

# 45th President Donald Trump Escapes Assassin's Bullet



Theodore Roosevelt, who also was shot and nearly killed while running for president, once said “The credit belongs to the man whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly . . .”

## Shinnston High School Alumni Room Gives Community a Glimpse Into Its Proud Past

By Stephen Smoot

When one first takes the stairs, or the lift chair to assist those who struggle with climbing, to the top floor of the Bice-Ferguson Museum in Downtown Shinnston, one photo stands out. Looking to the left, a visitor will see a photo from the days of sock hops and finely designed Chevrolet sedans.

That photo portrays the Shinnston High School Spartan Band. On both the left and the right sit proud teenagers in gray looking military style uniforms complete with Sam Browne belts. In the back and center, however, stand 10 young ladies. All wore big smiles and gleaming white garments, each with either a letter or a punctuation mark on them.

They stood so that

together they spelled out SHINNSTON! And it would not have nearly the same effect without that confident and proud exclamation point at the end.

“We always had a pretty good band,” remarked Debbie Malone who takes care of the remarkable collection.

Shinnston High School’s Alumni Room offers not only artifacts from days gone by, but also endless stories and memories lovingly curated by Malone.

Malone explained that saving Shinnston High School’s past took a great deal of work - and not a little luck. She credited Harriet Harmer, a former secretary, for rescuing almost every yearbook issued by the school in its existence. Harmer also “salvaged the trophies.”

The Alumni Room

See “Alumni” on Pg 3



Debbie Malone curates the collection of Shinnston High School memorabilia in the Alumni Room above the Bice-Ferguson Museum downtown.

## “A City That Is Set On A Hill Cannot Be Hid”

### North Shinnston Baptist Church Set to Celebrate 100 Years of Service

By Stephen Smoot

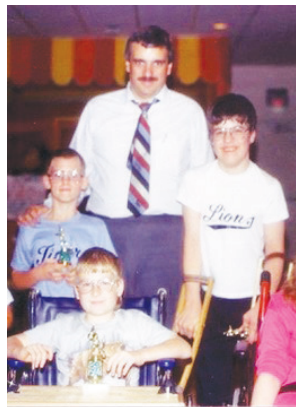
“Praise Ye the Lord!” reads the media announcement from North Shinnston Baptist Church as the congregation prepares to celebrate a century of service to the Drain Hill community and beyond.

While each church is the House of God, it is

See “Church” on Pg 7



North Shinnston Baptist Church has served families in the Drain Hill neighborhood for almost 100 years.



Shawn is in a white t-shirt with Lions on the front.



## A Fighter!



By Jim Hunt for the News and Journal

In the movie “Rocky,” Sylvester Stallone gave an inspirational speech that went something like this: “The world ain’t all sunshine and rainbows, and I don’t care how tough you are, it will beat you to your knees and keep you there permanently if you let it.

Nobody is going to hit as hard as life, and it ain’t about how hard you hit; it’s about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward.”

I was reminded of that speech over the 4th of July weekend. I was invited to a family reunion of one of my T-Ball players from years ago. The player’s name is Shawn Fultz, and he was barely seven years old when he showed up to the VA park for the first Cerebral Palsy T-Ball League season. He had a huge smile and was always one of the first to take the field. He used wooden hand crutches to get around and ran harder than anyone on the team. I remember one game where Shawn was on third base and the game was tied. The ball was hit in the infield, and Shawn took off to score the winning run. About halfway to home, his crutches slipped on the base

See “Hunt” on Pg 6

## County Commission Receives Legal Opinion On Trecost and Charles Pointe Conflict of Interest Question

By Stephen Smoot

Last week, the Harrison County Commission addressed a thorny issue on the agenda.

In a previous meeting, Commissioner David Hinkle raised a question about Trecost participating in votes regarding the Charles Pointe development. Trecost had received a \$2,500 donation from an individual with significant involvement in the development there and Hinkle questioned if that campaign support rose to a level of undue influence.

That question was accompanied by a request for a written opinion to establish guidelines in the matter. At the opening of the meeting’s business,

Trecost moved that the county attorney who conducted the research and made his conclusion have his opinion read into the record. The motion passed on a two to one vote with Commission President Susan Thomas voting in favor.

After conducting interviews, reviewing primary documents, and investigating cases used as precedents in such matters, the attorney rendered his opinion. First, this type of matter had never inspired guidance from the office of the State Attorney General.

Context for the situation, as the attorney explained, included the fact that the contribution represented less than 10 percent of Trecost’s total sum of donations

See “Commission” on Pg 3







Guest Column

By Charlotte Lane

Chair, WV Public Service Commission

# Electricity’s shocking truth

A dear friend of mine is fond of telling the story about the day he learned about electricity. Lots of us are curious, perhaps overly so, of this mysteriously powerful force that flows through wires and then lights and heats and cools our homes, cooks our food, and powers so many things we rely on.

My friend thought sneaking up on a smiley-faced outlet in his home and poking a fork into it would be a smashing idea. And so it proved. He was blown – literally – back and I like to imagine his hair curled with little wisps of smoke.

All of us here at the Public Service Commission want to remind you not to mess with electricity. It is a life-giving force, but it is also extremely dangerous when used wrongly.

My friend was very young when he suffered a mild shock and learned a lesson. It is a lesson I hope most people will take to heart without getting a shock or burn. Or having something more serious happen. Electricity is not something ever to be played with. If you see an open outlet, don’t try to fix it.

If you are outside and see a dangling power line, or goodness forbid, one that is sparking, don’t try to tackle that problem yourself. Call the power company or call 911. They are the professionals. You are not, and we don’t want you to try.

All sorts of potentially dangerous situations exist where electric power is concerned. Don’t be one of the people who are hurt or – worse – who become statistics. We always need your help whenever you see something you know is not right. Please call for help.

Electricity is a powerful tool for good, and when handled correctly it makes our lives so much easier. But it also must be respected as the force of nature that it is. Don’t be like my friend. If you need repairs, put down the fork and call an electrician.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# West Virginia State Fire Marshal’s Office, 115th Year Anniversary

CHARLESTON, W.VA. — Dear Media Partners and West Virginia Citizens:

It is 2024. July 15 th will be 115 years since the West Virginia Fire Marshal’s Office was established by the state legislature and staffed by 4 fire marshals. These 4 brave and dedicated people covered our entire state, traveling many miles by train, car

*See “Letter” on Pg 3*

“A Newspaper The Whole Family Can Read”

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Super Crossword

POTENTIAL SPIN DOCTORS

ACROSS

1 Pairs

5 Actress Thurman

8 “Well done!” for a diva

13 “Shame on you!”

19 Bows’ shapes

20 Is able to

21 Fundamental

22 Not planted

23 Coach induct-ed into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 2008

25 Make dim, as by tears

26 Meal with a pastry crust

27 Spanish for 70-Down

28 “Star Trek” lieutenant Yar

30 Fashion designer once known for his metal couture

32 Equal to the face value

34 Shul text

36 Cartel formed in ’60

37 Dress up, with “out”

38 “The Human Stain” novelist

40 Hazy stuff

41 Heads, to Fifi

43 Sleek, in brief

44 Foot cover

46 Fido’s pests

48 — -Magnon

49 Soccer’s Chastain

52 Player of Clair Huxtable on “The Cosby Show”

55 Drink like Fido

56 Greek coin

58 Baseballer Slaughter

59 Jurists’ gp.

60 Speck in the ocean

63 High choir voice

65 Ivory tickler

69 Star of 2015’s “Ant-Man”

71 Prior to

72 She played Lulu Hogg on “The Dukes of Hazzard”

73 Six-stanza poem

74 Siberian husky, e.g.

76 Skyrockets

77 Tolkien fiend

78 Moisturizer brand

79 Rim

81 Tiny peeve

82 Star of “Trapper John, M.D.”

87 Apprise

90 Bullfight cry

91 Really unkind

92 German river

93 Golf champ McIlroy

94 Gettysburg victor George

96 Bucket

98 “Kindergarten Cop” co-star

103 Obsolescent TV hookup

104 Mia of soccer

105 Chichi tie

106 Give birth, as a cow

107 1960-89 NFL commissioner

110 Ordeal

112 Kuwait export

113 Reply

114 Cacophony

116 What nine featured celebrities in this puzzle are?

118 Puerto Ricans, e.g.

119 Certain opening for a bolt

120 Bray syllable

121 Sensed

122 Bitcoins, e.g.

123 Ends

124 Census stat

125 Punky Brewster player Soleil Moon —

DOWN

1 Mic-testing sound

2 Ghost

3 Ink-squirting mollusks

4 Lithuania, once: Abbr.

5 West Coast sch. with the Bruins

6 Eminent conductor

7 Slangy “Well, then ...”

8 Fraud-finding org.

9 Polo designer Lauren

10 Sailing

11 It bought MTV in 1985

12 Old Athenian citadel

13 Rap’s Shakur

14 Snooty sort

15 Univ. in the Midwest’s Manhattan

16 First-rate

17 Heyday of Glenn Miller

18 Leg part

24 “That was my best shot”

29 Place to buy sketchpads

31 Aqua — (corrosive liquid)

33 Actor Ladd

35 Matey’s cry

39 — -dieu (prayer bench)

40 Scraped, as an 18-Down

41 Pouches for infusion

42 Turf for lawns

45 Having bright peepers

47 James Bond player Daniel

49 Radar signals

50 Tabulae — (blank slates)

51 High grade

52 Spur on

53 Dove sound

54 Panasonic bought it in 2009

57 Beef quality rater, in brief

61 “Candle in the Wind” singer John

62 Old Greek warship

64 Change the tag on

65 Actor Simon of “Mission: Impossible” films

66 Tehran native

67 Sans — (font style)

68 Delicious

70 Dad’s brother

72 Peas’ places

74 — -mo

75 Take away (from)

78 Holiday tree danglers

80 Organic compound

82 Petite pooch, for short

83 An hour before noon

84 Laughs at, say

85 Bolivian capital

86 435 in Cong.

88 Seer’s shrine

89 Fashionable Banks

93 One no longer working

95 Lured

97 Declaration when asking for directions

99 Transforms (into)

100 One fleeing to get hitched

101 In a devilish way

102 Cross out

104 Tot’s equine rocker

105 Fable author

107 Pasty-looking

108 Philosopher Descartes

109 “— & Stitch”

111 Pinnacle

115 UFO crew

117 On’s opposite

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## FIND THE SUPER CROSSWORD ANSWERS ON PAGE 6!

# THIS WEEK IN West Virginia History

Charleston WV – until June 1989. The following events happened on these dates in West Virginia history. To read more, go to e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia at [www.wvencyclopedia.org](http://www.wvencyclopedia.org).

July 18, 1776: Methodist bishop Francis Asbury first set foot in present West Virginia outside of Berkeley Springs. He worked extensively in what is now the Eastern Panhandle, preaching and lecturing almost every day, before continuing farther into western Virginia.

July 18, 1893: Spencer State Hospital opened. With its connected brick buildings, a quarter-mile in length, the hospital was sometimes referred to as the longest continuous brick building in America. It remained in operation

July 19, 1850: Pope Pius IX established the Diocese of Wheeling, naming Richard V. Whelan as its first bishop.

July 19, 1863: A Confederate raid led by Gen. John Morgan came to an end on Buffington Island, near Ravenswood. The Confederates were overtaken by federal troops, local militia and three U.S. Navy gunboats.

July 19, 1877: Federal troops arrived in Martinsburg, where the Railroad Strike of 1877 had begun days earlier. The troops ended the violence in Martinsburg, but the deadly strike continued across the country into September. It was the first work stoppage in U.S. history to spread nationally.

July 19, 1946: Author Stephen Coonts was

born in Morgantown. After graduating from West Virginia University and serving in the navy during the Vietnam War, Coonts became a best-selling action and adventure novelist with the 1986 publication of Flight of the Intruder.

July 19, 1952: Novelist Jayne Anne Phillips was born in Buckhannon. After graduating from West Virginia University, her short stories and novels began receiving wide recognition. In 2024, she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for her 2023 novel Night Watch, about a mother and daughter in West Virginia after the Civil War.

July 20, 2010: Carte Goodwin became the nation’s youngest sitting senator. Goodwin was appointed to fill Robert C. Byrd’s seat in the U.S. Senate following Byrd’s death.

July 21, 1924: Don Knotts was born in Morgantown. The comedy legend will be forever remembered for portraying Barney Fife on The Andy Griffith Show.

July 22, 1859: Athlete “Jack” Glasscock was born in Wheeling. Glasscock, who played bare-handed, was one of baseball’s premier shortstops of the 19th century.

July 22, 1937: Musician Tommy Thompson was born in St. Albans, Kanawha County.

Through his group, the Red Clay Ramblers, and a career that spanned four decades, Thompson played a major role in spreading the popularity of old-time music.

July 23, 1863: Financier and industrialist Isaac Thomas Mann was born in Greenbrier County. As president of the Bank of Bramwell and the Pocahontas Fuel Company for three decades, “Ike” Mann held vast holdings in coal, timber and especially financial institutions.



# Hail to Shinnston High School!



## The Story Behind the Photo

By Bobby Bice

To recognize this weekend’s Shinnston High School Alumni celebration, I thought it would be a good idea to have July’s article and photo be one pertaining to Shinnston High School with its first alumni.

You are looking at [what is most likely] the first group photograph taken of Shinnston High School’s faculty and staff. The photograph was taken in 1910, which was also the year that three students exited the school as the first graduates from Shinnston High School. They were: Mildred L. Jarrett (who later became a teacher and never married), Vera Radabaugh (later Mrs. Edward Allen), and Nellie Swiger (later Mrs. Harry Kuhn).

All three of the young ladies are in the group photo.

Within a few short years, Shinnston High School established an official SHS Alumni Association.

The 112 year old organization is observing its final celebration this month. The students are gathered outside of the Mahlon Street school building. Known to most people as the grade school building, it was also home to the first Shinnston High School. Built in 1895 to provide six large classrooms for primary education, the building was added onto during the summer of 1907 to provide three additional classrooms for students wanting to further their education past the 8 th



Taken in 1916, shortly after the completion of the building, this image shows Clay District High School, later to be known as Shinnston High School.

grade.

At that time, the building became known as “Shinnston Public and High School” and was known as such until a separate building was constructed solely for a high school.

When construction of the high school building was finished on the hill at the head of Pike

Street in 1916, that building opened as Clay District High School. It continued to be known as CDHS until the county-wide board of education was established in 1933, at which time the Shinnston High School name was adopted back.

The beginning of the alumni association is discussed with detail

in the early editions of “The Courier”, which was the name of the early yearbooks for SHS. The last sentence of its history from the 1914 yearbook reads, “And we trust that the organization may grow in interest and that it shall never die so long as the S.H.S. shall last.” Well, S.H.S. closed

its doors with the Spring 1978 graduates and the alumni continued with celebrations for well over forty years. Hats off to all of those alumni who have dedicated the time it takes to plan those celebrations, and which also makes this month’s article possible for the story behind the photo.

### “Alumni” From Pg 2.

features both class photos and also pictures from the decades that students attended Shinnston High School. “The pictures were thrown into a box,” Malone said, then shared that “we were able to clean up and save some of them.”

One of those photos was of John McKay who, like others from the area, grew up, moved away, and became legendary coaches. McKay graduated from Shinnston in 1940 and later headed the football program at the

University of Southern California. There he won nine conference titles and five of his team’s eight appearances in the Rose Bowl. He also led the team to four national titles.

He had less success coaching the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. McKay, however, earned his way into National Football League lore by responding after a particularly lackluster performance to the question “what do you think of your team’s execution?” with “I’m

in favor of it.”

Other memorabilia includes letter jackets and other Spartan colored clothing, as well as a group photograph from the last reunion.

Malone shared that her favorite moments in taking care of the memories comes when older graduates peruse the collection. “It’s great to see families reminisce,” she said, describing how some will look for their relatives or even themselves in class pictures.

The centerpiece is certainly the scrapbook, a massive treasure

tome of clippings, pictures, and more. One older visitor, Malone remembered “cried when he looked at the scrapbook. It was really touching.

Others love looking for old friends in the Alumni Room. As Malone described, “when they see someone they haven’t seen in years, their eyes light up. It’s really heartfelt. It’s just an experience you have to see.”

Few high school alumni treasure their stories as much as Shinnston High School’s, at least to the point of establishing a small museum in its

memory. Like most small towns, however, the local high school serves as the backbone of area culture and history, a common touchstone of memories and understanding the world during childhood. The Alumni Room has 15 poster sized photographs of some of the classes for sale for \$10. Malone says that those interested in purchasing one can contact her to do so. Additionally, the museum still accepts donations of any items, save newspaper clippings. She stated that they have received a large

number over the years and that the task of working with them is daunting.

It is open to visitors during the Shinnston High School Reunion celebration on Saturday afternoon and by appointment. Malone states that those who wish to view the collection “can contact Deb Herndon (with the Bice Ferguson Museum) or they can contact me. We will work it out.”

The Alumni Room also has a Facebook page for those who wish to keep up with events or reach out.

## N&J Briefs

**FROM AROUND HARRISON COUNTY**  
*The Shinnston News provides a calendar of events free of charge to churches and nonprofit organizations. Please submit your listing two weeks prior to the event. Send via email to [newsandjournal@yahoo.com](mailto:newsandjournal@yahoo.com)*

Please come to the Shindy Music Festival on Aug 3 at Ferguson Memorial Park at 12 PM

The Progressive Women’s Association will hold a Kids Paint Day on Sat July 20 starting at 12 noon. It takes place at 305 Washington Ave in Clarksburg. Please text (304) 838-0082 to register your child and provide name and age. Healthy snacks and water will be available

### “Commission” From Pg 1.

in that cycle.

Case law included 28 opinions that touched on campaign contributions to local elected officials, the closest to this situation occurring in Colorado. The definitive case on undue influence, however, came from a West Virginia case, Caperton vs. A. T. Massey Coal.

“Caperton is really the case nationwide” that other campaign contribution cases regularly cite as an authority.

In this case, A. T. Massey Coal made a sizable donation to a candidate for the West Virginia State Supreme Court of Appeals. That donation dwarfed most others and made up a sizable percentage of funds available to defeat the incumbent. That justice then, once elected, joined a majority opinion supporting the very

company that made the donation.

The United States Supreme Court even then did not find that a justice or judge would have to automatically recuse him or herself when involved in a case involving a campaign donor. “High risk of actual bias” comes about when the donation is “disproportionate” to the rest of the campaign financing efforts and that the “timing” of the case right after the election had an impact as well.

In the case of Trecost, the legal opinion read into the record stated that the donation he received was “not so extraordinary” in proportion to other supporters.” Furthermore, the case cited involved the judicial system, where a judge or justice has considerable unchecked influence relative to a county commissioner.

Also, “outstanding public safeguards” exist to prevent campaign contribution influence on one elected official from being a paramount factor in an assembly of elected officials who must work together to obtain results.

Later in the meeting, the Charles Pointe development came up again in debate and discussion. An agenda item mentioned “submission of a letter by the County Commission and Charles Pointe EODD Board to the attorney for Holders of Series 2008 Property Tax Increment Revenue Bonds issued by the County Commission for the Charles Pointe development.”

When the agenda item came up in its turn, Hinkle protested that “I have not seen this letter. I hate to think at 10:35 today that we can vote through a document

that has not been made available to me.”

Harrison County Administrator Laura Pysz-Laulis explained that she had distributed the letter via email to the commissioners that morning. Hinkle replied and said “I think this is extremely unprofessional . . . I have no idea what this is about.”

Hinkle then made a motion to table the item, which was defeated. He also argued, after an executive session was proposed, that there was no basis for it. Hinkle then stated that City of Bridgeport Mayor Andrew Lang be a part of the executive session, which was also successfully opposed.

After a lengthy executive session, the Commission came out and voted unanimously for Thomas to sign the letter in her capacity as Harrison County Commission President.

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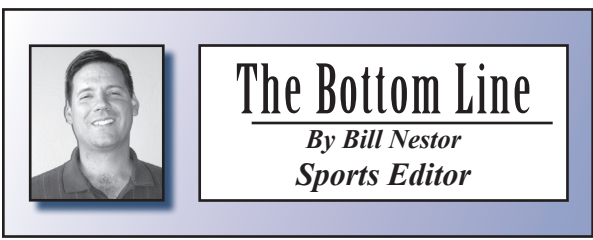


# Former Teacher and Coach Ellis Passes Away

Recently a local legend passed away after years of caring for his community. Anthony Ellis was 86 years old and spent much of his time on Earth doing for others - especially our youth.

Anthony grew up in Harrison County, graduating from St. Mary's High School in Clarksburg in 1955. He moved straight to Wheeling, earning a Bachelor's of Science degree in Biology four years later. Ellis opted to return to North Central West Virginia to attend Fairmont State College. He would use this opportunity to garner the necessary classes to become a teacher.

Seven years after his high school graduation, Ellis returned home to begin his teaching career at Notre Dame High School. He showed extreme versatility and a true desire to help children, teaching Biology, General Science, Religion, and Senior Business Math. Back in those days, teachers were looked at with a



certain level of respect. At that time, coaches were also held in very high regard and Ellis was involved with several extracurricular activities. He coached football, basketball, and tennis for the Fighting Irish.

Radio announcers joke about players that do several things for their team by saying "they do everything but sweep the floor." Back in the 60s, Coach Ellis would literally drive the bus to and from games. It wasn't just x's and o's for Ellis; it was stop signs and lights as well!

In the late 60s, Anthony's father became ill and he left teaching to become a full-time restaurateur at the Sunset Ellis Restaurant. Once again, his love for others took center stage. First it was the youth and then it was his family. Ellis put his heart and soul

into making sure they knew how much he meant to them.

It was at the Sunset Ellis Restaurant where I met Anthony. He remembered me from my playing days at Washington Irving High School and he knew that I was a broadcaster and a writer at that time. We had some terrific conversations over the years. No matter how busy he was, he would always take time to talk. He had the ability, and more importantly the desire, to want to make you feel important. He was simply put, a great person that people would gravitate to.

What I liked the most about Anthony was that he was such an unassuming man. We developed a friendship that went on for several years before I even knew of all of his previous coaching and teaching

accomplishments. It wasn't until I became the Sports Editor of the Shinnston News and Harrison County Journal that I learned of his past. I was invited to attend the prestigious Frank Loria Banquet. Anthony was a devout member of the Clarksburg Columbian Club and he was the Academic Excellence presenter at the banquet. Being a member of the Columbian Club allowed Anthony to continue to do for others even after his coaching and teaching days were long over.

I gained a newfound respect for Anthony after learning about all that he had accomplished in his past. What made it even that much more impressive was that he didn't waste time talking about it. He was busy doing for others and he didn't have time to talk about himself.

Here is to a life well-lived. Rest in peace, my friend.

That will do it for now. Until next week . . . Take care and God Bless!

# Tee It Up

By Bill Nestor

This week's edition of "Tee It Up" took us high in the Appalachian Mountains to the Raven Golf Course at Snowshoe Mountain. This Gary Player designed venue is rated as one of the best in the Mountain State every year. Tucked in the hills, this 18-hole championship course provides a pristine course with ideal weather conditions during the dog days of summer.

Dramatic elevation changes and rugged rock faces provide gorgeous views and challenges at the same time. The Raven tees play a shade over 7,000 yards and there are additional tees available to provide a challenging, but fun, round for golfers of all skill levels. The course conditions are the best they have been in several years, which is a testament to the hard work put in by the friendly and

knowledgeable staff.

The par threes are what stick out at the Raven. They are short in distance, but tall in intimidation. Elevation changes and ravines make the most confident golfers take a deep breath before teeing off.

The Raven Grille offers a fabulous pre round breakfast, grab n' go lunch, or an after round bite on the deck with your favorite beverage. Stay and play packages are a must here. On Snowshoe Mountain, the village has something for everyone. The non-golfers are guaranteed to have just as much fun on this excursion as the golfers. With discounts, the price is right, so all you have to do is come on down to the Raven Golf Course at Snowshoe Mountain

# Manchin speaks on senate floor in Commemoration of Jerry West

Washington, DC – Yesterday, U.S. Senator Joe Manchin (I-WV), spoke on the

Senate Floor to honor the life and legacy of NBA legend, proud West Virginian and

wonderful friend, Jerry West.

"With God-given talent and unmatched

character, Jerry's life has benefited the people of our home state in a profound way," Senator

Manchin said in part. "The legacy he leaves behind is undoubtedly an integral part of our heritage. He was a very dear friend to me and a proud ambassador for the Mountain State."

"His thoughts were models for how to manage success, failure and change—how to take the lessons you've learned, adapt them and go on to improve the world

around you," Senator Manchin continued. "From the coalfields of West Virginia to basketball's biggest stages, Jerry always demonstrated his mastery of the sport with grace and humility. It is my hope that his family and friends can find peace, strength and comfort in one another during the loss of this wonderful person."

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UNITED HOSPITAL CENTER'S HOME VISIT

# HOUSE Call

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR ADULTS

with **Dr. Kristen Sepp**, physical therapist at United Rehab

**Adults need physical activity to stay healthy; however, it can be hard to find the time if you have a busy routine.**

**Can physical activity help adults to feel better right away?**

Yes, physical activity can boost your mood, sharpen your focus, reduce stress, and improve sleep. You can start feeling better today by just becoming active!



**How much physical activity does an adult need?**

- You should aim for 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity. Any activity that gets your heart beating faster counts.
- At least two days a week, you should engage in muscle-strengthening activity. Do activities that make your muscles work harder than usual. If you feel like you do not have time—then start with just five minutes. It all adds up.

**So, what counts?**

It is as simple as whatever gets you moving counts toward your physical activity minutes for that day. Things that you already do daily, like walking the dog or folding laundry, count. Over time, physical activity can help you live a longer, healthier life. It can lower your risk of diseases such as type 2 diabetes and some cancers. It can also help control your blood pressure and stay a healthy weight. So, take the first step and become more active each day.

**What can physical activity do regarding the health of older adults?**

Physical activity can help manage many health problems for older adults, such as reducing the risk of falling, symptoms of arthritis, anxiety, and depression. It can also keep diabetes and high blood pressure under control. Older adults will want to start slow and only do what they can. Even a five-minute walk has real health benefits. Build up to more activity over time.

**Regarding daily physical activity for older adults, what is the one suggestion to stay on track and ensure success?**

The most important suggestion is to create a plan to help track your progress! Make an exercise plan, and do not forget to reward yourself when you reach your goals. If you are unsure of a plan, seek care from a Physical therapist who can help guide you. Update your plan often. This is the key to success, especially as you witness your transformation.



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# Commission Applauds Public Park Survey Work

By Stephen Smoot

“Open up our minds, our bodies, our souls to let you in,” prayed Commissioner Patsy Trecost to commence last week’s Harrison County Commission meeting. Although two of the most important discussions centered around the development at Charles Pointe, Commissioners covered a number of other topics in the lengthy proceedings.

Apart from those talks, one of the first subjects approached by Commissioners involved support for HOPE Inc. Joseph Spadafore represented that organization in its attempt to secure \$2,000 in funding assistance from the Harrison County Commission. Spadafore explained that he was requesting funds to cover “general operating expenses.” He later stated that “we do utilize hotel rooms from time to time” when resources are more limited.

The request for funding includes many expenses not covered by other grants.

HOPE Inc operates shelters and other services for the homeless. Susan Thomas, Harrison County Commission President, asked “just

how many are from Harrison County?” She referred to homeless individuals seeking help from the Marion County based shelter facility. HOPE Inc also has a Clarksburg office in the Board of Education building.

Spadafore reported that “over 50 percent are from Harrison County.” Commissioners approved the request.

Another support request came from the Italian Heritage Festival. Bill Boyles was to represent the Festival, but could not attend. Commissioners approved \$3,000 because, as Harrison County administrator Laura Lysz-Laulis explained “it’s a contribution we give every year.”

Next, Commissioners approved support of \$1,500 for any county law enforcement entity that will hold a National Night Out party on August 6. Police departments across the nation hold festival-type events aimed at children and families as part of outreach designed to build public support and rapport. At the time of the meeting, the Harrison County Sheriff’s Department and the city departments of Clarksburg and Bridgeport had plans to hold events.

City of Shinnston Police will participate in the Bridgeport event.

Commissioner David Hinkle asked if the county would set a deadline on requests for support. Pysz-Laulis responded that each has until August 6 to do so if they plan to hold an event.

Although the agenda included an item concerning McKinley’s contract for a new animal control facility, Pysz-Laulis explained that the topic was not ready for discussion. Hinkle noted that he had received “a rough drawing” that lacked detail. Thomas replied to Hinkle that Pysz-Laulis will “meet with them tomorrow (last Thursday)” and then report to the Commission what McKinley shared. Trecost urged Pysz-Laulis to include discussion of possible support from two grants for the project.

Commissioners then agreed to table the agenda items related to the proposed new animal control facility.

After concluding discussion on animal control, Commissioners turned next to hear an update from Harrison County Parks and Recreation. Their representative reported that the organization

was “looking at a survey on what people want” in their public recreation facilities. He then provided a detailed update on upgrades and future plans.

“I want to thank you,” said Thomas, who added that “you took the bull by the horns . . . kudos to everybody.” Hinkle concurred with Thomas and offered praise of his own for their efforts.

Sheena Hunt, executive director of Region 6 Economic Planning and Development, then came to speak on behalf of her organization. Region 6 is one of nine entities across the state that helps to coordinate economic development strategies among multiple county and municipal governments, as well as provide assistance to communities seeking grant support for a variety of projects.

Hunt opened with “thank you for allowing me to present information,” then expressed that she had worked with the organization for nearly two decades and “the last eight years as executive director.”

She stated that “we got a call from someone representing the Harrison County Commission.” That call, which turned out to be

from Hinkle, requested financial statements and minutes from Region 6 meetings. Hunt shared that she found it “rather odd” since she had just attended a Commission meeting on June 5 and expressed that she thought it was a “gotcha” attempt to “impugn Region 6’s integrity.”

Hunt also stated that “we have done extremely well” on audits of Region 6 and that public service districts and local governments with fewer resources rely heavily on help from them. She invited commissioners to attend their next meeting on the third Wednesday in September.

Thomas said “thank you for everything you do,” to which Hunt responded that their office remains “very busy” but that she is “happy to help.”

Thomas broke with Commissioners Hinkle and Trecost on a request from county administration to issue per diem to traveling county employees up front. Currently, employees request their per diem after the travel, but some may have limited funds available to do so. She said “I have concerns” that some may waste the money and said she

desires “ an ironclad policy.”

During the period set aside for discussions of county budget revisions at the start of the fiscal year, Trecost noted that the County Commission enjoyed costly security coverage that may not be necessary. Thomas asked about the potential saving of eliminating dedicated Commission security that existed “for no reason whatsoever.”

Pysz-Laulis noted that she had asked security to remove an unruly attendee recently, but Thomas responded that sheriff’s deputies could serve the same purpose. Both Trecost and Thomas stated that other offices in the area lacked such protection and that no other County Commission in the state had its own dedicated security.

Finally, Greater Harrison Public Service District will hold a public meeting on July 15 at 6 PM to discuss a waterworks system improvement project and also the possibility of rises in rates.

Hinkle said that the Commission should examine financial information “to see how bad they really need this” and suggested a work session to discuss.

“Hunt” From Pg 1.

path, and you could feel the thud of him hitting the ground. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw his mother running toward him, but I pointed for her to go back to her seat. Shawn gathered himself up and ran across home plate for the winning run. It was one of the greatest plays I have ever seen.

Shawn played T-Ball

through grade school, and I would see him occasionally after that as he moved on to high school and college. I reconnected with Shawn through Facebook, and we have kept up with each other over the past several years. Shawn moved to Schenectady, New York, and met his partner, Mary, a wonderful lady who

I had the privilege of meeting at the reunion. I enjoyed seeing Shawn’s adventures and was particularly proud of his participation in a sled hockey league. Shawn also trained as a boxer and seeing him pounding a heavy bag revealed a toughness that he has carried through his whole life.

About five years ago, Shawn’s toughness was tested when he suffered a stroke that left him in a

coma for several weeks and weakened his body. Mary told me that the doctors were not giving her much hope and that Shawn was touch and go throughout his recovery. When I saw Shawn at the reunion, his smile was as big as always, but he was now in a wheelchair, with some paralysis of his right arm. He gave me a big hug and we relived some of those days of T-Ball in the park.

Under the sleeve of his t-shirt, I saw a colorful tattoo and asked Shawn about it. He explained he had put the date of his stroke on his arm with flames rising, much like a Phoenix.

Shawn has never been a quitter, and he has been hit as hard as anyone, but he continues with a positive attitude. He works out daily with the goal to walk again. He told me that as soon as the doctors

clear him, he is going tandem skydiving. For many, this might be an unrealistic dream, but Shawn has already been to the skydiving school and spoken to the fellow who will be hooked to him on the way out of the airplane. I continue to be inspired by these brave kids, who I was fortunate to meet over forty years ago and honored to be remembered as “Coach.”

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### Answers

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OBITUARIES

Larry D. Stealey

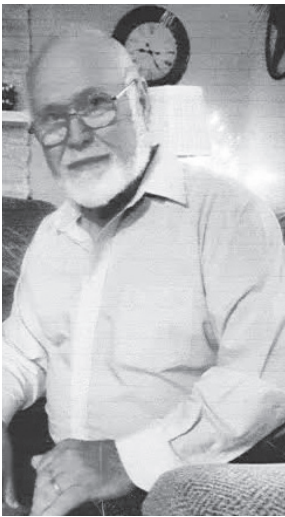
Larry D. Stealey, 72, of Shinnston, passed away at his residence on July 10, 2024. He was born on August 24, 1951, in Clarksburg, a son to the late Herman and Virginia Talkington. Along with his parents, he is preceded in death by his brothers, Edward, Donald, and Joseph Talkington.

Larry is survived by his wife of over 47 years, Marilyn Stealey, whom he married on June 2, 1977. He’s also survived by his children, daughters Lacy (Joey) Allen of Bridgeport, Sarah (Michael) Parker of Monongah, sons Larry (Jennifer) Stealey of Jacksonburg, Jason (Caitlyn) Stealey of Shinnston; grandchildren Haley Stealey, Justin Coltrane, Dylan Ash, Montana Stealey, Sierra and Skylar Stealey, Brianna, Quin, Pepper, and Talula Stealey; step-grandchildren Haley Allen, Cara and Mikey Parker; sisters Marlene Payne, Darlene Aiello, Jessica (Frank) Izraelski; and brother Marvin Talkington. Larry was a Marine and served in Vietnam.

He was previously a Bounty Hunter and worked on drilling rigs. He was a truck driver for Nuzum Trucking, and retired from E&S Trucking. He was a member of the Shinnston Breakfast Club and enjoyed boxing, ATV and motorcycle riding, antique cars, and watching Westerns. Friends will be received at Harmer Funeral Home on Saturday, July 13, 2024 from 2:00PM-8:00PM. Per his wishes, Larry will be cremated.

Online memories and condolences may be shared at [www.harmerfuneralhome.com](http://www.harmerfuneralhome.com)

A service of Harmer Funeral Home, Shinnston.



“Church” From Pg 1.

the congregants that set the tone and give it life. For North Shinnston Baptist Church, that vitality has come from families that made this church their home for a full century now.

As North Shinnston Baptist congregant David Minor shared “when we grew up here, it was a pretty tight knit community.” That community, the Drain Hill neighborhood, saw its first development about a half-century before the establishment of the church.

Deloris Minor, 98 years young, has attended North Shinnston Baptist for 80 years and has worn many hats in both leadership and administering its affairs. Prior to that, she attended a Baptist church in Wyatt starting at the age of five.

She explained that “the church was a small church,” then said that congregants themselves came together to construct the church. “The carpenters built the church, the Minors, the Leeson’s” Deloris Minor stated.

Prior to that, as Mrs. Vinnie (pronounced like “vine”) Minor stated “I guess they did have church in their homes.”

In 1974, Deloris Minor wrote “History of the North Shinnston Baptist Church.” In it, she described how “twelve charter members” were “inspired by God” to establish it. From the start, the church was a family affair. It involved the original settling family, the Drains, as well as the Leeson’s, Minors, Martins, Horners, McIntires, and Lippencotts.

“Each family in the community contributed with freewill offerings,” Deloris Minor penned, also stating that “each gave as the Lord prospered them.” Local residents and businesses also contributed and “most everyone in the community helped.”

To help the new church get started in 1924, other Baptist congregations, including Shinnston First Baptist, Hepzibah, and Worthington Baptist Churches assisted.

Originally, the church had a small sanctuary. As congregant Danny Minor explained, the original church’s footprint only occupies the back third of the current structure. Today, that area is half open space and half devoted to other rooms.

That said, church records show that attendance could often outstrip the church’s capacity. On one April Sunday in 1927, 114 came to church. David Minor joked “they had to be standing outside.”

By the 1950s, the church started working on expansion. The Salvation Army donated \$100 in 1957 to purchase another lot on which to expand the building. Community support helped to raise funds for construction. David Abruzzino, the lawyer handling the lot purchase, donated part of his fee for the effort. The next year, a cookbook sale helped to bring in funds.

As Deloris Minor wrote in her history, “many out of town members sent offerings and also nonmembers of the Church gave.”

The first expansion came in the form of digging a basement, work which was started in 1960 by Salerno Brothers, who worked at a significant discount to aid the church. By 1967, the entire structure was ready for dedication with the new section serving as the sanctuary. The church also received new seats, hymnals, carpet, and other furnishings

Through much of that time, Deloris Minor worked in numerous capacities to serve the church. As David Minor told it, “she taught Bible study and Sunday morning classes for years and sang in the choir.” Vinnie Minor added that she also worked as church treasurer, clerk, and sang as part of the quartet. Her responsibilities included keeping the records of the church, valuable to posterity in terms of understanding how the church grew and developed.

Like many smaller churches, North Shinnston Baptist struggled to find its footing in the 21st century. “Like all small churches,” David Minor stated, “it practically folded at one time. It was closed for a while.” Vinnie Minor added that “a lot of people, you can’t get them to come to church,” but she went on to say that one saving grace was that they still sent their children.

Also, as David Minor said, for a time the larger “mega” churches served as a draw for a lot of people seeking a different worship experience.

North Shinnston Baptist closed its doors for eight months in 2011. David Minor shared that “it’s a miracle that the church is still here.”

And the reason for that, in part at least, is, of course, Deloris Minor. Danny Minor explained that “her getting in touch with a local preacher” looking for a church home helped to bring it back, Lazarus-like. That pastor, Jeff Dytzel, as David Minor said “brought a lot of people with him that he knew,” including friends and relatives. “He was a young man just starting out,” he added.

Today, Pastor Matthew Keith serves the church congregation as he has for the past six years. Music, as in most churches, has remained important over time. David Minor explained that “this church has had its share of good guitar players and piano players over the years.”

Danny Minor explained that the church has a somewhat informal tone. With attendance generally around 20, the back and forth between pastor and flock gives services a less than High Church type of tone “We cut him no slack,” laughed David Minor, also saying “we keep him on his toes.” Danny Minor agreed whole-heartedly, but added “when it’s time to get serious, we get serious. We’re here to serve the Lord.”

On Friday Aug 2 at 6 PM, the church will hold a special worship service with Josh Oldaker, to which the congregation encourages all to “bring your family and friends.” The next day, the church will have a community picnic in Ferguson Memorial Park at the large pavilion. Fellowship opens at 11 AM and lunch starts an hour later.

“Bring your family, friends, and a covered dish” the flier for the event reads.

Then comes a Sunday service starting at 11 AM with former Pastor Garry Layfield giving the service. Lunch will follow.

The celebration reminds all who attend and love the doughty little church and its devoted congregation that they must continue to “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

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Out of the Past

Memorable photographs from around Harrison County




Photo courtesy of Bobby Bice. Caption reprinted from his Sept 2023 column

One of my favorite photos is the accompanying one showing the old Shinnston High School building during its construction. It’s a rare photograph in the sense that the photographer’s name is noted on the image. A lot of early Shinnston area photography was performed by Shinnston’s jeweler Muta Swiger. This particular image was taken by Henry W. Null and signed near the left bottom of the photo”



# Harrison County Fifth In New Businesses Started For June

Charleston, W. Va. – The WV Secretary of State’s Office registered 993 new businesses statewide during the month of June according to Secretary of State Mac Warner.

Gilmer County led the state in the percentage of new business growth with a total of seven new business registrations, a 2.05% increase. The Secretary of State’s Business Division reported that Raleigh, Pocahontas, Monroe and McDowell County also experienced notable growth during the month.

Top five counties in new business growth:

1. Gilmer County - 2.05% growth.
2. Raleigh County - 1.54% growth.
3. Pocahontas County - 1.50% growth.
4. Monroe County - 1.42% growth.
5. McDowell County - 1.38% growth.

Counties that led the state in total businesses registered in June include Kanawha, Monongalia, Berkeley, Cabell and Raleigh. Top five counties in total businesses registered:

1. Kanawha County - 103 new registrations.
2. Berkeley County - 74 new registrations.
3. Raleigh County - 73 new registrations.
4. Monongalia County - 70 new registrations.
5. Harrison County - 53 new registrations.

Statewide, West Virginia registered 13,890 new businesses in the previous 12-month period, from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. Mason County led all 55 counties with an 19.61% growth rate during the one-year timespan. To review county-by-county growth, visit our Business Statistics Database.

# DHF Announces Plan to Enhance Care in Long-term Care Facilities

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Health Facilities (DHF) has unveiled a comprehensive initiative aimed at bolstering the quality of care for seniors across West Virginia through a strategic capital investment plan for the state’s four long-term care facilities – Jackie Withrow Hospital in Beckley, John Manchin Sr. Health Care Center in Fairmont, Hopemont Hospital in Terra Alta, and Lakin Hospital in West Columbia. To spearhead this effort, the State of West Virginia has engaged Lument Securities, LLC, a leading advisor in healthcare mergers and acquisitions.

Under this initiative, Lument will assist DHF in facilitating a sustainable long-term care strategy, leveraging private capital to revitalize the state’s nursing facilities. The plan includes the sale and license transfer of these facilities, ensuring uninterrupted care and operational continuity throughout the transition.

“Ensuring the quality and continuity of our long-term care facilities is a top priority for West Virginia. By partnering with a world-renowned firm, known for their expertise in healthcare matters, we are poised to preserve and elevate the standard of care for our population served by the long-term care facilities,” said DHF Secretary Michael J. Caruso.

The strategic investment plan will channel millions of dollars into facility modernization, upgrades, and expansions in each community. Efforts will also focus on retaining the dedicated staff already serving these communities.

As part of the plan, Lument will initiate an extensive marketing campaign to engage qualified investor groups with proven operational expertise. This process will culminate in negotiating a sale agreement that aligns with the state’s vision for long-term care sustainability. Oversight of the transaction will be managed by the Department of Administration to safeguard and preserve the interests of residents, stakeholders, staff, and the community at large.

# Capito Statement on Assassination Attempt on President Donald Trump

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) released the below statement regarding the assassination attempt on President Donald Trump on Saturday, July 13:

“Like all Americans, I was shocked and horrified by the assassination attempt on President Trump at his campaign rally in Pennsylvania. I am so thankful that President Trump survived this attack and I conveyed that to him personally. However, I am heartbroken that one individual was killed and others were critically injured while simply exercising their freedoms and coming together in one of our country’s oldest traditions – a rally. I will continue to keep their family members and loved ones in my prayers during this incredibly difficult time. Now more than ever, we need to come together as Americans. Violence of any kind has absolutely no place in our country and I condemn it entirely. Like many Americans, I have questions around this attack and it is important we understand how and why this terrible act of violence occurred.”

# W.Va. Secretary of State’s Office Recommends New Video Tutorial

Charleston, W.Va – The United States Department of Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) has recently released a new five-minute demo to assist business owners with filing a Beneficial Ownership Information (BOI) report online. New federal legislation that took effect at the beginning of 2024 make BOI reports mandatory for a majority of business owners in the country.

According to FinCEN, 23 types of entities are exempt from BOI reporting requirements. You can view the list of exemptions on FinCEN’s website, [fincen.gov/boi](https://fincen.gov/boi).

Business owners that are not exempt from filing BOI reports have specific filing deadlines depending on when they registered their business: Businesses registered before 2024 have until January 1, 2025 to file a BOI report. Businesses registered in 2024 have to file within 90 days of their registration taking effect.

Moving forward in 2025, all new businesses that are not exempt will have to file a BOI report within 30 days of notification that their registration has taken effect.

The West Virginia Secretary of State’s Office believes the new video tutorial released by FinCEN will be a great asset to business owners trying to navigate the new federal requirement.

# WVU Widens Service Area to Assist Pregnant Women, Parenting Families

A West Virginia University-led effort is extending its reach to 11 Mountain State counties, providing more low-income pregnant women and families with children access to health care and life skills through the West Virginia Healthy Start/Helping Appalachian Parents and Infants — HAPI — project.

In partnership with local organizations, the program serves communities with infant mortality rates at least 1.5 times the United States national average and with high percentages of other negative maternal and infant outcomes. The goal is to turn around those numbers by reducing incidences of preterm labor and low birth rate and improving the overall health of mothers and families.

The HAPI project is administered by the WVU School of Medicine Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences and the WVU Research Office. A recent grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service will continue funding with \$1.1 million annually for the next five years for assistance in Barbour, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Randolph and Upshur counties, while adding Doddridge, Hardy, Marshall and Wetzel counties.

For more than two decades, the program has partnered with community agencies and organizations to provide maternity services and a multitude of resources ranging from healthy solutions and preventative care to parenting education, career planning and personal relationship goals.

More than 800 West Virginia women or families participate each year. Once a baby is delivered, HAPI follows through with support for 18 months for mom, dad, the newborn and siblings.

“We are thrilled to have the opportunity to continue serving families in West Virginia,” Penny Womeldorff, director of the West Virginia Healthy Start/HAPI Project, said.

“We have spent 23 years building a network of providers and partners to address the needs of pregnant and parenting families and will now be able to continue to expand our reach to additional counties that need us. We want to keep growing and responding to the needs of our West Virginia families and contribute to the health and well-being of West Virginia in general.”


HAPI works hand in hand with Right From The Start, a state program that provides case management and home visitation services for pregnant women, postpartum women and infants up to age 1 year who have Medicaid, CHIP or maternity services coverage, and expands on those offerings.

“We partner with them to provide a much more comprehensive package of services for the families we serve,” Womeldorff said. “We use the same staff of nurses and social workers who provide both programs in our region. It’s a lot of case management and education centered around healthy pregnancy behaviors. We look at things like perinatal mood disorders and postpartum depression, anxiety and smoking cessation.”

For mothers who would like to try breastfeeding, HAPI offers education and consultation with certified lactation counselors. Womeldorff said that aspect of the program has shown success by increasing initiated breastfeeding rates from 59.7% in 2017 to 76.6% in 2022.

In partnership with the WVU School of Dentistry, the program also emphasizes oral health care by encouraging mothers, fathers and their children to visit a dentist. After a checkup, each family member receives a Sonicare toothbrush.


“We provide education around the impact of poor oral health and pregnancy because there is an association between periodontal infection and low birth rate and preterm birth,” Womeldorff said. “We’re trying to improve our birth outcomes by keeping everybody’s mouth healthy.”




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See “Service” on Pg 9



# Summer 2024 VetFest PACT Act & VBA Claims Clinic

VBA and LAJVAMC are hosting our annual claims clinic with 10-12 benefits representatives available, Toxic Exposure Screenings, enrollment, woman’s health programs, food trucks, and more. The clinic will be held on Thursday July 25 between 8:30 and 5 PM at the Nathan Goff Armory in Clarksburg.

## Social Security Announces Upcoming Changes to Accessing Online Services

Today the Social Security Administration announced that customers who created an online account (e.g., my Social Security account) before September 18, 2021, will soon be required to transition to a Login.gov account to continue access to their online services. Over five million of these account holders have already transitioned to Login.gov. The agency is making the changes to simplify the sign-in experience and align with federal authentication standards while providing safe and secure access to online services. “my Social Security is a safe and secure way for people to do business with us,” said Social Security Commissioner Martin O’Malley. “We’re excited to transition to Login.gov to access our online services, streamlining the process and ease of use for the public across agencies.” Account holders are encouraged to sign-in now. When the user logs in, they will be presented with an option to easily transition to Login.gov. Once their account is successfully linked, a confirmation screen will appear, and they will have immediate access to their personal my Social Security services or other service that they were attempting to access. Existing Login.gov or ID.me account holders do NOT need to create a new account or take any action. My Social Security accounts are free, secure, and provide personalized tools for everyone, whether receiving benefits or not. People can use their account to request a replacement Social Security card, check the status of an application, estimate future benefits, or manage the benefits they already receive. For more information visit [Create an Account | my Social Security | SSA](#). For more information about Login.gov, including their 24/7 customer phone and chat support, visit [Help | Login.gov](#).

## W.Va. Senate Republicans Stand United in Support of President Trump

The signed members of the West Virginia Senate Republican Caucus strongly condemn the recent attempted assassination of President Donald Trump in Pennsylvania. We stand united in our support for President Trump and his unwavering commitment to serving the American people. The safety and security of our nation’s elected leaders and candidates as well as those who gather to support them are essential to affect the will of the people. This act of violence against President Trump and his supporters is an attack on the principles of democracy and the foundation of our great nation. We firmly denounce the heinous act that took place and call for a stop to the escalating calls to violence, political prosecution, and out right attack of President Trump by the Biden administration, activist prosecutors and judges, and President Biden’s deep state. We call on Congress to immediately investigate the Secret Service, FBI, CIA, police agencies and any other service that might have been involved with the failed security of the rally in Pennsylvania. President Donald Trump has been a tireless advocate for the people and families of West Virginia, fighting for their interests and working to strengthen our economy. His dedication to life, liberty, job creation, energy independence, and national security has directly benefited the hardworking men and women of our State. We are proud to support his bold leadership and steadfast commitment to putting America first. In these challenging times, it is crucial that we stand together as a nation against those that introduce violence and hatred to our elections. We urge all Americans to reject any form of political violence and to engage in the sort of civil discourse and election participation that preserves a government by the people. As well, these signed members of the West Virginia Senate Republican Caucus extend our heartfelt prayers and wishes for a swift recovery to President Donald Trump and all those affected by this senseless act of an assassin. We will continue to work tirelessly to support President Trump’s agenda and ensure the safety and prosperity of the American people and encourage you to support freedom by voting for Donald Trump on Election Day.

## Warner preparing for National Poll Worker Recruitment Day

Charleston, W.Va – The state of West Virginia has teamed up again this year with the county clerks, U.S. Elections Assistance Commission (EAC), and other states in a national poll-worker recruitment effort heading into the 2024 General Election. According to Secretary of State Mac Warner, National Poll Worker Recruitment Day is a national effort to address the ongoing need for poll workers and to inspire civic engagement. Warner’s administration has been recognized nationally for its efforts over the last seven years for working with veteran’s groups, the WV Board of Realtors, and students to recruit poll workers. “Poll workers are critical to facilitating the election process and instilling confidence in voters,” Secretary Warner said. “To ensure that we have accessible, safe, and accurate elections we need to fully staff every polling place with trained poll workers.” Since 2020, the WV Secretary of State’s Office has teamed up with the EAC and other stakeholders to promote National Poll Worker Recruitment Day and encourage registered voters to be poll workers for early voting and on election day. Currently there are 1,704 voting precincts throughout West Virginia, which requires more than 8,000 poll workers to adequately, safely, and securely manage those precincts on election day. “Being a paid poll worker is a great way to participate in our democracy right here in West Virginia,” Warner said. “The most secure way to cast a confidential election ballot, free and clear of any undue influence or intimidation, is to do so at a polling place staffed by trained poll workers selected by the political parties. Ensuring there are enough poll workers to assist voters is always a priority for the Secretary of State’s Office and the county clerks.”

### “Letter” From Pg 2.

and on horseback. They traveled these miles and spent all that time away from their homes because they believed in protecting the residents of this state from fire and its dangers... So, I cannot mark this anniversary without recognizing the many whose shoulders we as an agency stand on: our families, the statewide fire service and law enforcement community of colleagues that we have had the pleasure to be associated with through our collaborations, partnership, and service to protect to keep safe and help limit the risk from fire and other emergencies by our service in fire and explosion investigation, fire code inspections, fire code plans reviews, fire department evaluations, and various regulatory and licensing services. My thoughts on this occasion always lead me to Charles Ellison and Walter Smittle III. Charles Ellison was the first of us, the very first state fire marshal back in 1909. Just 27 years old when he took office, he had the daunting task of setting the precedent for all of us that would follow. And then to late Walter Smittle who passed away on August 25, 2022. He was the longest serving State Fire Marshal to this date with 26 years of service from 1974 to 1999. He left a legacy and a mark of advancement not only on this State but throughout this Nation as one of the most decorated State Fire Marshals this nation has known. I hope that the legacy and history of this agency will be that of growth, professionalism, integrity, and a caring approach for all who visit and live in this great State! Closing in on my 10 th year of service within this agency and to our great State, I am humbled and honored to be the 19 th State Fire Marshal in West Virginia’s history in a land and state that I love. Sincerely, Kenneth E. Tyree Jr. WV State Fire Marshal

### “Service” From Pg 8.

A fatherhood coordinator is also available to offer guidance on parenthood engagement and employment and relationship goals. The program’s successes aren’t measured only in health and parenting outcomes, but also in the impact they’ve made on clients’ perspective for helping others. “Over the years, we’ve had some clients come back and work with us as outreach workers and then go back to school to finish their degrees,” Womeldorff said. “One is now a labor and delivery nurse and another is working for a state health program. Others have come back to volunteer or participate in community events.” Dr. Rawan El-Amin, HAPI’s principal investigator, gained insight into the program while completing her practicum for a master’s of public health degree at WVU prior to completing her medical training. “HAPI is a great bridge between medical and social/community-based services,” El-Amin said. “This funding is critical to continuing our efforts of raising awareness and coordinating treatment of important conditions in pregnancy and the postpartum period. We are grateful for the opportunity to continue to care for our West Virginia families.” Currently, Sadie Lobdell of Townsend, Delaware, a student in the Master of Social Work program, and Courtney Dillow of Mechanicsville, Virginia, a senior pursuing a bachelor’s degree in social work, are completing their practicum as Designated Care Coordinators and plan to continue working with the HAPI Project during and after their schooling. To raise awareness about prenatal and early childhood health, HAPI also hosts several community events. The largest, “Baby and Me Day,” takes place each year at the Meadowbrook Mall in Bridgeport and includes vendor booths from WVU Medicine and various state agencies. “It’s an opportunity for folks to learn about pregnancy and parenting and fill out a referral for our program,” Womeldorff said. “Our goal is to support our families and help them make sure that they have everything they need through their pregnancy, through early parenting and helping them move from step A to step C or D, whatever that is for them.” The WV Healthy Start/HAPI Project is funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services and is integrated with the state supported program, Right From The Start.

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# Medical Staff: Hailea E. Harper, Au.D.

## Introducing the Newest Member of the UHC

Bridgeport, WV— Hailea E. Harper, Au.D., earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Communications Disorders from West Virginia University, graduating Magna Cum Laude, before going on to earn her Doctorate of Audiology from the University of Louisville School of Medicine, Louisville, KY.

She had a number of clinical rotations in the Louisville and Lexington areas, which culminated in a fourth-year externship at the Memphis, TN, VA Medical Center, where she worked on a team of 11 audiologists providing hearing and balance healthcare to adult and geriatric populations.

She brings with her many clinical skills, having worked with both pediatric and adult patients. For pediatric patients, she has done audiologic evaluations as well as evaluation, fitting, programming, and follow up care for cochlear implants and osseointegrated devices. For adults, Dr. Harper’s experience

is more extensive; in addition to audiologic evaluations, she evaluates for tinnitus and performs other audiology testing. Dr Harper was involved in several community outreach programs while in Louisville, including the University of Louisville Hear Camp, a multi-day

interactive summer camp for children with hearing loss and hearing devices. She also volunteered for hearing screenings at local churches serving underprivileged populations in the Louisville area to promote hearing healthcare. Dr. Harper joins UHC ENT &



**Harper**  
Audiology practice, located at 527 Medical Park Drive, Suite 401, Bridgeport. For more information, please call 681.342.3570.

# Safeguarding human dignity in this new era of machines

*From Pope Francis in L'Osservatore Romano*

Religious leaders from across the world met in Hiroshima, Japan, on 9-10 July, to sign the “Rome Call for AI Ethics”, emphasizing the vital importance of guiding the development of artificial intelligence with ethical principles that promote peace. Pope Francis addressed a message to participants at the event, which was read aloud by Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Pontifical Academy for Life. The following is the English text of the Holy Father’s message. Dear friends, I send this greeting to those participating in the

“AI Ethics for Peace” Gathering. Artificial intelligence and peace are two issues of supreme importance, as I had the opportunity to emphasize to the political leaders at the G7: “It should always be remembered that a machine can, in some ways and by these new methods, produce algorithmic choices. The machine makes a technical choice among several possibilities based either on well-defined criteria or on statistical inferences. Human beings, however, not only choose, but in their hearts are capable of deciding. A decision is what we might call a more strategic element of a choice and demands

a practical evaluation. At times, frequently amid the difficult task of governing, we are called upon to make decisions that have consequences for many people. In this regard, human reflection has always spoken of wisdom, the phronesis of Greek philosophy and, at least in part, the wisdom of Sacred Scripture. Faced with the marvels of machines, which seem to know how to choose independently, we should be very clear that decision-making, even when we are confronted with its sometimes dramatic and urgent aspects, must always be left to the human person. We would condemn

humanity to a future without hope if we took away people’s ability to make decisions about themselves and their lives, by dooming them to depend on the choices of machines. We need to ensure and safeguard a space for proper human control over the choices made by artificial intelligence programs: human dignity itself depends on it” (Address to the G7, 14 June 2024). In commending your initiative, I ask you to show the world that we are united in asking for a proactive commitment to protect human dignity in this new era of machines. The fact that you are gathering in Hiroshima to discuss artificial

intelligence and peace is of great symbolic importance. Among the current conflicts impacting our world — including the hatred of war — we hear more and more about this technology. That is why I consider this event in Hiroshima to be of extraordinary importance. It is crucial that, united as brothers and sisters, we remind the world that “in light of the tragedy that is armed conflict, it is urgent to reconsider the development and use of devices like the so-called ‘lethal autonomous weapons’ and ultimately ban their use. This starts from an effective and concrete commitment to introduce ever greater

and proper human control. No machine should ever choose to take the life of a human being” (Address to the G7, 14 June 2024). As we look at the complexity of the issues before us, recognizing the contribution of the cultural riches of peoples and religions in the regulation of artificial intelligence is key to the success of your commitment to the wise management of technological innovation. Hoping that your gathering will bear fruit in bringing about fraternity and cooperation, I pray that each of us may become instruments of peace for the world. Francis

# American Legion Post 31 Celebrates Independence Day

*By Betsy Turner*

The American Legion Family (Legion, Auxiliary, Sons and Riders) of American Legion Post 31 in Shinnston celebrated the Fourth of July on Thursday, July 4, from 2 - 4 pm with a dinner for members, family and guests. American Legion Auxiliary Unit 31 prepared a picnic style meal of hot dogs with all the fixings, baked beans,

a variety of salads and desserts. The event was considered a success with approximately 50 people in attendance. The highlight of the day was the inaugural meeting of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 31 Juniors. For their first activity, the Juniors made 75 cards to be given to Veterans who are going on the Honor Flight and also mailed to Veterans and Service Members. The ALA Junior Activities

program inspires active participation in American Legion Auxiliary members aged 17 and under so they will become engaging, productive members who will want to continue their ALA membership into adulthood. Enrollment in the Auxiliary of many daughters of American Legion members prompted the formation of Junior groups within many units. Junior members do

not form a separate organization but are members of the American Legion Auxiliary, grouped separately so they may be given a program within the scope of their years and understanding. Junior membership is the training ground for active Auxiliary membership. Junior activities instill in Junior members the ideals of the Auxiliary and present opportunities to teach the ALA’s founding principles of

justice, freedom, loyalty, and democracy. Junior groups function under the guidance of an advisor and committee from the Senior ALA members. Organized as a committee of the unit, Juniors conduct their own meetings and carry out their own activities. The Junior officers shall be known as honorary Junior officers. Their work should be coordinated with the work of the Senior group, and they should

have a role in regular unit activities whenever possible so they will feel they are truly a part of the Auxiliary. Americanism is the major focus for Juniors and helps teach patriotism, citizenship, and loyalty to American ideals and principle. Junior membership is offered to anyone under the age of 18 who is an immediate family member of an American Legion member or a deceased veteran.

# DoHS Files Motion for Summary Judgment in Child Welfare Class Action Lawsuit

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Human Services (DoHS) has filed an extensive pleading asking the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia hearing the challenge to its operation of the child welfare system in Jonathan R., et al. v. Jim Justice, et al. to decide the case on summary judgment, without proceeding to a costly and unnecessary trial. As required by federal litigation rules, over the last five years, DoHS has turned over 3.2 million pages of documents, including reams of data, and made dozens of its employees available

for examination by plaintiffs’ counsel. The motion filed on Tuesday, July 9, 2024, asks the court to find, based on undisputed facts reflected in these documents and testimony, that there is no scenario under which plaintiffs could win if this case were allowed to proceed to trial at the taxpayers’ expense. The motion also outlines just some of the hundreds of actions that DoHS has taken in the last five years to recruit and retain more Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers, improve case planning, expand community-based mental health services, recruit foster families,

improve training of CPS caseworkers and supervisors, assess the health needs of foster children, monitor service provision, and reduce reliance on residential treatment. The child welfare program of 2024 looks vastly different from the program as it existed when plaintiffs brought suit. As set forth in the motion: DoHS’s spending on community-based mental health services for foster children nearly tripled over the last decade. The percent of foster children placed in residential treatment has decreased from 28 percent to 17 percent over the last decade. DoHS substantially

decreased the vacancy rate for CPS and Youth Services (YS) positions over the last two years. DoHS decreased the turnover rate among CPS and YS workers from 34.1 percent to 22.3 percent over a two-year period. According to the most recent available federal data: West Virginia has the third lowest rate of maltreatment of children in foster care in the country. West Virginia has the highest rate of placement stability of any State in the country. West Virginia has the highest rate of placement in kinship care of any State in the country. “While there is still

room for improvement, DoHS has devoted substantial resources to making those improvements, with the support of the West Virginia Legislature and the courts, and will continue to do so,” said Cynthia Persily, Ph.D., Secretary of the West Virginia Department of Human Services. “In West Virginia, as in every State child welfare program, there are always individual cases in which DoHS could improve. However, the statistics are clear that, on a system-wide basis, West Virginia has much to be proud of.” DoHS recognizes that the many successes it has achieved over the last several

years ultimately depend on foster families, dedicated CPS caseworkers, and mental health professionals. Earlier this year, DoHS along with Aetna Better Health of West Virginia, Mission West Virginia, and 10 foster care agencies joined in collaboration to launch a statewide campaign focused on recruiting foster parents and addressing the shortage of foster care placements in West Virginia. Since its successful launch in March, close to 400 families have reached out with interest in the state’s first collaborative foster care campaign.