



Honoring the Citizens Who Gave All



In Meuse-Argonne Cemetery in France are interred 14,246 Americans who gave the last measure of sacrifice. Most of these died in the World War I offensive which bears the same name.

We honor all Americans in any war or for our nation. Requiescat in pace. And other action who served and sacrificed thank you all for our freedom.

The Shinnston News & Harrison County Journal has named American Soliders as Citizens of the Month, a recognition sponsored by Dorsey Funeral Home in Shinnston - locally owned and operated.

'Inflation Creations & Events by Rae' Offers The "WOW" Factor To Any Special Occasion



Rachel's colorful display drew a lot of attention to Ruby Hospital's celebration of 'Hospital Employee Week'.

By Leigh C. Merrifield

For some people, making others happy is what also makes *them* happy - and that perfectly describes Rachel DeMarco. Originally from Fayette County, PA, Rachel moved to Shinnston after marrying Adam DeMarco and has called Shinnston "home" for the past eight years. She worked in a dental office for several years, but still managed to feed her creative hunger in her spare time.

"I have always loved art and creating things, and I guess this all originated when I used balloons in imaginative ways to make my son's birthdays really special celebrations," she commented. And because she 'goes that extra mile' in *everything she does*, her family calls her "EXTRA". Her family will also tell you that she doesn't settle for 'modest'; she tends to shoot for 'grand'!

She humorously recalls that when this all began, her first thought was 'how difficult can it be to blow up and arrange balloons'? Now, however, she admits to being surprised that there truly is skill involved - even in how you cluster balloons and what size to use for the effect you want. But she experimented and learned by trial and error until her skills were perfected. Family members then requested her expertise, and *then friends* asked for



Standing in front of a backdrop she painted herself is Rachel DeMarco, owner of Inflation Creations & Events by Rae, who strives to make each of her creations unique and unforgettable.

her help, *and then* she did a baby shower and was encouraged to seriously market her talents!

She loves what she does so much that she grasped their encouragement and quit her job to set up a business, which incidentally, is much more than merely arranging balloons. She also does

handmade backdrops, thanks to help from her husband and grandfather who cut the wood or foam from her drawings; but the

See "Rae" Pg 10



(l-r) Harry Faulk, former Clarksburg City Manager and Chad Edwards, former Shinnston City Manager. Both are now managing townships in Pennsylvania.

Finding Inspiration Among Pennsylvania's Municipal Managers



By JIM HUNT

Building Amazing Cities

For the Harrison County
 Journal

I recently attended the Association of Pennsylvania Municipal Managers conference in Pittsburgh, and I came away reminded once again that some of the most important leadership in local government does not always happen under the bright lights of elected office.

The conference was held at The Landing Hotel, attached to the Rivers Casino and located next to Acrisure Stadium, home of the Pittsburgh Steelers. For me, going to a conference in Pittsburgh always feels a little unusual. Unlike many of the conferences I attend around the country, I can be home from Pittsburgh in under two hours. It is close enough to feel familiar, but still far enough away to make you step out of your regular routine and see things with fresh eyes.

After spending the majority of my career as an elected official, I find myself more and more interested in the work of city managers. In many ways, they operate in a world that elected officials only partly see. They are responsible for carrying out the policies of councils, managing employees, responding to citizens, dealing with crises, and trying to keep the daily machinery of government moving forward.

What struck me most at this conference was

See "Hunt" Pg 3

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OPINION

The Sparsity Question

By Stephen Smoot

West Virginians, no matter where they live, at least west of Berkeley Springs, have very similar identities of what the image and ideal of their state is, what living in the state looks like.

Ask most to draw a picture and one would likely see the same results. A cabin nestled in the woods or perched atop a hill or mountain, perhaps a small farm attached or at least as a neighbor. Our state's official song "West Virginia Hills" and unofficial "Country Roads" reinforce the image that the best life in the Mountain State is one of rural quiet, far from the noise of the city and mostly out of view of neighbors.

Indeed, many moving in from out of state or seeking to move out of West Virginia's own cities see this as a dream lifestyle.

Last month, we had a family party. My in laws were mostly born in New York City, but they feel much better now, having moved out into smaller urban areas. When hearing our garbage bill, one who recently escaped from New York was flabbergasted at how much more expensive it is and asked why.

I explained that "in the city, each garbage truck has a pretty compact route and hits a residence maybe every few seconds to a minute. Here, you can go a few miles between houses and you also have to go up the hollers where people live even farther apart. Lots of dead miles that eat up gasoline and time.

He understood immediately, but a number in the West Virginia State Legislature seem to have the same lack of understanding about the special problems posed by sparse populations. In a number of areas, the distance between towns, residences, businesses, and government institutions is significant. Then one adds in the rugged terrain and the sometimes unforgiving road network serving these areas.

State Senator Walt Helmick (D-Pocahontas) and Delegate Harold Michael (D-Hardy) decades ago served as Finance chairs for their respective committees. They saw that the sparsity issue created grave problems for county school systems in that the funding from the state aid formula could not compensate for the extra expenses incurred when vast distances converge with small populations.

With help from Pendleton County Schools Treasurer J. P. Mowery, they devised the 1,400 floor formula that helps to mitigate that issue for systems such as Calhoun, Pendleton, Pocahontas, and a number of other systems with tiny student populations, lots of miles to travel, and mountains, hills, and hollers with which to contend.

While some school systems still face significant budget problems, this has helped to give them a fighting chance to maintain healthy budgets in line with State of West Virginia financial expectations.

That said, other areas also fight to keep their heads above water, budget-wise, sometimes without the same understanding of the effects of sparse populations.

Last session, the Legislature passed EMS

See "Smoot" Pg 3

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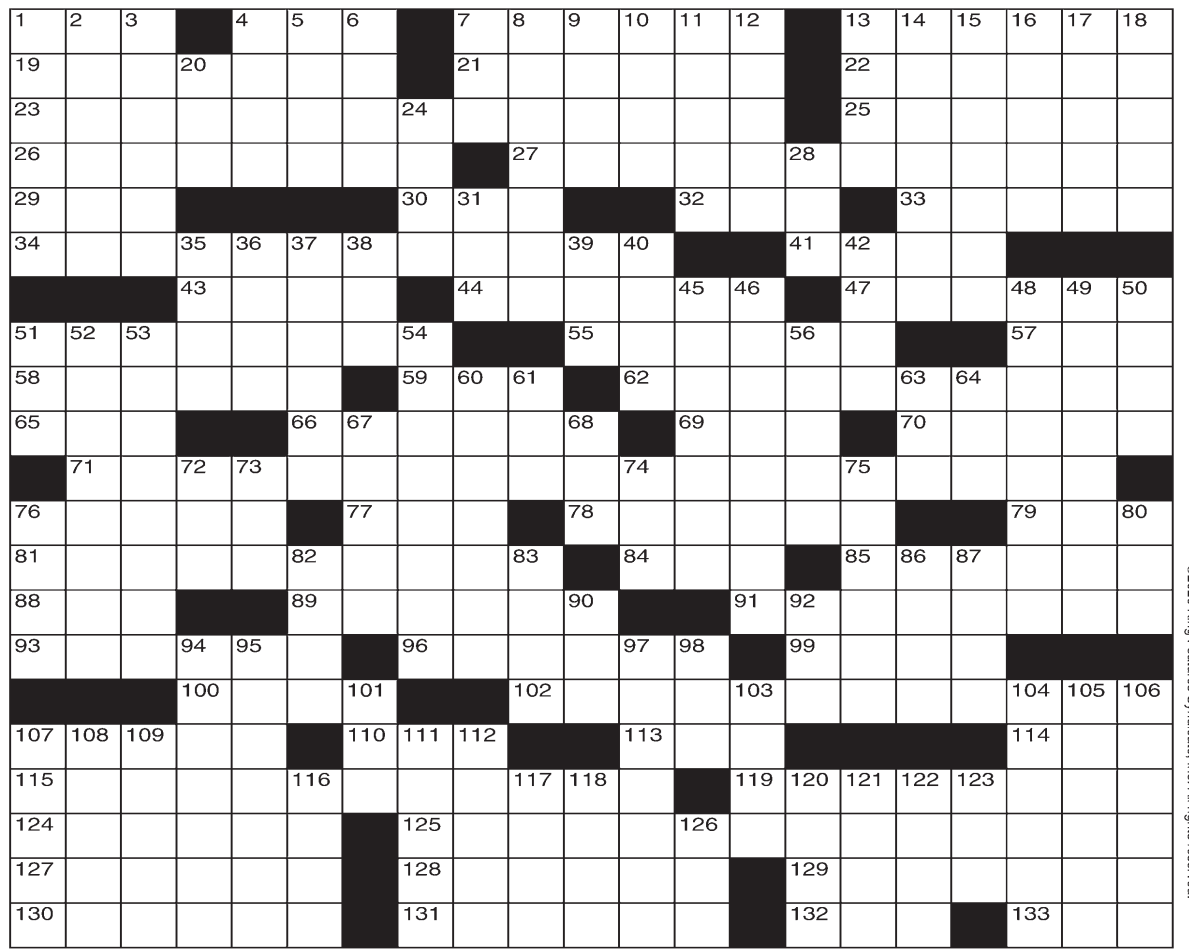
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Super Crossword

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- ACROSS**
- 1 PlayStation 3 competitor
4 Prefix for "bird"
7 Man-to-man term of endearment
13 Luau skirt
19 Native (to)
21 Modern way to shop
22 Neckwear clasp
23 Noteworthy septet of piers?
25 Spanish fleet
26 Worship
27 Publicly revealing Edison's secret?
29 Bottom-row PC key
30 Recipe qty.
32 Overly
33 Eggs' shapes
34 Successfully trap a moray?
41 Shrek is one
43 "There oughta be —!"
44 Dozing
47 Spellbound
51 "This works like a charm!"
55 Up-to-the-minute
57 Director Ang
- 58 Like family-friendly films
59 Pres. after FDR
62 Bring a Ferris wheel to a complete stop?
65 Scrape (by)
66 Charlotte —, Virgin Islands
69 Internet ID
70 TV host Philbin
71 Like a king who has wild mood swings?
76 Burns a little
77 Army NCO
78 Teensy bit
79 Noted period
81 Ruling eagle sitting in her high nest?
84 Org. giving tows
85 Iridescent button materials
88 Architect I.M. from China
89 "Avengers: Age of —" (2015 Marvel film)
91 Government revenue sources
93 Ukraine port
96 Basketry willows
- 99 Shout
100 Mask
102 Wish you had never met the star of "Firestarter"?
- 107 Curved
110 — Fridays (restaurant)
113 Bank acct. amount
114 Uncooked
115 Response to a question about "Swan Lake"?
- 119 1996 #1 hit for Los del Rio
124 Funnel-shaped bloom
125 People with unorthodox opinions about a girl in Wonderland?
127 Quick raids
128 Cringed
129 Sugar alcohol used as a sweetener
130 Tiny amounts
131 Goes hastily
132 From — Z
133 Pop/soul singer Des'—
- DOWN**
- 1 Floor cleaner for liquid spills, in brief
2 Suffering, figuratively
3 — Kit (police face-maker)
4 Part of ACLU: Abbr.
5 — voce
6 "High Rollers" rapper
7 See 109-Down
8 With the wish (of)
9 Actress Summer of "Serenity"
10 Encircled with a band
11 Not suitable
12 Like many simple questions
13 TDs or RBI
14 Loud warning device
15 Eliminator
16 Former first lady Michelle
17 Rafael of tennis
18 Lawn surface
20 Suffix of nationalities
24 Amsterdam is its cap.
28 Sticky gunk
31 Island setting
35 Appellation
36 Dressed
37 Bible book before Zechariah
38 Prefix with light
39 Pipe joint
40 Foliage unit
42 Stan of jazz
45 Region of pre-Roman Italy
46 Viewed intently
48 Some wheel adjusters
49 Animal's "family tree"
50 Golf pegs
51 Deep anger
52 Pay attention
53 Sault —, Mich.
54 Replace with
56 Bud of Cooperstown
60 Some roofing specialists
61 Up to, in brief
63 Suffix with southwest
64 Outdoor gear retailer
67 Large city in Iraq
68 Raised RRs
72 "Either he goes — go!"
73 Mao — -tung
74 Diva Sumac
75 Boomer's kid
76 Mafia chief
80 Horse cousin
82 Campus area
83 Film genre
86 Skillfully
87 Tranquil
90 Modern, in Munich
92 Scottish port
94 Varnish
95 Judy glance
97 Make more offspring
98 Govt. loan agency
101 LAX guess
103 — mater
104 Collier's tram
105 Really bug
106 Discarded PCs or TVs
107 At the stern
108 Barber's tool
109 With 7-Down, the original "It" girl
111 Chews on
112 Town on Long Island's South Shore
116 Russian news agency
117 Chablis, e.g.
118 Ovid's "Lo!"
120 Brand of athletic shoes
121 "— la vie"
122 Slangy suffix with buck
123 Cup edge
126 ER staffers



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.

May 27, 1912: Golf legend Sam Snead was born in Ashwood, Virginia. When The Greenbrier reopened as a resort after World War II, Snead returned as the golf pro. Snead is tied with Tiger Woods for most career wins on the PGA Tour: 82.

May 27, 1922: Labor leader Bill Blizzard was acquitted of treason charges following the 1921 Battle of Blair Mountain. The trial was held in the Jefferson County Courthouse in Charles Town, where John Brown had been convicted of treason against Virginia in 1859.

May 28, 1863: Arthur Boreman was elected as the first governor of the new state of West Virginia.

May 28, 1920: Elmer Bird—"The Banjo Man from Turkey Creek"—was born in Putnam County. He was named best old-time banjo player in the country four times in his 60s.

May 28, 1938: Basketball player Jerry West was born on Cabin Creek, Kanawha County. West led East Bank High School to the state basketball championship in 1956 and then rewrote the record books at West Virginia University and with the Los Angeles Lakers.

May 28, 1998: The Robert C. Byrd United States Courthouse in downtown Charleston was dedicated. The 440,000-square-foot building incorporated Neoclassic, Egyptian and Art Deco designs.

May 29, 1778: Dick Pointer, an enslaved man, helped defend Fort Donnally near Lewisburg from an attack by Shawnee Indians during the Revolutionary War.

May 29, 1949: Singer-songwriter and labor activist Elaine Purkey was born in West Hamlin, Lincoln County. She is best remembered for her labor anthem "One Day More."

May 29, 1961: Alderson and Chloe Muncy of McDowell County received the first food stamps in the nation. He was an unemployed coal miner, and they were the parents of 15 children.

May 30, 1883: The Soldiers Aid Society of

Wheeling dedicated the Soldiers and Sailors Monument to honor Civil War Union veterans. It now stands beside West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling.

May 30, 1914: Nurse Dolores Dowling was born in Ohio and graduated from Huntington's St. Mary's Hospital. During World War II, she was one of the first American nurses to land during the 1943 Sicily invasion at Gela.

May 30, 1940: Smoke Hole Caverns in Grant County opened for tours. The cave is beautifully decorated with stalactites hanging in rows along the ceiling; the main room is called the "Room of a Million Stalactites."

May 30, 1881: Frederick Douglass gave a notable speech at Storer College in Harpers Ferry honoring John Brown, who had been executed for his abolitionist raid on the town's armory in 1859.

May 31, 1841: Roman Catholic Bishop John Joseph Kain was born near Martinsburg. As bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling, he worked to meet the needs of newly arrived immigrants who came to labor in West Virginia's mines and factories.

May 31, 1946: Writer Meredith Sue Willis was born in Clarksburg and raised in Shinnston. Willis has authored books for children and on the subject of writing. Much of her adult fiction is set in West Virginia.

June 1, 1880: An 86-round bare-knuckle prize fight for championship of the world was held in the Brooke County town of Colliers, between defending champion Joe Goss and challenger Paddy Ryan. Boxing was illegal in every state, and matches were often held in railroad villages to avoid big-city police.

June 1, 1935: Musician Hazel Dickens was born in Mercer County, the eighth of 11 children. She was a pioneering old-time and bluegrass musician, known for preserving the traditional vocal styles of West Virginia.

June 1, 1858: The Artists' Excursion left Baltimore on its way to Wheeling. A Baltimore & Ohio executive planned the rail trip to promote tourism. About 50 passengers were on board, including artist and writer David Hunter Strother, who described the experience in an article for Harpers magazine.

June 2, 1951: Cornelius Charlton died of the wounds he received in battle during the Korean War. Charlton, a Raleigh County native, was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

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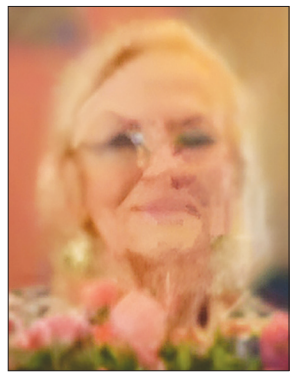


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Mary Ann Myer



Mary Ann Myer, 81, of Clarksburg, passed away on Sunday, May 17, 2026. She was born in Cedar Rapids, IA, January 1, 1945, a daughter of the late Frank John and Mary Martha Smruchek Haster. On June 17, 1993, she married Clyde L. Myer, who preceded her in death on May 30, 2023.

Surviving are one daughter, Mignon Juanita Boring and her husband Alan, Lumberport; her grandchildren, Melina McWhorter and her husband Derrick, Clarksburg, Letosha Lindley and her husband Jeremy, Washington, PA, Matt Boring, Shinnston, Joey Bush, Bridgeport; great grandchildren, Trevor, Jayce, Abigail, Arionna, Xavier, Callan, Elliana, Kiara, Gabi, and Ali; her sisters, Becky Haster-Buxton, Linda Haster, Joan Haster; her sister-in-law, Mary Vavra-Haster; several nieces, nephews, and extended family; and her bonus daughter, Helen Davisson and her family. Mary was also preceded in death by two brothers, David Haster-Buxton and Gary Haster.

Mary was a U.S. Army Veteran and spent 15 years in WV National Guard as a supply Tech. She was a people person and always friendly to everyone. She had Mary's Beauty Salon for many years. Later in life she was employed as a Contact Representative with the IRS from which she retired. Following her retirement, she worked at Jackson-Hewitt to assist during tax season. She was faithful to attend Good Hope Prayer Chapel for many years where she enjoyed playing violin. She kept herself busy by doing yardwork and being very hands-on with maintenance around her property. She will be greatly missed.

A graveside service will be held at the WV National Cemetery in Pruntytown, Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at 11am. Full military honors will be accorded at the cemetery by WV Army National Guard and the Harrison County Honor Guard. Condolences may be extended to the family at www.perinefunerals.com. The Perine Funeral Home is honored to serve the Myer family.

Harriet Lou Bice

Harriet Lou Bice, 95, of Enterprise, passed away on Monday, May 18, 2026 at Clarksburg Healthcare Center. She was born December 30, 1930 in Enterprise, a daughter of the late Harry and Lesley Grimes Bice.

Lou was the last surviving member of her immediate family. In addition to her parents, Lou was preceded in death by her twin sister, Barbara Sue Livingston; her sisters, Eleanor Agnes McDougal; Dorothy Jean Thompson; and her brother, John Elmore Bice.

She is survived by several nieces and nephews.

Lou was employed by the Fairmont Box Company and the broom and mop factory in Stonewood. In later years, she enjoyed working at both Rockwell and Bice's Greenhouses. Lou loved everyone in Enterprise and was known for calling every one of them "Moe". She was a member of Rebekah Lodge #47 in Shinnston as well as the Tenmile Church of Christ.

A private interment was held at the Enterprise I.O.O.F. Cemetery. Online memories and condolences can be shared with that family at www.perinefunerals.com

The Perine Funeral Home is honored to serve the Bice family.

"Smoot"

Shinnston, WV - funding that should provide some boost to local services especially in funding. One requirement that also came out of the 2026 session lay in requiring that county commissions provide at least one ambulance service for every 18,000 residents.

As Mike Alt, Training Officer for Pendleton County Emergency Rescue, has noted during county commission meetings in his area, a far more radical proposal was floated, that only one ambulance per 6,000 people was necessary.

Calhoun County has approximately 6,000 residents. Within the county one of the most distant towns from Minnie Hamilton Health System, and its heliport, in Grantsville is Stinson, a 36 minute drive one way in optimal conditions. Optimal conditions include good weather, normal flow of traffic, and decent road conditions. They also include winding main highways, backroads extending deep into hollers, and other obstacles.

Pendleton County has the same population, twice the square miles, and three valleys bisecting the county divided by 3,500 foot ridges. One ambulance could never cover that much ground.

In Charleston, a good response time on an urgent EMS call is about 10 minutes.

Another challenge lies in broadband expansion in these same rural areas. A decade ago, the cost of one mile of broadband fiber was approximately \$30 to \$35,000. Those costs accelerate in remote areas with miles between potential customer homes in some locations.

One could dismiss these rural residents and suggest easier living closer to urban areas. That said, Calhoun County has those working and doing business in natural gas and timber. Another example, Hardy County, has a maze of rural roadways, high ridges, and deep valleys are the home of some of the most productive poultry farmers anywhere. Pendleton County farmers raise ample numbers of cattle and sheep. One of its most remote communities boasts a bustling sawmill whose product is even

sold internationally.

Yes people live there because they want to, but these out of the way areas happen to serve vital roles in the West Virginia economy. Natural gas, coal, timber, adventure tourism, all types of agriculture, and other fields of endeavor pump money into the state economy from some of the most hard to get to areas.

West Virginia's leaders in every field where it matters need to understand the special challenges facing counties with sparse populations. They should not do this thinking of rural residents as looking for a subsidy for a carefree country life, but support for the important work done in these counties, the people who do it, and the families that support them.

And these residents do pay the higher cost of living there. Sheila Burch, director of the Little Kanawha Area Development Corporation cited the poor condition of local highways as a serious barrier to regional economic development in Wirt and Calhoun counties. It has spurred her to explore developing a regional drone freight facility to address the burdens of truck traffic on the roads.

Support need not be only financial. It can take creative forms, but that requires the willingness to explore solutions with the goal of reducing costs related to sparsity and geography.

In the Potomac Highlands, gasoline is about 60 cents more per gallon in Franklin than Keyser, the second largest city in the Eastern Panhandle, usually 10 cents higher even than neighboring Petersburg or Moorefield. Electric outages and snow covered roads take longer to address. For many years, most rural West Virginians battled with Frontier's unreliable copper line internet.

Yes Charleston, Huntington, Clarksburg, Morgantown, Martinsburg and so on are wonderful places with wonderful people.

But those are not what people think of when they envision West Virginia, resident or not. Because remote regions of the Mountain State are not just beautiful places to live, but vital parts of the state's economy and identity.



"Hunt"

the energy, creativity, and dedication of so many young municipal managers. There is an infectious spirit among them. They are not simply trying to maintain the status quo. They are thinking about technology, communication, employee morale, community trust, and new ways to deliver services. I believe municipal management is becoming one of the most innovative and creative parts of local government.

One session that touched me deeply was an interview with Centrice Martin, the former manager of Ferguson Township. Centrice made history as the first municipal manager ever chosen to serve as President of the Pennsylvania Municipal League. That alone would be a remarkable achievement. But her leadership came during a particularly difficult time in her township.

With a toxic mix of social media conflict, community tension, and difficult relationships with members of the elected board, Centrice eventually made the painful

decision that her peace was more important than continuing in her position. Listening to her share that story with a room full of her peers was both heartbreaking and inspirational.

It took courage to be that open. It also gave voice to something many city managers understand but may not always say out loud. Managers can be lone rangers in their communities. They are expected to lead, solve problems, absorb criticism, and remain professional, even when the attacks become personal. Yet they are never completely secure. They can give years of their lives to a community and still be shown the door at any time.

Another session that stood out featured my friend Sam Toles of CiviSocial. Sam's company helps cities use social media as a vehicle for positive communication with citizens, rather than simply accepting the conflict and toxicity that have become too common online. Sam believes city

employees can become content creators, using their unique roles and daily experiences to tell the story of local government from the inside. I have known Sam for a couple of years, and I admire the difference he is making in cities, one community at a time.

Of course, since the hotel was attached to a casino, I did wander over for a brief visit. I walked through the smoke-filled sea of flashing slot machines, found one, and fed a twenty-dollar bill into the slot. About three minutes later, I pushed the button on my final credit and once again wondered how gambling has become such a big business.

As I drove home from Pittsburgh, I thought about the conference, the city managers I met, and the city that was my "big city" growing up. Pittsburgh has always had a special place in my life. This trip reminded me that great cities are built not only by mayors and councils, but also by the dedicated managers and employees who quietly do the hard work every day.

On Memorial Day, Red Poppies, and Honoring Veterans' Sacrifices



GRAPEVINE
By Rosalyn Queen

As we say good bye to spring, we welcome in summer. Memorial Day always means the beginning of summer. It means graduation for both high school and college. It means

vacation and it means summer jobs.

But Memorial Day means more than that. In 1868 it was established to recognize those who gave their lives for our

country. Communities were to come together to decorate the graves of these heroes. The tradition continues with the placing of flags on these graves.

But sometimes if you were at the grave yard and noticed a coin on the headstone of these Veterans, this is what they meant. The placing of these coins on headstones dates back to the Roman Empire. If there is

a penny it meant the grave was visited. If a nickel, they served with the Veterans at boot camp. If a dime it means they served together at some point and if a quarter the Veterans was with them when they died.

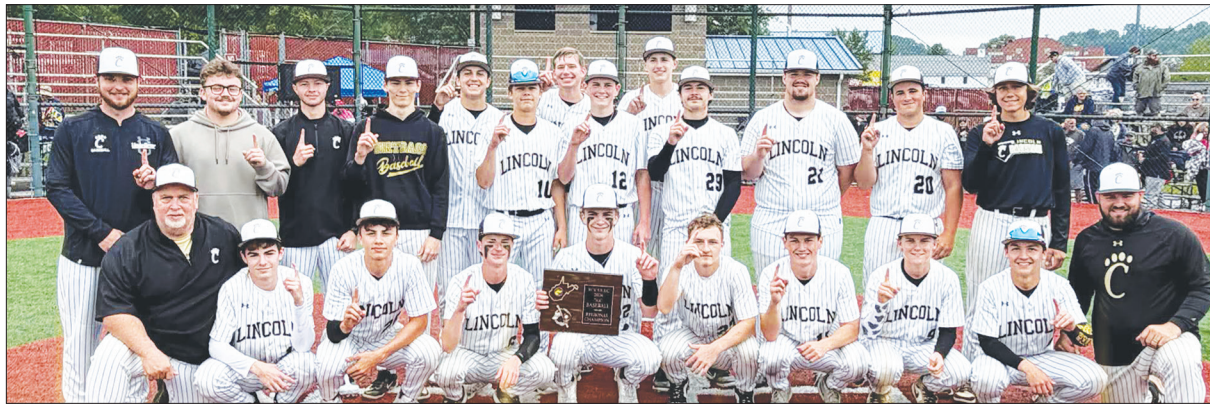
This year when visiting the cemetery take a pocket full of change and place a penny on all veterans graves you visit. This will communicate a

message of respect to the family.

Continue to fly the flags and remember the red poppy is a symbol of Memorial Day.



Lincoln Earns Trip to Baseball State Tournament!



Cougar Baseball Advances to Charleston



The Bottom Line
By Bill Nestor
Sports Editor

The Lincoln baseball team has been on fire as of late and even the rainy weather that has pounded North central West Virginia couldn't stop the Cougars.

Lincoln head coach, Greg Smith, has done a masterful job with his squad all season long, but he picked the perfect time for the best baseball of the season to be played by his team. A three-win week has propelled the Cougars to their first trip to the state tournament for the first time since 2009.

Class AA regional action opened for Lincoln on Monday when they hosted Berkeley Springs. The Cougars laid the lumber, scoring five runs in the bottom of the first inning en route to a 12 to nothing victory. Alex Greene was two for two with a pair of home runs and six runs batted in. Colton Edwards was two for two with a double and three runs scored. Max Abruzzino was one for two with a double. On the mound, Jacob Bart had four innings of scoreless ball, allowing one hit while striking out six batters.

The win would set up a clash with inter-county opponent South Harrison. The Hawks edged Petersburg two to one behind the pitching of Jacob Watts. Watts was dominant, going the distance and striking out 13 Viking batters.

Tuesday night in Shinnston, South Harrison and Lincoln played a pivotal contest. The winner would be in the driver's seat while the loser would be just one game from elimination.

For a second consecutive postseason game,

the Cougars would provide key first inning run production. A pair of homers helped the home team to a quick four to nothing lead. Edwards started off the bottom of the first with a dinger and Greene sent a pitch over the fence for his third homer in two games. Greene was once again perfect at the plate, going three for three with three RBIs. Anthony Belcastro was two for three with a tripe and a pair of runs scored. Jacob Holt was two for three with a run scored. Jacob Bart was two for three with a run scored. A. J. Bart went the distance on the hill in the six to two win.

For South Harrison, Watts was the only multi-hit performer, going two for two with a homer and a pair of RBIs.

Lincoln would finally get a day off as Petersburg and South Harrison would lock up on Wednesday. The Vikings would edge the hawks four to three and advance to face the Cougars on Thursday. With the rains settling in throughout the area. Lincoln would be forced to lose their home field advantage as the tilt was moved to the all-weather field at Frank Loria in Nutter Fort.

The extra day of rest allowed Smith to give the ball back to Jacob Bart. Bart pitched a gem, scattering four hits and striking out nine Vikings on the way to a four to nothing triumph.

Lincoln would plate single runs in the second, third, fifth, and sixth inning. Christopher Mazzei paced the offensive attack, going two for three with a run batted in.

The win pushed the Cougars' record to 21 and 12 and gives them their longest winning streak of the season at five. During this stretch, they have dominated opponents, outsourcing them 35 to seven. Congratulations and good luck to the Cougars as they now compete for a Class AA crown!

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



Harrison County EMS
HARRISON COUNTY
Cougars
EMERGENCY SQUAD
Athletes of the Week

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 Lincoln's Alex Greene and Jacob Bart.

The Lincoln Cougars punched their ticket to the baseball state tournament this past week. Alex Green and Jacob Bart were contributors to their success.

Green had at least one hit in all the games and was six of eight with three home runs on the week.

Bart earned a pair of wins on the mound, pitching 11 innings of scoreless baseball. Bart also struck out 15 batters in his two games combined.

Congratulations to Lincoln's Alex Greene and Jacob Bart for shining bright in the SN and HCY spotlight!

They're Golden



Lincoln Middle boasted three recipients of the West Virginia Golden Horseshoe award for excellence in state history. Aden Mason is pictured here. Casaun Akers and River Greathouse also earned the accolade.



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Super Crossword

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Traci Horton, RN
Nurse Coordinator
Mountaineer Medical Rapid Care

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Rail Trail Law Enforcement Discussed By Harrison County Commission

By Stephen Smoot

As the May 20 meeting of the Harrison County Commission got underway, Commissioner Patsy Trecost delivered the opening invocation.

He prayed “Thank you for the blessings here at Harrison County and all our surroundings that we can support our local fire department so we can support our local authorities, that we have the means to do so so that we can touch those who don’t have and be able to share with those who wanna participate in community, Lord.”

Harrison County Commission President Susan Thomas, after the consent agenda and other housekeeping items, recognized the Wallace Volunteer Fire Department. Their spokesman came to describe the need as they request \$3,000 toward their Wallace Day at the Park Festival Fair.

Lieutenant Betsy Shaw, who also serves as Secretary and Treasurer, explained that they had decided to condense the activities from the previous three days down to Saturday. It will start at 9 a.m. and attendees can enjoy live free music all day long. “It’s really the same thing we normally do,” he stated.

“We’re gonna do the kids rodeo, the firefighter rodeo with the obstacle course, the water battle, the concessions from the ladies, the, like I said, three vans, the vendors that we bring in, we usually try to get in the walk walk climbing wall, the bounce house that we can bring in.”

Shaw added that it’s a perfect opportunity for people who do not normally get to use the park to enjoy “a really good day for the kids to come here and experience what Parks and Rec has done lately to improve the park.”

Commissioners also voted to provide \$1,500 for the Clarksburg-Harrison Regional Housing Authority’s Back to School Bash. Children get to celebrate the return to school, but also receive needed supplies and other items to help them return equipped to learn.

Orpha Swiger, Vice President of the Harrison County Solid Waste Authority Board, was unanimously reappointed.

Then came the central discussion of the meeting, how to monitor and enforce applicable laws on the Rail Trail.

LEGAL

“NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING”

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection has scheduled a public meeting on June 17, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. to discuss the **Draft Fiscal Year 2027 Intended Use Plan** for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds Program. A part of the Intended Use Plan is the Fiscal Year 2027 Priority List. The meeting will take place in person at the WV DEP’s Headquarters in Charleston, WV. An option to attend remotely or call-in is below. A copy of the draft Fiscal Year 2027 Intended Use Plan is available, and may be requested by calling, writing, or sending an email request to the address below. The plan can also be viewed on DEP’s web site.

Contact

Katheryn Emery
WV Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Water & Waste Management
Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds
601 57th Street, SE
Charleston, WV 25304
(304) 926-0499 Ext. 43830
Katheryn.D.Emery@wv.gov
Google Meeting information
Video call link: meet.google.com/hfk-ktgm-fei
Dial in number: (US) 1-352-888-6340
PIN: 710 382 982#

For years, reports have come to the County Commission concerning unlawful activities on the Rail Trail, including, but not limited to trespassing, vandalism, and theft on adjoining private property. Illegal vehicle use has also created issues for those trying to legally enjoy the trail.

Commission President Thomas opened by saying “I think t. . . it’s past time to get something on the rail trail, whether it be a park ranger, it be law enforcement . . . I would prefer law enforcement.”

Options include appointing a Harrison County Sheriff’s Deputy or the creation of a Park Ranger role, the main difference being that a Park Ranger is not law enforcement. Commissioner Thomas quipped “My question would be, what can the park ranger do? Say that somebody’s speeding down the trail?”

Trey Simmerman, Harrison County Counsel, explained that authority to enforce the law derives from the Commission ordinance establishing laws and rules for the trail. On the question of whether a Park Ranger can also have arrest powers, he said “we hoped that Charleston might give us some teeth in the last legislative session. They did not.”

He also noted that it may be easier to find grant funding for rangers, as opposed to deputies.

Sheriff Robert Matheny came to the meeting to answer questions and discuss the role of deputies on the trail. He shared that two deputies had been assigned to cover the trail, but that “the trail’s very large, as you guys know.” The Sheriff stated that his department would work with the commission to coordinate coverage.

Commissioner David Hinkle raised questions about the specifics of organization and coordination with Commissioner Trecost and Sheriff Matheny. He asked “So who would be the, person in charge of what they do each day? Would that be assigned by you, or would that be assigned by Parks and Rec?”

After the Sheriff responded that the agencies would coordinate, Commissioner Hinkle stated “I need a little more than working together, Robert.” adding “Because I don’t wanna find out the people we’ve hired are covering for vacation or working somewhere else instead of working . . . on the trail or working on something that we’re doing that they’re truly assigned to us.”

Commissioner Hinkle noted that he did not think that the budget for this issue was prepared with the costs of civil service employees in mind.

Simmerman, in response to a question, stated that he could not create an ordinance to bind future commissions to the arrangement. He explained that the coordination would work in that the Commission would set up a “patrol period” and then decide “what resources you’re going to give.”

Commissioner Hinkle asked if “we can afford to do this now,” to which Commission President Thomas answered in the affirmative. Hinkle responded by expressing concern over the rising cost of the regional jail bill that all counties pay to the state to cover the cost of incarceration there. “Well this is the first I’ve heard you bring it up, or anybody bring it up,” noted Commission President

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Thomas.

She added “we need to find the money, or we’ve got to do something with these trails.”

Simmerman called the jail bill issue “a vicious cycle” of a financial cost because better enforcement of the law results in a higher bill. He suggested putting more into alternative sentencing programs.

Kim Malejko, director of Harrison County Parks and Recreation was then asked for her perspective. She stated that “we would want somebody who can enforce our laws, but also be approachable to the public . . . I’m happy to collaborate and work with the sheriff’s office is that if that’s the direction the commission wants to go.”

“I want us to do something, whether it is a Park Ranger or the Sheriff’s Department,” Commission President Thomas weighed in. Simmerman stated that “it’s kind of like patrolling a highway . . . you’re not going to stop it all,” but that when residents see that lawbreakers are held accountable, it will dampen the enthusiasm of others to break the law.

Malejko urged that law enforcement officers on the trail have the same “ambassador” approach that school resource officers use in providing security, being “eyes and ears” of the trail, but also able to engage the law abiding users with the ability to answer a range of questions about the trail and its surroundings.

Commissioner Hinkle argued that equipping a sheriff’s deputy comes at a higher cost that that of a Park Ranger, with “shotguns, and pistols, and armored vests and all we buy.” He suggested hiring four rangers who can call in when they see lawbreaking.

Commission President Thomas moved to hire two deputies and Commissioner Hinkle moved to hire four park rangers. Voting resulted in the approval of deputies and not for rangers. Commissioner Trecost noted that the extensive hiring process for law enforcement may mean that hiring may not occur until next year.

Simmerman recommended the creation of certain enforcement zones on the trail, sparking a comment of frustration from Commissioner Trecost. He stated that the Commission would “talk about this for six years like I talk about animal control, like I talk about bridges, like I talk about rail trail.” He then said to Simmerman “I appreciate your comment and I thank you for that. That’s just another thorn in my side that nothing ever gets done.”

Simmerman responded that “if we are going to put officers out there” it needed to get done.

At the conclusion of the meeting during comments, Commissioner Trecost noted that he wished to see the demolition of the movie screen at Sunset Ellis on the agenda. Commissioner Hinkle thanked the voters of Harrison County for passing two countywide levies, saying “That was a very important thing for Harrison County, and I appreciate it.”

He also thanked the County Clerk’s office for an efficient canvas of voting. Commission President Thomas.

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Family Research Resources Expanding at Bice-Ferguson Museum

By Deb Herndon

The Bice-Ferguson Museum was recently gifted local genealogical research papers compiled by Linda Carol (Nixon) Glover. The papers cover Shinn, Cunningham, Harbert, Barnes, Sapp, Barnes, Wilkinson, Nixon and Musgrave families.

Linda graduated Shinnston High School in 1967 and graduated from Fairmont State College with a Secretarial degree. While at Shinnston High School, she was active serving as a class officer for 3 years and was in the National Honor Society in both her junior and senior years. She was a majorette and was on the homecoming court for three years. She was also Prom Queen. Linda participated in the Shinn's Run 4-H program and attended the summer camp at Jackson's Mill.

Linda's parents were Jesse Jackson and Betty Jean (Musgrave) Nixon. The family lived on Shinn's Run up Nixon Hollow. The Nixon family had deep roots in Harrison



County. When they came westward to this area in a covered wagon, they settled on a farm just south of Maulsby ford. They have always been active in the development and

improvement of agriculture. The Nixon family took up livestock grazing and the growing of grain crops.

Some of you may remember

Linda's father Jesse Nixon as a skilled mechanic who worked at the Fred Bice Service Station in Shinnston.

Linda's family donated a picture of the Shinn's Run School, the school bell and a monetary donation to the museum in her memory. Linda Carol (Nixon) Glover was born in 1949. While in high school she met the love of her life, Gary Glover and they had 56 happy years together in Maryland.

Linda's siblings are Nick Nixon, Bob Nixon and Jackie Nixon Romeo. Linda and Gary's children are Chris, Shane and Robbie Glover. Linda's funeral service was held at Capon Bridge because of her love of genealogy and history. She knew that many of her forefathers had entered western Virginia through that bridge.

The volumes of her detailed research and some local stories are available for view during the museum's open hours - Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9 to 1 and by appointment at 304-677-6650.

Shinnston Women's Club Performs Installation Ceremony



By Deb Herndon

The Woman's Club of Shinnston met at the Bice-Ferguson Museum Monday, May 18th with Co-President Mary Ann Ferris presiding.

The group said the pledge to the flag and Mrs. Ferris read a devotional on teamwork derived from an article by Leigh Merrifield.

Mrs. Ferris introduced WWC North Central District President

Nancy Porter who reported on District events. Mrs. Porter then performed an installation ceremony for the incoming officers of the Shinnston Woman's Club, involving a description of each office and a pledge for service. Each Officer was then asked to light a candle as a sign of their willingness to serve. The Shinnston Woman's Club Officers installed were: Mary Ann Ferris and Debra Herndon as Co-Presidents, Robin Lamb as Secretary, Kathleen Panek as Treasurer, Deborah Starkey as First Vice-President and Carrie Mancino as Second Vice-President.

Minutes from the previous meeting were read and accepted and the Treasurer reported bank balances.

In a short business meeting, Mrs. Ferris reported that the scholarship committee had met and reviewed applicants and that Lillyan Toth had

been selected to receive the \$500 Club scholarship. Lillyan had excellent academic credentials as well as excellent community involvement.

Co-President Debra Herndon reported that Mrs. Panek had procured insurance coverage for the building. She also reported on the April rummage sale and that the August sale would be held August 7&8.

The Members then went to the museum meeting room where Mrs. Herndon commented on many of the pictures recently donated. The group then took the "gallery quiz" and enjoyed the many images.

Refreshments of fruit, chicken salad croissants, chips and bar cookies were enjoyed.

Also present, not previously mentioned were Mary Ann Spadafore and Viviane Spagnuolo.

Monongahela National Forest Invites Families to Discover Nature Day at Seneca Rocks Discovery Center

Seneca Rocks, W.Va., May 20, 2026— Monongahela National Forest invites kids and families to Discover Nature Day on Saturday, June 6, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Seneca Rocks Discovery Center, 13 Roy Gap Road, Seneca Rocks, WV 26884. Discover Nature Day is an interactive nature based educational event that celebrates the natural world and encourages visitors of all ages to

get outside and explore.

Forest Service staff and partners will engage visitors with a variety of hands-on activities, including live snakes and birds, wildlife skulls and skins, and other nature- and outdoor-related experiences designed to spark curiosity and learning.

The first 100 kids will receive goody bags filled with Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl giveaway

items. A raffle will be held at the top of every hour beginning at 11:00 a.m. and ending at 3:00 p.m., giving participants the chance to win an outdoor or nature related prize valued at \$50.00.

Eventgoers will also have an opportunity to meet Smokey Bear and/or Woodsy Owl during the day. The event is free and offers families a fun way to connect with public lands, wildlife, and the outdoors.

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Food For Thought

By Leigh Currey Merrifield

Tolerating "Momma Nature"!

I made a HUGE mistake one bright, warm day back in early March; I rejoiced that cold weather was making its exit, and I packed up sweatshirts, sweaters, and warm clothes in crates for storage. Although that is never an easy chore, I was happy to do it. I've lost count now of how many times I've opened those crates to retrieve things I thought I no longer needed; and I've also lost count of the number of times I've switched my thermostat from a/c to heat! Guess I 'jumped the gun' or maybe I jinxed what I thought was behind us. ??? I'm sure Mother Nature got a good laugh out of it.

Spring was supposed to have sprung on March 20th, but that was nothing more than a tag on the calendar. Mother Nature can't seem to make up her mind. She teases us with a lovely day once in a while, probably giggles, then throws us back to frosty mornings and dreary, wet days.

I smiled the other day when I opened the blinds in my bedroom and noticed that the trees across the hill were bright green and looked like large, fresh heads of broccoli. I admit I have also enjoyed the fact that daylight hours have lengthened, BUT the temperatures are still not what we hoped for May, are they?

Many times, we can't put much faith in local forecasters' predications, so I consulted the Farmers' Almanac and didn't much care for seeing that April and May were going to remain wetter than normal. However, we are supposed to have another HOT Summer, BUT mid-June, mid-July, and late August will include lots more rainfall.

So what's up with you, "Momma Nature"? When will you send us several consecutive days of beautiful, warm, sunny weather? Does "Momma" not realize that continuing to throw us a steady diet of dark, cloudy, wet, cool days significantly influences our mood, our energy, and our mental health? We're really trying to be tolerant, but we are bordering on fatigue and depression. CUT US A BREAK!

I just got a response from her so I guess she's looking over my shoulder, watching what I write, and she must have read one of my previous columns because she reminded me "This too shall pass" and I should "Count my blessings" that it's not snow!

Oh, and she suggested that if I wanted an accurate forecast, I should consult one of comedian George Carlin's forecasts for the night, which predicted it would be DARK! Okay, so she did make me laugh with the Carlin predication; at least she has a sense of humor, right?

OOPS – I wrote this column a week in advance of its publication. Little did I know we would receive a few consecutive days of 80-90 degree weather! Thanks, Momma Nature; I guess you finally get it that we are all ready to go outside without a coat and gloves. MUCH appreciated! But since then, I guess she has changed directions again and plans for us to have a week of rain. Just like a woman to keep changing her mind, but please consider turning off the spigot for a while.

Quote of the Week: "In the Spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours!" ~ Mark Twain



— Detecting that leak —



Guest Column

By Charlotte Lane
Chair, WV Public Service Commission

Safety is a top priority at the Public Service Commission, and that includes helping West Virginians protect their homes from dangerous natural gas leaks.

The Commission regulates in-state transmission of gas and hazardous liquids and gas distribution lines.

Our team of gas pipeline safety experts enforces federal and state pipeline safety regulations.

But you, too, can, and should, be aware of safety issues that involve these important sources of heating and cooling in your home.

Natural gas can be deadly if it escapes from pipes or appliances. Knowing the warning signs of a gas leak and how to respond can save your life.

Natural gas has a distinctive rotten-egg odor, which is added by your utility to make leaks easier to detect. If you smell this odor inside or near your home, take it seriously and act immediately.

But there are other things to look for that you might not be aware of.

There are also visual signs to watch for outdoors. Dead or discolored vegetation above

buried gas lines, dust blowing from the ground, or bubbles forming in standing water may indicate a gas leak.

Inside your home, a hissing or whistling sound near a gas appliance, or even an unexplained increase in your gas bill, can also signal a problem.

If you suspect a gas leak, leave your home immediately. Do not use light switches, appliances, or electronics. Once you are safely outside, call 911 and your natural gas utility, and steer clear of the area until emergency responders say it is safe to return.

Installing carbon monoxide detectors in your home adds another important layer of protection. While carbon monoxide is odorless, these detectors can alert you to dangerous conditions before symptoms appear.

Prevention is just as important as quick action. One simple but critical step is to call 811 before you dig anywhere on your property.

This free service sends a utility locator to mark underground lines so you can avoid damaging gas, electric, or other utility infrastructure.

At the Public Service Commission, we are committed to ensuring your natural gas service is safe, reliable, and responsibly managed by your utility.

At home, you can help protect yourself and your family by staying alert, maintaining your appliances, and knowing what to do if something doesn't seem right. A few moments of caution can make all the difference.

Congratulations to the Lincoln High School Class of 2026



Photos courtesy of Lincoln High School

Commission Contention Boils Over During Summit Park Discussion

By Stephen Smoot

In the second half of the regular meeting of the Harrison County Commission last week, Harrison County Commission President Susan Thomas expressed frustrations over how Commissioner David Hinkle and other officials had conducted County business

Commissioners had revisited the major issue from the previous meeting, the status of Summit Park and the West Virginia Softball League's use of it. Commissioner Hinkle raised concerns about the stewardship of Summit Park under the direction of the West Virginia Girls' Softball League

Trey Simmerman, Harrison County Counsel provided a review of the current status, saying first the Commission can lease the land to a non profit entity. He also stated that the League remained in non compliance with the West Virginia Secretary of State's Office registration requirements. Commissioner Hinkle had raised concerns about that in a previous meeting.

A number of officials, including Parks and Recreation Director Kim Malejko, Commissioner Hinkle, Simmerman, and County Administrator Laura Pysz-Laulis reviewed and amended the agreement so "it's what the county wants it to be," as Simerman said.

He also noted another concern from Commissioner Hinkle related to public access, saying "there are material covenants and limitations. So there is an open access portion of this because the deed into the county has an open access requirement for the park."

Commissioner Hinkle inquired about a clause that would require the League to be "responsible for all grass cutting except the field that is multi use."

Commission President Thomas asked "so you're taking that field away?" They then discussed whether or not the field was multi-use or softball. That led to Commission President Thomas shutting down discussion and explaining her frustrations.

"I'm going to say something right now," she commenced. "I didn't know how to handle this, but I'm going to handle it right now. It's been a thorn in my side for quite some time."

Commissioner Hinkle replied "Am I?"

Without naming her target, at least at first, Commission President Thomas explained "we speak to one commissioner, and we rack up fees. Now I hear that one commissioner was involved in this lease and . . . one commissioner goes to supervisors or goes to various employees to get things done. Something has got to be done about this."

Furthermore, she added I don't know what can be



Commissioners have battled over issues related to the West Virginia Girls' Softball League's use of Summit Park and its ballfields.

done unless everything needs to come up here and we vote on it before you move forward on anything. But that's my two cents." She paused, then went on "So I'm tired of being left out of things, and I'm not crying like a baby. But, David, how many times?"

He said "say it. Go ahead."

She fired back that issues need to be discussed among commissioners, to which Commissioner Hinkle said "With who? You guys are never here," then said "have either one of you two read this?" referring to the lease.

"Yes I have!" Commission President Thomas thundered back, going on to relate "and I got this new one about an hour before the meeting!"

Commissioner Hinkle said that the lease's main change had been that Simmerman cut down League responsibility for the entirety of park maintenance down to two fields.

Discussion turned to work performed by the League that Commissioner Hinkle asserted was not allowed under the agreement. "Who gave him permission to work on the bottom field and tear stuff down," he asked.

It was then Commissioner Hinkle raising his voice, stating "I wanna make a notice to it for the newspaper. You cannot, if we say you can use one of our facilities, install something because you feel like it. That is not a blessing because we say you could use it. So if you're down at Ellis (Sunset Ellis flea market held on land owned by the County

Commission), you can't go ahead and build yourself a stand for your to sell your stuff just because you want one. Because I'm finding out today that if we tell you you could use something, can do whatever you want."

"And while we're commenting, what's your relationship between you and Susan," Commissioner Hinkle asked, directing comments toward the League spokespeople present. "Because whenever you have a complaint, this is who you go to, Susan. Why are you in charge?"

She fired in response "I'm not in charge!"

Commissioner Patsy Trecost interjected "you work for the County, Sir!" In response, Commissioner Hinkle said "No! I work for the people in the county."

Commission President Thomas noted that she was pleased to see the park in use with "children playing" and said "the community is thankful to have this." Commissioner Hinkle said he agreed and shared that he had often advocated to spend money on improvements and upgrades. He said "Nobody else fought for it. H***, our Parks and Rec didn't do squat over there."

Simmerman then reentered the conversation to note the different changes made and why, including the requirement for continued public access to the facility.

It was decided to provide the West Virginia Girls' Softball League with the draft lease and put the item on the agenda for the next meeting in June.

Shinnston Businesses Honored At Harrison County Chamber Dinner



West Virginia Secretary of State Kris Warner Honors Bice Greenhouse, the Shinnston Plumbing Company, and the Shinnston News for at least 100 years of service. Leigh Merrifield, under whose family the Shinnston News thrived for decades, is pictured with Secretary Warner. All centurion businesses and organizations represented gathered for recognition during the event. Photos courtesy of Viza Frame.



UHC School of Radiologic Technology Graduation

Bridgeport, WV—United Hospital Center School of Radiologic Technology recently held a Commencement and Reception for the 2026 graduates. Diplomas were presented to 13 students by Program Director, Micah Ford; Clinical Coordinator, Jane Bray; and Clinical Preceptors, Lisa Knight and Abby Kovalck at 5 p.m., on Saturday, May 16, at the Bridgeport High School Auditorium.

Lois Auvil, radiographer at United Hospital Center, served as guest speaker for the Radiologic Technology commencement, while Addison Cunningham delivered the class address. Special presentations included Radiography Clinical Excellence Award presented to graduate Hope Auger; Radiography Academic Excellence Award presented to graduates Isabella Mayle & Lauren D'Angelo; and the Laurie D'Anselmi Technologist of the Year award presented to technologist Brooklynn Teeple.

Graduates of the School of Radiologic Technology include Hope Auger, daughter of Tammy Marlin of Cumberland, MD; Jeremy Bonner, son of Carolyn Bonner of Elkins and the late Paul Bonner and husband of Brittany Bonner of Elkins; Addie Cunningham, daughter of Jonathan and Kristin Cunningham of Idamay; Lauren D'Angelo, daughter of Jacob and Allison D'Angelo of Elkins; Aliyah Elder, daughter of



Front Row from left: Isabella Mayle, Alexis Williams, Trinity Eldridge, Olivia Vandevender, Lauren D'Angelo, Aliyah Elder

Back Row from left: Macey Franklin, Addie Cunningham, Zachary McGary, Jeremy Bonner, Emma Elliott, Kaleigh Ryan, Hope Auger

Chris and Whitney Elder of Lumberport; Trinity of Bridgeport and daughter of Tara Eldridge of Jane Eldridge, granddaughter of Joe and Scarlett Bishop

See "UHC" Pg 10



Pictured (front row, l-rt) following the retirement luncheon are: Denise Harbert, Emily and Lucas McCoy, Dr. Dubberke, Janna Dubberke, Cathy Waggy, Emily Altman, RaEtta Wentz, Katie Blair, Dr. Gwinn, and LouEllen Smith; (back row, rt - l) are; Kimberly Boyce, Amy Sweeney, Susie Dayton, Stephanie Lucas, Tessa Yost, Trena Snider, Dr. Morrison, Katie Thorne, Sarah Patrick, and Karen Butcher. Not Pictured – Donna Chandler, Debbie Harvey and Becca Harbert.

Shinnston Healthcare Hosts Retirement Celebration For Valued Employee

By Leigh C. Merrifield

Choosing the right employees for your workplace can be difficult. Regardless of their qualifications and experience, sometimes it may not prove to be the “right fit”. However, when the fit IS right, it is such a blessing that their eventual departure at some point is not something that is looked forward to. That aptly describes the atmosphere when Cathy Waggy decided to retire at Shinnston Healthcare after 43 years of service. Although they were understanding about her choice, losing a valued long-term employee can at times lead to some confusion and chaos when their absence becomes a reality.

Dr. Lance Dubberke, with whom she had worked for many years, was prompt in praising Cathy’s work ethic. “She loved her work and she loves the Shinnston community. She consistently helped in many aspects here, and voluntarily cross-trained many of our employees so the staff would be prepared, if circumstances required it, to step in and know how to handle situations; this often came in handy. She is skilled and efficient and has always been a tremendous asset to all of us here,” he commented.

Her devotion to her work was demonstrated when she initially announced her plans were to retire in January; however, when a replacement wasn’t found, she agreed to continue working until the staff felt comfortable with someone suitable to take her position, and extended her retirement by nearly five months! Her final workday was May 9th.

Cathy attended WV Business College, graduating in 1982 as a medical administrative assistant; she first worked for Dr. Kalaycioglu when his practice occupied what is currently Shinnston’s City Office Building on lower Main Street. She remained his employee even after his office was moved to its new location on South Pike Street.

Dr. Dubberke joined the practice in 1998, and upon Dr. Kalaycioglu’s

retirement, Cathy became Dr. Dubberke’s office manager. She noted that with this new job title came more paperwork and reports and not as much connection with patients, which she missed.

“There has been a lot of growth since that time and the practice has expanded from 3 employees to 20,” she added. “However, I did manage to keep up with continuing education and CPR training just in case I might be needed to fill in whenever needed. My years here have always been hard work, but it was also very fulfilling. I feel confident that the staff is very capable of handling things just fine, but I also left the door open to them calling me if they had questions.”

When asked what made her choose this profession, Cathy said she felt it was her ‘calling’. “When I was just 12 years old, my grandfather had diabetes and lost both of his legs and one arm. I went there every weekend to spend time with him and help out, and I think from that point forward, I recognized the importance of helping others, and it just stuck with me,” she said.

It is no wonder that Dr. Dubberke came to view Cathy as the ‘ultimate helper’ and recalls instances when an older person needed to see a doctor but had no transportation; Cathy was always the one who stepped forward and offered to taxi them to and from.

Through the years, not only her devotion to her work but her caring, supportive personality as well have earned her much respect. To show their high regard for her, the staff hosted a luncheon for her and presented her with gifts to celebrate her retirement on May 14th.

While she will miss her regular work routine for a while, she plans to enjoy a trip to Disney World with her family and is already looking forward to spending more time with her grandchildren. With another grandchild on the way this summer, there will be ample opportunities for her to create many more precious memories.

“UHC”

cont. from p. 9

Lew; Emma Elliott, daughter of Marc and Kristy Elliott of Clarksburg; Macey Franklin, daughter of Chris and Ginger Franklin of Jane Lew; Isabella Mayle, daughter of Israel and Heather Mayle of Philippi; Zachary McGary, son of Brandy McGary of Clarksburg and grandson of Melissa Pierce of Spelter; Kaleigh Ryan, daughter of Patrick and Kristi Ryan of Clarksburg; Olivia Vandevender, daughter of David and Angela Vandevender of Durbin, WV; Alexis Williams, daughter of Scott and Missy Williams of Shinnston.

Elder, Elliott, and Mayle will attend the UHC Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program; Cunningham and D’Angelo will attend the WVUH

Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program; Eldridge will attend the WVUH Radiation Therapy Program, Franklin will attend the WVUH Magnetic Resonance Imaging Program; Auger, Ryan, Vandevender, and Williams have accepted employment as staff radiographers at United Hospital Center; Bonner has accepted employment as a staff radiographer at St. Joseph’s Hospital and United Hospital Center and plans to further his education to become an interventional Radiology Physician Assistant; McGary has accepted employment as a staff radiographer at St. Joseph’s Hospital and plans to further his education to become a radiation therapist.

Paula Deen Bread Pudding

INGREDIENTS

Bread:

- 2 cups White Sugar
- 5 large Eggs (lightly beaten)
- 2 cups Milk
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- 3 cups stale Italian Bread (24 ounces)

Pecan Topping:

- 1 cup packed Light Brown Sugar
- 1/4 cup softened Butter
- 1 cup chopped Pecans

Sauce:

- 1 cup White Sugar
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract
- 1/2 cup melted Butter
- 1 lightly beaten Egg
- 1/4 cup Brandy

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (177°C).
- Spray a 13x9 inch, 2” deep casserole dish with cooking spray or grease with butter.
- Add the bread to the baking dish in an even layer.
- In a medium bowl, lightly whisk 5 eggs. Then, add 2 cups of sugar and whisk to combine.
- Pour the milk and vanilla into the egg mix and gently whisk to incorporate.
- Pour the custard over the bread



and gently push down so the custard covers everything.

- Leave to sit for at least 10 minutes.
- In a small bowl, combine the 1/4 cup of soft butter with the brown sugar and chopped pecans until there are no large lumps of butter.
- Sprinkle the pecan topping over the bread and custard.
- Bake for 35-45 minutes, until golden brown and set in the middle.

To make the sauce:

- Whisk 1 cup of white sugar with 1/2 cup of melted butter in a small saucepan.
- Add 1 egg, 2 teaspoons of vanilla, and whisk until well blended.
- Heat gently over medium heat until the sugar is dissolved.
- Add the brandy and blend until smooth.
- Pour over the bread pudding and serve hot or cold.

“Rae”

cont. from p. 1



Rachel kept the surroundings very feminine for an ‘It’s a Girl!’ baby shower featuring an impressive exhibit of flowers in assorted shades of pink.



Rachel created the perfect setting for photos on Shinnston Little League’s opening day recently.

artistic painting involved is strictly done by her own hand.

“The possibilities are endless,” she added. “I love trying new things that can add a whole new dimension and make something really unique and customized. I like to be busy, and many times I spend HOURS on intricate details. I am very critical of myself and always strive to deliver my ultimate ‘BEST!’”

She shares information about her business on Facebook and Instagram as well as on her website www.inflationcreationsbyrae.com.

Recently, she has become affiliated with Angela Holt at Almost Heaven Barn Rentals in Shinnston, where Rachel will manage and fully operate the rental side of Almost Heaven

Barn.

“We are really excited about this; it is one more way, for example, to help those who often become overwhelmed with details when planning a wedding or other significant event. We can help them make their vision come to life without so much stress, and that gives me as much satisfaction and happiness as it does them,” she concluded.

If you’re interested in taking your celebrations to the next level, visit Rachel’s website listed above, and you’ll find a submission page where you can fill out your name and contact information, specify the date of your event and what you’re looking for, and she will respond. OR you can call her directly at 681-495-4966.



CONGRATULATIONS!