



**GEHS Wrestler
of the Week**
Page 7



Laurine Yates' art at library
Page 10

Mountain messenger

January 6, 2024

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The Weekend Newspaper for the Greenbrier Valley - Lewisburg, West Virginia

Area garden clubs named Volunteer of the Year

By Sarah Richardson

For the year 2023, the City of Lewisburg has named local gardening and beautification clubs as the Volunteers of the Year. The groups were acknowledged at the Shanghai Parade on Jan. 1, and carried the Volunteer of the Year signs for the event. Each year, Lewisburg chooses a volunteer or volunteers who "actively volunteer their time and effort in our community, especially in times of need" and who often receive little recognition for their service.

A proclamation signed by Mayor Beverly White states: "The City of Lewisburg wishes to thank the Bluebell Garden Club, The Greenbrier Gardeners, the Lewisburg House and Garden Club, the Savannah Garden Club, the Lewisburg Foundation, the Lewisburg in Bloom Committee, and the WVU Master Gardeners of the Greenbrier Valley for their service in horticulture, conservation, their many projects including annual hanging baskets, planters, landscaped areas, tree plantings and civic improvement to the city and beyond."

The proclamation also explains how in 2014, the Lewisburg in Bloom Committee was formed as a coalition to bring together the garden clubs, Lewisburg Foundation, the Lewisburg Downtown Merchants Association, the WVU Master Gardeners of the Greenbrier Valley, and citizens to work together for the betterment of the city and for the participation in the national America in Bloom competition.

It notes that all of the mentioned groups are non-profit volunteer organizations who seek knowledge in horticulture, conservation, flower arranging, historic preservation, and sharing ideas and programs with the community

See other Shanghai Parade winners on Page 5



Marching in the Shanghai Parade (from left to right) are Linda Spencer, Lewisburg in Bloom and Garden Club member; Jan Dehaven, Bluebell member; Brenda Spencer, Lewisburg in Bloom and Bluebell member; Martha Hilton, Lewisburg in Bloom and Greenbrier Gardeners member; Judy Deegans, Lewisburg House and Garden Club member; Donna Toney, Lewisburg in Bloom member; and Shannon Beatty, Lewisburg in Bloom Coordinator and Lewisburg Foundation board member.

Donations continue for Penny Pitch into the new year

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." — Winston Churchill.

Once again, we have a wonderful community to thank for supporting Penny Pitch. When a guest from Florida saw how people gave and supported this program, she made a donation to help noting that she couldn't believe how this community pulls together to help each other.

Thank you to everyone who donated, who delivered, who interviewed families, and who helped with logistics. Again, we owe a special thanks to the Mountain Messenger. They picked up the ball for Penny Pitch and helped make it happen.

Happy New Year, everyone!

- 30.00 Billy & Pam Carter
- 300.00 Frankford Presbyterian Church
- 100.00 Pete & Polly Buskirk
- 100.00 Troy & Juddylee Holbrook in memory of Frances and Martha
- 3,000.00 In loving memory of Jeanne & Lawson Hamilton, Jr., Helen & George Aide and Nadine & Leo O'Neil
- 100.00 In honor of Carol Cales from S.T.A.I. R.
- 50.00 James & JoAnn Pearis
- 200.00 Jim & Nancy Nemitz
- 200.00 Susan Sharp Campbell
- TOTAL \$49,907.00

"Neighbors Helping Neighbors"

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration to be held January 15

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration in Lewisburg on Monday, Jan. 15, will begin at 11 a.m. and consist of a march from the Greenbrier County Courthouse to Lewisburg United Methodist for a community lunch, followed at 12:30 p.m. by a program in the sanctuary. The keynote speaker for the program will be Mark Hickman who is a 1975 graduate of Greenbrier East High School and now a resident of White Sulphur Springs. He retired in 2019 from West Chester University near Philadelphia where he taught in the Department of Communication Studies and then in the University Honors College.

While on the faculty, Hickman developed the university's minor in Leadership Studies and revamped the University Honors College admissions process to increase minority enrollment tenfold. Trained in Communication and Social Change, Hickman specialized in teaching in the areas of Public Discourse and Decision-Making, Social Movement Rhetoric, Political Communication, and Leadership Development.

While at the University he served as President of the Honors Council, Director of Forensics (Speech and Debate), and he was a recipient of the West Chester University Legacy of Leadership Award.

As part of his commitment to leadership through service to promote positive change he spent several years leading groups of students to South Africa to conduct needs assessments and secure resources for children whose parents had died from AIDS.

Gathering at the courthouse for the march at 11 a.m. will be occurring at exactly the same time as the begin-



The Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration speaker before the march will be Mark Hickman

ning of MLK Holiday DC Peace Walk along MLK Avenue in our nation's capital. It's a day of unity across the nation for helping in the struggle for civil rights and the promotion of harmony among all people.

Before the march starts, Lewisburg Mayor Beverly White will read her proclamation of the beginning of

See "MLK Day Celebration" Page 3

2023 News in Review

January

Lewisburg's Shanghai Parade is held on the 1st; as of Jan. 1, 2023, Greenbrier Valley Medical Center officially becomes a part of Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC); Jan. 16, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration is held in downtown Lewisburg; Penny Pitch exceeds financial goal; BOE recognizes Brenda Elmore, who has served as the Davis Stuart liaison to Greenbrier County Schools for 30 years, Elizabeth Reynolds, a WVU Youth Nutrition Educator through the WVU Extension Office, and the Greenbrier East men's soccer team's state title win; WSS tables lease agreement with 50 East following encroachment onto city property; County

Commission elects Commissioner Tammy Shiflet-Tincher as President; Lewisburg City Council declares Mike Kidd the 2022 Volunteer of the Year; at their regular meeting the Greenbrier County Airport Authority discusses an incident which occurred at LWB earlier in the month. According to Airport Director Brian Belcher, "an aircraft landed, got a flat tire, lost traction and slid into the grass. No one was hurt in the incident, and we immediately reported the incident to the FAA. We gave them a report, which is pretty standard operating procedure, telling them everything that happened as well as the weather at the time and such. We recently heard

back from the FAA saying that they have everything they need from us at this point."; the City of Lewisburg was named the winner for Best Downtown and Best Town for Foodies in the Best of West Virginia contest, held by West Virginia Living; American Pickers announce plan to visit West Virginia;

February

Mark Trent and Dan Withrow joined forces to revive the Sportsman Tavern in Ronceverte; 12 James Monroe High School (JMHS) Youth Leadership Alliance (YLA) students travel to Boston, MA, for the Harvard University Model United Nations (HMUN) Conference; Jenny Curry, director of Food Services for Greenbrier County

Schools, promotes local products for Farm to School Lunches; Ronceverte City Council welcome newest member, Mark Trent; the rail line between Cass and Durbin in Pocahontas County opens following almost four years of cooperative work between the West Virginia Division of Highways, Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad; Ronald McMillion, 71, is indicted and subsequently arrested on one count of murder of Dee Ann Keene on or about the date of Feb. 28, 2014; Dr. Erin Drickey Justice, the West Virginia School Counselor of the Year, travels to Washington, DC, as WV's representative to the American School Counselors Association Gala at

Union Station; Alderson searches for alternative water source for new water plant; Lajuana Agripina Lopez, 46, of Rainelle, is arrested and charged with murder in the 1st degree following a homicide investigation; the Greenbrier County Airport Authority reluctantly accepts Director Brian Belcher's resignation;

March

WSS City Council confirms funding continues on Greenbrier Valley Family Activity Center; ticket sales begin for 15th Annual Chocolate Festival; Dr. Kim Arbogast McBride and Dr. W. Stephen McBride, archaeologists, are named History Heroes by the Division

See "2023 News in Review" Page 2

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Inside This Week
Number of Sections: 1

GENERAL

- Briefly 3
- Classified 6
- For the Record 3
- Obituaries 4

ENTERTAINMENT

- Puzzles 8
- Steppin' Out 10
- Dining Guide 10



2023 news in Review

Continued from Front Page

of Arts, Culture and History; Lewisburg is named the Best Small Town Food Scene for 2023 by USA Today; River City announces the newest festival in the region - The Ronceverte Food Truck Festival - starting in May; Paul and Mary Lindquist are named the Grand Marshals for the St. Patrick's Day Parade; River Festival Committee invites people of all ages to creatively visualize a new logo and present a new slogan for use in the 2023 Ronceverte River Festival pamphlet; the 2nd annual Red Nose River Float, a floating fundraiser, will return to the Greenbrier River this summer on Saturday, June 17; the Ronceverte Skate Shop opens on Edgar Avenue by the post office; the Greenbrier Valley Convention and Visitor's Bureau unveils a new, updated logo for the Greenbrier Valley and a new version of the visitor's guide; Greenbrier River Trail set to open in mid-summer ahead of previous estimate; Lauren Rodgers finishes in Top 5 in Poetry Out Loud State Championship; Greenbrier Valley Brewing Company announces on their social media that they closed their taproom "indefinitely" as they work to save the company; Gov. Jim Justice announces Jan Cahill resigned from his position as Superintendent of the West Virginia State Police; Justice also announces the appointment of Jack Chambers as Interim Superintendent; Edgerton Inn, the oldest in Ronceverte built by Thomas Edgar who founded Ronceverte is rebranded Hollerwood House; Kamron Lawson (Raleigh), Caden Glover (Monroe), and Andre Williams (Greenbrier) are selected to go to Hollywood for the next round of American Idol!; "The Old Seneca Health building" across from the New River Community and Technical College campus is the site of some very extensive and public demolition to make way for a parking lot with electric charging stations;

April

E.L. Robinson Engineering Co. founder Ed Robinson is presented with the Distinguished West Virginian Award at a ceremony at the Embassy Suites in Charleston; the 15th annual Lewisburg Chocolate Festival is held Saturday, Apr. 8; Smailes family opens Rainelle Deli & Marketplace in Rainelle; Greenbrier Valley Chorale celebrates their 30th year; Monster Truck Challenge Live Destruction Tour comes to the fairgrounds; Abby and Josiah Spangler, new directors of Wellspring, announce plans for creating a long-term care plan for their community including access to food, mental health care, home construction, providing a safe space, and referring clients to other local providers like The Marvel Center, Valley Works, God's Way Home, and Seneca Health. They plan to begin offering free counseling and meetings (AA, NA, Al-Anon) in the near future; Greenbrier East High School is named one of 10 National Finalists in the 13th annual Samsung Solve for Tomorrow competition, receiving a \$50,000 prize package;

May

New signage is completed at Greenbrier Valley Airport; the Greenbrier River Trail Foundation

(GRTF) seeks the public's help in raising funds for an extensive project: re-decking all 37 bridges along our Greenbrier River Trail; American Legion of Ronceverte (Greenbrier Post No. 26) honors officers Alex Williams and Robert Akree, II to show their appreciation for the work that they, Chief Jerry Hopkins, and the rest of the department do for the city; White Sulphur Springs City Council hear sports parents speak out against the city's decision to bid out the concession stands at the softball and football fields; first Ronceverte Food Truck Festival is a smashing success; Amy Hubbard and Lisa Carter speak to the Greenbrier County Commission about plans for West Virginia Helping Hands, an adult education center, located in Ronceverte; work on portion of Greenbrier River Trail completed and 2-mile section opened in time for Memorial Day Weekend; Travel Lemming ranks Lewisburg #12 on its summer list of 150 best things to do in the USA;

June

Lewisburg Police Chief Chris Teubert introduces Lewisburg's newest police officer, Jonathan Cosby, who graduated from the West Virginia State Police Academy and was voted the Outstanding Officer of this class; the James F.B. Peyton Foundation and The Lewisburg Foundation (LF) announce they are collaborating to develop new landscaped parking spaces on the west end of downtown Lewisburg; "Homes Among the Hills" 2023 Home Tour sponsored by the Greenbrier Historical Society is held June 10, with the opening reception on Jun. 9; annual Ronceverte River Festival and Rubber Ducky Race is held June 10 and 11; the Dry Creek Music Festival returns to the downtown streets of White Sulphur Springs June 23 and 24; Mark Trent, Ashley Guet, Tanya Hazelwood and Leah Sills prevail in Ronceverte election; Rainelle successfully secures \$12.1 million of federal funding to complete repairs and upgrades to its stormwater system and sidewalks; Mayor Bruce Bowling resigns as WSS Mayor; Andy Pendleton, Rainelle's former long-time mayor, is elected to serve another term; Bill Bell is elected as Rainelle's town recorder, while Tiffany Crowe, Gary Harris, Amanda Sue Hunter, David Spencer, and Martha Levisy are elected to town council positions; in Lewisburg Mayor Beverly White, Sarah Elkins and John Little are reelected and Levy is approved; in Alderson Mayor Travis Copenhaver is reelected and council members Betty Thomas, Larry Reinhold, Ruthie Allen, Doris Kasley, Ann Eskins and Charley Lobban; in White Sulphur Springs voters selected Kathy Glover as Mayor, Mark Gillespie recorder and George "GP" Parker, Audrey Burns Vanburen, Ryan Lockhart, Thomas Taylor and Ted Humphreys are voted in as council members; Carnegie Hall announces TOOT vendor applications are available; Greenbrier His-

torical Society announces Clifford Gillilan of Lewisburg is the recipient of the Rodney Collins Preservation Achievement Award, the Most Significant Save of an Endangered Property Award goes to The Friends of the Blue Committee for the Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion Restoration Project, Alderson, and Joshua Adamo, Adamo Building Arts, Lewisburg is recipient of the Bob Weir Craftsperson Award; the Dry Creek Music and Arts Festival celebrates the re-birth and rejuvenation of White Sulphur Springs; the Monroe County Commission votes unanimously to delay the removal of Sheriff Jeff Jones until the WV State Police have completed their investigation into allegations of misconduct - while most of the allegations against Jones pertain to his management of the department's evidence room, particularly the storage and transfer of firearms, the most concerning accusation involves a shooting incident which took place on Dec. 8 of last year;

July

Ronceverte City Council candidates Mark Trent, Tanya Hazelwood, Leah Smith, Ashley Guet, Scott Vogelsong, and Gail White are sworn in following the June 13 municipal elections; Lewisburg in Bloom hosts a community cleanup day in downtown Lewisburg in preparation for the arrival of America in Bloom judges on July 13; Greenbrier County Health Department reported rabies cases in the area; third Food Truck Festival is held in Ronceverte; a building adjacent to the old True Value building is demolished to make way for a parking lot in downtown Lewisburg; by a vote of six to four, the Alderson Fire Department reelects Frankie Jones to the position of Fire Chief; Lewisburg City Council discusses the recurring issues with large trucks failing to make the right-hand turn from Washington Street onto Rt. 219 and striking Bella the Corner Gourmet and the traffic backup seemingly caused by the timing of the traffic lights at Walmart. Both are beyond local control because it's a state road with all decisions made by the Department of Highways in Charleston; Hawk Knob Appalachian Hard Cider & Mead acquires Greenbrier Valley Brewing; the Greenbrier County Board of Education selects a paving company to undertake the complete paving of the parking lot at Greenbrier East High School; the new addition to the left side of the Greenbrier County Courthouse is now open to the public;

August

The Lewisburg Literary Festival returns to Lewisburg Aug. 4 and 5; The 98th annual State Fair of West Virginia opens Aug. 10 and runs through Aug. 19; more than 200 fire departments and EMS agencies throughout West Virginia join together to ask Gov. Jim Justice to include a bill intended to help stabilize local emergency services on the call for the upcoming special session; the Renick Commission "2023 News in Review"

— Page 4

Greenbrier County Sheriff's Department welcomes back officer



Billy W. Mitchell, Jr. is sworn in by Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Dent.

Billy W. Mitchell, Jr. took his oath of office for the Greenbrier County Sheriff's Department on Wednesday, Jan. 3. The oath was administered by Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Dent.

Deputy Mitchell served with the Greenbrier County Sheriff's Office for approximately seven years before accepting a position with the U.S. Park Service.

Chief Deputy Bart Baker stated "We are pleased to welcome Billy back to our ranks. He will be a great addition to the department and will serve the citizens of Greenbrier County well."

Opportunity to apply for Special Use Permit to operate boat rental at Lake Sherwood

Monongahela National Forest is soliciting applications from people interested in operating and maintaining the government-owned boat rental facilities at Lake Sherwood Recreation Area, under a concession special use permit.

Go to <https://sam.gov/opp/198f15e4d3ce4e6cbfeb938929671e9c/view> for more information and how to apply. All applications must be submitted to Forest Supervisor, Attention: Lands Program Manager, 200 Sycamore Street Elkins, WV 26241. Applications must be received by close of business (4:30 p.m.) on Feb. 2.

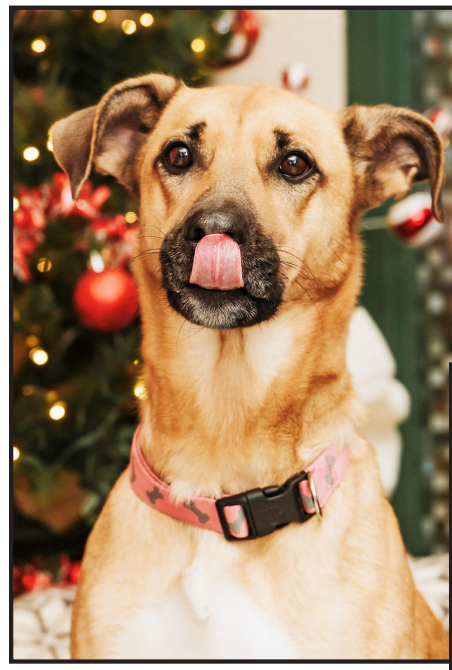
Lake Sherwood Recreation Area is located adjacent to Lake Sherwood, a 165-acre man-made lake. The area is ten miles northeast of Neola, WV in the Marlinton-White Sulphur Ranger District. Lake Sherwood is accessible via paved WV Highway 14 and is 30 miles from I-64. The boat rental is near the public boat ramp in the beach/day use area.

The Lake Sherwood boat rental permit area includes a boat rental registration and storage building (with electrical service), parking area, concrete boat ramp, floating courtesy dock, shade shelter and bench, a double trash can and approximately 0.25 acres of grounds to maintain. A campsite with electric service and water is provided to the permit holder at no cost. At a minimum, the permit holder is expected to fully operate the boat rental area from the Friday prior to Memorial Day through Labor Day.

An on-site visit of the boat rental concession will be conducted at the Lake Sherwood Recreation Area at 1 p.m., Jan. 18. Meet at the Lake Sherwood entrance station.

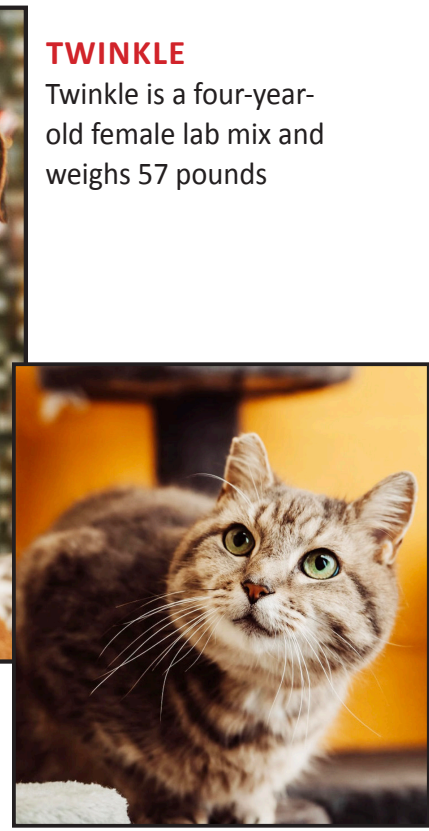
Applicants should contact Michael Hancock at michael.hancock@usda.gov or 304-635-4438 or Matthew Edwards at matthew.j.edwards@usda.gov or 304-799-4334, extension 7995524 regarding any questions related to this opportunity.

PICK OF THE LITTER



TUCKER

Tucker is a 10-year-old male domestic shorthair-



TWINKLE

Twinkle is a four-year-old female lab mix and weighs 57 pounds

These and other animals are available at the Greenbrier Humane Society, located at 151 Holiday Lane off of Rt. 60 West in Lewisburg. They are closed Sunday and Monday, and are open from 11 a.m. through 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Their cat adoption fee is \$65 and covers spay/neuter surgery, first kitty vaccinations, rabies vaccine, de-worming, toe nail trim and flea treatment.

Their dog adoption fee is \$85 and covers spay/neuter surgery, first dog vaccinations, rabies vaccine, de-worming, toe nail trim, flea bath and flea treatment.

Call 304-645-4775 for more information.

They also offer donation-based spay/neuter vouchers, and clinics are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. They use a lot of vets in the area but the clinics fill up fast! Fill out an application to help prevent animal overpopulation! Call 304-645-4775 for more information.

DON'T SHOP • ADOPT!

**THANK YOU FOR READING
THE MOUNTAIN MESSENGER**

Briefly

Democratic Executive Committee

will hold their next meeting next Wednesday, Jan. 10, at 5:30 p.m. at the Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate office. Anyone interested in supporting the Democratic Party in Greenbrier County is welcome to attend.

American Heritage Music Hall, Inc.

located at 496 Island Park, Ronceverte, is open to the public, all welcome, handicap accessible. Listeners and tourists welcome. Admission \$7 Tuesday nights, \$10 Saturday - Audience provides food. Doors open at 7 p.m. Jam & Dance every Tuesday 7 to 10 p.m. **New Year's Party Dec. 31. will feature the Thomas Taylor Band, 7 to Midnight. No dance Tuesday, Jan. 2. Dance Saturday, Jan. 27 will feature the Flash Back Band 7 to 10:30.** The Music Hall is available for weddings and parties. For more information call the Music Hall at 304-645-4667; Bill Evans at 304-392-6079; Grace Poe at 304-992-5852.

Walk With a Doc in January

Ring in the New Year by taking steps toward better health and wellness! Walk With A Doc (WWAD) is a low-intensity activity set at your personal pace and respectful of your abilities; we welcome all new WWADers. Come as often as you want and get to know our students and HealthYeah!, a community-centered organization aimed at raising health awareness and healthy habits. WWAD meets weekly on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. at the Hollowell Park track on GMS Drive. Once a month, we will have a health topic talk given by a local healthcare provider or one of our HealthYeah! student leaders. Our January walks will be Jan. 8, 22, and 29. We look forward to seeing you then! (In the event of heavy snow or ice, walks will be cancelled. Please exercise caution during the winter months!)

For the Record

Deeds

Seneca Trustees Inc to My Ruby Slippers LLC: lots 220, 221 and 222 of Lilly Park Addition, Meadow Bluff District, Map 60L Parcel 0099 0000 0000. Filed Dec. 27, 2023.

Richard L. Howard estate and family trust (by executor and trustee) to Edward E. Howard: corrective deed, lot 455, White Sulphur District, Map 22N Parcel 0001. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Cynthia A. Wickline trust (by trustee) to Cynthia A. Wickline: 0.55 acres, Irish Corner District, Map 10C Parcel 3.1, 3.2, 4. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

James P. Argabrite and Cynthia D. Argabrite to James P. Argabrite revocable trust: 149 acres, Meadow Bluff District, Map 79 Parcel 23. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Rickie Church and Rejetta Church to Lorena L. Musser: 0.237 acres more or less, White Sulphur District, Map 22D Parcel 87. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Doris Glover to David B. Kelly, Neil A. Glover, and Gary C. Glover: lot nos. 23 & 25, Hamilton House, 10 acre tract Addition, White Sulphur District, Map 22D Parcel 56. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Two Men and a Mutt LLC to Jane A. Randolph and Peyton O. Randolph: lot 5, Ronceverte District, Map 10 Parcel 113. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Lorena L. Musser to Erick L. Jack and Kimberly D. Jack: 0.237 acres more or less, White Sulphur District, Map 22D Parcel 87. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Aretha B. Dowdy to Sabrina A. Dowdy and Paton Smith: 7.04 acres, White Sulphur District, Map 6 Parcel 38 6001. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Edward M. Payne III to Edward M. Payne III revocable trust (by trustee Edward M. Payne): 0.407 acres or lot 44, White Sulphur District, Map 26L Parcel 0031. Filed Dec. 28, 2023.

Kathy L. King to Christopher Rodriguez-Stanley and Jorge Rodriguez-Stanley: 3,152 square feet, Ronceverte District, Map 9 & 9 Parcel 611.6002. Filed Jan. 2, 2024.

Frederick H. Butler, Deborah G. Butler, Steve E. Butler, Drema A. Butler, Rita Butler Pippin, Leonard T. Pippin, Norma B. Brackenrich, Jerry Brackenrich, Joseph D. Butler, Jean S. Butler, David R. Butler, and Rondie Butler to William L. Butler and Andrew L. Butler: 1.9 acres, Meadow Bluff District, Map 76 Parcel 68. Filed Jan. 3, 2024.

Cat tests positive for rabies in White Sulphur Springs

The Greenbrier County Health Department announced on Jan. 3 that they had received a positive rabies result from a feral cat in the downtown White Sulphur Springs area. The Health Department asks, "Please be vigilant and do not pet, feed, or house stray animals. Please make sure all of your pets are vaccinated for rabies."

Frankford Veterinary Hospital posted more details that same day, stating, "On Dec. 30, 2023 a stray cat from Barton Road between Dry Creek and Cato Road area of White Sulphur Springs was brought to our clinic as a potential hit by car. The cat was exhibiting odd behavior of chirping followed by hissing/growling. Upon exam it was found to have no injuries except a small wound on its lower back leg. Given the abnormal behavior and human contact it was decided to quarantine the animal for the weekend. The cat progressively got worse and was ultimately euthanized and was sent for rabies testing. On Jan. 3, 2024 we got confirmation that the cat was positive for rabies."

The public is strongly encouraged to vaccinate pets for rabies and to report animals exhibiting abnormal behavior, including aggression, stupor, vocalizing excessively, staggering, drooling, inability to eat/drink, progressive paralysis, and difficulty breathing.

Public Meetings

Rainelle Town Council

meetings are held every second and fourth Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at Rainelle City Hall. The public is invited to attend.

Greenbrier County Farmland

Protection Board

will meet on the fourth Thursday of each month at the WVU Extension - Greenbrier Co. Office, 1046 Maplewood Avenue, Fairlea WV 24901. The public is invited to attend. Call 304-520-3221 for more information.

Renick Town Council

will meet Monday, Jan. 8, at 7 p.m. at Renick Town Hall. Agenda items are as follows:

- Community Comments
- Approval of Minutes and Financial Reports
- Old Business
- New Business
- Committee Reports
 - Building Committee
 - Maintenance Committee
 - Park
 - Streets
 - Finance
- Other Business

Greenbrier Co. Board of Education

will meet Tuesday, Jan. 9 at 6 p.m. in the Kyle & Ann Fort Arts & Sciences Building, 653 Church St., Lewisburg.

Greenbrier County Magistrate Court Convictions

Manasa S. Dittakavi, Ann Arbor, MI, speeding, GP, fine \$30

Duane Lee Winchester, White Sulphur Springs, negligent shooting, wounding or killing of livestock while hunting, NCP, fine \$400

Michael J. Meadows, Lewisburg, failure to stop at stop sign, NCP, fine \$10

Randy Harlan Gwinn, Rupert, DUI - impaired state, NCP, fine \$100, jail 5 days - suspended and placed on 9 months unsupervised probation

Nicole R. Bailey, Rupert, failure to stop at stop sign, NCP, fine \$10

Dwight L. Winals, Lorain, OH, making, issuing worthless checks, NCP, fine \$20, restitution \$111.20

Michael Shawn Gray, Rainelle, 1) failure to register dog or kennel and forgery or alteration of certificate. NCP, fine \$25; 2) failure to revaccinate against rabies, keep or report record, obstruct, fine \$10

Dwight L. Winals, Huntington, possession of controlled substance, NCP, fine \$100

Marriages

Madison Abigail Hedrick and Jefferson Edward Fraley

Attorney General Morrissey announces \$700M settlement with Google over Play Store misconduct

West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrissey and a bipartisan group of 52 attorneys general have announced a \$700 million agreement with Google in their lawsuit about Google's anti-competitive conduct with the Google Play Store.

"We believe in a free market - vigorous competition protects consumers and helps the economy thrive," Attorney General Morrissey said. "The action our coalition alleged in the lawsuit - anti-competitive and unfair business practices - harmed consumers by causing them to pay higher prices for purchases made while using an app."

"A healthy free-market economy thrives on competition not in a monopoly and no company is too big to play by the rules."

Google will pay \$630 million in restitution, minus costs and fees, to consumers who made purchases on the Google Play Store between August 2016 and September 2023 and were harmed by Google's anti-competitive practices. Google will pay the states an additional \$70 million for their sovereign claims.

People eligible for restitution do not have to submit a claim - they will receive automatic payments through PayPal or Venmo, or they can elect to receive a check or ACH transfer. More details about that process will be forthcoming. The agreement also requires Google to make their business practices more pro-competitive in a number of important ways.

The attorneys general sued Google in 2021 alleging that Google unlawfully monopolized the markets for Android app distribution and in-app payment processing. Specifically, the States claimed that Google signed anti-competitive contracts to prevent other app stores from being preloaded on Android devices, bought off key app developers who might have launched rival app stores, and created technological barriers to deter consumers from directly downloading apps to their devices. The states announced a settlement in principle on Sept. 5, 2023, and recently released the finalized terms of that deal.

The settlement requires Google to reform its business practices in the following ways:

- Give all developers the ability to allow users to pay

MLK Day Celebration

Continued from Front Page

Martin Luther King, Jr. Week, and Pastor Kathie Holland of the New Vision Baptist Church will provide the invocation. During the march up Washington Street Chris Winston will lead the singing of "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around," one of the great freedom songs of the civil rights movement. As the people pass City Hall, the lyrics ringing out will be "I'm gonna keep on a-walking, keep on a-talking. Marching up to freedom land."

The free community lunch in the fellowship hall at the church will allow people to keep on a-talking before the program which will begin with the singing of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and the welcome to the church by Rev Bev Columbo. More music will be provided by soloist Nevaeh Traynham whose singing was a highlight of the WV State NAACP Convention in Lewisburg in August of this year.

Even more music will come from the many voices of the Resurrection Praise Community Choir with singers from Greenbrier and other nearby counties. They were so well received last year that their return is a must. High Rocks will deliver a performance of their own recent creation. They will also be helping with other duties before and during the event.

Kayla Reed will present the winners of the Middle School MLK Essay Contest who will read their essays based on Dr. King's words: "There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right."

The Elementary School MLK Art Contest winners will also be announced, and their art will be on display at the church. Their art will have been inspired by Dr. King's words: "I have decided to stick with love... Hate is too great a burden to bear." Mark Hickman's speech will then be featured as the highlight of the event.

Donations to support the event will be collected while the lunch and program are in progress or by mail to MLK Day Committee c/o CYAC, 112 Courtney Drive, Lewisburg, WV 24901.

through in-app billing systems other than Google Play Billing for at least five years.

- Allow developers to offer cheaper prices for their apps and in-app products for consumers who use alternative, non-Google billing systems for at least five years.

- Permit developers to steer consumers toward alternative, non-Google billing systems by advertising cheaper prices within their apps themselves for at least five years.

- Not enter contracts that require the Play Store to be the exclusive, pre-loaded app store on a device or home screen for at least five years.

- Allow the installation of third-party apps on Android phones from outside the Google Play Store for at least seven years.

- Revise and reduce the warnings that appear on an Android device if a user attempts to download a third-party app from outside the Google Play Store for at least 5 years.

- Maintain Android system support for third-party app stores, including allowing automatic updates, for four years.

- Not require developers to launch their app catalogs on the Play Store at the same time as they launch on other app stores for at least four years.

- Submit compliance reports to an independent monitor who will ensure that Google is not continuing its anticompetitive conduct for at least 5 years.

For much of this case, the attorneys general litigated alongside Epic Games and Match, two major app developers. Match announced a separate settlement earlier this year, while Epic Games took its case to trial. A jury unanimously found that Google's anti-competitive conduct violated the federal antitrust laws early last week.

This lawsuit was led by the attorneys general from North Carolina, Utah, Tennessee, New York, and California and joined by the attorneys general of all remaining states, the District of Columbia and the territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Read a copy of the settlement: <https://bit.ly/48pZ6TU>.

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2023 News in Review

Continued from Page 2

munity Center announces a new walking trail has been completed and is now open to the public; the WV Press Association releases the results of their 2023 Newspaper Editorial and Advertising Contest. Mountain Messenger Head Editor Sarah Richardson is awarded first place in the Best News Feature category for her piece “Local Dancer Pursues her dreams in California,” published Apr. 9, 2022. Richardson also wins second place in two categories: Best Business, Economic, or Labor Reporting and Best Governmental Affairs Reporting for her pieces “Stardust Café Changes Hands” and “Lewisburg City Council Votes 4-2 to Remove Banners From Lampposts.” Mountain Messenger staff also places first in the Best Special Section category for the 2022 State Fair of West Virginia Guide, and sweeps the category Best Front Page with a first, second, and third place win for front pages throughout 2022; Monica Maxwell announces that one of downtown Lewisburg’s staple stores, Harmony Ridge Gallery, will be closing; at the 2023 WV Press Association Convention it is announced that two Mountain Media newspapers, the Mountain Messenger and the Shinnston News & Harrison County Journal, tied for Third Place in the Division IV General Excellence category; Bella the Corner Gourmet is struck for the ninth time this year causing the WVDOH to release a notice stating that they will “temporarily restrict right-hand turns on a tight intersection in downtown Lewisburg while the WVDOH, in conjunction with the city of Lewisburg, conducts studies to come up with a long-term solution to truck traffic in the historic town; HB 125 allows taxpayers to pay their entire vehicle

property tax this year and receive full credit on their 2024 income tax return; the City of Ronceverte announces the upcoming installation of playground equipment designed specifically for children with impairments and/or disabilities so that every child can have a space to play - installation to begin Aug. 28 across from the Splash Pad at Island Park; Donald Havens is selected as the new Director for the Greenbrier County Homeland Security/Emergency Management/911 Center; Brandon Watkins opens his own golf shop, “For the Love of Golf,” in downtown White Sulphur Springs; the Governor appoints Del. Mike Honaker, R-Greenbrier to serve as the new Inspector General for the Department of Homeland Security. Honaker announces his resignation from the West Virginia House of Delegates; U.S. Marshals, along with West Virginia State Police, Lewisburg Police Department and Greenbrier County Sheriff’s Office arrest a man who escaped from an Arkansas prison facility in 2022 at the Quality Inn in Lewisburg;

Gov. Justice announces that GEHS is the newest school in the state to get a therapy dog through the Friends with Paws Program - Ruby, a 10-month-old Golden Retriever, is the 13th therapy dog to be placed in schools through the program around the state;

September

WVDOH District 9 installs signs in downtown Lewisburg along US 60 Westbound indicating “No Right Turn For Trucks Longer Than 50 Feet”; the Runway Rehabilitation Project gets underway at GVA; The eighth annual Parade of Lights is held Monday, Sept. 11, the 22nd anniversary of the September 11, 2001,

terrorist attacks; Healing Appalachia returns to Fairgrounds; Gov. Jim Justice announces he has appointed Jeff Campbell, of Lewisburg, to the West Virginia House of Delegates 46th District which covers part of Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties; the Greenbrier County Commission signs a “proclamation for [a] Constitution Week declaration,” prepared by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR); Mayor Beverly White is recognized by Travis Blosser, executive director of the West Virginia Municipal League and is awarded the Lydia Main Breaking Boundaries Award, which recognizes the dedication, hard work, and accomplishments of women in government, and is also inducted as an honoree at the Governor’s Civil Rights Day for advancing civil rights in the state through advocacy; a bat tests positive for rabies in the Friars Hill Road area of Renick in Greenbrier County; after a months-long investigation into the alleged cover up of a deputy’s inappropriate relationship with a 17-year-old high school student, Monroe County Sheriff Jeff Jones is arrested by the WV State Police; Greenbrier County Commission President Tammy Tincher before Congress during a meeting of the House Subcommittee on Environment, Manufacturing, and Critical Material; City Manager Misty Hill updates councilmembers that a new app has been released called My Lewisburg - the app is designed for citizen engagement with ways to view city ordinances, meeting agendas and minutes, city news, service interruption announcements, updates, and links to the city website;

October

Lewisburg in Bloom Coordinator Shannon Be-

atty accepts Outstanding Achievement Award for Lewisburg’s Floral Impact at the America in Bloom Symposium in Spartanburg, SC; the 37th edition of TOOT is held Saturday, Oct. 14 in downtown Lewisburg; Greenbrier BOE members congratulate GEHS Agriculture Education Instructor Emily Dunkle, recipient of the National Association for Agricultural Educators (NAAE) Teachers Turn the Key Award; Greenbrier County Commission, approves shift-differential pay for 911 Center employees who work between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m.; Alderson Artisan’s Gallery opens in the old National Bank building at 100 Railroad Avenue, on the Monroe County side of Alderson; Penny Pitch gears up to be of service to the community again this year; Gov. Jim Justice leads a groundbreaking event for much-anticipated new veterans nursing facility in Beckley;

November

WV experiences best fall foliage in a decade; the Monroe County Historical Society expects to complete restoration work on two of its historic structures; the Lewisburg Lions Club announces they will once again not hold their annual Christmas tree fundraising sale due to the lack of a wholesaler that meets their standards; work continues on the Lafayette Street sidewalk repair; new playground with accessible features opens in Ronceverte; U.S. Marshals apprehend Travis Devonte Fernatt, 25, of Crichton who is wanted out of Greenbrier County for two counts of attempted murder of a police officer, presentation of a firearm during the commission of a felony, and a circuit court copias; The Magic of Christmas in Lewisburg begins on Saturday, Nov. 18; Nov.

25 is Small Business Saturday; the New River Gorge National Park and Preserve releases update on the Steep Valley Fire; Communities In Schools of Greenbrier County (CISGC) hosts fifth Angel Tree Event; Greenbrier Valley Chorale prepares to conclude its 30th anniversary season with the annual Holiday Concert; the Chesapeake & Ohio Historical Society announces production is complete on a limited piece of American-made glassware commemorating the C&O Railway’s deep history in White Sulphur Springs. Created in partnership with the Blenko Glass Company of Milton, WV, the custom design features an architectural diagram of the C&O Railway’s famous brick depot in White Sulphur Springs etched on the iconic “384 water bottle.”

December

The Ronceverte Development Corporation hosts their annual Holiday Open House in Downtown Ronceverte on Friday, Dec. 15; Gov. Justice presents the Greenbrier Valley Airport with a \$5 million check to be used towards a terminal rehabilitation and runway renovation; the Greenbrier County Commission affirms the retirement of Robert Ford from the Greenbrier County Planning and Permit Office. Ford began his employment with Greenbrier County in June of 2012; Christmas at the Fair drive-thru light show experience returns to the State Fair of West Virginia for the 2023 holiday season; John Williams of Renick earns a Merit Award of \$500 for his piece Live Edge Cherry Table with Sculpted Stand (cherry wood sculpture) at the WV Juried Exhibition at the Culture Center in Charleston; the long-anticipated pedestrian walking bridge is installed across Howard’s Creek in White Sulphur Springs just adjacent to the former site of Big Draft Brewing and behind the Veteran’s Memorial downtown; James Moran, White Sulphur Springs, winner in the WV Divi-

sion of Natural Resources’ second annual Monster Trout Contest; the Greenbrier Valley Aquatic Center hosts a holiday Open House; Robert F. Reinhold III and Kimberly A. Sears arrested and charged with child abuse resulting in death of 3-year-old Colton Lee Sears; 2023 Best of West Virginia winners include: Best Bed & Breakfast/Inn - Winner: General Lewis Inn, Lewisburg; Best Boutique Hotel - Second Runner Up: The Schoolhouse Hotel, White Sulphur Springs; Best Campground - Second Runner Up: Greenbrier River Campground, Cabins, and River Trips, Alderson; Best Casino - First Runner Up: The Greenbrier Casino, White Sulphur Springs; Best Golf Course - Winner: The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs; Best Mountain Biking Trail - Winner: Snowshoe Mountain Resort, Snowshoe; First Runner Up: Greenbrier State Forest, Caldwell; Best Resort - First Runner Up: The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs; Best Spa - POMONA Salt Cave and Spa, White Sulphur Springs; Best Fair/Festival/Event - Winner: State Fair of West Virginia, Fairlea; Best Cider - Hawk Knob Hard Cider and Mead, Lewisburg; Best Coffee House - Manic Espresso, Lewisburg; Best Brunch - First Runner Up: The Humble Tomato, Lewisburg; Best Butcher Shop - First Runner Up: Mountain Steer Meat Company, White Sulphur Springs; Best Donut Shop - First Runner Up: Ben Ellen Donuts, State Fair of WV, Fairlea; Best Drive-In Restaurant - Winner: Jim’s Drive In, Lewisburg; Best Hot Dog - First Runner Up: Jim’s Drive In, Lewisburg; Best Italian Restaurant - First Runner Up: The Humble Tomato, Lewisburg; Best Local Floral Shop - Winner: Gillespie’s Flowers and Productions, White Sulphur Springs; Best Outdoor Gear/Shop - Winner: Serenity Now Outfitters, Lewisburg; Best Real Estate Agency - Winner: See “2023 News in Review”

Page 5

OBITUARIES

Janet Reed Dyche



Shawnee, KS-Janet Reed Dyche, 83, formerly of Lewisburg, passed away on Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023.

The family invites family and friends to a visitation at 1:30 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 13, at Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home, 884 Jefferson Street, Lewisburg followed by a Memorial Service at 3 p.m. A private interment of ashes will follow in Rosewood Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the Alzheimer’s Foundation in Janet’s memory.

Janet was born Jan. 12, 1940, in Ronceverte to Dudley L. and Cynthia Pearl Heaster Reed. She attended Ronceverte High School and graduated from Concord College (University) with a two-year secretarial degree. She worked for First National Bank in Ronceverte for over 30 years and retired as a VP/Branch Manager in 1997. She was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church in Ronceverte. She was an avid bowler, golfer, and card

player and enjoyed word games of all kinds. She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother - a loyal friend, and a devoted, selfless caregiver to all who needed her.

She moved with her husband to Shawnee, Kansas, in 2021 and resided at Shawnee Hills Retirement Community for two years before moving to Brookdale-College Square Memory Care facility in April 2023.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Dale Reed; and brother-in-law, James Cohernour.

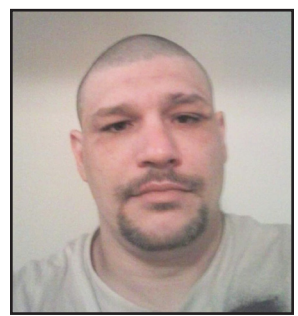
She is survived by her loving husband of 61 years, John (Jay) W. Dyche; daughter and son-in-law, Michelle and Brett Horton; sister, Joanne Cohernour; sister-in-law, Patsy Reed, grandchildren Jay Horton and husband Jeremy Burns, granddaughter Faith Horton, nieces Cyn-di Cohernour Pond, Beth Tanner and husband Tom, and nephew Steve Reed and wife Debbie.

Services will be live streamed on Wallace & Wallace’s face book page.

Arrangements: Porter Funeral Home, Lenexa, KS, and Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home, Lewisburg, WV.

Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home in Lewisburg is in charge of arrangements. Please send online condolences by visiting www.WallaceandWallace-FH.com.

Paul Allen Bland, Jr.



Ronceverte-Paul Allen Bland Jr, 45, passed away Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023 at home. Paul was born July 6, 1978, in Ronceverte to Paul Allen Bland, Sr. and Tammy Lynn Steele Peterson.

While in Nevada, Paul was an Explorer with the Washoe County Sheriff’s Department and was ordained by the Universal Life Church to perform

marriages.

Preceding Paul in death are uncles, Daniel Dawson and Timothy Bland.

Surviving are his father, Paul Allen Bland, Sr. of Ronceverte; mother, Tammy Lynn Steele of Lewisburg; siblings, Matthew Burrier and Amanda Robinson; aunts and uncles, Patricia Yago of Rupert, Mike Dawson of Ronceverte, Judy Huffman of Lewisburg, Fred Bland of Ronceverte, Vicky Klausman and husband John of Morganton, Darlene Mullins of Fairlea, Dreama Johnson and husband Nick of Smoot, Sherri Anderson of Crawley and Teresa Hedrick and husband Buddy of Rupert.

Funeral service was held on Wednesday, Jan. 3, at the Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home in Lewisburg where Pastor Sam McClung officiated.

Friends called prior to the service at the funeral home.

Please send online condolences by visiting www.WallaceandWallaceFH.com.

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This week in West Virginia History

The following events happened on these dates in West Virginia history. To read more, go to WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia at www.wvencyclopedia.org.

Jan. 7, 1955: The Cedar Lakes Conference Center officially opened, though it was not named until 1957. The name was chosen for its two lakes and an abundance of native cedar trees.

Jan. 8, 1866: William Gustavus Conley was born near Kingwood in Preston County. Conley was West Virginia's 18th governor, serving from 1929 to 1933.

Jan. 8, 1919: The West Virginia legislature ratified the U.S. constitution's 18th Amendment in the Senate, 26-0, and in the House, 81-3. West Virginia was the 21st state to ratify the amendment. National prohibition went into effect under the Volstead Act on January 16, 1920.



Jan. 8, 1926: Comedian Soupy Sales was born Milton Supman. Raised in Huntington and graduating from Marshall College (now University), he achieved fame as a wacky television personality.



Jan. 9, 1911: Louise McNeill was born on the family farm in Pocahontas County. She was appointed poet laureate by Governor Jay Rockefeller in 1979, holding that title until her death in 1993.

Jan. 9, 2014: Hazardous chemicals were discovered leaking into the Elk River, contaminating the water supply for a nine-county region.



Jan. 10, 1925: Judge Elizabeth Virginia Hallanan was born in Charleston. She was West Virginia's first female federal court judge.



Jan. 10, 1928: Gov. Howard Gore appointed Minnie Buckingham Harper of McDowell County to fill the unexpired term of her husband, E. Howard Harper. She was the first Black woman to serve in a state legislative body in the United States.



Jan. 10, 1940: The Pond Creek No. 1 mine at Bartley in McDowell County exploded. The blast killed 91 miners, with another 47 escaping. Rescue teams worked five days to retrieve the bodies but found no additional miners alive.

Jan. 11, 1865: Confederate forces under General Thomas Rosser burned the covered bridge at Beverly. Bridge builder Lemuel Chenoweth rebuilt the damaged span in 1872-73.



Jan. 11, 1893: U.S. Senator Harley Martin Kilgore was born in rural Harrison County. Kilgore served as a senator from West Virginia from 1940 until his death in 1952.



Jan. 12, 1869: Newspaperman Herschel Coombs Ogden was born near Fairmont. In 1888, he relocated to Wheeling and entered the newspaper business.

Jan. 13, 1905: Joseph H. Diss Debar died in Philadelphia. A supporter of the movement to create West Virginia, Diss Debar was commissioned in 1863 to design the Great Seal of West Virginia.

Create your native plant garden

Gardening is a worthwhile endeavor that not only passes the time but can be a form of exercise and relief from the daily grind. Gardens also provide ample opportunity to experiment, as individuals can produce everything from vegetables to bountiful blooms.

Recent years have witnessed a growing emphasis on eco-friendly gardening that aims to reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides in an effort to protect the planet. One way to do so is to rely on native plants.

Native plants are indigenous to particular regions. The National Wildlife Federation says native plants grow in habitats without human introduction or intervention. Native plants have formed symbiotic relationships with local wildlife over thousands of years, which the NWF notes makes them the most sustainable options. Native plants help the environment and thrive with little supplemental watering or chemical nutrients.

Native plants vary by region. In arid climates, certain succulents may be native because they don't need much rainfall to thrive. In lush wetlands, succulents might be out of place.

The NWF offers native plants for 36 different states that can be shipped right to customers' doors to help replenish native varieties. In addition, gardeners can visit local gardening centers to select native plants. Small and independently owned centers often feature knowledgeable local staff whose expertise can prove invaluable to individuals seeking native varieties.

It's important to keep in mind that native varieties may look less cultivated than more exotic blooms and foliage designed to sell for their unique appearances. Wildflowers and native grasses may be the types of native plants found in abundance, which may grow up and out quickly. These

other tips can help the process.

- Plan and prepare the site by removing weeds and turning over the soil. This will give seedlings an opportunity to take root without competition from weeds. Seedlings will give gardens a faster head-start than waiting around for seeds to germinate. However, gardeners can start seeds indoors and then move them outside once they are seedlings.

- Avoid planting native plants in rows, as that's not how they're likely to grow naturally. Vary the placement so the plants look like they sprouted up haphazardly.

- Gardeners can still exert some control over native gardens prone to growing a little wild. Borders and paths can better define the growing areas.

- Grow Native!, an initiative from the Missouri Prairie Foundation, suggests planting two to four species in broad sweeping masses or drifts. Mix grasses with flowering plants. The grasses produce dense, fibrous roots that can prevent weed growth.

Native plants should require minimal care. Keep an eye on them and supplement with water if conditions have been especially dry.

Greenworks Recycling announces 2024 Schedule

The following schedules pertain only to recycling pickups by Greenworks.

Lewisburg Residences: Pickups begin the week of Jan. 8 and continue every other week until 2024. Pickups take place on your regular trash collection day, except as noted below. All Other Customers: Per your individual schedules; taking into account Holiday exceptions noted below.

Holiday Exceptions:

1-1-24 - New Year's Day - Monday customers move to Tuesday.

1-15-24 - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Monday customers move to Tuesday.

2-19-24 - President's Day - Monday customers move to Tuesday.

5-27-24 - Memorial Day - Monday customers move to Tuesday.

6-20-24 - WV Day - Thursday customers move to Friday.

7-4-24 - Independence Day - Thursday customers move to Friday.

9-2-24 - Labor Day - Monday customers move to Tuesday.

10-14-24 - Columbus Day - Monday customers move to Tuesday.

11-11-24 - Veteran's Day - Thursday customers move to Friday.

11-28-24 - Thanksgiving Day - Thursday customers move to Friday.

12-25-24 - Christmas Day - Wednesday customers move to Thursday.

1-1-25 - New Year's Day - Wednesday customers move to Thursday.

If you have any questions, please call 304-661-7793.

Rules about Leap Years

It's widely accepted that a year is 365 days long. However, that statement is not entirely accurate. In fact, it takes Earth a little more than 365 days (365.24223 days to be precise) to orbit the sun. A calendar cannot accommodate that small distinction every year. In order to ensure that seasons do not start drifting from the difference between the Earth's rotation and the time it takes to get around the sun, leap years were established to keep the calendar more consistent and working like clockwork. The first modern leap year took place in 1752.

Certain guidelines were established to determine which years would be leap years. A leap year typically arrives every four years. However, in terms of end-of-century years, they must be divisible by 400. That is why the year 2000 was a leap year but 1900 was not, according to Royal Museums Greenwich.

This approach is not an entirely foolproof plan since there still may be very small discrepancies in time. Leap seconds have been added to keep time ticking correctly at various points throughout the years. This occurred on December 31 in the years 2005, 2008 and 2012, and also on June 30, 2015.

In terms of adding a day to the calendar for the leap year, it is placed in February, which already is the shortest month. While February is typically 28 days, in leap years the month features 29 days. A leap year next occurs in February 2024, and then again in 2028, 2032 and 2036.

Michael Showell, Publisher Sarah Richardson, Editor Kathy Hunter, Business Office Kathleen Stickley, Business Office Debra Smith, Advertising	Chris Kincaid, Business Systems Manager Julie Sweet, Ad Design Jeanette Albaugh, Production Layout Karen Boyd, Office Assistant
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2023 News in Review

Cont. from Page 4

Greenbrier Real Estate Service, Lewisburg; Bart Baker is sworn in as Chief Deputy of the Greenbrier County Sheriff's Department; the WV School Building Authority (WVSBA) has awarded \$6.7 million to Greenbrier County Schools through its Needs-Based Funding program to address safety, accessibility, and infrastructure needs at Frankford Elementary School (FES) as outlined in the 2020-2030 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP). The school will undergo a \$7,307,000 renovation and construction project utilizing the \$6,700,000 awarded by the WVSBA and an additional \$607,000 committed by Greenbrier County Schools. Highlights of the project include a new center addition with connecting corridors to bring the school under one roof with additional classrooms, a safe school entryway, elevator, administrative offices, improved bus and drop-off loop, and demolition of outdated portable classrooms. Additionally, electrical upgrades, a sanitation packaging plant, and a sprinkler system throughout the facility will provide much-needed infrastructure update - all by spring 2026; Tammy and Guy McAninch relocate from Idaho to Sinks Grove and open new business - The Hunkerdown coffee shop - in the old general store.

Shanghai Parade

Continued from Front Page

The 2024 edition of the Shanghai Parade was held Monday, Jan. 1 in downtown Lewisburg before a crowd of 1600. Fifty-four entries made up the parade. The Judges were Rev Bev Columbo, pastor Lewisburg United Methodist Church; Mollie Messimer, Patina; Patti Ford, Realtor; Rich Ford, attorney. Scorekeepers were Michelle Hanna and Shane Hanna. Mike Kidd was the M/C. In addition to the Volunteers of the Year, other parade winners included;

AC (Antique Car) - 1st #483 Mike O'Brien, 1967 Diamond T (Ripco); 2nd #471 Jerry Vance, 1948 Plymouth Coup; 3rd #478 Mike Howard, 1967 Camero

E (Equestrian) - 1st #493 Laura Plumley; 2nd #494 Cathy & Mark Romage; 3rd #498 Abby Jones

A (Animal/Animal Drawn) - (all animals other than horses) 1st #491 Dolly Knight and "Hooko" the chicken; 2nd #67 Hank Woodfin and chicken

DF (Best Dressed Farm Equipment) - 1st #486 Carroll Crane, 1948 Ford Almost Heaven; 2nd #469 Martin & Russell Tree Company

F (Float) - 1st #472 The Beards Family Traditions; 2nd #476 Democrats; 3rd #484 Ford for Family Court

M (Music) - 1st #458 Greenbrier River Optimistic Ukulele Players; 2nd #481 Tobias Sizemore with guitar

W1 (Walkers 1-2 persons) - 1st #68 Diane Hall and Glenn Singer; 2nd #71 Father Tom Nicholas County Fair; 3rd #70 Doug Buffington

W3 (Walkers 3+ persons) - 1st #480 Gum Store Studio; 2nd #475 Greenbrier Valley Hell Benders; 3rd #465 More Fishing in 2024 - Macie, Hayes & Henry Hileman

Joe Ellis Memorial Tradition Prize - #458 Greenbrier River Optimistic Ukulele Players

Mary Satterfield Spirit of Shanghai Award - #472 The Beards Family Traditions

Chairman's Award - #491 Dolly Knight and "Hooko" the chicken

Jim Wills Memorial Award - #475 Greenbrier Valley Hell Benders

Super Duper Pooper Scooper - Dr. Bob Foster & Mary Leb Foster

Oldest participant - Mary Alice Beard, 89-1/2 (#472)

Youngest participant - Theodora, 1 (#467)

Shanghai Parade Committee - Dr. Mary Ann Mann (chairman), DeEtta King Hunter (treasurer), Steve Hunter, Mike Kidd, Susan Sharp Campbell, Sheryl Hulmes, Kevin Salyer, Mike & Jeanie Wyatt, Michelle Hanna, Shane Hanna, Seth Kidd

Special thanks go to Gary Canterbury (GC Sales of Lewisburg) who provided the judges stand; Boy Scout Troop 70; City of Lewisburg - employees/Police Dept., Mayor Bev White, City Mgr. Misty Hill, Shannon Beatty, Susan Honaker and City Council; The Asylum - Paula Thomes/Colin Rose; Radio Greenbrier - Debbie Yates; WV Daily News; Mountain Messenger; Greenbrier Historical Society and Al Emch, chairman of the board who facilitated transfer of grant money to the parade committee.

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Dear Recycle Lady,

Dear Recycle Lady,

The Christmas wreaths that I used this year were made of pine on a heavy wire frame. They were beautiful, but what do I do with them now? Are the wire frames recyclable?

Time to Take Them Down

Dear Time to Take Them Down,

Yes, the wire frames are recyclable. Just remove the pine and take the wire to the Recycling Center. Be sure to use sharp wire cutters and wear garden gloves when removing the pine from the wire form as pine needles are very sharp. Better yet, use the intact wreaths as an insulating mulch in your garden. Not only will this add winter protection to your outdoor plants, but by spring the pine will decompose and be much easier to remove. Plus, the decomposed pine needles will add nutrients to your garden. The wire may be rusty, but it still recycles. If you had a commercially made wreath with decorations on it, those decorations can be removed and used next year to make your own wreath or to embellish a purchased wreath. Have you ever made a wreath from the branches trimmed from your live Christmas tree before you put it up? Next year use the pine from the tree to cover the wire frames, add the decorations and bows you saved this year, and you have a new wreath. A savings for you and a good deal for the environment.

Dear Recycle Lady,

The week or so before Christmas, newspapers were filled with colorful advertisements. Some of the ads were definitely printed on newsprint, but many of them appeared to be slicks. Do these ads need to be pulled out before recycling the newspaper?

Recycler

Dear Recycler,

The ads that are obviously printed on newspaper are recycled with newspapers. The ads that are obviously slicks are recycled with magazines. The big question, however, is which of the col-

ored ads are slicks and which of the colored ads are really high-quality ink on newsprint. The colored print ads on heavy paper are usually a slick. One way to determine if an ad is a slick is to wet one corner of the questionable ad. The newsprint ad will then tear easily, the slick will not. Try a magazine corner as an example. I discovered this one morning when my Sunday newspaper was heavily soaked and the ads were all wet. However, if in doubt, put the ads in with newspapers.

Dear Recycle Lady,

I see a lot of pop cans thrown in the trash. What is the benefit of recycling these cans?

Reader

Dear Reader,

Recycling aluminum cans saves nearly 95% of the energy needed to create one new can from virgin aluminum. That means you can make 20 cans out of recycled material with the same amount of energy it takes to make one can out of new material. In one year alone, energy savings using recycled cans are enough to light a city the size of Pittsburgh for six years, according to Treehugger.com.

Dear Readers,

Have you made an environmentally friendly New Year's resolution this year? Consider the impact that would be made if everyone were to make a New Year's resolution to begin recycling one item that they haven't previously been recycling. We could help provide a safer environment us and our wildlife and marine life, reduce our energy consumption, put reusable goods back to use, and reduce the amount of trash sent to the landfill. A worthy goal with little effort!

Have questions about recycling, or interesting information about recycling? Send questions or requests to greecycle450@gmail.com. Dear Recycle Lady is sponsored jointly by the Greenbrier Recycling Center and Greenworks Recycling.

A Look Back



Photo from Wikimedia.

Sources: The West Virginia News, General Robert E. Lee and Philanthropist George Peabody by Franklin and Betty Parker; Leonard Mackall by Lawrence C. Wroth, The Springs of Virginia by Perceval Reiniers.

By William "Skip" Deegans

Shown is perhaps one of the most historic photographs ever taken at what is now The Greenbrier. It was taken in 1869 and labeled "Robert E. Lee With Former Union and Confederate Leaders." For more than 100 years the photograph was misunderstood, and some of the men shown were improperly identified. Not until 1935 did the scholar Leonard L. Mackall sort it out. Mackall wrote, "...of all those standing only General Beauregard is correctly indicated, the other seven names being wrongly placed and also partly incomplete or entirely inaccurate."

Of particular interest are three men in the photograph: Lee, George Peabody, and William Wilson Corcoran. Peabody, an international banker and philanthropist from Massachusetts, was ill and joined his friend, banker, and philanthropist, William Wilson Corcoran, for a rest at the resort. It was the first time that Lee and Peabody had met, but they and Corcoran shared an interest in education. Lee was president of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) and in 1867 Peabody had endowed a \$2 million (about \$43 mil-

lion in today's dollars) Peabody Education Fund to promote public schools in the Confederate states. West Virginia was added to the eleven confederate states due to its rate of poverty. Peabody's fund was the first large public education fund in the United States. Although Corcoran may be best known for establishing the Corcoran Gallery, he was a generous supporter of education. Possibly as a result of the chance meeting in White Sulphur Springs, Peabody donated \$60,000 (just over \$2 million in today's dollars) to underwrite a mathematics professorship at Washington College. Corcoran was also a benefactor of the college.

Peabody died shortly after meeting Lee, who died the following year. Too ill to attend Peabody's funeral, Lee sent his photograph to be buried with Peabody.

Shown in the photo: standing, General James Conner, General Martin W. Gary, Major General Beauregard, General Alexander R. Lawton, General Henry A. Wise, and General Joseph L. Brent; seated, Blacque Bev (Turkish Minister to the USA), General Robert E. Lee, George Peabody, William Wilson Corcoran, and Judge James Lyons.

Ryan Vaughan named to Dean's List at Emory & Henry College

Emory & Henry College congratulates Ryan Vaughan of Lewisburg for being named to the fall 2023 Dean's List. For

inclusion on the Dean's List, a student must be enrolled full-time and earn at least a 3.6 GPA for the semester.

Greenbrier East High School Wrestler of the Week

Name: Calvin Roberts
 Grade: Senior
 G.P.A.: 4.5 (YES! 4.5)
 Current Record: 30-2 (28 Pins)
 Parents: Patricia and Patrick Roberts
 Hometown: Renick
 Favorite Wrestler: Mason Parris (University of Michigan National Champion / Hodge Trophy Winner / U.S.A. World Team member)
 Favorite Quote: "The greatest battles in wrestling are fought within ourselves."
 — Eddie Guerrero
 Began Wrestling: In elementary school
 Past Accomplishments: Calvin is a West Virginia Wrestling State Finalist. He has also beaten H.S. All-Americans. He currently has over 100 high school victories!
 Why he Wrestles: "I cannot live without it. Wrestling keeps me happy!"
 Coach's Comments: "Calvin has improved tremendously throughout his high school career. During this past summer



Calvin started analyzing and studying wrestling as an art form. With that maturity and focus, he is ready for any task ahead. We enjoy his love for the sport!"

Miluk Humor: (I'm getting old!) "I see people my age mountain climbing. Heck, I feel good just getting my leg through my underwear without losing my balance." Ha!

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Laurine Yates will present an art show, Seasons, at the Greenbrier County Library this January and February.

Laurine Yates displays art at Greenbrier County Library

The Greenbrier Artists Group continues to display their paintings in the Greenbrier County Library in Lewisburg. Every two months a different artist is featured.

During January and February, Laurine Yates will exhibit a selection of her paintings. The name of her show is "Seasons." She has lived in Monroe County for over 45 years. Laurine has been studying and involved in the arts all of her life. She has her Master's Degree in Art Therapy, has worked as an art therapist, taught art in Monroe County, worked at Carnegie Hall teaching at Kids College, has been

a member of the Greenbrier Artists for many years and participated in many of their shows, and is an accepted member at Tamarack in three different mediums. She began studying painting at the Boston Museum School of Art many years ago and after exploring other art fields, now finds that painting is still her favorite medium.

If you are interested in art, the Greenbrier Artists Group meets regularly at Carnegie Hall each Thursday beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Kellar Studio to paint together and to learn new techniques. Membership is open to all at a very reasonable rate.

Concern grows over WV kids losing Medicaid coverage

By Nadia Ramlagan

The federal government has warned nine states about an alarming number of children losing Medicaid health coverage, and West Virginia officials say they're also closely watching the numbers.

According to the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, children make up around 40% of the state's Medicaid beneficiaries. The program ensures low-income parents can take children to the doctor or dentist without facing costly bills.

Cindy Beane, commissioner of the West Virginia Bureau of Medical Services, said the Mountain State was one of the first to break down the data as families were requalified for Medicaid after the pandemic, and the drop is troubling.

"We have determined around 39,000 children, under the age of 19, have been determined ineligible or have failed to respond to the renewal," Beane reported. "This is approximately about



12% of our total number."

The Georgetown University Center for Children and Families estimates in 2023, more than 3 million children nationwide lost their Medicaid health coverage. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, nationwide, around 20% of children covered by Medicaid have special health care needs.

According to the health care policy nonprofit KFF, the federal government covers most Medicaid costs in West Virginia, at 74%.

With the loss of additional pandemic-era funding and a budget deficit, Beane pointed out there could be fewer

resources this year to cover low-income families, people with disabilities, pregnant women and others who rely on Medicaid. For now, she expects services and reimbursements to providers to remain the same.

"However, we are asking for a supplemental appropriation this year for the Medicaid program," Beane noted. "That's the first time we've asked in probably over 10 years."

For assistance with Medicaid renewals or questions about eligibility, residents should call 877-716-1212, visit the online PATH portal, or go in-person to their local Department of Health and Human Resources field office.

SCRAMBLERS
Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Walk
RATED

Path
OUTER

Brand
BELLA

Figure
PHASE

"I'd hate to see the _____."

TODAY'S WORD

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Picture is missing. 2. Toothbrush is missing. 3. Suitcase is missing. 4. Hat is smaller. 5. Corsage is missing. 6. Suitcase is missing. 7. Hat is smaller. 8. Corsage is missing. 9. Suitcase is missing.

Weekly SUDOKU
by Linda Thistle

		9	1	2				4											
	5			8				1											
7					9	3													
		8	5					3											
1					4			6	9										
	2			9		5													
		7	3																6
5	4			6		2													
9					1			8											

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Super Crossword FORGET THE WHOLE THING

ACROSS

1 Warning about a racy web pic
5 "West Side Story" knife
9 Seasoned vet
15 Bro
19 French for "yours"
20 Treat for feet, for short
21 Pope after Marcellus II
22 Scads
23 RFORM
26 Rapper Snoop —
27 Yrly show hosts, e.g.
28 ACLU interests: Abbr.
29 Farming unit
31 Pasty luau food
32 Flight takeoff abbr.
33 NTR
38 "Peek- —!"
40 Classic comic Martha
41 Uplifting poems
42 Place full of video games
43 UBL
46 Chicken cordon —
47 British chums
48 Stars and Stripes' nation

49 —'wester (certain storm)
50 "Oh, God!" actress Garr
54 Cousins of aves.
55 Name of some newspapers
57 GHTE
62 Actors Fiennes and Macchio
65 Very top
66 Flying
67 TRONI
72 Cast out of the country
73 Official helper
74 Pays out
75 EAKI
79 Diner check
80 Start for existing
83 Name of some newspapers
84 Vetoer's vote
85 U.S. tax org.
88 Aromatic aftershave liquid
90 QBs' blunders: Abbr.
92 RKE
96 Person doing a crossword puzzle, e.g.
99 Outer limit

100 Chimney grime
101 Great serves
102 HEER
105 2000-15 CBS series
106 Writer Rand
107 Blood type, in brief
108 Total
109 Wakes up
112 Writer Uris
114 NTEN
119 Peel, as fruit
120 Excited response to "Who wants ice cream?"
121 Cozy corner
122 Pierce player Alan
123 Cast off hair
124 Swan constellation
125 Forest sight
126 Saclike growth

DOWN

1 Neck back
2 Mushroom feature
3 Some plays on ground balls
4 Fiancee
5 Colo. — (city S. of Denver)
6 Skirt line
7 "Just go ahead and try!"
8 Wine merchants
9 Unlock, in poems
10 Resting place for a napkin
11 Drinker's hwy. offense
12 Implores
13 Christina of "Bel Ami"
14 Put too high a price on
15 Papa
16 Perfect world
17 Be charitable
18 Gas guzzler
24 Multivolume U.K. lexicon
25 Chicago winter hrs.
30 Blarney Stone's land
33 Mushroom feature
34 King, in Lyon
35 Hubbub
36 Novelist Deighton
37 Runs furtively with short, quick steps
38 Heads of fleets: Abbr.
39 Regatta entry
40 Upshot
44 Evan of figure skating
45 Univ. helpers
46 Web automaton
49 Brother of Moe and Curly
51 Deep black, in poems
52 Break in friendship
53 Hairy TV cousin
56 "Science Friday" aier
58 Person tying shoes
59 Onetime transportation agcy.
60 Foods created by biotech
61 Flood-prevention sack
62 One sharing your blood
63 Songwriter Carmichael
64 Salon noise
67 Large-scale public show
68 Untrue tales
69 Neighbor of Mont.
70 Caress
71 How money may be lost
72 Sci-fi gift
76 Belonging naturally
77 "One Mic" rapper
78 "— ToK" (#1 hit for Keshia)
80 On the nose
81 Viking letter
82 Rescue crew VIPs
86 Occupant
87 Represented
89 Peruvian singer with a wide range
91 Notorious emperor
92 OR workers
93 Rust may be a sign of it
94 DVR remote abbr.
95 Cain, to Eve
96 Hair-raising sites?
97 "Is that so?"
98 Poe's "radiant maiden"
99 Yuletide quaff
103 Destitute
104 Tic- — -toe
105 Gear tooth
109 Yard tool
110 Outer limits
111 Sports datum
113 TV neighbor of Homer
115 Pewter, mostly
116 Univ. website suffix
117 Vetoers' votes
118 Rival of Wade

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	14		15	16	17	18		
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96	97	98						99							100				101			
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PUZZLE ANSWERS PAGE 9

Gov. Justice announces LG to launch strategic initiative for new tech ventures across West Virginia

Initiative seen as foundation for Innovation Corridor across Appalachian Region to generate tech jobs, develop healthcare, new technology businesses

Gov. Justice announced this week that the State of West Virginia and LG Electronics are launching a strategic initiative to grow new business ventures in West Virginia and advance the development of technologies for renewable energy, healthcare, and industries of the future.

The businesses, created by LG NOVA, LG Electronics' North America Innovation Center, are expected to bring 275 high-skilled jobs to West Virginia and spur the growth of new technologies, investments, and economic development for companies and people in the area, establishing the start of an innovation corridor across the Appalachian Region.

Alongside LG's jobs commitment, an investment fund is being created with plans to invest \$700 million in West Virginia over the next five years to grow these businesses.

Established in 2021, LG NOVA collaborates with startups and partners to build innovative ventures that positively impact people and the planet. Through the Mission for the Future and Commercial Acceleration Program, LG NOVA engages with the innovation community

to create transformational positive change in the world. As a part of the collaboration with the West Virginia Department of Economic Development, LG NOVA plans to establish branch offices in Huntington, home of Marshall University, and Morgantown, home of West Virginia University.

"This is a tremendous day for our Great State," Gov. Justice said. "This partnership with LG Electronics is a game-changer, and it's going to create hundreds of good-paying jobs, spur investment in new technologies, and help us build an innovation corridor across the Appalachian region. I'm proud to work with LG to bring these new opportunities to West Virginia, and I can't wait to show the world what West Virginians are capable of."

"LG is glad to join the Governor's West Virginia economic development initiative to bring new value to the state and its regional partners by building transformational new businesses," LG Electronics Global CEO William Cho said. "LG is committed to delivering solutions for digital healthcare and cleantech that have impact on West Virginia and the rest of the world."

"This is another spotlight on the innovation and advancement occurring in



the great state of West Virginia," West Virginia Department of Economic Development Secretary Mitch Carmichael said. "We are honored to share this economic development announcement highlighting LG NOVA, LG Electronics' North America Innovation Center, and the job and career opportunities it will create in the Mountain State. We are here to support the entire LG team."

"The opportunity to work with the West Virginia and the influential leaders in the region to grow our businesses is significant. Through the work we are doing, we

get to create technologies and businesses that will help lead to transformational change, and we can make a difference and have an impact on the people of West Virginia, in the Appalachian Region and beyond," the head of LG NOVA Dr. Sokwoo Rhee said, Executive Vice President of Innovation at LG Electronics.

This strategic initiative extends beyond West Virginia through collaboration to promote resilient economic investments in communities across the Appalachian Region with business leaders, public-sector innovators, and universities.

Holiday traffic exceeds predictions on West Virginia Turnpike

It was a busy holiday season along the West Virginia Turnpike. The West Virginia Parkways Authority says there were 1,375,777 transactions during the 13-day holiday travel period from Thursday, Dec. 21, 2023, through Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024. This number is 45,777 transactions more than the pre-holiday travel estimate of 1.33 million transactions.

The busiest travel day on the West Virginia Turnpike was Friday, Dec. 22, 2023, with 145,870 transactions. The lightest travel day was Sunday, Dec. 24,



2023, with 54,838 transactions.

Turnpike traffic exceeded estimates every day of the holiday travel season except Christmas Eve; Saturday, Dec. 30; and New Years Eve, 2023.

"Ultimately, we are very pleased with how our staff handled the large influx of traffic and we were very well prepared," said Jeff Miller, Executive Director of the West Virginia Parkways Authority. "Our estimates were right in line with historical information that was reviewed prior to going into the holiday break."

The Parkways Authority anticipated there would be additional travelers on the Turnpike from Tuesday, Dec. 26, 2023, through Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023, due to people traveling to Charlotte, North

Carolina, for the Duke's Mayo Bowl. The college football game on Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023, featured the West Virginia University Mountaineers and University of North Carolina Tar Heels.

Miller is pleased with how everything played out during the 13-day holiday travel period.

"The weather cooperated for the most part and we did not experience many wrecks or significant backups at the toll facilities," he said. "I am very proud of our toll operations, maintenance staff, courtesy patrol, West Virginia State Police Troop 7 and dispatch center for responding quickly to anything that required our attention during this time."

Miller reminds drivers that E-Z Pass is the fastest and most economical way to travel on the West Virginia Turnpike.

Gov. Jim Justice announced the E-Z Pass Single Fee plan in 2018 to help drivers save on the cost of tolls. All lanes at the Turnpike's three toll plazas accept E-Z Pass. The Single Fee discount program costs \$26.25 annually for unlimited use of the West Virginia Turnpike.

To get an E-ZPass, or to renew an existing E-ZPass, visit <https://transportation.wv.gov/Turnpike/EZPass/Pages/default.aspx>. Drivers may also apply in person at the West Virginia Parkways Authority E-ZPass Customer Service Center, 3310 Piedmont Road, Charleston, West Virginia 25306, or at the Beckley Customer Service Center located at 12 Pikeview Drive, Beckley, West Virginia 25801.

SCRAMBLERS solution

1. Tread 2. Route;
3. Label; 4. Shape

Today's Word
LOSER

Weekly SUDOKU Answer

8	3	9	1	7	2	6	5	4
6	5	2	4	8	3	9	1	7
7	1	4	6	5	9	3	2	8
4	9	8	5	1	6	7	3	2
1	7	5	2	3	4	8	6	9
3	2	6	8	9	7	5	4	1
2	8	7	3	4	5	1	9	6
5	4	1	9	6	8	2	7	3
9	6	3	7	2	1	4	8	5

Super Crossword

Answers

N	S	F	W	S	H	I	V	O	L	D	P	R	O	D	U	D	E		
A	T	O	I	P	E	D	I	P	A	U	L	I	V	A	T	O	N		
P	E	R	F	O	R	M	A	N	C	E	P	I	E	C	E	D	O	G	G
E	M	C	E	E	S	R	T	S	A	C	R	E	P	O	I				
E	T	D	C	E	N	T	R	A	L	D	I	V	I	S	I	O	N		
A	B	O	R	E	R	A	P	O	E	S	A	R	C	A	D	E			
D	O	O	B	L	E	P	O	R	T	I	O	N	B	L	E	U			
M	A	T	E	Y	S	U	S	A	S	O	U	T	E	R	I				
S	T	S	S	U	N	S	L	I	G	H	T	E	S	T	B	I	T		
R	A	L	P	H	S	A	C	M	E	A	L	O	F	T					
E	L	E	C	T	R	O	N	I	C	C	O	M	P	O	N	E	N	T	
E	X	I	L	E	A	I	D	E	S	P	E	N	D	S					
S	P	E	A	K	I	N	G	P	A	R	T	T	A	B	P	R	E		
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THANK YOU FOR READING THE MOUNTAIN MESSENGER

Here's what West Virginians told us lawmakers should focus on this legislative session

By Tyler Dedrick and Duncan Slade for Mountain State Spotlight

This story was originally published by Mountain State Spotlight. For more stories from Mountain State Spotlight, visit www.mountainstatespotlight.org.

We're just a few days away from the 2024 legislative session, when senators and delegates from across West Virginia will meet in Charleston to pass legislation and set the state budget.

To help inform Mountain State Spotlight's coverage of the 60-day lawmaking sprint, we asked West Virginians what information they need about what lawmakers are doing — and not doing.

Nearly 200 people have already responded to our survey and there's still time if you haven't already.

Top of mind for many West Virginians is the lack of investment in infrastructure, child care, health care and public education.

These quality of life issues were followed closely by concerns about environmental issues. West Virginians told us they want to see improved infrastructure, economic development and an increase in accountability and transparency among lawmakers.

Here are the issues West Virginians told us most matter to them:

1. Quality of living in West Virginia

Many readers emphasized the importance of focusing on improving the quality of life for West Virginians by improving health care, education and the environment. Health care is at the top of West Virginians' concerns, with nearly three-quarters of respondents to our survey indicating it's an issue they care about.

Readers expressed concerns about the looming Medicaid shortfall and unwinding, and about environmental issues, including water and air quality.

Respondents said they were worried that the shifting of funds from public schools to private education through charter schools, homeschooling and the Hope Scholarship

is being done in a way that "drains public schools of badly needed resources."

"These legislators wrongly focus on cutting taxes, claiming to attract businesses," one reader wrote. "What business would locate here if our water and air are polluted, education is abysmal, life expectancy is poor?"

Nearly two out of three of survey respondents said they were interested in women's health policy. Dozens of responses included concerns about abortion or reproductive rights.

In 2022, lawmakers passed a near-total abortion ban in a whirlwind 24-hour period that largely left members of the public in the dark and unable to give input on the bill.

"The abortion issue should have been on the ballot instead of being passed by about 134 people," one respondent wrote. "Legislators misrepresented half of their constituents."

2. Economic, infrastructure and business development

West Virginians told us they're worried that lawmakers won't invest in public infrastructure while creating policies meant to attract major industries like energy and real estate.

"Policies that support large corporations and industries, all though often good intentions, usually directly harm small businesses and rural communities," one respondent wrote.

People also said they want to see the Legislature focus on improving roads, water and schools.

Some respondents suggested these policies may be driving away businesses, young people and families — particularly LG-BTQ+ folks and non-white West Virginians.

"I'm very unhappy about the focus on culture issues and not fixing actual problems like the minimum wage or...doing more for the state universities to remain competitive," one self-identified business owner told us.

3. Budgeting and adequately funding

state agencies

Many readers expressed a desire for lawmakers to fund government agencies, including those that oversee roads, libraries and jails. They shared concerns that a lack of investment into public agencies and infrastructure had led to "horrible roads, student scores, jails, mental health."

One respondent criticized legislators for "undermining the ability of state agencies to do their jobs by underfunding their budgets and still bragging about a government surplus while our roads and bridges fall apart, our public school staff are leaving/retiring, our foster care system is in shambles, no one can figure out how to pay for EMS in rural counties."

In September, lawmakers put \$100 million towards the state's understaffed and overcrowded jail system but it's not nearly enough.

Meanwhile, public employees expressed frustration at the increase in their insurance premiums, putting pressure on their finances.

4. Transparency and accountability

Several respondents expressed concern about lobbying and cronyism among lawmakers, some of whom previously or currently work for major industries including coal.

They called for more scrutiny of "cronyism, "lobbying activity" and "good ol boys transactions." One reader asked us to "follow the money and expose graft and corruption."

Others shared that they lack information about what goes on in Charleston after the Legislature gavel in due to the decline of local news and a "lack of candor" among elected officials. (Our limited-run newsletter series "Power and Possums" explores the unexpected places power does and doesn't lie in the Legislature.)

Note: This story is based on the responses of nearly 200 West Virginians who took our survey about what issues they think elected officials should address during the 2024 legislative session.

State says 84 projects from 2016 flood remain to be completed

By Stephen Baldwin, RealWV, www.therealwv.com

Seven and a half years ago, southern West Virginia was struck by a disastrous flooding event that killed 23 people and caused millions in damages.

During a mid-December meeting of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Flooding, Director GE McCabe of the West Virginia Emergency Management Division (WVEMD) disclosed to lawmakers that 84 projects remain "open" from that flooding event.

Projects which have yet to be completed are categorized as "open" by officials. For example, a home demolition awaiting final approval would be categorized as open.

WVEMD spokesperson Lora Lipscomb described the open projects in general terms, saying, "Those still in progress include projects for generators supporting critical infrastructure, acquisitions/demolitions of private homes, elevations of private homes, reconstructions of private homes, and stormwater management."

Greenbrier County Emergency Management confirmed four open projects locally including two private home elevations, one acquisition of a private home for demolition,

and a generator for a public entity.


They added that they received calls on a regular basis from residents who continue to seek relief from the 2016 flood over the last few months. WVEMD ran public service announcements inviting residents to contact their local emergency management office to apply for assistance in 2023. But the county says few if any qualify for the assistance.

More than 100 "open" projects exist across the state related to numerous flooding events, but McCabe said 84 of those are from the June 2016 flood alone.

"We've got a lot going on," said McCabe, before describing his office's activities related to at least ten flood events since June 2016. "These things take a lot of time. We are making progress."

RealWV reached out to multiple members of the Joint Committee on Flooding for comment, but none spoke on the record.

Tammy Tincher serves as President of the Greenbrier County Commission. She lives in the Meadow River Valley, which was hard-hit in the June 2016 flood. Reached for comment on the remaining projects, she said, "It would be beneficial for the county, as I am sure the state as well, to close out these projects in 2024."




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