



# The SHINNSTON News & Journal HARRISON COUNTY

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*Serving North Central West Virginia since 1897.  
Focusing on local news throughout Harrison County.*



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## Candidates Running In Upcoming Shinnston City Election

By Leigh C. Merrifield

The filing period for candidacy in West Virginia expired on January 31, 2026. The election will be held on May 12th, with city, county, state, and some federal positions (U.S. Senators & Representatives) on the same ballot. Listed below is information on the local City election in Shinnston.

There are staggered terms for Shinnston City Council members in order to avoid the possibility of a total replacement of Council seats.

Two current members of Shinnston City Council will remain until their terms expire; those include Mary Ann Ferris and Vance



**Patrick Kovalck is running unopposed for Ward 3 in the coming election. He currently serves as Mayor of Shinnston.**

Sosinsky.

The candidates who have filed for Shinnston City Council four-year terms by Ward are:

- WARD 1 (East Shinnston) – Andrew Kisamore
- WARD 2

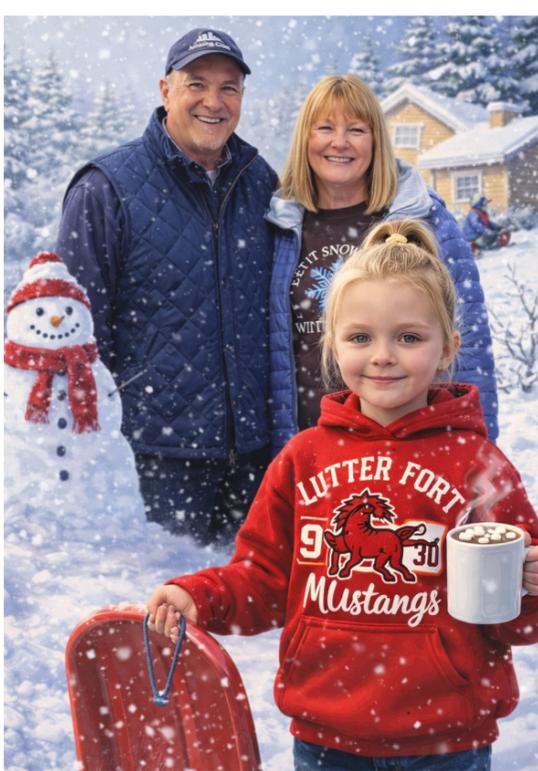
- (Downtown) – the four wards as well as the At-Large Council seat will be drawn at 9:00 a.m. on February 24, 2026 at the City Building (40 Main Street in Shinnston).
- \*Amanda Sayers & Kimberly Howell
- WARD 3 (Pleasant Hill) – \*Patrick Kovalck
- Ward 4 (West Side) – \*Julia Currey

Due to the resignation of former At-Large Councilman Bill Watson, Rodney Strait was previously appointed to fill that seat until the next election cycle, so that seat will now need to be an elected position for the remaining two-year term. Running for that

At-Large seat are \*Rodney Strait and Kevin Wiles. (\* denotes those currently serving on Council.)

Ballot positions for

*See "Merrifield" on Pg 3*



## Snow Days are the Best!



By Jim Hunt for the Harrison County News & Journal

"snow day" brought a smile to my face and the feeling that life could not get much better.

In grade school, when we got a big snowstorm, we anxiously waited for the 11 o'clock news and

watched the scroll along the bottom of the screen. When we saw "Harrison County," a cheer went up, and we

*See "Hunt" on Pg 3*

## Harrison County Commission Disburses Batch of Opioid Funds

By Stephen Smoot

After months of discussion, debate, and, most importantly, due diligence, the Harrison County Commission disbursed a tranche of opioid settlement funds that it had received from the West Virginia First Foundation. Established by then-West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrissey, this organization manages the massive pharmaceutical settlement monies received by the State of West Virginia.

The meeting opened with the customary invocation by Commissioner Patsy Trecost, in which he prayed "we know nothing is too big or too small for You." All then recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

First, Harrison County resident Greg Phillips spoke during public comment period about issues he had encountered in the taxation of his property. As per usual, Commissioners cannot ask questions or reply during public comment under the law. This protects the rights of the public from being interrupted or harassed while giving their comment.

Next, Operation Firm Handshake came for a special funding request of \$2,000. Martin Broderick spoke on their behalf, opening



**Game Changers, supported by the Harrison County Commission in its opioid disbursement, has been promoted heavily in the state by West Virginia University Sports Hall of Famer Meg Bulger over the years.**

with "I want to thank you guys. The County Commission has been there for us since day one." The organization works with veterans to assist with basic needs, such as small appliances, \$100 food gift cards, and more. He shared that they helped 16 veterans just in December and January alone. Commissioners approved the funding and thanked the organization for its work.

In going over maintenance and facilities related reports and updates, County Commission

President Susan Thomas expressed irritation over a lack of information in progress on the courthouse elevator project. She also asked about supplies for a County garage purchased from a Grafton-based business. "I'm a local person," she stated, "I want to support the local people."

Commissioner David Hinkle also pointed out purchases for parts for "an old truck we were told wasn't worth fixing." He shared that the County had replaced the vehicle due to its unsuitability for the

specific needs of County service. "I'm really confused," he shared.

Commissioner Hinkle also questioned an easement purchase request for a tract of farmland located in a flood plain. He did not debate that it "is prime agricultural land," as was described, but wondered why the easement would be necessary to purchase since development of a flood plain is next to impossible given various related restrictions. The motion to execute the deal passed two to one. Commissioner Hinkle voted against, but stated he would have supported it outside the flood plain.

Commissioners voted to table a discussion and decision regarding the Harrison County Sheriff's Department's involvement in courthouse security. This would delineate which County agencies would have responsibility for which aspects of operating security. Commission President Thomas indicated that she had not seen some of the latest proposals, including a document provided by Commissioner Hinkle and said "I'm not ready to make a decision on this."

## City of Shinnston and County Primary Election Candidate Filings Set

By Stephen Smoot

On Feb 4, West Virginia Secretary of State Kris Warner announced "more than 2,600 candidates filed to be part of West Virginia's May 12th primary election." The number totaled 2,661 with 2,047 filing for county and municipal offices and 614 for state.

Increasing numbers of town and city elections have synchronized with the county-held primaries after a state law mandating that Municipalities that have not done so still have some years to implement that change, however. Shinnston was one of the first round of cities in West Virginia to do so under agreement

with Harrison County.

"There is a lot of interest in seeking party nominations and election at the upcoming Primary Election. It's encouraging to see so many people who want to become, or remain, public servants," shared Warner.

Every candidate's Certificate of Announcement will be reviewed by State Secretary of State staff for accuracy. Candidates have until Feb 17 to officially withdraw from a race. After Feb 17, the State Secretary of State's office "will be able to certify the final list of candidates." Within 10 days of filing the Certificate of Announcement, candidates by law must

*See "Election" on Pg 3*



Each week copies of the News & Journal are distributed in each hospital to patients compliments of these community-minded sponsors listed:  
**UNITED HOSPITAL CENTER, LOUIS JOHNSON V.A. HOSPITAL, HIGHLAND CLARKSBURG HOSPITAL & WV VETERANS NURSING FACILITY**

OPINION

The "Stolen Land" Fallacy and Other Foolish Narratives

By Stephen Smoot

Celebrities should not speak of issues outside of what they know. Not that they should be legally prevented from speaking their mind, but the nature of their work, and sometimes their lifestyles for good or ill, prevent them from fully understanding the subjects on which they choose to speak.

Popular recording artist Billie Eilish, one of the few pretty good musicians of this decade, decided during a recent awards show to opine. She shared that she thought that one cannot close the borders on "stolen land." Then, of course, it was promptly revealed that she has called law enforcement numerous times to remove unwanted individuals from the property she owns, including lands and a mansion. Borders for me, but not for three.

One of the most fraudulent and stupid pieces of mythology created by the Left centers on their "stolen land" issue. Basically, the theory is that if a Caucasian people ever conquered land from a non Caucasian people, then the land is "stolen." If non Caucasians conquered from Caucasians, that's "justice." Advocates would not put it so directly, but essentially that's what it is.

Was West Virginia "stolen land" as the Left insists all of the Americas are? Yes, but not in the way they want the world to understand.

The Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, Seneca, and Cayuga nations of upper New York State, according to their own histories, warred viciously against each other for an unknown length of time. At a certain point, either in 1349 or 1478, these five nations combined. As their own oral histories tell (and oral historical traditions often are more accurate than written) the warring peoples had met for a conference to iron out differences.

An outsider figure named Deganawida used the onset of a total solar eclipse (hence the specific years mentioned) to force the nations to join and build an empire rather than war with each other. He threatened that if they did not join right then and there, he would not allow the sun to return. Convinced, the Five Nations created the Iroquois League.

From their base in and around the Adirondacks (a difficult realm in which to live and thrive during the frigid Little Ice Age that lasted from the 1300s into the 17 and 1800s) they sortied forth, conquering the land of all around them. Iroquois warriors, already battle hardened over centuries of fighting each other, easily annihilated or drove away other Indian groups from lands they desired.

In the South, the Cherokee also expanded their territory. According to James Mooney's written histories of their oral traditions, they practiced genocide on Indian groups that would not get out of their way.

The two most powerful imperial forces in Eastern See "Smoot" on Pg 3

Super Crossword

NBA PLAY

ACROSS

- 1 Relatives of pistachios
8 Mail-related
14 Baio and Turow
20 Wife of Nero
21 Fingers-in-ears syllables
22 Headwear for Mr. Peanut
23 Golden State hoopster who lives for Saturdays and Sundays?
25 Existence
26 Days of yore, archaically
27 Ruling group
28 Schlepped through the entrance
30 Ballesteros of golf
33 Groom, e.g.
35 Exemplary Houston hoopster?
38 San Antonio hoopster scaling a mountain?
42 Suffix with lion
43 Guy in the fam
44 High peak
45 Heavenly
46 Health club
48 Gyro bread
49 Semi fuel

- 51 Cowardly Denver hoopster?
55 "Mom" actress Jaime
58 Start eating
59 Org. against pollution
60 Redding of R&B
61 Event for stunt pilots
64 -Z (total)
65 Foot part
68 Brooklyn hoopster using a rod and reel?
71 Phoenix hoopster preparing a typeface for printing?
74 Frau's "Oh!"
75 Girl in the fam
76 Name originally proposed for Utah
78 Gas guzzler
79 Reindeer kin
80 Notion, to Fifi
81 Damsels
84 Los Angeles hoopster originally from New England?
90 Train in the pool
92 All excited
93 Mtn. stat

- 94 Tested for fit
97 "— culpa!"
98 "Stillmatic" rapper
99 Footed vase
101 Sacramento hoopster holding power?
103 Eco-conscious Charlotte hoopster?
107 Livy's lang.
108 Words in an analogy
109 Some nobles' domains
110 Jamaican pop genre
112 Baby wolf
114 Justification
116 Chicago hoopster devoid of spontaneity and emotion?
122 Sock with diamond patterns
123 "Seinfeld" character
124 Shrunken Asian lake
125 Some vowel sounds
126 Phrase structure
127 Lower than

- 3 Fr. holy woman
4 Olajuwon of the NBA
5 Daredevil Knieval
6 Power sources with spinning sails
7 Tearful
8 Strategize
9 Rowers' tools
10 35mm camera inits.
11 Alteration pro
12 Not silently
13 Huge
14 Directs
15 Buyable apartments
16 Vision-related
17 Have high aspirations
18 Bit of ink art
19 Pigpen
24 Flying needs
29 Collect bit by bit
30 Cousin of a jack mackerel
31 Oval-shaped
32 Spiteful
34 Even one
35 Capital of Bavaria
36 One-named Deco master
37 Exactly
39 Pollen eaters
40 "Get 'em, Spot!"

- 41 Syllable after "oom"
46 Broiling bar
47 Church seat
48 Club swingers' gp.
50 Meeting period, informally
52 Picked
53 — pot (sinus-cleaning product)
54 "Once — a time ..."
56 Dillydallies
57 Dark half of a Chinese circle
60 Birds — feather
62 News aggregation website
63 Precipitous
64 "— girl!"
65 Giant waves
66 Paid more than
67 Musician Brian
69 Capri, e.g.
70 Adidas rival
72 Pro —
73 Celtic speaker
77 Piece for seven
79 Heart test, for short
80 Ailing
82 Apathetic response

- 83 Ding- —
84 Light half of a Chinese circle
85 Lab gelatin
86 Horse feed holders
87 Body of rules
88 Verdi's "— tu"
89 Fix illegally
91 Pudding starch
95 China's Zhou
96 Day, in Peru
99 Open, as a new rug
100 Some French wines
101 Make a new digital image of
102 Dry dog food
104 Class that's a cinch
105 "Blue" singer LeAnn
106 Hockey great Cam
110 Capital of Yemen
111 Lego alternative
113 — Bator
114 Jogged, e.g.
115 History unit
117 Smack
118 Taxi
119 D.C.'s nation
120 Tennis call
121 "— -di-dah!"

DOWN

- 1 Mooing beast
2 High card

Grid for Super Crossword with numbers 1-127 indicating starting positions for words.

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FIND THE SUPER CROSSWORD ANSWERS ON PAGE 4!

THIS WEEK IN West Virginia History

Charleston WV - 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.

Feb. 5, 1784: Nancy Hanks (Lincoln), the mother of Abraham Lincoln, was likely born in Hampshire County, Virginia, on Mikes Run at the bottom of New Creek Mountain in what is now Mineral County, although historical records of her early life do not exist.

Feb. 5, 1889: Fiddler and self-taught physician James Franklin "Doc" White was born near Ivydale, Clay County. White served the community as doctor, dentist and midwife, delivering more than 1,800 babies.

Feb. 5, 1890: Coach Eli Camden "Cam" Henderson was born in Joetown, Marion



Nathan Goff of Clarksburg's official Secretary of the Navy portrait.

County. He is a revered figure in Marshall University sports history.

Feb. 5, 1941: Actor David Lynn Selby was born in Morgantown. His stage and screen credits include the outdoor drama Honey in the Rock, and the television shows Falcon Crest and Dark Shadows.

Feb. 6, 1732: Revolutionary War general Charles Lee was born in England. Late in his life, during

the war, he moved to what is now Jefferson County.

Feb. 6, 1882: Poet Anne Spencer was born in Henry County, Virginia. In 1886, she and her mother moved to Bramwell, where she spent most of her childhood and adolescent years.

Feb. 6, 2007: Selva Lewis "Lew" Burdette, a native of Nitro, died in Florida. Burdette was an outstanding major league baseball pitcher who spent most of his career with the Milwaukee Braves. In 18 major league seasons, he won 203 games and lost 144. He was MVP of the 1957 World Series.

Feb. 7, 1867: West Virginia University was established by an act of the West Virginia legislature. The college, originally called the Agricultural College of West Virginia, opened its doors in September 1867.

Feb. 7, 1889: Nell Elizabeth "Pistol Nell" Walker was born at Sewell Mountain.

Known as the "First Lady" of Fayette County, she served 12 terms as a member of the House of Delegates.

Feb. 8, 1892: Cartoonist Irvin Dugan was born in Huntington. For many years, his "Adam" cartoon character was a feature on the editorial pages of the Herald-Dispatch.

Feb. 8, 1915: Photographer Volkmar Kurt Wentzel was born in Dresden, Germany. He immigrated with his family to the United States at age 11. As a teenager in West Virginia, Wentzel took up with an eclectic group of people who had retreated to Youghiogheny Forest, a Preston County artists colony.

Feb. 8, 1918: Medal of Honor recipient Herbert Joseph Thomas Jr. was born. He excelled as a football halfback at South Charleston High School, and Herbert J. Thomas Memorial Hospital (now part of WVU Medicine) in South Charleston is named for him.

Newspaper advertisement for The News & Journal, including contact information, subscription rates, and a 'How To Let Us Know' section.

“Election” From Pg 1.

file a Personal Financial Disclosure Statement as well.

Candidates who filed in the City of Shinnston election, on May 12 in conjunction with that of Harrison County, include:

- Ward 1: Andrew Kisamore
- Ward 2: Kimberly Howell and Amanda Sayers
- Ward 3: Patrick Kovalck
- Ward 4: Julia Currey
- Council-at-large: Rodney K. Strait and

Kevin Wiles For County Commission, the candidates are Susan Thomas of Clarksburg, Martin Howe of Clarksburg, Mickey Petitto from Clarksburg, and Quill Ward from Lost City.

For Conservation Supervisor, the candidates are Emily Virginia Rockwell of Enterprise, Peter Anthony Scott of Bridgeport, and Robert Svan of Lost Creek.

For Harrison County

Board of Education, the candidates are Justin Joseph Caroli of Stonewood, Frank Devono of Bridgeport, Mary Frances Smith of Bridgeport, and Tom Tucker of Lumberport.

For United States Senate, the candidates are Rachel Fetty Anderson, Thornton Cooper, Jeffrey Kessler, Rio Phillips, Zachary Shrewsbury, Shelley Moore Capito, Alexander Gaaserud, Bryan McKinney, Janet McNulty, David Purkey,

and Tom Willis. For United States House of Representatives, the candidates are Ace Parsi, Stephanie Spears Tomani, Steven Wendelin, and Riley Moore.

For West Virginia State Senate District 12, the candidates are Lynette Murray, Joseph (Joe) Early, and Ben Queen.

For West Virginia Delegate District 69, the candidates are Lou Assaro from Clarksburg,

Jocelyn Blackwell from Bristol, Danny Hamrick from Clarksburg, Keith Marple from Lost Creek, and Andrew Yost of Lost Creek.

For District 70, the candidates are Jackson Howe of Clarksburg, Shannon Welsh of Clarksburg, Salvatore Bombardiere of Clarksburg, Paul J. Howe III of Clarksburg,

For District 71, the candidates are Robert “Rob” Garcia of Bridgeport, Laura Kimble of Bridgeport,

and Tim McNeely of Bridgeport.

For District 72, the candidates are Megan Krajewski, and Clay Riley.

All candidates at any level are invited to submit up to 800 words and a headshot to announce their campaign. The Shinnston News and Harrison County Journal has a standing policy of not reporting on political candidates or campaigns beyond these self-announcements.

“Merrifield” From Pg 1.

reside in WARD 4. Should any of these locations be changed, the public will be informed prior to the election.

As a reminder, West Virginia made it a state law on April 30, 2025 that voters must show

“Hunt” From Pg 1.

immediately started planning the next day. Boots, gloves, sleds, and snow shovels all made the list. The next morning, we had hot chocolate and Wheaties, watched cartoons, and eventually someone started pulling on long underwear.

My poor parents looked as disappointed as we were happy. We asked my dad if he would build a bonfire so we could go sledding late into the evening.

an ID in order to vote. This Bill was designed to ensure election integrity and prevent voter fraud.

Examples of identifications accepted at polling places on election day include any of the following:

- A valid West Virginia driver’s license or valid West Virginia identification card issued by the WV Division of Motor Vehicles.
- Those who may have recently moved to WV and have not yet

transferred their driver’s license can present a valid driver’s license issued by another state.

- A valid United States passport or passport card.

- A valid employee ID card with a photo of the eligible voter issued by

local, state or federal government.

- A valid student ID card with a photo of the eligible voter issued by an institution of higher education in WV or by a WV high school.

- A valid U.S. military ID card with

a photograph of the person desiring to vote.

- A valid voter registration card that includes the voter’s photograph issued by a County Clerk in the state of West Virginia or the Secretary of State.

Somehow, we made the most of the day.

By nightfall, icy boots and soaked jackets were strung out across the kitchen linoleum like trophies.

After college, my first job was as a learning disability teacher, and I still remember the first snow day of my working life. School had been called off, and I was looking forward to a quiet day goofing off while still getting paid. What could be better than that?

After sleeping in, I went to McDonald’s for breakfast and decided to drive by the Kelly Miller Building, where my office was located. I was curious to see if anyone had shown up. To my surprise, every parking space was filled, and the building was buzzing with activity.

I was dressed in jeans and an old sweatshirt, but I walked to my office anyway and looked around at all the supervisors sitting at

their desks. I was too embarrassed to ask why we were not taking the day off, so I sat down, doodled at my desk, and watched the clock crawl toward 3 o’clock. As it turned out, the county offices were expected to report on snow days, and since my office was in that building, I was expected to do the same. Snow days took a sudden turn for the worse.

Fast forward about fifty years, and snow days have regained the

smiles and happiness of those years gone by.

When my wife and I see the snow, we wait like school kids for the television to post that familiar scroll. “No School in Harrison County,” and we know our granddaughter will be spending the day with us. We check to make sure we have an adequate supply of hot chocolate and wait for the doorbell to ring the next morning.

Sadie comes in with that same grin I

had from years ago. She throws off her boots and jacket and jumps on the couch to begin a SpongeBob SquarePants marathon. After stuffing herself with Goldfish crackers and apple juice, she wants to go outside and explore the wintry wonderland.

When she comes back in, the hot chocolate is steaming. She wraps her arms around us and says, “Snow days are the best!” And we could not agree more.

“Smoot” From Pg 2.

North America until well into European colonization eyed central Appalachia as their next lands to seize. For centuries, two distinct “Mound Builder” civilizations dominated the Ohio and Kanawha valleys, their sway extending eastward into the mountains. For a number of reasons, most not known, this civilization disintegrated.

Those left in the wake

eventually received an offer they could not refuse from both the Five Nations of the Iroquois League and the Cherokee Nation. Leave or die. It’s not known which the inhabitants chose, but the region was mostly denuded of Indian settlement when Europeans filtered into the area.

In 1763, after the close of the Seven Years War or French and Indian War, whichever

name is preferred, the British Empire placed a boundary on the high ridge of the Appalachians. West of which its subjects could not settle. The Five Nations and the Kingdom of Prussia were Britain’s most vital allies in the global conflict and the British Crown’s solution to prevent problems between their people and Indian nations lay in drawing that line.

Five years later, however, the line was seen as untenable between the Potomac, Ohio, and Tennessee valleys. Britain went to its allies the Iroquois and also the somewhat less friendly Cherokee and purchased almost all of the future state of West Virginia, half of Kentucky, and a third of Tennessee in the Treaties of Fort Stanwix and Hard Labour. The Shawnee Nation and its neighbors protested, but they had submitted to participating in the Iroquois Covenant Chain empire. These same nations were the most aggressive in raiding frontier settlements for the chief purpose of stealing iron tools and also the settlers’ children.

If West Virginia is “stolen land” then the land was stolen from countless small disorganized villages by the American Indian imperial powers east of the Mississippi, a people whose coherence is as

lost to history as the Lombards. The British Empire bought the land properly from its owners, who happened to be some of Britain’s only true “friends” on earth at the time.

This fact should not inspire any other thought than the utter absurdity of “stolen land” ideology and mythology. Those who use it, including people who do know better, is that there is no way to extend the philosophy to its obvious end.

Consider the case of Poland. At one point, a combined kingdom of Poland and Lithuania extended nearly to Moscow. It was among the largest states in Europe until its government veered into absurd dysfunction and its neighbors spent a century lopping away bits and pieces until by 1800 there was no more independent Poland. The Treaty of Versailles restored the nation, but the verdict of World War II shifted the entire nation eastward into what had traditionally been German lands for over a millennia. The Poles themselves suffered greatly where Russia seized its lands, less so under Prussian and Austrian rule.

Okay stolen land folks, riddle me how you find “justice” for Poland? Which boundary was just, the ones in the 1600s,

1700s, 1920s, or now? And, assuming one could restore some past border configuration, what does one do with the people living there now?

All of this comes from the misuse and abuse of the discipline of history. History is meant as a tool to develop understanding of the past and the present while using its lessons as a guide for the future. As a story, it edifies and creates the kinds of discussions that bring people together. When used as a weapon, such as by the Left, it does nothing but divide, mostly by creating half-baked narratives that have neither sense nor purpose outside of their politics. It mostly encourages people to find enemies to force into the rhetorical and social stocks until they indulge in classic Marxist-Leninist “self-criticism,” humiliating themselves to escape the slanders of the mob.

Worst of all, it encourages the wrong use of Ockham’s Razor on history. In the humanities, the simplest explanation is almost never the case.

The former northern region of Mexico outside of Texas came into the United States after a war in which Mexico fired the first shot, then lost badly. The United States Civil War was not caused by slavery but a complex set of issues that included

a basic Constitutional disagreement over state versus federal power.. World War I was not the sole fault of Germany, no matter what the Treaty of Versailles claims.

One could go on and on debunking the neat and tidy handfuls of words used to explain massively complex problems and evolutions of history, but there’s just as much point in that as in advancing silly “stolen land” narratives.

And the Right cannot congratulate itself, because it is not immune to this. Within the Right side of American politics in the last few years, most likely duped by social media algorithms cooked up by Chinese intelligence, comes rapidly growing bigotry against Jewish people and Roman Catholics.

Few narratives outstrip the absurdity that these ancient and beautiful expressions of religious faith are secret cabals of evil control with centuries-old plans of world subjugation, but more than a few on the right and elsewhere have fallen for ideas just as foolish as “stolen land.” The difference is that one fosters bigotry against faith, the other fosters it against civilization itself.

Neither has a place in adult rational discourse and those who speak in such terms need not ever be taken seriously.

**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)*

**February 19, 2026**  
American Legion Auxiliary 31 monthly meeting, 7:00 pm. Juniors meet at 6:00 pm. American Legion Post 31, Bridge Street, Shinnston.

**SHINNSTON**

**MCDONALD’S**

**BOGO\***  
**BIG MAC**  
**SANDWICH**

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Expires February 18, 2026

\*BOGO - Buy One Get One Free  
One per customer per visit, not to be used with any other offer, discount or within an EVM purchase. Valid at the Shinnston McDonald’s only. Cash value 1/20 of 1 cent LwC. Must present this coupon prior to ordering.

# Kellogg Has His Team on the Move!

By Bill Nestor

West Virginia University's women's basketball team is quietly putting together another quality campaign. Head coach Mark Kellogg is in his third season at the helm of the program. His first two years in Morgantown were historic, leading WVU to back-to-back 25-win seasons, a feat that had never been accomplished in the first two years of any coach's tenure.

A great deal of that success was attributed to the play of J.J. Quinerly. Quinerly was an all-American selection in both of the seasons that Kellogg has roamed the sidelines. The question was, how would he and his team fare after the star's departure? The answer to that question came before the season when reviewing Kellogg's resume.

He is currently seventh on the all time active Division I women's

basketball coaching list for winning percentage, hovering just over 78 percent. He is just a handful of victories away from 500 career wins, which tells the story of his consistency.

At the time that this story was written, his squad was sitting in third place in the Big 12 Conference standings, just a game behind Texas Christian University and Baylor.

On the first of February, Kellogg welcomed the Bears into the Coliseum for a battle of Top 25 teams. The Mountaineers were ranked number 22 while Baylor came to town number 14 in the nation.

West Virginia pulled the upset and, even though it wasn't a perfect effort, the number 10 was still very relevant in this lock-up. The Mountaineers defeated Baylor by 10, 70 to 60. They held the Bears over 10 points below their season average of 72 and they scored 10 plus points

more than the Golden Bear defense allows on average. It wasn't just a squeak-by win. It was a statement defeat of one of the top teams in the country.

Kierra Wheeler had 18 points and pulled down 15 rebounds (her sixth double-double of the year) to lead the Mountaineers. Jordan Harrison added 18 points and Gia Cook chipped in with 14 in the win. West Virginia forced 30 Baylor turnovers with a stifling defensive effort that has been a trademark of this group, allowing just shy of 60 points per game. This defensive effort has translated in point production for Kellogg and company. WVU scores 25.6 points per game off of turnovers.

This team is mentally tough, as its record indicates. In a rarity in college hoops, the Mountaineers have lost more games at home than they have on the road, which will serve them come tournament

time, which is just around the corner. It's hard to believe that there are only four games remaining on the regular season schedule.

This Sunday, a trip to Fort Worth, Texas to battle the tope team in the Big 12 is crucial in not only regular season standings, but in conference tournament seedings as well. A rare break gives Kellogg a six day window to prepare for Oklahoma State who invades Touchdown City on the 21st. Feb 25th, a trip to Orlando to face the University of Central Florida gives way to the season finale when Cincinnati comes to town. The Bulls and Bearcats are near the bottom of the standings and should allow Kellogg to build even more momentum for the preseason push.

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



It's that time once again to acknowledge the efforts of Harrison County's student-athletes. Each week we review the performances of the athletes from the six schools (Bridgeport, Liberty, Lincoln, Notre Dame, Robert C. Byrd, and South Harrison) in our county.

The Shinnston News & Harrison County Journal's Athlete of the Week award is an avenue to promote the youth of our county while bringing attention to their athletic accomplishments.

By Bill Nestor

The Harrison County athletes in the spotlight this week are Bridgeport's haylee Prior and Notre Dame's Brayden Helmick.

Indian basketball player Haylee Pryor had an impressive week in a pair of setbacks. On Monday, Pryor had a team high 17 points against Lewis County. Pryor netted 18 points and pulled down four rebounds in a loss to Grafton on Thursday.

Fighting Irish hoopster, Brayden Helmick had a solid effort in a loss to Parkersburg Catholic this past week. Helmick recorded a double double, scoring 19 points and he also hauled down 12 rebounds.

Congratulations to Bridgeport's Haylee Pryor and Notre Dame's Brayden Helmick for shining bright in the SN and HCJ spotlight!

# Enhances Women's Cardiac Recovery Efforts for American Heart Month 2026

BRIDGEPORT, WV – WVU Medicine United Hospital Center (UHC) is highlighting its commitment to women's cardiovascular health this February in observance of American Heart Month and the Go Red for Women movement. As heart disease remains the leading cause of death among women, UHC's nationally certified Cardiac Rehabilitation department is focusing on specialized recovery plans designed to help patients regain strength and prevent future cardiac events.

The UHC Cardiac Rehab program, located on the first

floor of the hospital in Bridgeport, provides a comprehensive 12-week outpatient program. This phase two recovery process combines monitored exercise with education on nutrition and risk factor modification, led by a team of registered nurses and exercise physiologists.

"Heart disease is a progressive disease, so you might get some new pipes in there with your bypass or open up one with your stent, but if you continue to live an unhealthy lifestyle, those can clog up and you're going to have more problems. We want to eliminate that," said Angelina Davis, EP, MS,

manager of Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehab at UHC.

In support of the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women campaign, UHC staff will participate in National Wear Red Day on Friday, February 6, 2026, to raise awareness for the unique cardiovascular risks faced by women. Additionally, Cardiac Rehab will host informational displays for Heart Month at the following locations:

- The Bridge Sports Complex: February 10, 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.
- Meadowbrook Mall: February 17, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.

## HARRISON COUNTY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

**POSITION: DEPUTY ASSESSOR / REAL ESTATE DATA COLLECTOR-APPRAISER**  
The Harrison County Assessor's Office is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Deputy Assessor / Real Estate Data Collector-Appraiser. This is a full-time position offering a competitive salary, excellent benefits, and the opportunity to serve the community through accurate and equitable property assessment.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Conduct field inspections of residential, commercial, and agricultural properties.
- Measure, sketch, and document real estate for assessment and appraisal purposes.
- Collect, verify, and maintain property data using assessment software and digital tools.
- Assist with property tax appeals, exemptions, and assessment-related inquiries.
- Analyze sales and market data to support fair and equitable property valuations.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Valid driver's license and reliable transportation required.
- Ability to exit a vehicle and traverse various terrain, including uneven ground and stairs, in all weather conditions, as an essential function of field inspections.
- Prior experience in real estate, property appraisal, or municipal assessment preferred.
- Associate's degree or higher preferred; equivalent experience will be considered.
- Strong mathematical, written, verbal, and computer skills required.
- Knowledge of CAMA (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) systems is a plus.
- Willingness to obtain any required certifications or training.

**BENEFITS:**

- Health, dental, and vision insurance
- Participation in county/state retirement plans
- Paid leave and holidays

**TO APPLY:**

Submit a resume and cover letter by email to [afterree@harrisoncountywv.com](mailto:afterree@harrisoncountywv.com), by mail, or in person at: Harrison County Assessor's Office, 229 S. Third Street, Clarksburg, WV 26301  
Position open until filled. Harrison County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Answers  
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WEEKENDWARRIOR ENTITY  
ELDINS LUGGEDIN  
SEVEMAN MODELROCKET  
CLIMBINGSPUR ESS BRO  
ALPELYSIAN SPA PIGTA  
DIESEL CHICKENNUGET  
PRESSLY CHEW EPA  
OTIS AIRSHOW ATO TOUN  
FISHINGNET SETTING SUN  
ACH SIS DESERET AUTON  
ELK IDEE MAIDENS  
YANKEECLIPPER DOLAPS  
AGOG ALT TRIEDON MEA  
NAS URN REIGNINGKING  
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# HCSCC SPOTLIGHT

*Featuring news from the Harrison County Senior Citizen Center*

## HCSC Board of Directors News

The HCSCC Board of Directors met on Thursday, January 22, 2026, in a hybrid fashion in-person in the boardroom and via Zoom.

At the meeting, the Board: Accepted the appointment of Susan

Thomas as the Harrison County Commission representative to the Board of Directors.

Adopted the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget (October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026).

The next Board meeting will be held on Thursday, March 26, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. in person in the boardroom and via Zoom.

**2026 Board Officers & Members**  
Bill O'Field, President, Bill

Phillips, Vice President, Donna Stuart, Secretary, Don Burton, Treasurer, Carol E. Brown, Franklin Hairston, Will Hyman, E. Ryan Kennedy, Susan Thomas, and Betty Waddy.

## WVDSCS Legislative Reception Held on January 15th



WVDSCS (West Virginia Directors of Senior and Community Services) held its annual legislative reception at the Beni Kedem Center in Charleston on January 15, 2026. Association members Beth Fitzgerald and Bill O'Field represented Harrison County Senior Center in discussions with Senators and Delegates about senior citizen and senior center issues.

The following day, association members were present in the gallery at the Capitol. Reception Picture L-R: Senator Patrick Martin, Lewis County Senior Center Director Christy Mills, HCSC Director Beth Fitzgerald, Senator Ben Queen, House Speaker Roger Hanshaw, Gilmer County Senior Center Director Sallie Mathess, Delegate Keith Marple, and HCSC Board President Bill O'Field. Gallery Picture L-R: Scott Cosco, Hartman Cosco, LLC, advocate for WVDSCS, Sallie Mathess, Beth Fitzgerald, and Bill O'Field.



## HCSC represented at WV Alzheimer's Advocacy Day

HCSC was represented at the WV Alzheimer's Advocacy Day event held on January 21, 2026, in Charleston. Advocates from all over the state came together to advocate for HB4474, the Alzheimer's and other Dementia Task Force Reauthorization.

The event started at the Cultural Center and was coordinated by Ely Osborne, Public Policy Director for

the WV Alzheimer's Chapter. Ryan Kennedy (pictured at the podium), Cabinet Secretary for WV Department of Veterans Assistance and HCSC Board Member, shared his personal story about the impact of Alzheimer's in his family and the importance of advocacy.

Ryan is also the North Central WV Walk to End Alzheimer's Community Engagement Committee



**Pictured L-R at the Cultural Center: Beth Fitzgerald, Ely Osborne, Steve Semenik, and Bill O'Field.**

Chair with a focus on Advocacy.

Steve Semenik, Dementia Services Director, was hired after

the passage of HB2575 in last year's session to introduce himself to the attendees.



Ryan Kennedy

## Groups meet with Legislators during WV Alzheimer's Advocacy Day

After the program at the Cultural Center, WV Advocacy Day participants were divided into groups to be recognized in the gallery and visit with legislators in their respective offices. The first stop for Group 1 was in Majority Whip Senator Ben Queen's office.

Pictured L-R: Back Row: Cliff Marshall, Mr.

& Mrs. Caldwell, Lewis County FBLA students Brady & Kylie, and Beth Fitzgerald. Front Row: Bill O'Field and Senator Queen.

After lunch, the group visited with House Minority Leader Delegate Sean Hornbuckle, who shared his Alzheimer's personal story. Other group members shared



their stories and walk day experiences. Alzheimer's Advocacy Day provides a

tremendous opportunity for citizen advocates to meet with their legislators in the Capitol.



Alzheimer's and other dementia costs WV Medicaid over a half billion dollars annually and affects 115,000 West Virginians aged 45+ and their 250,000 caregivers who provide unpaid care.

## SAVE THE DATES

March 14, 2026 – North Central WV Walk to End Alzheimer's Benefit Dinner Fundraiser

April 26, 2026 – HCSC Kinley Café Murder Mystery Dinner Fundraiser

Both events will be

held in the HCSC Ballroom. Call 304.623.6795 Ext. 201 for more information.



## Winter Woes...

In case of inclement weather, please check our Facebook page, and/or local media outlets for reports on a possible closure or delay of senior center services. Cancellation of individual activities, meetings, or events will be posted on our Facebook page or call the center at 304.623.6795.



## Holiday Closures

HCSC will be closed Monday, February 16, 2026, in observance of Presidents' Day.

**Harrison County Senior Center**  
Socialize - Exercise - Engage

M - F 8am - 4pm  
www.hcscwv.org  
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Clarksburg, WV 26301  
304.623.6795

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## Harmony Valley Community for Seniors

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**OBITUARIES****James "Jim" Gump**

James "Jim" Gump, 85, of Wallace, passed away on February 3, 2026 at his home

surrounded by his loving family. He was the son of the late Jesse and Helen (Trader) Gump of Wallace.

He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 58 years, Barbara (Zvonaric) Gump on January 10, 2026.

Jim is survived by one daughter, Debbie (Larry) Bennett; two sons: Joe (Melissa) Thrower and James "Jimmy" Gump, all of Wallace; four

grandchildren: Mike Bennett, Doug (Koa) Bennett, Chad Thrower, Danielle Thrower and Justin Hickman all of Wallace; nine great grandchildren: Caemon, Casten, Kale, Reese, Judd Bennett, Matthew Barberio, Kara, Katie and Connor Hickman; one brother, Roger Gump of Wallace as well as several nieces and nephews.

In addition to his

parents and wife, Jim is also preceded in death by four sisters: Frances Gump, Phylis Blake, Mary Barker and Karen Hall; two brothers: Luther Gump and Robert Gump.

James worked at Glory Coal Company, retired from Salem College maintenance department. He did masonry and carpentry by trade. He enjoyed family and friends, his woodshop and building

cabinets. The family would like to thank WVU Hospice for their compassion to our father and family.

Graveside services will be held on Saturday, February 7, 2026 at 2:00PM at The Bennett Cemetery on Big Elk in Wallace with Pastor Brian Price officiating.

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

**Susan "SK" Phillips**

Susan "SK" Phillips, 69, of Gypsy, passed away on February 2, 2026. She was born in Rochester, NY on October 4, 1956 to the late Sam Male and Tressie (Loria) Male.

In honoring her wishes she will be cremated.

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

**Love In The Air**

By Chef Matthew Welsch - Executive Director of Culinary at West Virginia State Parks and Resorts

Is that love in the air? Well, whatever it is, it smells delicious!

Cooking is a love language, and it doesn't have to be a complicated one. Simple food cooked well with good technique will woo the day over complex and inaccessible dishes. A simple, yet special dish near and dear to my heart is Steak Frites, because my wife and I enjoyed it on our honeymoon to France. I love how simple and straightforward it is, and yet, when it's done right, it's a beautiful dish.

There are a few small trade secrets to elevate your dish. Let's start with the fries.

Homemade hand-cut French fries get a bad rap. They're often limp and bland; not at all virile.

There are two main techniques to get crispy fries at home: let's take it one at a time.

Peel a couple of pounds or more of potatoes; russets are the

fry standby, but I enjoy goldens, as well.

Then cut into your desired shape and thickness. Keep in mind that size and thickness will affect cook time, and bigger isn't always better for deep-frying at home. I prefer 1/4" or 3/8" sticks. They won't all be the same size or shape, and that's totally ok. As you're cutting your potatoes up, put them in cold water.

Once all your fries are cut, rinse in cold water multiple times until the water runs clear. This removes excess starch and helps them crisp. That's the first trick.

A light oil with a high smoke point is best for deep frying. You can use the vegetable or canola you probably already have in your kitchen, or spring for something fancier like avocado oil. I like peanut oil, but bonus points for animal fats: lard, duck fat, and beef tallow are all amazing and add a depth of flavor to your fries.

Heat your



oil to 325 degrees in a heavy Dutch oven. You need just as much to cover one layer of fries, because we're going to fry these off in batches to avoid overcrowding. If you don't have a thermometer, use the back end of a wooden spoon. Stick the butt of your spoon in the oil, and if it bubbles a little, you're good. If your oil is smoking, that's too hot. Be careful!

As your oil is heating, drain your fries and spread them out onto a paper towel-lined sheet tray. Get them as dry

as possible; this will reduce splatter and also help crisp them up.

Now add them to the oil in batches. Don't overcrowd. The oil temperature will drop when you add them,

that's ok. It will come back up. Cook them

until they're t e n d e r .

About 7 minutes. Remove with tongs

o n t o a n o t h e r

p a p e r

towel-lined sheet tray.

Once all your fries are fried, see how crisp they are. Not where you'd like them to be? No worries, friends. Slightly increase the oil temperature to 375 and fry them for a second time. This is where the real magic happens. Now that the fry is cooked through, we're going to crisp up the exterior with this second round of higher-heat frying.

Remove to another paper-towel-lined sheet tray (or the first one washed off with fresh towels) and eat as soon

as possible. Set this up in stations to control the cooking flow. First sheet tray to the left (1) with raw taters, then the dutch oven we're fryin in (2), and to the right the sheet tray where the fries will rest (3).

Once all the fries are off the first tray, rinse, clean, and line them in fresh, dry paper towels. And now go from right to left or 3, 2, 1, until all the fries are crispy, golden, and delicious. As the fries come out onto their final tray, dust with your favorite spices. I like a little S&P,

See "Welsch" on Pg 8



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**Out of the Past**

Memorable photographs from around Harrison County



This photograph portrays members of the Black Hand society whose crimes extended through North Central West Virginia through the 1920s. It was composed of Italian immigrants who preyed on their fellow, law-abiding, countrymen who came here to work, establish businesses, and raise their families in peace.

## LEGAL

The Region VI Workforce Development Board (RVI WDB) is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the provision of a program of activities and services for Out-of-School Youth in the thirteen-county area of Region VI.

Beginning February 2, 2026, interested organizations should contact the RVI WDB at (304)-368-9530 to obtain a copy of the Request For Proposal (RFP). OR a copy of the RFP can be downloaded from the RVI WDB website at [www.regionviwv.org](http://www.regionviwv.org). On the home page, click on About-Requests for Proposals.

The period of service provision is from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, with the possibility of a renewal contract negotiated for an additional two years, based on yearly performance and cost effectiveness. All parties interested in submitting proposals in response to this RFP **MUST** attend a Technical Assistance conference to be held at 1:00 p.m. on February 13, 2026, at the Region VI Workforce Development Board offices at 17 Middletown Road, White Hall. Further information on the Technical Assistance conference is included in the RFP.

The proposal in response to this RFP is due by 4:00 p.m. on March 3, 2026, and must be received by post or by hand delivery in to the RVI WDB offices located at 17 Middletown Road, White Hall, WV, 26554. Fax or email submissions will not be accepted. Refer to the RFP for the complete details on the process for the submission of a proposal. The RVI WDB reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals submitted.

For more information, contact Amy Hall at the Region VI WDB office at 304-368-9530.

Projects and programs provided by Region VI WDB are 100% funded with Federal WIOA funding by the U.S. Department of Labor through grant awards totaling \$2,462,559. No funding is being received from non-governmental sources for projects and programs provided by Region VI WDB at this time. Equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. WV Relay 7-1-1

## LEGAL

WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
Division of Highways  
NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS

Bids will be received electronically by the West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways through the Bid Express Bidding Service ([www.bidx.com](http://www.bidx.com)) and by sealed proposals (only when prequalification is waived) being received at its office in Building 5, Room 843, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, West Virginia until March 12, 2026 at 10:00 AM (Eastern Standard Time). The bids will be downloaded and/or opened and read publicly thereafter for the constructions of the following project(s):

Call Contract	State Project	Federal Project	Description
002	2022840005	S384-REC/AL-26 00	stbg-2026(007)D PAVEMENT MARKINGS D-4 RECALL STRIPING 2026 DISTRICT WIDE COUNTY: DODDRIDGE, HARRISON, MARION, MONONGALIA, PRESTON, TAYLOR

Proposals will be received from prequalified and West Virginia licensed contractors only except that on Federal-Aid Projects a contractors' licence is not required at time of bid, but will be required before work can begin. Registration is required with the Department of Administration, Division of Purchasing, in accordance with Chapter 5A, Article 3, Section 12 of the West Virginia Code. All contractors submitting bids on project(s) must include one of the following forms properly executed with each proposal: Proposal Guaranty Bond, Cashier's Check, or Certified Check for \$500.00 or 5% of the total bid, whichever is greater.

The West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways reserves the right to defer, delay or postpone the date for receiving and publicly opening proposals for any project designated in this advertisement, without the necessity of renewing such advertisement. The deferment, delay, postponement, and the date that proposals will be received and publicly opened will be available on [www.bidx.com](http://www.bidx.com).

The West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in consideration for an award.

## UHC Cancer Center enhances patient care with cutting-edge Varian TrueBeam linear accelerator

BRIDGEPORT, W.Va. Speed and Efficiency: — The Cecil B. Highland, Jr. & Barbara B. Highland Cancer Center at United Hospital Center (UHC), a partner of the WVU Cancer Institute, is proud to announce a major upgrade to its radiation oncology department with the installation of the Varian TrueBeam linear accelerator. This state-of-the-art technology, known for its precision and speed, marks a significant step forward in offering advanced, personalized cancer treatment closer to home for residents of the Central West Virginia region.

The Varian TrueBeam system represents a new era in radiotherapy, allowing for more precise dosage delivery while protecting surrounding healthy tissue. This technology facilitates innovation and collaboration, resulting in new treatment options for patients and new advances in the fight against cancer. "The addition of the Varian TrueBeam is a game-changer for our patients," said David Anthony Clump II, MD, PhD, Radiation Oncologist. "It is not just about having the latest technology; it is about providing better, faster, and more comfortable care. TrueBeam delivers precise dosage quickly, providing treatments that help give our patients their time back".

Key benefits of the new TrueBeam system at UHC include:

Speed and Efficiency: Treatments that once took 10 to 30 minutes can now be completed in just a few minutes, reducing the time patients spend on the treatment table.

High Precision and Accuracy: The system provides sub-millimeter accuracy, ensuring that radiation is directed specifically at the tumor, minimizing dose to surrounding healthy tissue.

Advanced Imaging: The TrueBeam generates 3-D images in 60 percent less time than other technologies, allowing for precise, real-time tumor targeting.

Motion Management: The system compensates for tumor motion, such as breathing, ensuring accuracy even for cancers in the lung, breast, or abdomen.

"This investment underscores UHC's commitment to offering comprehensive cancer care to the community, reducing the need for patients to travel long distances for top-tier treatment in the region," said Meredith Williams, Regional Director of Cancer Services for WVU Medicine's Central Region.

The installation is part of a broader, continued effort to enhance cancer services,

following recent advancements in surgical imaging and facility updates.

For more information about the new radiation oncology capabilities at the UHC Cancer Center, please call 681-342-1842.

## LEGAL

## WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

## NOTICE OF FILING

Application of Constellation NewEnergy - Gas Division, LLC for Approval to Offer, Render, Furnish or Supply Natural Gas Supply Services to the public in West Virginia in case No. 25-0905-G-EFPP.

Constellation NewEnergy - Gas Division, LLC has filed an application with the West Virginia Public Service Commission ("PSC") for participation in an Enhanced Firm Pooling Program to provide natural gas supply services as a supplier or aggregator of natural gas services. Constellation NewEnergy - Gas division, LLC, proposes to sell natural gas and related services to all counties in West Virginia.

The PSC may consider this application without a hearing. Protests directed to the technical or financial fitness of Constellation NewEnergy - Gas division, LLC may be filed within 15 days of the date of this notice with the Executive Secretary of the PSC, 201 Brooks Street, Charleston, WV 25301. Please include the Case No. listed above on the protest.

Additionally, please send copies of any protest to Constellation NewEnergy - Gas Division, LLC attorney at the address listed below.

Austin D. Rogers  
Babst Calland Clements & Zomnir, P.C.  
300 Summers Street, Suite 1000  
Charleston, West Virginia 25301  
(681) 205-8888  
(681) 205-8814 facsimile  
[arogers@babstcalland.com](mailto:arogers@babstcalland.com)

## LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SHINNSTON  
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SHINNSTON FOR  
CONVEYANCE OF CITY PROPERTY WITHOUT AN AUCTION

Notice is hereby given to all residents of the City of Shinnston, West Virginia, that the Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. at the Shinnston Council Chambers, 43 Bridge Street, Shinnston, West Virginia for the purpose of providing members of the public an opportunity to speak either in favor of, or opposition to, the proposed ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SHINNSTON FOR CONVEYANCE OF CITY PROPERTY WITHOUT AN AUCTION. The comments provided by members of the public shall be considered by the City Council in their decision.

A reasonable number of copies of the ordinance is on file in the Office of the City Manager of the City of Shinnston and is available for review by members of the public Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## LEGAL

The Region VI Workforce Development Board (RVI WDB) is issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the provision of Assessment and Case Management for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and employers in the thirteen-county area of Region VI.

Beginning February 2, 2026, interested organizations can contact the RVI WDB at (304)-368-9530 to obtain a copy of the RFP, OR a copy of the RFP can be downloaded from the RVI WDB website at [www.regionviwv.org](http://www.regionviwv.org). On the home page, click on About-Requests for Proposals.

The period of service provision is from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, with the possibility of a renewal contract negotiated for an additional two years, based on yearly performance and cost effectiveness. All parties interested in submitting proposals in response to this RFP **MUST** attend a Technical Assistance conference to be held at 2:00 p.m. on February 13, 2026, at the Region VI Workforce Development Board offices at 17 Middletown Road, White Hall. Further information on the Technical Assistance conference is included in the RFP.

The proposal in response to this RFP is due by 4:00 p.m. on March 3, 2026, and must be received by post or by hand delivery in to the RVI WDB offices located at 17 Middletown Road, White Hall, WV, 26554. Fax or email submissions will not be accepted. Refer to the RFP for the complete details on the process for the submission of a proposal. The RVI WDB reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals submitted.

For more information, contact Amy Hall at the Region VI WDB office at 304-368-9530.

Projects and programs provided by Region VI WDB are 100% funded with Federal WIOA funding by the U.S. Department of Labor through grant awards totaling \$2,462,559. No funding is being received from non-governmental sources for projects and programs provided by Region VI WDB at this time. Equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. WV Relay 7-1-1

## Food For Thought

By Leigh C. Merrifield

## What's Wrong With The 'Same Old Thing'?

I am learning some of the signs of aging ... and there are quite a few of them!

Some things you really can't control. For instance, a few gray hairs may appear; bones may crack once in a while; a wrinkle or two may become visible; perhaps energy levels are not what they used to be – to name a few. But I can live with those. However, there are other changes that I notice REALLY upset me anymore, and they are just LITTLE things that I object to.

I'm not so ancient that I'm no longer independent. In fact, maybe THAT is my problem; I'm TOO independent and accustomed to doing things the way I have for years. I've been an adult now for more than half a century and have managed very well making my own decisions. While I don't claim to know it all, don't keep throwing all these new things at me when I'm comfortable with 'the same old thing'!

Here are a few examples. I keep getting these messages that insist I need a new computer program. You know what? My laptop and I have for the most part gotten along fine through the years. Why would I want

to change it and start from scratch getting on good terms with a new one?

I am not a fan of all the self-checkouts that have taken over in numerous stores either. For one thing, some limit you to just 15 items so that limits my usage of them because typically, my cart is usually full. Also, I wonder how many people have lost their jobs because of this. ??? I'd rather wait in line. Don't force me to use the self check-outs!

Here's another one. Some stores are now charging people to send them a bill! I suppose maybe it saves them money on paper to print off the statement ... and postage to mail it of course! So they want me to receive a statement online AND pay my bill the same way! I don't like to give that information online either; PLUS, mailing my payment to them is my way of keeping the postal workers employed as well.

Am I just getting cranky? Recently, I read an article encouraging folks to "brain dump" with their phones. My first thought was – what the heck is a "brain dump"? After further reading I discovered it is the new term for a to-do list. The article suggested it is

psychologically healthy to do this "brain dump" first thing every morning and keep a digital record on your cell phone of all the goals you set for the day ahead. I was not inspired to do that. I have to admit that I am a list-maker, and I DO keep a notepad near my bed. Before I turn the light out, I write down tasks I want to tackle the following day, things I might need from the store, any appointments I might have, etc. Personally, writing down these reminders before I turn in for the night clears my head and helps me sleep better. I need the "brain dump" at night, not first thing in the morning. Yep, I'm the queen of organization and I think ahead; therefore, I may fill at least one page of a LEGAL pad, not a little notepad. But, if my to-do list is that long, I prioritize and focus on the most important things first, and at least allow myself more than just one day if needed to get it all accomplished!

While the young ones may rely on technology and love the challenges of learning new digital techniques, we older folks may prefer to stick to the 'Same Old Thing'. Don't try to force an old dog to learn too many new tricks!

“Welsch” From Pg 6.

some granulated garlic, and onion powder.

Mix spices in a small bowl with a fork until incorporated. Taste to make sure the mix is good and sprinkle from a high height to ensure even coating. Remember, you can always add more, but it’s hard to take it away, so go a little at a time until they’re seasoned perfectly.

Crispy food has a bad habit of not staying that way, so it’s best not to let your fries rest for too long.

Therefore, in a perfect world, you want to cook your steak at the same time. Now generally, I’d cook my steaks on the grill, but it’s too cold for all that. So, let’s do them in cast iron.

I like to let my steaks dry out in the fridge for a day before I cook them. Unwrap them a day ahead of time and

lay them on a plate or tray, a wire rack on a tray is ideal, so air can get all around them. Cover lightly with parchment paper or not covered at all. Make sure not to store raw food over ready-to-eat food in your fridge.

Pull the steaks from the fridge when you’re ready to start cleaning your potatoes. Dab them dry with paper towels and season liberally with salt and pepper on both sides.

When you’re ready to start frying your potatoes, pause and cook your steaks. They will want to rest after cooking, so while they’re resting, you can fry your fries.

It’s important to heat your cast-iron skillet thoroughly before adding the steaks. Place on the stove on medium-high to high heat and add just a little bit of

oil. Once the pan is smoking, add the steaks carefully, laying away from yourself with the upside down. The pan should sizzle like an angry rattler. Cook for 2 -3 minutes on one side, then flip. Once flipped, add a fat knob of butter.

Once the butter melts, you can carefully tip the pan towards you and, using a spoon, baste the steaks with the butter and fat in the pan for another 2 - 3 minutes. Now, remove the steaks to a plate and tent with aluminum foil to rest.

By the time your fries are done, your steaks will be ready to cook! If you really want to jazz things up, we can do a pan sauce, but we’ll have to talk about that another time.

Enjoy, friends! Celebrate the ones you love with good food.

# Data Centers and W.Va.’s Economic Future: Opportunity with Responsibility

By Jim Estep and Matt Ballard

West Virginia stands at an important crossroads in its economic development journey. As the global economy becomes increasingly digital, data centers have emerged as critical infrastructure—quietly powering everything from healthcare and banking to manufacturing, education, and national security. It is no surprise that our state is being considered more seriously for these investments. The question before us is not whether data centers are coming, but whether West Virginia will position itself to benefit from them in a way that is responsible and aligned with our values. There is much to support in the growth of the data center industry.

It is also worth noting that data centers are not an abstract or entirely new concept for West Virginia. Data centers already operate today at the I-79 Technology Park in Fairmont and at the West Virginia Regional Technology Park in South Charleston. While these are smaller in scale than the hyperscale projects now being discussed nationally, they perform the same essential functions and have coexisted successfully with surrounding communities for years. They provide a practical, real-world example that this type of infrastructure can operate responsibly, quietly, and safely right here in our state. These facilities bring significant capital investment, often measured in the hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars. They broaden the local tax base, strengthen public finances, and create demand for skilled trades during construction as well as long-term technical, engineering, and facilities jobs. Just as importantly, data

centers can serve as anchors— attracting complementary industries, research activity, and workforce development opportunities that help diversify regional economies that have long sought stability beyond boom-and-bust cycles.

At the same time, it is reasonable for citizens and leaders to raise questions around any new development. Concerns around water usage, power demand, and the potential strain on public infrastructure deserve thoughtful consideration. These are not obstacles to progress; they are signals that the public expects growth to be managed wisely. Fortunately, these concerns are not new, nor are they unsolvable. Modern data center design has evolved rapidly. Many facilities now use advanced cooling technologies that dramatically reduce water consumption, including closed-loop systems and air-cooled designs. Others are sited intentionally to avoid competition with residential or agricultural water needs. Transparency around water sourcing and consumption, coupled with enforceable performance standards, can ensure that communities understand how resources are being used and protected.

Infrastructure investment is another frequent concern, particularly when it comes to electricity generation and transmission. Here, careful planning matters. Data centers should be recruited to locations where existing infrastructure can be leveraged, or where private investment can offset the need for public ratepayer-funded upgrades. Smart policy can ensure that growth does not translate into higher utility bills for households, but instead strengthens

the overall system through modernization and resilience. West Virginia has already taken an important step forward in this regard. The Governor and Legislature deserve credit for enacting microgrid legislation that provides new tools for energy reliability and innovation. Microgrids can allow large energy users like data centers to invest in their own generation and storage, reducing strain on the broader grid while improving resilience for surrounding communities. This kind of forward-thinking policy sends a strong signal that West Virginia understands both the opportunity and the responsibility that come with hosting next-generation infrastructure.

Equally important is community engagement. Successful projects are those that involve local leaders early, communicate, and make commitments that can be measured and enforced. West Virginia has always powered America in one form or another. Data centers represent a new chapter in that legacy—one rooted in digital infrastructure rather than physical extraction, but no less vital to the nation’s future. By welcoming this industry with clear standards, smart policy, and respect for local concerns, we can ensure that growth is both economically meaningful and publicly supported. This is not a choice between progress and protection. With the right approach, West Virginia can have both.

Jim Estep is President and CEO at High Technology Foundation I79 Technology Park and Matt Ballard is CEO and Executive Director of West Virginia Regional Technology Park

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