critiqued our responses, communication systems and respective plans.



GVHS Guidance Counselor, Karen Williamson, GVHS Nurse, Peggy Amoss, Evening Maintenance Supervisor, Joe Steigerwalt, Concord Fire Marshal, Fred Fields, GVMS Assistant Principal, Ken Acker and Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Majorie DelBello, at the Delaware County 911 center.

In the fall, Mr. Thomas Morgan, local crisis trainer/coordinator trained the district's administrative team in the various complexities of the incident command system and crisis response. Crises were simulated and the team's responses were analyzed. Building level teams will conduct similar drills throughout the winter and spring, emphasizing evacuation and lock-

down modes to assure best practices. Guides in the form of handbooks and videotapes are being developed to allow building principals (or their designated substitute) to easily navigate the intricacies of all their building's systems (e.g. HVAC, security, boiler, water, etc.) in the event of an emergency.

Additionally, Dr. Albert Villarin, MD, FACEP, consultant in bio-terrorism, will address administrators on this topic from the federal crisis planning perspective in March.

The Garnet Valley School District is committed to state of the art crisis planning, with one of the longest-standing refined plans. The implementation of the *Global Connect Communications Phone System* is the latest initiative to reach this goal. Administrators have

presented on various aspects of the plan at local, state and national conferences, and maintain ongoing communication links with a plethora of agencies also committed to the well being of staff, students, and community. A number of competitive grants have been attained to assist in this ongoing endeavor.

#### **GVHS FBLA TAKES TOP HONORS**

On January 12<sup>th</sup>, 54 students traveled to Upper Darby High School to compete in the Future Business Leaders of America Regional Leadership Conference. This conference allows members to compete in various

business-related events. Garnet Valley had 46 students place in the top ten and 23 students qualified to go on to compete in states. States will be held at Hershey Lodge and Convention Center on April 19, 20, and 21st.

Dylan Nelson: 2nd Place -Accounting 1, Mary Jachetti: 5th Place - Accounting 1, Kevin Ong: 4th Place - Accounting 2, Joe Katacinski: 4th Place -Banking and Financial Systems, William DiMaio:1st Place - Business Communication, Lorraine Neef: 3rd Place - Computer Applications, James Boyce: 4th

Place - Computer Concepts, Stacey and Stepanie Synder: 1st Place - Desktop Publishing, Mayra Torres: 4th Place - Business Law, Charlie Luo, Matt Malinowski, and Dave Hynek: 3rd - Entrepreneurship, Anna Pendalakis, Shawn Geary, and Sheana Lee: 3rd Emerging Business Issues, Tori Marino: 2nd - FBLA Principles and Procedures, Michelle Curran: 4th - FBLA Principles and Procedures, Rose Conte: 5th Impromptu Speaking, Niko Rafailidis: 4th International Business, Laura

Anshant: 5th Intro to Business, Greg Otto: 2nd Job Interview, Tyler Keyes: 4th Marketing, Cathy Phan: 1st Ms. FBL and Who's Who in FBLA, Jason Hamill: 2nd Networking Concepts, Connor Price: 2nd Public

Speaking, Sohum Trivedi: 1st Public Speaking II, Nick Paolella: 2nd Technology Concepts, Andrew Cory: 1st Visual Basic, Lindsay Farah: 2nd Visual Basic, Justin Snyder: 3rd Visual Basic, Laura Loggia: 1st Word Processing /Bruce Chang: 1st Word Processing II, Kim Neidig: 4th Word Processing II, Tyler Slezak: 9th Place - Accounting 1, Thomas **Quagliariello**: 9th Place – Accounting II, Billy Lim: 6th Place - Banking and Financial Systems, Kevin Bird: 10th Place - Business Calculations, Brian Mikus: 9th Place – Business Law. Shazia Nakhoda: 6th Place - Business Math. Nick Coan: 9th Place -



Garnet Valley's Chapter of FBLA received the Outstanding Chapter Award, and two of our students, **Lindsay Farah** and **Gregory Otto**, were elected President and Secretary, respectively, of Region 19 FBLA.



### PANA = A NEW EMPHASIS ON HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Research has long indicated that children who are active, fit, and eat nutritiously, focus better, and tend to perform well academically. Schools have always underscored that message too, and now the US Congress, with its reauthorization of the Healthy Meals for Healthy Americans Act, also reiterates its importance.

The Act mandates that school districts that wish to retain their school lunch subsidies must now adopt a wellness policy, and districts are also encouraged to establish health councils to address issues of nutrition, activity, and healthy living in an ongoing manner. Each of Garnet Valley's five schools now has such a health council, and they are expected to bring recommendations for a Wellness Policy to the board of school directors in February 2006. The School Board will then develop such a policy, to be adopted before July 1, 2006.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education has also introduced a new initiative related to wellness, PANA, (Pennsylvania Advocates for Nutrition and Activity,) and encourages all districts to participate

GVHS Dance Team sponsor, Julieann Brant, and GV Adult evening school fitness director, Mary Curcio, addressed new teachers, administrators and the Board at a recent School Board meeting dubbed "PANA-vent". This event was organized to increase staff awareness about how healthy food and stress-reducing exercise can enhance their personal and professional lives.

in wellness activities. Garnet Valley has enthusiastically responded—each building in its own way. The elementary schools have celebrated the Great Apple Crunch Day, Go for the Greens, and other "Fruit of the Month" Days. They've expanded involvement in the mileage clubs with teachers and students running laps together. The middle school students and staff have been working with Chartwells, our food service vendor, in refining healthy choices for meals and expanding curriculum to identify opportunities for students to make their own healthy choices. The high school will introduce a new elective course, *Eating Light*, for the 2006-07 school year, and has added a number of new clubs and co-curricular activities to involve students in a more active lifestyle.

Moving forward, staff, students, and parents will be asked to be more mindful of every aspect of the GV culture as it pertains to wellness--healthier choices in foods selected for celebrations, fundraisers, vending machines, etc, and activities that build strong bodies in healthy minds, ever ready to learn.

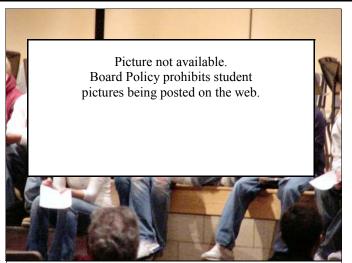


## Garnet Valley High School Hosts Alumni Council

The guidance department of Garnet Valley High School hosted an alumni panel with the Class of 2005 returning to their alma mater over winter break. The seasoned college students came to dispense advice to juniors and seniors about the first few months of college. From dealing with roommates to time management, the college freshmen provided a plethora of insider information. The high school students listened attentively as the college students spoke about college life.

"Keeping an open mind" and "managing time wisely" were two pieces of advice that were repeated again and again. Approximately thirty students returned to speak and were invited to a reception after the panel discussion for conversation and snacks.

Karen Williamson, GVHS guidance counselor, has been running the alumni panel for several years. According to Mrs. Williamson, "Each year the panel has a different 'chemistry' and seems to take the discussion to a unique place. Every year, I hear a phrase that sings the praises of Garnet Valley High School."



In the picture are Brandon Whittington(University of Virginia), Carolyn Gibbs (University of Pittsburgh), Jordon Price(University of North Carolina), Shaina Mardinly (University of North Carolina), Katie Bradenburg (University of Pittsburgh), Thilan Wijesekera (Duke University).

## **School Happenings**



# Garnet Valley Middle School Warm Clothing Drive

The class of 2012, or the Sixth Grade Class at **Garnet Valley Middle School,** is thrilled with the response to the annual warm items drive. The drive ended in December and they far surpassed their goal of 2,012 pieces and have counted over 3,000 items! The sixth graders and their teachers would like to thank the community for helping us take care of friends and neighbors in Delaware County. All warm items were kindly received by the Loaves and Fishes food Pantry in Prospect Park.

In the photo, from back left: Tyler lanniccari, Jen Choi, Chris Loggia, Ron Hitner, Emily Merchant, Ashley Larson, Tom Scott and Andrea Zizza.

## **Garnet Valley High School Stocks Pantries**

Garnet Valley High School canned food drive raised over 25,520 cans of food for the needy. This year's donations went to Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry in Prospect Park and City Team Ministries in Chester. For the third straight year, the Garnet Valley High School canned food drive, sponsored by the Student Council, raised over 20,000 cans of food for the needy. Local businesses and parents also played a part, offering donations to this worthy cause. The teachers were overwhelmed by the community spirit and generosity. Every year the students come through at a time when many of the kitchens in the shelters are empty. Mr. Demarro, Mrs. Seltzer, Mrs. Rockafellow, and Mr. Kocur are teachers who, as team captains, motivate their student teams. Their student teams are inspired by the incentive that the winning captain, this year, Mrs. Seltzer, gets "pied" in the face. In the photo, Melanie Giardina, Brian Kocur, and Lindsay Ambrose help pack the truck for the Canned Food Drive.





# BSES Annual Polar Express Parade

The first graders at **BSES** concluded their book study of the Polar Express with a parade in their pajamas. All first grade students, their teachers, and principal, Mr. Piasecki, and assistant principal, Mrs. Holland, parade around the school and return to the cafeteria for a hot chocolate and cookie treat. Lindsey Mullen, Emma Zipf and Josh Szkotak have their tickets in hand to board the train.

Families, Students, and Community Members
Are welcome to hear

Powerful Motivational Speaker

# Steve Fitzhugh Former NFL player Monday, Feb. 27, 2006 7 p.m. - GVMS Auditorium

Steve Fitzhugh speaks to thousands of youths each year throughout the country and abroad. Steve's talks help young people make a positive choice in life. His message challenges the students on critical issues of today. His style is fresh and humorous as he tells about his stories in the NFL (Denver Broncos and Cleveland Browns) and his own personal experiences. He identifies with the youth of today, he sees what the students see, he feels what they feel, and he understands their situations.



## **Construction Update**

# Garnet Valley Middle School Completed, Garnet Valley High School Renovations Accelerated, New Concord School Takes Shape

Garnet Valley Middle School: In late November, nearly two months ahead of schedule, Garnet Valley Middle School opened its new 14 classroom addition. The welcomed addition provided the Middle School with two state-of-the-art science labs and a beautiful computer lab in addition to the other 11 classrooms. GVMS houses 1,100 students. Although the building is significantly larger, the addition enabled the principals to schedule teams closer to one another. Prior to the new wing, several teachers "floated" from room to room throughout the day. The additional classrooms allowed for assigning teams in the same area. Most students now have only a short walk from one team room to another. The Garnet Valley Middle School administration, faculty, and students are certainly thankful for the new wing and are taking advantage of the academic opportunities that have resulted from its completion.





Garnet Valley High School: Students and teachers occupied part of the new second floor addition at the start of the new semester in late January. The rest of the second floor will be ready on President's weekend. GVHS construction is on an accelerated schedule so that HVAC renovations can be started in the oldest section of the building, the A wing. The high school renovations are scheduled for completion of Fall 2006. In January, the School Board approved the installation of synthetic turf on the GVHS athletic stadium field. The new turf, which will be supported by advertising, ticket sales, and other non-tax revenues, will allow more intensive field use and scheduling of the field with less deterioration and lower maintenance costs.

New Concord Elementary School: The new Concord School is scheduled to open in September 2006. The steel work will be completed by the end of February with the concrete block and wall work under way as the building takes shape. Concord School will utilize geothermal wells which will provide heating and cooling with state of the art methods while conserving energy. Ground has been prepared for storm water runoff and erosion. The 130,035 sq. ft. new building will house approximately 700 students in

the fall of 2006.



#### Leesa Bucci Attends Educational Conference in Bejing China

Leesa Bucci, head of the GVSD Art Department and a GVHS art teacher, recently attended the US-China Joint Educational Conference in Bejing, China. Ms. Bucci was among 206 delegates who represented North America. She said that the conference allowed for an exchange of ideas between the two cultures as China is looking to expand their arts education. Since attending the conference, Mrs. Bucci has added a new dimension to her teaching and has already implemented a new practice into her classes. Mrs. Bucci stated, "This conference experience will no doubt be one of the highlights of my professional career."

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The law applies to all schools which receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student, or former student, who has reached the age of 18 or is attending any school beyond the high school level. Students and former students to whom the rights have transferred are called eligible students.

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of materials in education records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to inspect the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents and eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record commenting on the contested information in the record.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:
  - School employees who have a need to know;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions:
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - Individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas;
  - Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies; and State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory" type information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school. For additional information or technical assistance, you may call (202) 260-3887 or TDD (202) 260-8956 or contact:

> **Family Policy Compliance Office** U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue. S.W.

# Notice of Rights Preschool Parents

If you are a parent of a preschooler residing in the Garnet Valley School District and are concerned that your child is not developing as he/she should in any of the following areas: talking, seeing, playing, thinking, hearing or moving, help may be available. Free screening services are provided through the Delaware County Intermediate Unit Early Intervention Program. Call 610-565-0618 for more information or to begin the screening process.

All information is confidential.

## Student Records **Policy**

The Garnet Valley Student Records Policy #216

#### may be obtained at:

Elementary Schools - Concord Elementary School Office, Bethel Springs Elementary School Office, Garnet Valley Elementary School Office Garnet Valley Middle School - Guidance Office or

Principal/ Assistant Principal's Office Garnet Valley High School - Guidance Office or Principal/ Assistant Principal's Office

The Garnet Valley Schools

### Now Post ALL Weekly News and Information on the GVSD District Web Site!

All five schools plus the District have extensive web pages and we encourage our community to look first to the web for information about the schools and activities. Another excellent source for information is the district television station, GVTV— Comcast channel 11, in the three GVSD municipalities.

Concord Township, Bethel Township, and Chester Heights Borough.

#### Board Refinances Bonds to Save \$257K+



The Garnet Valley School Board refinanced \$8,650,000 in existing bonds to a lower fixed interest rate at the January Board meeting. This move is expected to save the district more than \$257,000 by locking in an interest rate that is near a record 40-year low point.

At the same Board meeting, Tom Delaney, GVSD Director of Business & Support Services, noted that Moody's Investor Service has upgraded the district's underlying bond credit rating from A2 to A1. This new rating will allow the district to obtain low interest rates and good refinancing terms. Mr. Delaney and Board member, Ed Plasha, went on to note, that the rating upgrade is like a "feather in the cap to the Board," since the basis for this upgrade is based, in large part, on the fact that the Board manages the GVSD budget and spending conservatively.

#### Garnet Valley School District Community Newsletter

80 Station Road Glen Mills, PA 19342 Phone: 610-579-7300 Fax: 610-579-7368

Visit us on the Web at: www.garnetvalleyschools.com Email: gvweb@garnetvalleyschools.com



Quality Educational Opportunities for All

# GVHS Presents The Pajama Game GVHS Performing Arts Center



Thursday, March 9th 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 10th 7:30 p.m. saturday, March 11th 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

\$10 at the door / \$8 in Advance

Tickets on sale beginning Feb. 22
Call the box office voice mail system
at 610-579-7438 or visit GVHS ticket booth
on Sundays from 1-3 p.m.

Support the Musical Theater Program
Business Sponsorship Opportunities Available!
Advertise in our Show Program!

Voices of the Valley is published by Garnet Valley School District.

Address correspondence to:

Anthony Costello, Ed.D., Superintendent, 80 Station Rd. Glen Mills, PA 19342, Phone—610-579-7300.

Communications Specialists: Sue Fritz 610-579-7306 and Louann Campbell 610-579-7307

#### **School Board Meetings**

All meetings are open to the public.

Garnet Valley School Board meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 8:00 p.m. The Work Session is held the Monday of the week before the regular Board Meeting at 8:00 p.m.

#### **GVSD Board of School Directors**

Michael J. Hanlon, Esq., President	610-558-2005
Kenneth J. Miller, Vice-President	610-459-3290
Charles Abel	610-361-3495
Mary Kay Beirne	610-361-0058
George Patti	610-459-1717
Edward Plasha	610-388-5666
Barbara Tarr	610-459-3962
Daniel C. Van Wyk, Esq.	610-859-8182
William D. Wilkinson	610-459-4954

#### Seated with the Board:

Anthony V. Costello, Ed.D., Superintendent
Marjorie DelBello, Ed.D., Asst. Superintendent
Kathie Estock, Ed.D., Asst. Superintendent
Joseph W. Kauffman, Esq. Board Solicitor
Thomas E. Delaney, CPA, Treasurer
Margaret F. Brown, Secretary
Nancy O. Ward, Supervisor Human Resources

#### The Finance and Facility Operations Committees meet following the Work Session.

Finance Committee Chair: Edward Plasha Facility Operations Chair: Daniel Van Wyk

The Education Committee meets the Tuesday before the Work Session at 7:00 p.m.

Education Committee Chair: Barbara Tarr

The Policy Committee meets per chair's request.
Policy Committee Chair: Kenneth J. Miller

The Building Projects Committee meets per chair's request.

Building Projects Committee Chair: William Wilkinson