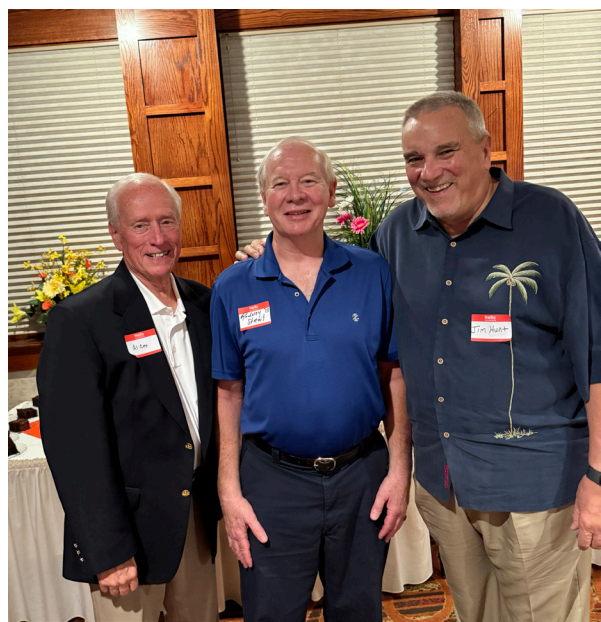


What Did You Do Over Summer Vacation?



Lincoln High School's DECA Club is hard at work installing solar powered lights on the West Fork River Rail Trail. Volunteers pictured are Cameron Patton, Trinity Eldridge, and Sierra Menendez.



SHS Reunion

Community Spirit



By Jim Hunt for the News and Journal

It is often said that schools can define a community and give it life, long after the students depart. I had the opportunity to attend the Shinnston High School Reunion recently and it was an event to remember. Although I did not attend Shinnston High School, my wife is a graduate, and we enjoyed an outdoor get-together on Friday and a dinner/dance on Saturday. Each class set up a tent in the parking lot of Lincoln High School and the hundred-plus crowd took advantage of a food truck and music, as people talked with friends or just sat and enjoyed the sounds of bygone years.

Shinnston High School is long gone, replaced by Lincoln

High School and the last graduate walked out the door over forty-six years ago. This has not stopped a dedicated group of graduates from hosting a reunion every four years. As an outside observer of this unique community event, I was taken by the loyalty and affection of the graduates and how they travel hundreds of miles to reconnect and relive their high school days.

There is also a clear love of the Shinnston community, and graduates were strolling the streets of downtown Shinnston and seeing the displays that welcomed the visitors to town.

With consolidations and reduced birthrates, community schools like Shinnston High School may well go the way of the "Happy Days" television series, where the school was the center of the community's social life. The glare of the lights at the football field on Friday nights, was a place for first dates and family bonding. I heard stories of the Shinnston Dairy Queen from several of the attendees

See "Hunt" on Pg 3

Still Showing Class After Nearly Five Decades



The Shinnston High School Class of 1976 poses for a group photo at the recent SHS Reunion festivities.

Healthy Grandfamilies Provides Resources For Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

By Stepehn Smoot

Over half of the grandparents in West Virginia are either playing large roles, or doing the entire job of raising their grandchildren. Though the number has dropped slightly in the past five

years, from 54.4 percent to approximately 52 percent, the numbers still represent a crisis in both child and elder care.

Tammy Romano, a social worker and case manager with Healthy Grandfamilies of Harrison County,

explained the importance of support for grandparents who must accept the role of primary caregivers to children. She said that with crucial and helpful support, "they don't feel alone. They know there's help."

Many may assume

that grandparents come equipped to such a role because they already raised

See "Healthy" on Pg 3

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2:30 PM THE MOON MY TWIN

3:35 PM SAMUEL JAMES

4:20 PM EMMALEA DEAL & THE HOT MESS

5:20 PM THE HEAVY HITTERS

6:20 PM KHEGAN MCLANE & THE RACCOON WRANGLERS

7:20 PM ANNIE NEELEY

8:20 PM SAM EPLIN

9:20 PM ALABASTER BOXER

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Getting Nosy

I'm going to be nosy. Are you looking for a job? Are you even thinking about looking for a job? Do you know someone who is looking for a job? If so I'd like to suggest that you broaden your horizons and consider a career instead. The Public Service Commission of West Virginia has positions open, and we are actively recruiting. The Commission's professional staff includes people with a wide variety of talents and abilities. In our halls, you'll find attorneys, engineers, accountants, secretaries and clerical workers, IT professionals, even police officers. You may find your calling in an office, in the field inspecting natural gas pipelines, or patrolling the highways for overweight or speeding trucks. Whether you are a recent graduate or a seasoned professional who is looking for a change, we hope you will consider the Public Service Commission. Our employees enjoy full state benefits such as health insurance,



including vision work environment, and dental; paid opportunities for advancement, and the bonus of being able to serve the people of West Virginia. There is a special satisfaction that comes from being able to contribute to the overall good of our friends and neighbors. Working for the Commission makes you an active participant in

making West Virginia a wonderful place to live and raise a family. To see what positions are currently available at the Public Service Commission, go to our website at www.psc.state.wv.us and click on "Employment Opportunities." Positions are only posted for a limited time. However, if they are not filled right away, they will be reposted, so check back often. We are looking for people from all walks of life. And while most of our employees work at the main headquarters in Charleston, we do have field staff stationed throughout the state, especially our transportation officers, railroad inspectors, and pipeline safety inspectors. If you have a feeling that the Public Service Commission might be the right place for you, go ahead and send your resume in care of our HR Manager. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 812, Charleston, WV 25232. Who knows? This might be your lucky day – and ours!

"Hunt" From Pg 1.

and some of the ladies even remembered the girls from Lumberport cruising up to Shinnston to check out the local boys. The local high school produced a great number of teachers, business owners, craftsmen and coal miners, making their impacts locally, nationally and internationally. At the Saturday dinner/dance, I got to talk to former Shinnston mayor, Rodney Strait

and he described the reunion as a great thing for the community. He related that the link with the City of Shinnston and its former namesake high school is still strong and continues to bring real value to the

city. The dinner was held at the Best Western in Bridgeport and drew well over a hundred attendees. The DeeJay was playing a wide mix of music and several of the graying graduates hit the dance floor with a vim and vigor that brought back memories of sock hops in the gymnasium. Sadly, this was the last Shinnston High School reunion and as the evening ended, there were tears and hugs for

this longtime tradition. The committee chair, Debbie Malone and her team of volunteers deserve a great deal of thanks for their leadership and hard work to put on an amazing event.

"Healthy" From Pg 1.

children. Certainly that experience comes in handy and some skills learned as parents do translate. Many grandparents, however, find that accepting this responsibility creates a different and often more difficult dynamic than when they raised their own. For some grandparents, the logistics of, as Romano puts it, "navigating" issues such as the school system, child health care, applying for welfare benefits, modern technology, and other problems prove daunting. The world requires more of those participating in programs than even

just a generation ago. Compounding the problems faced by grandparents in dealing with everyday issues comes the necessity for many in confronting challenges faced in raising children who have grown up in neglect, abuse, or other traumas. Many of these stem from one major source, Romano says, sharing that. "the opioid problem we have in this county alone" has created large groups of children who did not experience a firm footing with their biological parents or parent. She went on to say that approximately 80 percent of children raised by grandparents have biological parents in addiction, incarceration, or similar problems that prevent them from providing a safe and secure home. West Virginia often sets the pace in the nation on tackling drug addiction crisis related issues head on and this is no different. The Healthy Grandfamilies program started seven years ago in response to rising numbers of grandparents raising their grandchildren. West Virginia State University Department of Social Work and WVSU Extension Service combined forces to establish and operate the program that serves Harrison and most other counties across the state. In Harrison County, the organization also partners with the school system, Family Services of Harrison County, and others. The United Way also sponsors the program. Romano described the program in Harrison, saying "we have two sessions, one in fall and one in spring." Each session includes eight to 10 weekly classes that provide multiple benefits. Primarily, the sessions center around a presentation by an expert in a field helpful to grandfamilies. Some classes focus on legal and government

related issues, such as working with the courts or the school system. Dr. Kevin Johnson, a child mental health expert, will come to share vital information on child trauma. Other professionals may focus on communication and building family relationships. Each session also includes presentations that focus on informing grandparents on how to maintain their own mental and physical health through topics such as stress management and nutrition. Of course, the slate of programming changes from session to session, but all sessions bring important focus on the most challenging issues. Participants get more than just the presentations, however. Families in these types of situations often find themselves increasingly closed off. Some believe that asking for help runs against their ideals of family self-reliance. Others fear that if social welfare organizations are aware of their struggles, that Child Protective Services will come and take their children away. Romano shared that trust "is one of our biggest obstacles." "We get out into communities," Romano said, "to let people see who we are and what we do." They also provide fliers and other information to and through the school system. Bringing the grandfamilies together reminds each participant that his or her family is not alone. On the nights scheduled for presentations and other social events, such as picnics, Healthy Grandfamilies encourage participants to share stories and to get to know each other. This expands their support networks, even if that support is just a friend with whom to vent. Another mission of Healthy Grandfamilies lies in connecting participants with resources. Romano described how a state law geared toward helping the homeless allows for extra assistance for children who are also in the school system. Help with rent or car repairs can be made available. Also "if they need transportation, Community Action has transportation." Healthy Grandfamilies works with grandfamilies and these community service groups to get the families the help they need to continue. Their mission lies in both supporting the raising of the grandchild, but also the health and well-being of the grandparents as well.

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

Thursday, August 15, 2023

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 31 monthly meetings. Juniors meet at 6 pm, Seniors meet at 7 pm. American Legion Post 31, Shinnston.

Harrison County Schools will hold Family Day on Aug 17 between 11 AM and 3 PM at Meadowbrook Mall

Shinnston will hold its citywide yard sale on Aug 3rd

Wind Down Wednesday will take place at 6 PM in Shinnston on the Green Space

Aug 17 will be Party on the Green from noon to 10 PM in Shinnston on the Green Space

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Playing Ball For Cash In the Summer Tee It Up

Hoops fans get a little fix this time of year with the TBT (The Basketball Tournament) going strong. Created in 2014, TBT is a 64 team tournament with the winner walking away with a cool \$1 million purse. It is a “winner” take all format so the words of Ricky Bobby “If you ain’t first, you’re last” directly apply in this scenario.

Hoops fans in the Mountain State love the TBT because it provides a walk down memory lane for both West Virginia and Marshall fans. Each schools is represented with an alumni squad that competes in this event and it pairs players from different years, allowing a fresh look at what could have been if there wasn’t an age gap between some of these superstars.

Best Virginia had a 10 man roster with eight former West Virginia players, along with two hoopsters (Marcus Keene and Xavier Bledson) with the head coach being former Mountaineer guard Chase Harler. Guards Teyvon Myers, Tarik Phillip, and Taz Sherman accompanied by forwards and big men Esa Ahmad, Wesley Harris, Jonathan Holton,



The Bottom Line

*By Bill Nestor
Sports Editor*

Devin Williams, and Sagaba Konate are the recognizable names that are not far from their playing days in the old gold and blue. Sherman, Harris, Konate, and Ahmad had never participated in the TBT before in the previous four years of the team’s existence.

Heading into this year’s tournament, Best Virginia was seeded third and had to travel up 79 north to play out of the Peterson Events Center in Pittsburgh, the home of the Panthers. The opener brought a lock-up with Brotherly Love, a Philadelphia-based team. Best Virginia jumped out to an 11 to nothing lead and cruised to a 94 to 69 victory. The new players on the block, Bledson and Keene, combined to shoot seven for 11 from deep. Harris netted a team high 15 points while Keene, Bledson, and Ahmad each chipped in with 12 points a piece.

Best Virginia outrebounded their opponents 44 to 30

with Williams hauling down a team high eight caroms. Every player on the roster found the scoring column in the tournament opening win.

Game two brought host squad Zoo Crew, the Pittsburgh alumni based team, in an older version of the Backyard Brawl. The home team would prevail 91 to 79, ending the run for Best Virginia. It was an uphill battle for Harler and his team as they trailed throughout the contest, thanks to the hot shooting of the Zoo Crew. The host was over 50 percent from the field and scored 36 from three-point range.

Ahmad paced Best Virginia with 17 points. Tarik Phillip and Harris netted 13 points a piece and Keene added 11 points in the loss.

Marshall’s alumni based team (Herd That) garnered a pair of wins in the TBT. The first was a 92 to 57 victory over Jackson TN Boone in Rupp Arena (home of the Kentucky Wildcats.) Former Notre Dame

High School and Marshall standout Jarrod West ran the show while scoring five points and dishing out five assists.

In the second game, Herd That had to come from behind to earn a 63 to 59 triumph over War Ready, an Auburn alumni based group. It was a game of runs and, fortunately, the Thundering Herd was “Herd” last. War Ready utilized a 12 to two scoring advantage to claim a 55 to 49 lead heading down the stretch. However, Herd That closed strong, scoring the final 14 points of the affair to advance.

In the Lexington Regional title game versus the Kentucky based La Familia, Herd That fell 95 to 66. It was a perfect storm that put an end to the tournament for the Marshall team. A lack of paint production, coupled with red hot shooting from the host team, spelled defeat for Herd That.

Summertime hoops is always a joy, especially when it involves players from West Virginia and Marshall.

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

By Bill Nextor

This week’s edition of the Tee It Up took us to Grafton for a round at Tygart Lake Public Golf Course. This 18 hole championship course plays 6,255 yards from the longest tees and is a par 72.

Tygart Lake Golf Course was created in 1967 and has seen multiple changes over the years. The ownership and management has taken this proud tract to an even higher level. It seems as if every visit to this venue brings vast improvements. The most recent are the addition of blue tees on a pair of holes (numbers seven and 14) that add to the difficulty of both holes tremendously. I didn’t play from the near tees, but just standing there, pondering their perspective, made my knees knock.

The course is a tale of two sides with the front side being more wide open and with four par fours, there are plenty of opportunities to score. It also owns my favorite hole in the course (number seven) which is protected by water and bunkers.

Sometimes, I think I would rather take a picture of it than to take it on.

The back nine provides the classic risk versus reward scenarios on multiple holes. Water comes into play on numbers 10, 11, 12, and 14. Hole 17 is a par five with a narrow opening lined with trees on both sides. All five of the above mentioned holes give the option of a driver, if you dare.

The staff is the difference-maker here. The upgrades to the facilities are nice, but it’s the people who make the venue stand out. From the pro shop to the course-friendly, knowledgeable, and hardworking staff set Tygart Lake Golf Course apart from others.

The 19th Hole is a fun and friendly experience to say the least, and it provides the perfect place to recap your round. They say the grass is always greener in Grafton and the proof can be found here. The greens are in exceptional shape; you have to play them to believe it, and I suggest that you do. Tygart Lake Golf Course is a must play this season.

New Members Banding Together



Photo from Lincoln High School Facebook page

Newbie Lincoln High School band members march to dinner for the first time with drumline cadence.

AG’s Mobile Office Sets August Stops for Shinnston, Italian Heritage Festival

CHARLESTON — Attorney General Patrick Morrissey announced a representative from his office will meet with north central West Virginia residents in August to discuss consumer-related issues and answer any potential questions.

“These public events are a great way for consumers to talk one-on-one

with our consumer representatives,” Attorney General Morrissey said. “Residents can easily get questions answered, learn what is going on in their area and how to keep personal information safe and secure.”

Pam Krushansky, a consumer outreach and compliance specialist with the office, will host the events as scheduled

below:

Aug. 1: 11 a.m. to noon – Senior Center, Maple Drive, Fairmont

Aug. 5: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. – County Commission Meeting Room, 106 West Main St., Kingwood

Aug. 5: 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Terra Alta City Hall, 701A East State Ave., Terra Alta

Aug. 12: 11 a.m. to noon – Senior Center, 404 Main St., Fairview

Aug. 13: 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. – Senior Center, 500 West Main St., Clarksburg

Aug. 13: Noon to 1 p.m. – Shinnston Library, 40 Bridge St., Shinnston

Aug. 14: 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. – Senior Center, 171 West Second St., Weston

Aug. 15: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. – Senior Day at Randolph County Fair, Fairgrounds, Beverly

Aug. 20 to Aug. 23:

5 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Monongalia County Fair, 500 Mylan Park, Morgantown

Aug. 27: 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 – Senior Center, 217 Senior Lane, Parsons

Aug. 29: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. – Barbour County Fair Grounds Pavilion, 227 Fairgrounds Way, Belington

Aug. 30: 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. – West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival, Downtown Clarksburg,

Clarksburg

Aug. 31: 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. – West Virginia Italian Heritage Festival, Downtown Clarksburg, Clarksburg

For information on additional requirements specific to any location, attendees are encouraged to contact Pam Krushansky at 304-741-5834. In case of inclement weather, please call ahead.

Justice announces State of Emergency for all counties due to drought conditions

CHARLESTON, WV — In an effort to support West Virginia’s farming community, Gov. Jim Justice has declared a State of Emergency for all 55 counties due to a prolonged shortage of rainfall that has caused dangerous drought conditions. The

U.S. Drought Monitor indicates extreme, severe, and moderate drought conditions have impacted the entire state.

“This drought has plagued West Virginia farmers, putting them at risk of losing everything,” Gov.

Justice said. “We cannot and will not stand by and watch our hardworking farmers suffer from this severe lack of rain. We understand the immense stress and hardship this drought has caused. Right now, our Emergency

Management Division is working tirelessly to secure disaster assistance for those in need. Until then, we are committed to doing everything we can to support our agricultural community during this challenging time.”

With this

proclamation, Gov. Justice has activated the Emergency Operations Plan, instructed personnel and resources to be ready to respond to any emergencies, and granted specific administrative powers to the Director of the West

Virginia Emergency Management Division to ensure essential emergency services are provided efficiently.

This State of Emergency will remain in effect for thirty days unless terminated earlier by another proclamation.



A Tradition Older Than History, A Game For the 21st Century

Shinnston Bocce League Is the Organization of the Month

By Stephen Smoot

“People come from all around,” said Lou Belcastro about the popularity of one of Shinnston’s favorite pastimes. It’s not the national pastime of baseball, but a game with far older and even imperial origins.

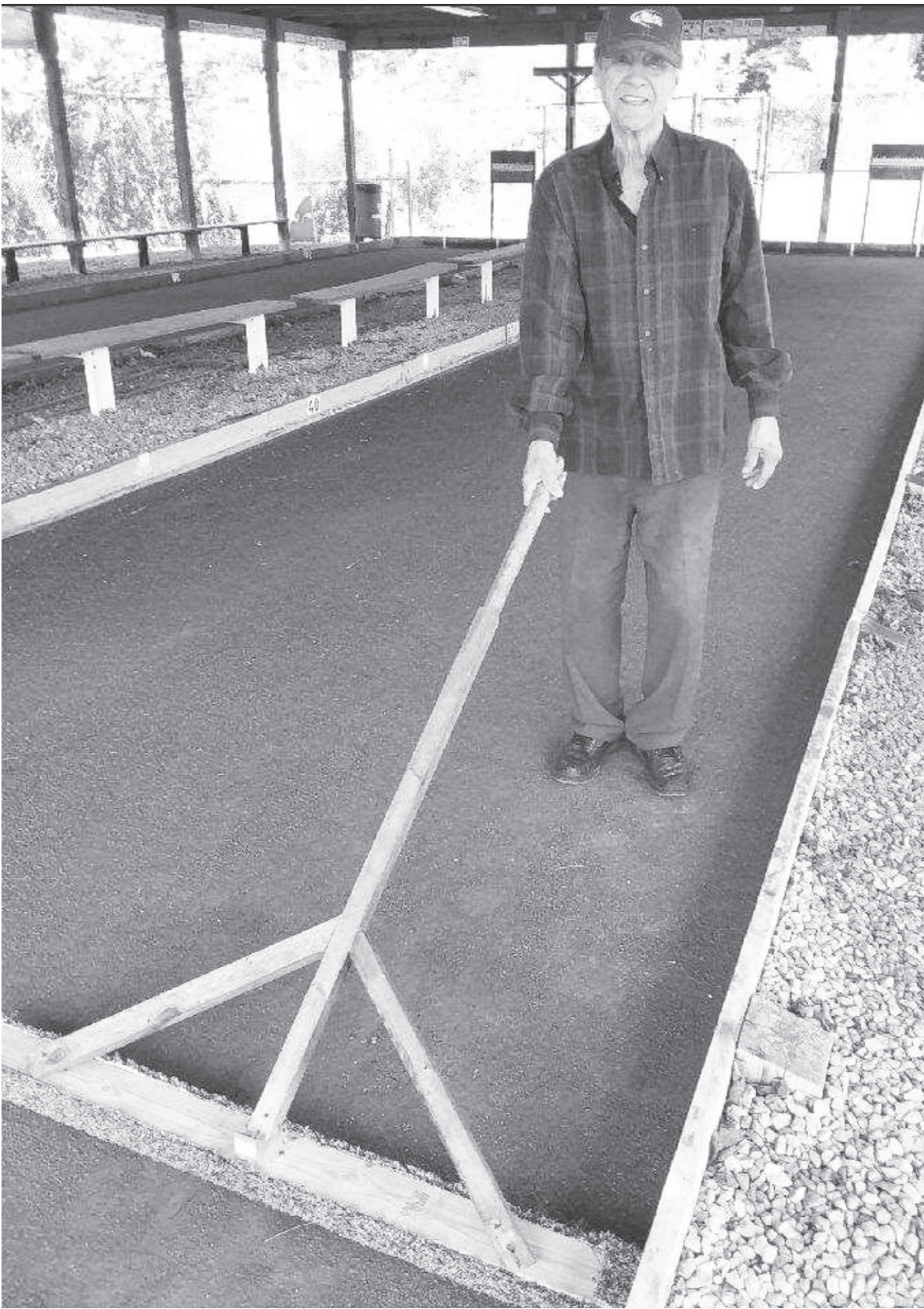
It’s easy to see why many in Shinnston and around north central West Virginia go bonkers for bocce!

Some form of the game of bocce was over six centuries old when Egyptians constructed the Great Pyramid of Giza to house the sarcophagus of Pharaoh Khufu. The game is known to date at least to 5200 years prior to the birth of Christ and perhaps even back to 9000 BC. Play of the game traveled to Greece at the end of that region’s Dark Ages in 800 BC, close to the time when Homer composed The Iliad and The Odyssey.

Like the modern United States, the Roman Republic, then Empire, excelled at absorbing the traditions of other cultures, making it their own, then re-exporting them. Roman trade ships and caravans drove throughout the Mediterranean Sea and crossed deep into Africa and Asia. As the website Bocce.org explains, “in early times they (the Romans) used coconuts brought back from Africa and later used hard olive wood to carve out bocce balls.

Over the centuries, bocce did not become the sport of mere kings, but of Roman Emperors and continued as such after the fall of that great state. “Beginning with Emperor Augustus,” the sport’s site reads, “bocce became the sport of statesman and rulers. From the early Greek physician Ipocrates to the great Italian Renaissance man Galileo, the early participants of bocce have noted that the game’s athleticism and spirit of competition rejuvenates the body.”

So naturally, the



Lou Belcastro and others volunteer regularly to keep the bocce courts at Feeguson Park pristine for play.

Italian word “bocce” derives from the Latin term “bottia,” which in English translates to “boss.”

The sport traveled through time from Classical Rome to the city-states and minor kingdoms on the Italian Peninsula. What the Romans embraced, the Renaissance Italians tried to ban. Italian magnates felt that their subjects ought to spend more time training in the military arts and several Popes felt that it contributed to a gambling epidemic.

Others disagreed with those assessments, especially the English. Elizabethan England adopted the game as its own, almost on an obsessive level. It was said that Sir Francis

Drake insisted on completing a game of bocce before helping to lead Queen Elizabeth I’s fleet to take on the Spanish Armada. Over time, England, then America, transformed the Italian bocce into a somewhat different game - the British sport of bowling.

Despite the commands of their rulers, Italians from nobles to peasants loved the game. When immigrants from Southern Italy and Sicily came to America in the late 19th and early 20th century, bocce came right along with them.

“We usually have red balls and green balls for the flag of Italy,” Belcastro shared.

He went on to

explain that a group can play four-on-four, two-on-two, or one on one. This makes it a versatile game for a fun afternoon with friends or family. A bocce set has eight balls of two colors. One can play with different sizes of balls with smaller sizes for beginners and the largest fashioned for professionals.

One of the great perks of playing bocce is that the game costs little to play, whether for fun or organized competition. One can buy a good set for \$20. Belcastro noted that joining the Shinnston Bocce League and playing a full schedule is generally cheaper than a single game of bowling when all chip in for the team’s entry

fee.

In the Shinnston League, a four man team pays a \$100 entry fee. A two man team pays \$20 per person and one-on-one costs only \$15 per person. Within the league as it progresses in the season, “you play many games. You play everyone at least once.”

Also, the League built the Shinnston court with the area’s hot summers in mind. The court lies in the shade of an open sided structure that lets in air and shields out the sun.

Winners earn prize money, but that isn’t the players’ priority. “It’s not the money. It’s the competition and the camaraderie,” Belcastro explained.

A coin flip decides which side gets to toss out the pallina, also called by some a jack. This object then becomes the target. Individuals must try to throw their balls in such a way as they land closest to the jack. If the ball ends up touching the pallina, it’s called a “kiss.”

“I’m a knocker myself,” laughed Belcastro. As in croquet, a player can target another ball to gain an advantage.

Points are earned based on the final proximity of each ball to the pallina. “You play to 11,” Belcastro said, adding that “points are earned by how many of your balls are close to the pallina.” A team must win by two, however.

Anyone can and does play bocce. It offers the player good exercise and fresh air, but those of almost any physical size and strength can compete. While in some areas, their leagues remain strictly a male activity, not so in Shinnston. In the League here, Belcastro says “women and men can be on the same team mixed.” He added with enthusiasm, “And these women are good!”

Whether it be the exercise, the fellowship, or the fun of it all, bocce seems to keep its players young regardless of age. Belcastro spoke of one lady in Fairmont, aged 102. “She drove and she played bocce. You’d never guess she was 100 years old!” He went on to say “any age can play, you see. It’s just fun!”

Today, 25 million people play bocce regularly, making it the third most popular sport globally. It also serves as a fun and exciting symbol of the strength of an Italian tradition dating back millennia, but as fun and exciting in the West Virginia of the 21st century Anno Domini as ever.

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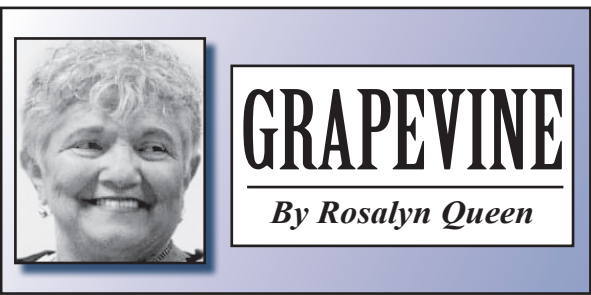
The Whole World Watches As Paris Takes the Spotlight For the Olympics

Today I thought I would take a break from the political day to day stories and tune into the Olympics. I guess I am what you might call a fanatic. Other than Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune I watch the news channels all day long. I must admit it is repetitious but I do enjoy the news.

So I am so glad that I can take a break and enjoy the Olympics. The opening ceremony was great and it brought back memories of my visit to Paris several years ago. The Eiffel Tower, the Arc de

Triumph and the Louvre were just a few of the landmarks I remember. My memory slipped back in time and I remembered the French language and my classes with Jane Maxwell. Although I am not fluent, I did recognize a lot of the words in the remarks.

Then I decided to browse through the schedule of events and once again I slipped back to my gym classes at Broadway Junior High School. Our gym teacher was Tyson Kishbaugh and in my opinion he



GRAPEVINE

By Rosalyn Queen

really contributed to our being well rounded individuals.

The first six week period of spring we competed and enjoyed learning games that are featured in the Olympics. I remember the long jump and the high jump. I especially like the high jump as we sailed over the stick

hoping that the stick did not fall as it was raised inch by inch. On the long jump, we ran to the line and tried as hard as we could to make a long land on the mats. We also learned how to race as a team and how to pass off the bar to other members of our relay team. Shot put was another event

we participated in as well as pole vaulting. We had a tumbling team which could have been an introduction to gymnastics. Back then girls played on three court basketball. Two guards in the opponents basket, a center in the middle court and two forward's in our court. A little different but we learned the basics.

So now thanks to Mr. Kishbaugh, I really have a basic understanding of the competitions. For the next ten days, I will be reliving my days at Broadway Jr

High. I only wish that these programs were being used in our school systems today. Granted I will not be participating in the Olympics but I am a more rounded person because of my understanding of the events.

I guess I should set the record straight, I will watch a little bit of news over the next ten days. Just a reminder summer is slipping away, so be sure to plan a little get away and remember to get your fresh produce at the Farmers Market.

JUNE RED MEAT PRODUCTION

From the United States Department of Agriculture

Charleston, West Virginia - Commercial red meat production during June 2024 totaled 700,000 pounds. This was down

17 percent from June 2023. Commercial red meat production is the carcass weight after slaughter including beef, veal, pork, lamb and mutton. Individual commodity production is total live weight of commercial slaughter. Commercial cattle

slaughter totaled 881,000 pounds live weight, down 18 percent from June 2023. Cattle slaughter totaled 700 head, down 200 head from the previous year. The average live weight was up 42 pounds from

the previous year, at 1,245 pounds. Commercial calf slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing data for individual operations. Commercial hog slaughter totaled 173,000 pounds live weight, down 9 percent

from last year. Hog slaughter totaled 600 head, unchanged from the previous year. The average live weight was up 12 pounds from the previous year, at 306 pounds. Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter was not published to avoid

disclosing data for individual operations. United States - Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 4.27 billion pounds in June, down 6 percent from the 4.55 billion pounds produced in June 2023.

“Smoot” From Pg 2.

President Rutherford B. Hayes antagonized party bosses by promising “reform in our civil service. . . a reform that will be thorough, radical, and complete.” He added that “public officers should owe their whole service to the Government and to the people.” Hayes did not get what he wanted immediately, but civil service reform eventually won the day.

But has it given the federal government the type of employees that Hayes envisioned in his call for reform?

Civil service gives the federal government career employees. The positive of a career employee lies

in the fact that they accumulate knowledge and experience over time that can make them more effective in their jobs. Protections against “unreasonable” removal give them security in case they must execute a policy against the wishes of someone, somewhere, in power.

Ideally, they work in a practical manner without reference to politics or ideology. They work for the betterment of the country more than themselves and develop a national viewpoint that allows them to see parts of the big picture that others cannot.

Ideally, anyway. In all too many cases, long tenure of service

provides the opportunity for federal employees to carve fiefdoms within their agency, use their knowledge of policies and procedures to solidify their position. Others, knowing the difficulty of removal, remain in place as the lilies of the field, neither toiling nor spinning.

All too many go from college - in cases of higher level positions, the Ivy League - to federal employment without the opportunity to pick up “real life” experience. Career officials of this stripe know what they learned in school and in government service, but in no other context.

For all of the drawbacks of the spoils system, it offered one clear advantage in consistent turnover. Federal employees

gained experience that they then, by necessity, took into the private sector when administrations changed. A new President from a different party meant that the federal government might lose valuable experience, but also gain insight from an entirely new set of perspectives.

The automatic firing of political appointees did mean a loss of experience, but a gain in the effect of creative destruction.

Political appointees also often brought a broad spectrum of perspectives beyond their ideological and political loyalties. They worked in other fields, in other places, and for other people, giving them a more varied life experience than a lot

of federal employees today.

Also, they did not have to navigate the infamously and bewilderingly complicated computer portals used for civil service federal hiring. This process automatically weeds out those with less technological savvy, but who might otherwise bring strong characteristics to the job.

Why this history lesson? Because the

federal government is a bloated and broken bureaucracy that has much more control over Americans’ lives than insight into their needs. The spoils system allowed for abuses comparatively picayune to the pain it can inflict today. While the Chevron decision and others has pulled back on the leash, the federal government could still benefit from a regular refresh of its leadership and also rank and file employees.

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Answers

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OBITUARIES



Alfred David Bell

Alfred David Bell, 74, of Shinnston passed away Sunday morning, July 28, 2024 at Grafton following an extended illness. He was born April 15, 1950 in Fairmont, a son of the late Claude and Mary Margaret Simmons Bell. He is also preceded in death by his sister, Janet Hardman and Niece, Donna Ice.

He is survived by his wife, Maria Gagliardi Bell of Shinnston; his daughter, Lucy Herrod of Shinnston; his son Chuck Bell of Shinnston; his granddaughter, Ali Herrod of Lost Creek; two grandsons, Brock Herrod of Lost Creek and Brody Bell of Shinnston; Great-grandson, Axton James and great-granddaughter, Ayda James, both of Lost Creek; a nephew, Rick Bragg and wife Amy of Rivesville, and several nieces and nephews who reside in Italy.

Dave served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He retired from Consolidation Coal Co., Robinson Run Mine #95. He was active in Little Rock Camp Church and Higher Rock Church. Dave loved fishing, riding his Harley, and loved spending time with family, especially his grandchildren and great-grandchildren whom he adored. He enjoyed spending time with his fishing buddy, Jim Knight at the fishing

camp in Elkins. Friends will be received at the Harmer Funeral Home, 300 Pike St., Shinnston from 2 PM to 8 PM Wednesday, July 31, 2024. A funeral service will be at the funeral home at 10:30 AM Thursday, August 1, 2024 with Pastor Tim Sandy officiating. Entombment will follow at Shinnston Memorial Cemetery Mausoleum. Online memories and condolences may be shared at harmerfuneralhome.com A service of Harmer Funeral Home.



Nick Fleece

Nick Fleece, 81, of Haywood Rd., passed away Friday, July 26, 2024 at Mon General Hospital following a brief illness. He was born December 6, 1942 in Detroit, MI, a son of the late John and Betty Phillips Fleece.

He is survived by his wife, Donna Spagnuolo Fleece of Haywood, Rd; his children, Nick (Jennifer) Fleece, Hurricane, Matt (Mary) Fleece, Gypsy, and Chad Fleece, Adamsville; Grandchildren, Marina (Cody) Opron, Shinnston, Megan (Austin) Clarida, Marietta, OH, Madison Fleece and Matthew Fleece, both of Gypsy, Sydney Fleece and Nick Fleece, both of Hurricane, Andrew Fleece, Morgantown, and Audrey Fleece, Adamsville; great-

grandchildren, Sunny and Jettson Opron, and Hudson and Beau Clarida; sisters-in-law, Judy Fleece, Haywood Road, and Ernestine Fleece, California, brother-in-law, Roger (Suzy) Spagnuolo, Bridgeport; several nieces and nephews. Also preceding him in death are his brothers, Thomas P. Fleece, John Fleece, Jr., and Richard W. Fleece; his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Roger and Mary Spagnuolo.

Nick was employed at Anchor Hocking until it closed, then retired from Lockheed Martin. He was an active member of St. Ann Catholic Church, where he served as usher and member of the men's group, and was also known for frying the fritti's. He was a daily participant of the McDonalds coffee gang, where he would be found early in the mornings.

Nick was previously involved with his son's youth sports, enjoyed watching the WVU Mountaineers, and mowing grass. Also, he looked forward to spending time with grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Friends will be received at Harmer Funeral Home, 300 Pike St., Shinnston from 1 PM to 8 PM Tuesday. Holy Rosary will be recited at 7:30 to conclude the visitation. A funeral mass will be celebrated at St. Ann Catholic Church at 11:00 AM Wed., July 31, 2024 with Rev. Akila Rodrigo TOR and Rev. Deepu Joseph officiating. Interment will follow at Shinnston Memorial Mausoleum.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent for the Eucharistic Chapel, St. Ann Catholic Church, 43 Mahlon St.,

Shinnston, WV 26431 Online condolences may be sent to harmerfuneralhome.com.



Richard David "Dickie" Martin

Richard David "Dickie" Martin, 77, of Parkersburg, passed away on Friday, July 26, 2024, following a prolonged illness. He was born in Shinnston, September 9, 1946, a son of the late Richard "Dick" and Naomi "Skeeter" Murray Martin.

Dickie is survived by his wife, Colleen Martin; his sons, Chris and Curtis; and his daughter, Crystal; two loving grandsons, Allan and Bentley; three sisters, Debbie Reed, Linda Moebus, and Lisa Martin. He was also preceded in death by his sister Brenda Martin.

Dickie was a Bridgeport High School graduate and retired from the US Army as a Master Sargent. He later was employed with the Texas State Prison System. He loved life, his family, and his friends. He spent most of his years trading horses, loved fishing, and was an avid deer and bear hunter. He enjoyed camping in Bergoo, WV.

The family will receive friends at the Perine Funeral Home, 1348 S. Pike St., Shinnston, from 1-8pm, Wednesday and 10am until the time of

the service at Noon on Thursday, August 1st, with Pastor Thomas Horne officiating. Interment will be in the WV National Cemetery in Pruntytown. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to The Wounded Warrior Project at support.woundedwarriorproject.org or at the funeral home. Condolences may be extended to the family at www.perinefunerals.com. The Perine Funeral Home is honored to serve the Martin family.



Wayman Lee Vincent

Wayman Lee Vincent, 92, of Shinnston, passed away on July 28, 2024 at United Hospital Center. He was born in Shinnston on April 16, 1932 to the late Ora Guy Vincent and Malissa Marie (Ash) Vincent.

Wayman worked at King Knob Coal as a heavy-duty operator. He enjoyed making guns and jewelry as well as hunting, fishing and drag racing. He was an excellent mechanic.

He is survived by his brother, Chuck Vincent and wife Patricia of Saltwell and one nephew, Duane Vincent and wife Erica of Shinnston and several other nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, Wayman is preceded in death by his wife, Eva (Colwell) Vincent; two sons:

Allan Lee Vincent and Lenard Keith Vincent; two sisters: Vonda Lou McIntire and Louise Vincent; four brothers: Bill, Bud, Carl and Dale Vincent and one niece, Stephanie Eileen Buck.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to:

Humane Society of Harrison County
2450 Saltwell Road
Shinnston, WV 26431

Family and friends will be received at Dorsey Funeral Home, 701 S. Pike St., Shinnston, on Thursday, August 1, 2024 from 11:00am until time of service 1:00pm with Pastor Duane Bartrug officiating. Interment to follow Shinnston Memorial Cemetery.

Dorsey Funeral Home is honored to be handling the arrangements for the Vincent family.



Treven Robert "Skeeter" Russell

Treven Robert "Skeeter" Russell, 51, of Fairmont passed away Friday, July 19, 2024 at his residence surrounded by his family. He was born January 5, 1973 in Fairmont, a son of Arnett Ambrose and the late Helen Louise Minear Russell, and step-mother, Peggy Russell.

Also surviving are his spouse, Angel Sisler Russell; son Owen

See "Obits" on Pg 10

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Out of the Past

Memorable photographs from around Harrison County



Oil industry workers with their horses at G. R. Ferguson Farm near Shinnston in 1910

Investment to reopen Weirton operation announced

This investment will result in up to 600 jobs in Brooke and Hancock counties

Gov. Justice and jobs in Brooke and Cleveland-Cliffs Hancock counties. The announced a \$150 million investment to reopen the recently idled plant in Weirton. This investment will lead to an anticipated 600 USW-represented

for Weirton and the Northern Panhandle. We were never going to sit on the sidelines and watch these jobs disappear. After we announced the closure of the facility in February, we immediately mobilized an Economic Development Task Force and a Workforce WV Quick Response Team to support those affected. Now, just

a few months later, we’ve forged a new deal that positions West Virginia at the forefront of strengthening our nation’s grid. I extend my deepest appreciation to Lourenco Goncalves and the entire Cleveland-Cliffs team for ensuring the continuation of this operation, which will bring 600 jobs back to the area. We turned a really tough situation

into a great outcome, and I’m proud to say this is how we do things in West Virginia,” Gov. Justice said. “In addition to saving these important jobs, this deal shows our commitment to energy independence. By making these high-demand transformers right here, we’re cutting down on our need for energy from other

countries and making our grid stronger. Just as important, this not only helps keep our current mining jobs but will also create new ones in our state. Plus, it helps us build new relationships with businesses, giving them the reliable energy they need to grow. This is a big win for West Virginia and our country’s energy future.”

Moore announces record-breaking year for unclaimed property returns

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – State Treasurer Riley Moore today announced his Office’s Unclaimed Property Division has once again set a new record for returning lost funds, with nearly \$28 million worth of unclaimed property returned to individuals, businesses and organization over the last fiscal year. “I am once again proud to announce my Office continues to beat our own records for how much money we’ve returned to our citizens,” Treasurer Moore said. “This is the third year in a row we’ve been able to set a new record for unclaimed property returns. Since I took Office in 2021, we have returned more than \$81 million to our citizens, and I know this record pace will continue. “I’m proud of the hard work that’s been put in by our entire team to ensure our citizens, businesses and other organizations are reconnected with their lost funds,” Treasurer Moore said. “This is the people’s money, and we’re working diligently to get it back to them.” During Fiscal Year 2024,

which ended June 30, the Unclaimed Property Division returned \$27,989,624.99 in funds, topping the previous record of \$26.8 million set during the prior fiscal year. Since it began in 1967, the program has returned more than \$311 million to rightful owners. Treasurer Moore has taken several steps since taking Office in 2021 to modernize and streamline the unclaimed property process. That included working with lawmakers in 2022 to pass House Bill 4511, which improved both the process of claiming funds and how funds and properties are turned over to the Office. This bill also allowed the Office to launch the successful “West Virginia Cash Now” program, which has automatically returned roughly \$7 million to individuals since its inception, with another \$3.3 million set to be returned this fall. Additionally, the Office has ramped up its digital marketing efforts to help raise awareness of the program with various online

and mobile audiences, and launched a mobile version of the website that features an SMS text feature which allows users to forward unclaimed property listings to family and friends if they see their names listed. Also, to help assure residents of the legitimacy of the program, the state’s unclaimed property website and database was migrated to a .gov domain – www.WVUnclaimedProperty.gov. “One of the biggest challenges we face is that people think this program is too good to be true – they can’t believe someone from the government is trying to give them money instead of asking for it,” Treasurer Moore said. “We’ve been working hard over the years to promote and educate people about this program to assure them that this is their money and they can rightfully claim it.” While the Office is returning money at the fastest pace in state history, it’s also receiving new claims at a record pace too – thanks in part to the modernization and streamlining reforms

contained in House Bill 4511. The State Treasurer’s Office now has more than \$440 million worth of listings in its database. “We’re receiving new listings on a continual basis, so that’s why I remind people to bookmark and keep coming back to our website – www.WVUnclaimedProperty.gov – to check and see if we’re holding anything for you,” Treasurer Moore said.

What is Unclaimed Property?

Unclaimed property can include financial accounts or items of value in which the owner has not initiated any activity for one year or longer. Common examples include unpaid life insurance benefits, forgotten bank accounts and unused rebate cards. (While the title includes the word “property,” it does not however include real estate.) West Virginia’s unclaimed property laws protect the public by ensuring money and property owed to them is returned to them, rather than remaining permanently

with financial institutions, business associations, governments and other entities. The Treasurer seeks to reunite the unclaimed property, including uncashed paychecks, stocks, or safe deposit box contents, with its owner. Nationwide, nearly 33 million people in the United States – one in every 10 – are estimated to have unclaimed property available for them to claim.

How Can I Find Unclaimed Property in My Name?

West Virginians searching for lost financial assets can go to www.WVUnclaimedProperty.gov. In addition to finding property, the website will also help you track a claim. A demonstration of how to use the Unclaimed Property search site is available on the Treasury’s YouTube page, at: <https://youtu.be/K09yQ7YNKIE>. To search for lost financial assets outside West Virginia, visit www.MissingMoney.com.

WVSOM students in The Health Plan’s medical scholarship program

WHEELING, W.Va. – Since 2009, The Health Plan (THP) The Health Plan has opened its medical Scholarship program has provided over \$3 million in scholarships to students at the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (WVSOM) medical and nursing students who intend to

stay and practice in the state of West Virginia. On July 19, Jeff Knight, president and CEO of THP, and James W. Nemitz, Ph.D., president of WVSOM, celebrated the osteopathic medical school’s inclusion in the need-based scholarship program, which is also available to medical and nursing students at West Virginia University and Marshall University. WVSOM does Knight said including

WVSOM builds on THP’s efforts to support West Virginia medical community. “The health care staffing shortage continues to be a significant issue in West Virginia. The Health Plan is committed to supporting our state’s health care workforce, and we’re thrilled to team up with WVSOM to offer our scholarship program to its students. WVSOM does amazing work in

both educating our future providers and advocating for health care initiatives important to all West Virginians. We’re proud to be partners,” Knight said. Nemitz thanked Knight and The Health Plan for offering the scholarship program at WVSOM, which educates an average of nearly 800 medical students each year. According to the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, the school is No. 1 in producing physicians who practice in West Virginia, with 40% of the state’s physicians being WVSOM graduates.

West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine WVSOM is a national leader in educating osteopathic physicians for primary care medicine in rural areas. Visit WVSOM online at www.wvsom.edu. “WVSOM is appreciative that The Health Plan has

included osteopathic medical students in its scholarship program. Medical school is not inexpensive. This scholarship, by financially assisting recipients who want to stay in West Virginia, benefits not only our students but the state. The Health Plan shows its commitment to the health and well-being of the communities it serves through its products and services and by supporting health care professionals, medical education and healthy-living initiatives. The program is a tremendous opportunity for WVSOM students,” Nemitz said. With this new opportunity, WVSOM students were able to apply in the final month of the 2024-25 scholarship cycle and will be eligible for the full 2025-26 period. The scholarship pays for tuition and fees at the school’s in-state rate and can be renewed for up to four years.

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DISTRICT CLARK NUTTER FORT CORP MAP 801 PARCEL 0163 0000 0000
You will take notice that DAWN PHARES, the purchaser of the tax lien(s) on the following real estate, **Cert. No. 2023-C-000204**, located in CLARK NUTTER FORT CORP District, 1 LOT 794 FAIR-GROUNDS, which was returned delinquent or nonentered in the name of JONES DAVID & BARBARA, and was sold by the deputy commissioner of delinquent or nonentered lands of HARRISON County at the sale for the delinquent taxes on May 8, 2024. DAWN PHARES requests that you be notified a deed for such real estate will be made on or after January 1, 2025, as provided by law, unless before that day you redeem such real estate. The amount needed to redeem on or before December 31, 2024 will be as follows:
Amount equal to the taxes and charges due on the date of the certification, with \$ 239.73
interest, for tax year ticket number 2022-11455
Back tax tickets, with interest, and charges due on the date of certification for \$ 0.00
ticket number.
Subsequent of taxes paid on the property, with interest to for tax year 2023-11636. \$ 161.80
Additional taxes with interest. \$ 0.00
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Total Amount Due and Payable to WV State Auditor - cashier check, money order, \$ **1,583.54**
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**Pictured are the convention attendees from Unit 31, Shinnston.
Seated: Margaret Yost and standing: Dortha Parsons, Kim Mellie, Marsha Duckworth, Sharon Duckworth, and Roxie Nicholson. Not pictured: Evelyn Murphy.**

Shinnston Post 31 Delegates Attend 102nd American Legion Auxiliary Department Convention

By Betsy Turner

The American Legion Auxiliary Department of West Virginia held its 102nd convention July 9th-11th at the Doubletree by Hilton in Huntington, WV. The Convention is called for the purpose of electing officers for the ensuing year, amending the Department Constitution, receiving reports of Department Officers and Chairmen, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before it.

Department officers elected and installed for the 2024 -2025 Auxiliary Year are:

President-Laura Clark; 1st Vice President-Kim Mellie; 2nd Vice President-Stephanie Handley; Secretary/Treasurer-Susan Brown; Chaplain-Peggy Swartz; and Historian-Rebecca Farley. Election of delegates and alternates for the

national convention was also held.

The president's theme this year is For the Heart of the Matter, the membership theme is Membership in the ALA...How Sweet it Is! Laura's special project is partnering with the ALA Foundation and the Veterans Project Fund to secure the funds to purchase at least 5 new AED's or Automatic External Defibrillators for the WV Veterans Home. The colors for auxiliary year 24 - 25 are purple (representing ambition and determination) with accent color(s) pink, yellow, and blue (which represent fun and energy) while the flower for the year is the Daisy (that represents new beginnings and cheerfulness). Matthew Sampson, American Legion Department of West Virginia Commander D e t a c h m e n t Commander addressed

the gathering.

Seven members of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 31, Shinnston attended the convention, including two past department presidents. Unit 31, Shinnston brought home several plaques and awards in the category of units with membership 151 and over. These included the traveling plaques for Unit Chaplain's Report, History, and Poppy. They also received awards for their Chaplain's Prayer Book, Public Relations Press Book, Unit Scrapbook, and Junior Membership.

It was also announced that the annual fall conference for American Legion/American Legion Auxiliary Department of West Virginia 3rd District twill be held by Post 13, Clarksburg, at American Legion Post 13 on October 5, 2024.

LEGAL

State of West Virginia
Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Water and Waste Management
PUBLIC NOTICE
WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE, 601 57TH STREET SE, CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25304-2345 TELEPHONE: (304) 926-0440.
APPLICATION FOR COVERAGE UNDER THE GENERAL WEST VIRGINIA NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PERMIT NO. WV0115924
Public Notice No.: SM-66-2024
Public Notice Date: August 01, 2024
Paper: Shinnston News
The following has applied for coverage under the General WV/ NPDES Water Pollution Control Permit No. WV0115924 for this facility or activity:
Appl. No.: WVR112507
Applicant: WOLF SUMMIT ENERGY, LLC
901 MAIN AVENUE
NORWALK, CT 06851
Location: CLARKSBURG, HARRISON COUNTY
Latitude: 39:16:45 **Longitude:** 80:19:20
Receiving Stream: Elk Creek to West Fork to Monongahela
Activity: To operate and maintain a treatment and disposal system and best management practices for the direct discharge of treated stormwater associated with construction activities via multiple outlets to unnamed tributaries of Elk Creek of the West Fork River.
Business conducted: Earth disturbance of 59.48 acres to construct a power plant in Harrison County near Clarksburg, WV.
Implementation: N/A
On the basis of review of the application the "Water Pollution Control Act (Chapter 22, Article 11-8(a)), and the "West Virginia Legislative Rules," the State of West Virginia will act on the above application.
Any interested person may submit written comments on the site registration permit application modification and may request a public hearing by addressing such to the Director of the Division of Water and Waste Management within 30 days of the date of the public notice. Such comments or requests should be addressed to:
Director, Division of Water and Waste Management, DEP
ATTN: Sharon Mullins, Permitting Section
601 57th Street SE
Charleston, WV 25304-2345
The public comment period begins August 01, 2024 and ends August 31, 2024.
Comments received within this period will be considered prior to acting on the permit modification application. Correspondence should include the name, address and the telephone number of the writer and a concise statement of the nature of the issues raised. The Director shall hold a public hearing whenever a finding is made, on the basis of requests, that there is a significant degree of public interest on issues relevant to the draft site registration permit modification application and this facility's coverage under the General Permit. Interested persons may contact the Public Information Office to obtain further information.
The application, draft permit modification may be inspected, by appointment, at the Division of Water and Waste Management Public Information Office, at 601 57th Street SE, Charleston, WV, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on business days. Copies of the documents may be obtained from the Division at a nominal cost. Individuals requiring Telecommunication Device (TDD) may contact our agency by calling 1-800-422-5700. Calls must be made 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

DOH Launches MEDALS Project to Enhance Antibiotic Stewardship in Nursing Homes

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Health's (DH) Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services (OEPS) is proud to announce the launch of the MEDALS Project, a pioneering initiative aimed at promoting antibiotic stewardship in nursing homes across the state. The project was officially inaugurated with a webinar presentation during a meeting with the West Virginia Healthcare Association, marking the beginning of a concerted effort to elevate standards in infection prevention.

Designed to recognize and reward nursing homes that demonstrate exemplary efforts in infection prevention, the MEDALS Project will see its next phase unfold with a presentation scheduled for the Quality Insights nursing home meeting in August. This presentation underscores West Virginia's commitment to fostering best practices and ensuring the highest standards of care for vulnerable populations.

"The MEDALS Project represents a crucial step forward in safeguarding the health and well-being of our nursing home residents," said Sec. Sherri Young, DO, MBA, FAAFP. "By promoting initiatives that emphasize infection prevention and responsible antibiotic use, we aim to

enhance patient outcomes and reduce the threat of antibiotic resistance."

Nursing homes participating in the MEDALS Project will be evaluated based on specific criteria across various levels of achievement, highlighting their dedication to implementing effective strategies for infection control and antibiotic stewardship. This structured approach not only encourages continuous improvement but also sets a benchmark for excellence within the healthcare community.

For more information about the MEDALS Project, including eligibility criteria and how nursing homes can participate, please visit the project webpage at <https://oeeps.wv.gov/au/Pages/medals.aspx>.

The application link may be found here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfzhoS9Zycd_DQjBr_7s7TjB9n6vE18y2Plfz-k65P2NS1UmQ/viewform.

The West Virginia Department of Health encourages all nursing homes to actively engage with the MEDALS Project and embrace its principles of patient safety and quality care. Through collaborative efforts and shared commitment, West Virginia aims to lead the way in advancing antibiotic stewardship practices and ensuring the long-term health of its nursing home residents.

2025 State Historic Preservation Annual Work Program Announced

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture and History (WVDACH) announces the proposed Annual Work Program for the 2024-2025 Historic Preservation Program is now available for review and comment. The work program describes the activities and programs the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will undertake as part of its continuing efforts to assist communities and residents of the state in preserving the physical evidence of our history.

A copy of the proposed work Form (available with the work program) and requested by contacting Claire Tryon, SHPO Planning and Education Coordinator, The Culture Center, 1900 Kanawha Blvd, E., Charleston, WV 25305-0300. The plan can also be accessed and reviewed on the Department's web page at <https://wvculture.org/agencies/state-historic-preservation-office-shpo/>.

Persons reviewing the program document may submit comments by completing a Work Form (available with the work program) and mailing it to the address above or emailing claire.e.tryon@wv.gov. The deadline for public comment is Aug. 31, 2024. For more information, contact Tryon at (304) 558-0240. The Friends of West Virginia Culture and History support the programs of the Department of Arts, Culture, and History. The WVDACH is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Living out the Gospel

From L'Osservatore Romano

Humanitarian workers were evacuated long ago while the missionaries stay because the people need them. “We will only leave with the people in our care”, says Sister Agnieszka Gugala. The Polish missionary sister works in North Kivu, where one of Africa’s bloodiest conflicts has been going on for almost three decades. Sister Agnieszka travelled to Africa 20 years ago. She recalled that she already felt her missionary vocation when she was in high school. “You could say that it was the missions that led me to the Congregation of the Sisters of the Angels”, she confessed. During the first years of her religious life, she taught catechism in schools and took care of children and young people. She received permission to go to Africa after professing perpetual vows. First she went to Rwanda, then she moved to the Democratic Republic

of the Congo. For a decade she has been running a hospital and nutrition centre for children in the village of Ntamugenga. She jokingly refers to herself as the man of the house: her occupations include buying taps for sinks, soap and medicines, paying staff, repairing the roof, finding pots and mattresses for refugees, and making dangerous trips to Goma, the only town in the region where she can get the necessary medicines, food and milk for children who have lost their mother. During her trips, Sr Agnieszka has to pass several checkpoints that are controlled by rebels. At almost all of them she has to negotiate in order to continue providing aid. **Blood-stained raw materials** Sister Agnieszka’s years of working in North Kivu are marked by repeated conflicts, which, although sometimes more subdued, never end. “As long as the children witness crimes and have to interrupt their

studies, there will be no peace in this country”, said the missionary, who cares about the future of the younger generation. The region is destabilized by more than 100 different groups trying to take control of deposits of cobalt, coltan and niobium, needed to manufacture mobile phones. These minerals are more valuable than gold and diamonds, which the rebels are also looting. Civilians are the ones who suffer the most, and who do not even see the crumbs of the land’s riches. People are forced to leave their homes and land due to the upsurge in violence. There are more than 5.6 million internally displaced people in Congo. The UN peacekeeping mission, whose costs for one year exceeds the national income of the entire Congo, is unable to change the situation. Missionaries do not interfere in politics, but they try to address the powerful humanitarian crisis that is destroying North Kivu. “Every

day people are dying of hunger and of the most common diseases. Our presence gives people hope and ensures their safety. They call us ‘our sisters’, which means we are very close to them”, said Sister Agnieszka. Although frail in appearance, she is the point of reference for thousands of people in need living in war conditions. Two sisters, from Rwanda and Congo, courageously support her. She recalled one of the conflicts in the region. “We are alive only thanks to God’s Providence. Bombs were falling close to our monastery; just a few meters closer and we would have died. The people brought us the wounded, the walls were covered in blood”. “More refugees arrived at the mission, and the hospital run by the Sisters was struggling to accommodate 5,000 patients, including many wounded. At the moment the front has moved away from the mission, but the

situation is still very difficult”. **The monastery as a place of refuge** The missionary sisters are a point of reference especially for women with children who, at the first signs of danger, take refuge in their monastery. During tranquil moments, Sr Agnieszka buys fuel and tries to get as much assistance as possible from abroad. Her foresight has often saved lives. “Under normal conditions getting medical assistance is already a miracle, but when the situation worsens it becomes impossible”, she said. Despite the conflict, the Sisters of the Angels continue to distribute food. “In this part of the region, almost half the number of children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition. Tuberculosis and malaria remain a major challenge. The latter is the disease that still kills the most”, Sr Agnieszka confided. When asked about the missionaries’ dream, like many inhabitants

of the region, she said: “lasting peace. This land is fertile and people could live here in safety and dignity”. However, as if this region has not suffered enough, from neighbouring Uganda, jihadists linked to the so-called Islamic State are starting to make their presence felt in the region. Reports of defenceless people being massacred and women and children being raped are increasing. The missionary recalled Pope Francis’ appeal to take our “hands off Africa”. She emphasised that the Pope’s visit to the Congo was an opportunity to shed light on this forgotten corner of the world and to provide it with the humanitarian aid it needs. Together with other Sisters of the Angels, she asks for prayers that they will have strength and health to continue on their mission. #sistersproject Beata Zajackowska

“Obits” From Pg 7.

Sisler both of Fairmont; daughter, Natalie Sisler, Enterprise; sister Kathy Hustead, Stonewood; brother Stephen Russell (Carol) Hutchinson; uncles, Charles Russell (Tammy), Dola, and Paul Russell, Clarksburg; Aunts Loretta Harris, North View, Esther Rauer (Ronnie), Melbourne, FL, Becky Minor (Dave), Shinnston, and Janice Russell, Shinnston; many nieces, nephews, and great nieces and nephews, and his best friend and loyal companion, Cooper Dale (Coonie) Russell. Deceased family also include his brother, Scott Russell, sister, Kelly Hicks; uncles, Marion Russell, Bob Minear and James F. Minear; aunts, Judith Minear; Maternal

Grandparents, Jess and Kathryn Minear; Paternal grandparents, Frank and Hazel Russell; Nephew, Corey Carpenter and his dog, Izzy. Treven was formerly employed at the Op Shop. He loved to play his guitar and serving and volunteering at the Union Mission and the streets of Fairmont and beyond. He gained his spot playing guitar in the heavenly band. He had a heart like solid country gold. Friends will be received at Harmer Funeral Home, 300 Pike St., Shinnston from 2-8 PM Wednesday and a funeral service at 11:00 am Thursday, July 25, 2024 with Pastor Brian Thompson and Pastor Adam Stuck officiating. Interment will follow at Shinnston Memorial Cemetery. The family

will host a dinner at Church Of Lord Jesus Christ at 124 Hood Ave, Shinnston. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Harmer Funeral Home, P.O. Box 1852, Shinnston, WV 26431 Online memories and condolences may be shared at harmerfuneralhome.com A service of Harmer Funeral Home, Shinnston. **Donna Michelle Wright** Donna Michelle Wright, 57, of Clarksburg, passed away on Sunday, July 21, 2024 at United Hospital Center. She was born August 30, 1966 in Ft. Knox, KY a daughter of Charles Paul Winans and his wife Doris of Wallace



and the late Maxine Howard Winans. Donna is survived by her husband, Billy Ray Wright Sr., whom she married in 1989. She is also survived by her son, Billy Ray Wright Jr. and his wife Olesya of Maidsville; and her daughter, Brenda Marie Haught and her husband Jimmy of Smithfield; her grandchildren, Irana Wright; McKensie, Colton, and Cason Haught; her grandmother, Ruth Howard of Fairmont;

her brother, Brian Winans and his wife Paula of Shinnston; her nieces, Andrea Fedio and her husband Mike of Clarksburg; and Allison Winans of Shinnston; her aunts, Eileen Hayhurst; Esther Ramsey; and Litha Cronin; her uncles, Jack Winans and Mike Howard; as well as her cousins, David, Chaz, and Logan Hayhurst. In addition to her mother, Donna was preceded in death by her grandson, Matthew Haught; her maternal grandfather, Vaine Howard; and her paternal grandparents, Charles and Mildred Payne Winans. Donna found her calling as a Registered Nurse. She studied at West Virginia Community College in Wheeling. She worked

at United Hospital Center in Clarksburg before becoming a traveling nurse. She served her last duty in Louisville, KY where health reasons forced her retirement. Donna enjoyed listening to Rock and Roll Music. Her favorite group was AC/DC. She also loved animals, especially her dogs. Friends will be received at Perine Funeral Home, 1348 S. Pike St. Shinnston, on Wednesday from 4-7pm. In keeping with her wishes, cremation will follow the visitation. Online memories and condolences can be shared with the family at www.perinefunerals.com The Perine Funeral Home is honored to serve the Wright family.

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