

# Junior high students step back in history

Brownsboro Junior High students were treated to a surprise Thursday, May 8. US History students entered the school library to find a man dressed in a Confederate infantry uniform. The man was Rickey Pittman, an author, teacher and Civil War re-enactor.

He had even brought a host of items actually used during the war.

Jana Snyder, librarian at the school, said she asked Pittman to come to the school after they met at a library conference in Jacksonville during January.

"He's going to be teaching US history classes throughout the day," Snyder said.

Pittman, who hails from Monroe, La., also teaches freshman English at two Northeast Louisiana universities. He is a certified Gifted and Talented secondary English teacher.

He first got interested in Civil War re-enactment when a friend took him to one.

"He had an extra uniform, so I tried it out."

To Pittman, English and history have always gone together hand in hand, so he merged English and history to become an author. His first major step was winning the grand prize in the Ernest Hemmingway Short Story Competition in 1998.

"I wrote a short story called 'Ghost Fires,'" Pittman said,

"and I was able to meet Hemmingway's family."

From there, Pittman wrote two books on the Civil War from the south's viewpoint.

One book, a children's book called "Jim Limber Davis: A Black Orphan in the Confederate White House", is a factual account of an orphaned black child adopted by



Jefferson Davis.

"The Confederacy had its own White House during the Civil War," Pittman said. "The first one was in Montgomery, Alabama. The second was in Richmond, Virginia."

The Jim Limber Davis story is an accelerated reader book, meaning schools can have test questions on the book. It is aimed at pre-kindergarten through third grade level readers.

The second book, "Stories of the Confederate South", is a collection of fictional short stories from the Civil War era

from the south's perspective.

In addition to his teaching and re-enactment interests, Pittman is also a freelance writer and editor. He is also a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Camp Thomas McGuire, in West Monroe.

"There are so many stereotypes and so much misinformation about the Civil War these days," Pittman said about the importance of the subject. "Some of the issues are still being discussed."

He added one false stereotype about the Civil War is that the war was only started due to slavery.

Pittman said the students responded well to his lesson. In addition to telling children about the history of the war and the life of a soldier in that era, he also played guitar and sang Civil War songs for the kids.

The author's visit to Brownsboro comes amidst Pittman's first year to take his lessons on the road. Pittman said he wants to visit 100 different locations a year to teach at.

Rickey Pittman is also a traveling musician who performs both original and Civil War era music.

More information about the author and teacher is available at [www.rickeypittman.com](http://www.rickeypittman.com).

Pittman also visited Hastings in Tyler on Thursday for a book signing.

## ★ Wyatt, Grantham elected

(Continued from page 1)

Friday.

Wyatt, a business manager for a sheet metal working company in Tyler, said he can make level-headed and tough decisions.

"These decisions are what I normally make," Wyatt said.

He first signed up to run for the board position because he wanted to see growth and make sure the students have the best resources available. Wyatt is a lifelong resident of the school district with a child in Brownsboro Elementary School.

Grantham said the board is

faced with the huge issue of school funding.

"It's hard to meet the requirements of the state and still stay within the budget," Grantham said.

She likened it to a balancing act.

This will be the re-elected incumbent's second term on the board.

"If you're a part of something then you should be willing to offer your time to that organization," Grantham said.

Grantham, originally from Bowling Green, Kentucky, has three children in the

school district. Having a mother who was a high school teacher and a father who was a college professor, she spent a great deal of her time around schools.

"I'd like to thank everyone who voted," she said.

It is important to serve more than one term, Grantham added, because a board member will learn a great deal about school administration during the first term. The board member will then be able to bring this experience to the board during the next term.

# BHS Prom Court



Chad Wilson Photo

Prom Court for Brownsboro High School consisted of seniors Brittany Robbins, Andrew Adair, Lexi Harrod, Collin Wilson, Anaka Mosler and Joe Denney. Prom was held on Saturday, May 10 in Tyler.

# Brownsboro prepares to draft new budget

By Nathan Straus  
News Reporter

Brownsboro City Council met Thursday, May 8, to go over the first draft of its proposed 2008-2009 city budget. If the final version is anything like the version proposed at the City Council meeting, the budget will be increased by about \$25,000. However, the water and sewer budget would be decreased by over \$50,000.

One of the first big changes on the budget is the health insurance item. The figure jumped from \$16,500 to \$26,000. Brownsboro mayor Ronny Harris attributed the city's new assistant court clerk, hired in October of 2007.

Electricity and street repair could take a dip, street repair falling from \$30,631 to \$28,000 and electricity from \$28,000 to \$26,500.

One of the larger leaps on the expenditures budget is the miscellaneous item, which could go from \$7,500 to \$11,340.

For revenues, the fines and fees item took a massive leap on the proposed budget; it jumped to \$145,000 from \$124,950. This accounts for most of the change from the city budget's transition

to \$415,750 from \$390,600.

Accounting for most of the \$397,491 to \$341,400 decrease in the water and sewer budget are the new equipment, repair and replacement and miscellaneous items. New equipment went from \$35,000 to \$10,850, repair and replacement from \$21,846 and miscellaneous from \$28,056 to \$10,000.

Items like electricity and maintenance rose a bit, electricity rising from \$44,500 to \$46,000 and maintenance from \$30,721 to \$31,760.

The big factor in the water and sewer budget change is the FEMA reimbursement item, which provided \$39,346 for the city in 2007.

Currently the budget target is 83.3 percent. Many items are close to this goal, though a few are either far under it or have gone over.

Of its \$13,000 gas and oil budget, a balance of \$3,693.60 remains, putting this item at 71.6 percent. Equipment repair currently stands at 62.7 percent of its \$5,000 budget.

Miscellaneous has gone over the budget by \$716.99. Health insurance has also gone over its

\$16,500 budget to \$18,941.96.

Under revenues, fines and fees have far exceeded expectations; this revenue is at \$171,635.00, 137 percent of the \$124,950 budget drawn in 2007.

Though expenditures have gone about \$5,000 over the budget, revenues are pouring in thanks to fines and fees.

"I'm very pleased that we're in such good shape," Harris said.

Water and sewer remains slightly under the budget mark, though water and sewer revenue does the same.

The council also passed two ordinances at the meeting. The first was an ordinance from Atmos Energy to increase franchise tax from four to five percent. The second ordinance effectively prohibited LED billboards from being constructed in Brownsboro without the council's permission.

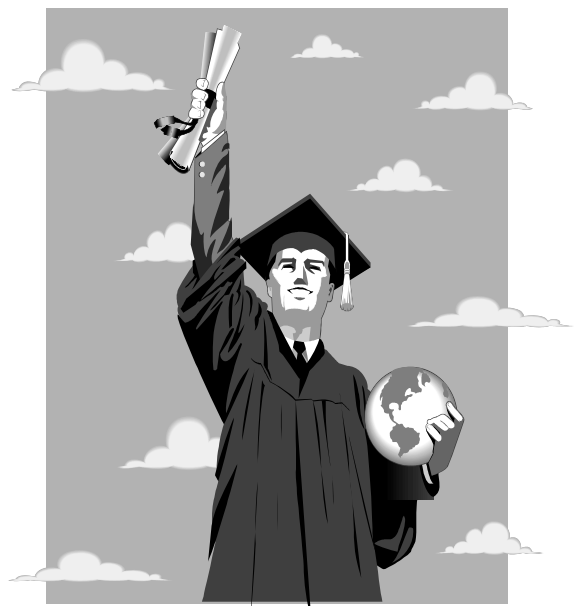
The deadline to have an ordinance passed on the LED billboards is June 1, and there would not have been another Brownsboro City Council meeting before that time. There could be future meetings to elaborate on what signs would be allowed and what signs would not be allowed.

# Graduation 2008

The Statesman will publish the 2008 Special Graduation Edition Thursday, May 29

If you or your business would like to place a special graduation ad in this issue the **deadline is Friday, May 16**

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