

# The Parsons Advocate

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF TUCKER COUNTY SINCE 1896

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## Sheriff Applies for Grant to Fund School Resource Officer; Theft Increases in Tucker County

By: Lydia Crawley  
The Parsons Advocate

Tucker County Sheriff Jake Kopek updated the Tucker County Commission on the recent grant application his department is working on to fund an additional School Resource Officer. The update came as a part of the Commission's December 13th regular meeting.

According to Kopek, the department is working on acquiring a second grant funded School Resource Officer. "The Sheriff's Office is currently working on a second grant funded School Resource position for the purpose of supplying security to our children in our school system," Kopek said.

The effort is assisted by the Tucker



Tucker County Sheriff Jake Kopek addressed the Tucker County Commission. The Sheriff's update included information on a grant application to fund a School Resource Officer position.

County Commission and Community Corrections, according to Kopek. Kopek said. "The folks at the County Commission

See SHERIFF page 2



The site of the Riverwalk project has been proposed to house a pedestrian bridge that will connect the City Park with the Blackwater Falls State Park trail system. The site, pictured, has both the Friends of the Blackwater and the Town of Davis seeking funding to construct the bridge across the Blackwater. The site has become the subject of controversy following an eminent domain filing by the town to condemn the housing development at the site.

## Tomson Addresses Riverwalk Condemnation Filing

By: Lydia Crawley  
The Parsons Advocate

City of Davis Mayor Al Tomson addressed the allegations and a recently published Letter to the Editor, in The Parsons Advocate, made by Riverwalk Developer Pete Johnson over the City filing to condemn the 12 lots in Phase Two of the Riverwalk project as well as the private access road that runs in front of the unaffiliated Phase One properties to the lots at

Phase Two. Tomson addressed the controversy in an interview with The Parsons Advocate on December 12th at City Hall.

Johnson has alleged that the decision was made in secret. Tomson denied that any wrong doing was made in the decision to condemn. Tomson defended the handling of discussions held by the council in the matter. According to Tomson, the discussion of land acquisition in executive session is permissible by the Open

See RIVERWALK page 4

## Blackwater PSD Address Public Concerns

By: Lydia Crawley  
The Parsons Advocate

Two of the three members of the Blackwater Public Service District members were on hand to address public comments at the board's meeting at the Davis Town Hall. In attendance were members Al Tomson and Judy Cronauer. Distinct VII representative Jim Marshall appeared via telephone. Board Member Jody Flanagan was absent. Several members of the public

were also in attendance to hear the latest developments of the board's water treatment plant project.

Several members of the public were in attendance to hear if there were any updates on upgrades to the sewer collection in the City of Thomas. However, with the absence of Board Member and Thomas Mayor Jody Flanagan, no update was available for those in attendance.

Al Tomson did address the plans the

See BLACKWATER PSD page 2

## Commission Approves Funding Request from Senior Center; Conducts Business

By: Lydia Crawley  
The Parsons Advocate

A request for funding from the Mountain Top Senior Center was one of the agenda items addressed by the County Commission at their regular meeting. The request for money to help renovations at the center was approved by the Commission in a unanimous vote. Debbie Thomas and Melissa Brown addressed the Commission on behalf of the Senior Center.

Thomas informed the Commission of the need for renovations and upgrades to the facility. "We are in the process of renovating the Mountain Top Senior Center in Thomas," Thomas said. "It's been there I don't know how many years and never had any work done on it and it is in need of renovations."

Thomas went on to say that the Seniors have been funding ongoing renovations from a variety of fund raisers including

See SENIOR CENTER page 4

## A Look Back at the Year 2023

### January

- Freezing temps take toll on water lines in Davis.
- Ren and Brian Adkins present retiring TC Commission Lowell Moore with a walking stick.
- Tucker County Girls capture Holiday Classic Championship.
- Tucker Valley Boys win at East Preston.
- Mike Rosenau chosen as TC Commission President.
- Crystal Nutter opens new bakery location.
- Lady Mt. Lions collect wins over Petersburg and Gilmer.
- Tucker Valley boys' and girls' teams col-

- lect wins over Kasson.
- Christopher Chambers graduates from Glenville State University.
- Solid Waste Authority gets new Compactor.
- Tucker County Girls' win at Tygart Valley and Moorefield.
- Tucker Valley Boys' take victory over Philippi.
- Robert North seated on Town Council of Davis.
- Tucker Boys' basketball defeats Pendleton and Gilmer.
- Lady Mt. Lions win at Pocahontas County.

See A LOOK BACK page 2B

## St. George Internet Provider Addresses County Commission on Impact of Prodigy Broadband; Requests Funding

By: Lydia Crawley  
The Parsons Advocate

Local internet provider Andrew Meador addressed the Tucker County Commission about the impact Prodigy's Broadband Roll Out is having on his business. Meador supplies internet to the St. George area and local resident Ron Marker also addressed the Commission in support of Meador and his internet service. Meador claimed the broadband roll out was negatively impacting his business and submitted a \$65,000



Andrew Meador addresses the Tucker County Commission about the struggles his internet provider service has encountered due to the Prodigy Broadband roll out. Meador claimed that his company cannot compete with Prodigy's state funded roll out.

funding request to the Commission. While the funding request was not formally addressed because it was not on the agenda, the Commission

See COUNTY COMMISSION page 6

## Retired Magistrate Barb Passes Away

Jane Hamrick Barb, age 90 years, a resident of Parsons, WV, departed this life Friday, December 29, 2023, at Mountain Memories Assisted Living at Elkins, WV.

She was born Sunday, July 16, 1933, on Miller Mountain, Webster County, WV, on the hottest day that God every created, according to her mother. She was the daughter of the late Grover C. and Fuda Groves Hamrick. On December 12, 1952, she was married to Howard Nick Barb, who preceded her in death May 7, 1981.

Surviving are her children, Jeffrey A. Barb of Elkins, Sidnee A. Barb of Alabama and Riley H. Barb and wife Amy of Canaan Valley; three grandchildren, Bethany Miller and husband Fred of Alabama, Hugh Nicholas "Nick" Barb and wife Courtney of Parsons, and Charlee Barb and Tommy McGuire of Lost Creek; six great grandchildren, Luke, Beau and Jack Barb, Rylee Miller and Wylder Sage and Jude McGuire.

Preceding her in death is one grandson, Jeffrey "Adam" Barb.

She was a graduate of Parsons High School with the class of 1951 and attended nursing school at West Virginia University. She served as Magistrate of Tucker County from 1977 and retiring in 2001, serving twenty-four years. She served as Senior Status Magistrate from 2001 to 2008 and was one of the original founders of the West Virginia Magistrates Association. She was President of the former Barb's Drug Store and co-owner of the former Old Town Shoppe in Parsons and Davis. In 1991, she received the Public Employee award and in 1993, she received the award "Tuckineer". She was the first female President of the Tucker County Chamber of Commerce, the first female member and President of Parsons Kiwanis, past president of the Mountaineer Gar-



den Club, County Chairman of TIRE (flood recovery). She was a fifty plus member of the Parsons Chapter #91 Order of the Eastern Star and a member of St. Johns United Methodist Church in Parsons. Jane enjoyed travelling and camping with her husband and children when they were younger, playing cards and dancing. Her door was always open for a cup of coffee and hours of conversation around her kitchen table.

The family will receive friends at the Lohr & Barb Funeral Home of Parsons, WV on Saturday, January 6, 2023, from 4 to 7 p.m. Final rites will be conducted at the funeral home on Sunday, January 7, 2023, at 1 p.m. The Reverend Kevin Keplinger will officiate, and interment will follow at the Parsons City Cemetery at Parsons, WV. The Lohr & Barb Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements for Jane Hamrick Barb. Condolences may be expressed to the family at; www.lohrbarbfuneralhome.com.

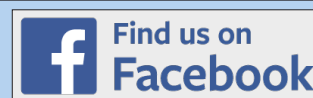
## ROAD CLOSURE

The West Virginia Department of Transportation reports that County Route 17 (Smokey Hollow Road) will be closed beginning Monday, Jan. 8 starting approximately 1.5 miles from the intersection of County Route 17 and WV72 near Parsons for construction work associated with Cor-

ridor H. All motorists, including emergency vehicles and school buses, will need to seek alternate routes. One alternate route is to take WV72 to WV38, near St. George to County Route 21 (Clover Run Road). A later press release will be sent out before the road is reopened.



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## Sheriff

Cont. From Front Page 1

sion and Community Corrections are helping us with what we need to get that together.”

Currently, the County has only one School Resource Officer to serve three schools, Kopec said. “We currently have one School Resource Officer and he floats between all three schools,” Kopec said.

According to Kopec, his department's goal is to have one full time officer for the High School and a second officer for the two Elementary Middle Schools in the County. “What our targeted ideal would be to have one full time at the High School and then one that went to both of our middle school and elementary schools,” Kopec said.

Tucker County Commission President Mike Rosenau commended Kopec and his officers on their increased presence at sporting events. “Just wanted to comment on your department, Jake,” Rosenau said. “I've noticed the presence at the ball games, too. Emotions get high at ball games sometimes and just the presence of an officer there, I want to thank you for that and your staff.”

According to Kopec, he is always looking for ways to improve and increase his department's presence in the community. “We've increased that,” Kopec said. “We always take a look at things where we could improve and that was one thing that I saw that we could improve in so we've been having some more police presence at the ball games.”

Kopec said the effort is helping. According to Kopec, the governing body for High School football has updated their regulations and requested police escorts to and from locker rooms for the referees. “It seems to help,” Kopec said. “We had an event, a pretty good sized event, the school did a wonderful job getting it together for the play

off games for the football. The WVSSAC, they have changed some of their rules. They want a police presence to escort the referees to and from the locker room.”

Kopec said the WVSSAC requirement has added time to officer presence. Kopec also said that he has volunteered his time towards the time that presence entails. “That requires an officer to show up not at the game, but two hours before the game even starts,” Kopec said. “So then you got two hours before the game starts and then the game and then after the game. I took that on myself on my time off to go and do that. There were times I was sitting in the parking lot until even the game was over watching for the refs to get them to their vehicles.”

Kopec said the officials have been pleased with the effort he and his department put into the play off games. According to Kopec, he received gratitude for his effort and the hospitality the referees received in Tucker County. “It worked out wonderfully,” Kopec said. “The refs said every play off game, said, 'This is just wonderful. There's so much hospitality within Tucker County. Thank you.' They were really impressed.”

Kopec also informed the Commission that there has been an increase in theft in the County. Kopec attributed the increase to the economic downturn and the effects the economy are having on the residents of Tucker County. Kopec also said that several of the cases have had suspects developed and arrests have been made, as well. “We've seen an uptick in not just house break-ins, but vehicles getting broken into,” Kopec said. “We've noticed we've had an increase in shoplifting. We've had an increase in theft from family individuals.”

Kopec said the new camera system installed at the

Courthouse has assisted in apprehending the suspect in a series of car break ins in the Parsons area. According to Kopec the suspect was captured on camera breaking into vehicles, but the images were blurry. Kopec went on the say that since the suspect was seen walking by the Courthouse, the footage from the Courthouse cameras led to identification and arrest of the suspect in the case. “Something that helped tremendously and it was a grant that was done by the Commission here within the last six months for upgrading camera systems within this building,” Kopec said. “And those camera systems actually helped us to locate the suspect.”

Kopec went on to say that the car break ins have stopped in Parsons as a result. “The vehicle thefts have stopped in Parsons,” Kopec said. “So, that's wonderful.”

Kopec said his department has been working with State and local law enforcement on the thefts in Tucker County. “Our officers are doing a wonderful job,” Kopec said. “The State Police also handled several of them and the City Police. We all took different cases and was able to work together with that suspect and get some warrants done and get that resolved.”

The next meeting of the Tucker County Commission will be held Tuesday, January 2nd at 8 a.m. at the Tucker County Commission Office.

## Blackwater PSD

Cont. From Front Page 1

Town of Davis has to upgrade their sewer collection and the funding the town has acquired to complete it. According to Tomson, the project is funded by a \$5 million earmark along with a State match of \$1.25 million and IJDC monies in the amount of \$300,000. Tomson also said that the project would begin in late summer or early fall. According to Tomson, the goal of the PSD is to have both Thomas and Davis sewer collection systems upgraded before consolidating with the new entity and the new water treatment plant. Tomson said the project has already been through a preliminary engineering report and is currently looking to complete the design and will then enter the contract bidding phase. “That's why we are looking at late summer, early fall,” Tomson said.

Executive Director of Friends of the Blackwater Judy Rodd was in attendance at the meeting to address several concerns she had with the project. One of Rodd's main concerns was with leachate from the landfill and its impact on the system and potential impact on the river once it is discharged. Rodd said she was reminded of her concerns over leachate being trucked to Thomas for treatment and the facility's yearly fines. According to Rodd, when the leachate is trucked in, the leachate is dumped in and overwhelms the bacteria who are used to only sewage and it leads to bacteria die off. “I have been told by...the guy who fines them every year, and he said I fine them every year and they never change anything and one of the problems is adding the leachate because its added all at once. It's not piped.”

Rodd said the issue with the Thomas system could be fixed if the landfill creates its own system. Tomson said that is one of the avenues that is being explored for the new plant. Tomson said the PSD and their engineers are taking the matter of leachate seriously and are looking at every avenue to be able to treat it and safely discharge into the river. “The engineers are talking to the landfill,” Tomson said. “They are talking to Thomas and part of it is looking for pretreatment. Now pretreatment may occur at the landfill, it could occur at the sewage treatment plant and the options are, do you pipe it in or do you truck it into the holding area. The holding area allows you to release it in periodically as opposed to one bit surge that you were talking about. So, the engineers are looking at this very pragmatically and very thoroughly.”

Rodd also said a retired DEP sewage worker informed her that many of the problems Thomas is experiencing would be alleviated through enclosing the existing tanks in order to maintain temperature. “A guy from the DEP who used to manage sewage systems, said they could solve a whole lot of problems if they just enclosed the tanks,” Rodd said. “Because its too cold. If they enclosed them with a little bit of heat, the bacteria would do a lot better and the system would work.”

Rodd said she believed the Thomas plant was overbuilt and has more than adequate capacity to service Thomas, as well as Douglas. According to Rodd, the facility was built much larger than was needed and would service well if a couple of fixes were addressed. Rodd also voiced concerns over the potential of piping along the North Fork to a facility in Douglas. “It's got a lot of capacity, it needs a couple of fixes, the landfill fixed, the enclosure fixed and I think it could

do for even Davis,” Rodd said. “And I'm concerned with it going down the North Fork, piping going down the North Fork to a treatment system near Douglas. I know the people of Douglas are concerned.”

Marshall said that the Douglas area had been selected by a previous engineer and that the current engineering firm is reevaluating everything. “The current engineer is currently looking, he's reevaluating everything,” Marshall said. “So, the Douglas area is not, has not been decided on as a potential place for the sewer pipe.”

Tomson addressed the issue of the leachate concerns. “Leachate is currently being trucked to Westernport and Moorefield, mostly to Westernport,” Tomson said. “It's expensive, it's dangerous. They already had one accident a couple of years ago when a tractor trailer overturned hauling the leachate because of a tree that had fallen onto the road in the wintertime. So, safety and money are both concerns. The third concern is if we treat it here, that we treat it correctly and the plant would be designed to treat the leachate just like its designed at Westernport to treat the leachate. Whether it gets trucked from the landfill or piped from the landfill to the treatment plant is still a question because piping has issues with it and trucking it has issues. They would figure out what the best solution would be and make accommodations with it. So, leachate is still very much a part of the study.”

Tomson said that while Thomas' facility was over capacity, it was not the correct capacity needed. Tomson also outlined the area the new plant will serve. “They are also looking at the Thomas treatment plant,” Tomson said. “It is over capacity, but it is not necessarily the right capacity. As well as this project is doing Davis, Thomas, Blackwater Falls State Park, the landfill, the Industrial Park, the Lewiston Center, the Youth Center and the expansion of housing that goes down Corridor H and we are also looking at Benbush and those areas, as well as Canaan Heights. So that capacity, is more than the unused capacity in the Thomas plant, but it is being studied because we want to make sure we are making a fiscally prudent decision as to how we go forward.”

Rodd also informed the Board of the Friends of the Blackwater's project to clean mine water. “That Rail Trail is a protected area,” Rodd said. “As is Blackwater Industrial Complex and it already has a waterline under it. We are paying for the planning of an acid mine drainage treatment plant right where the Douglas Road crosses the North Fork.”

Tomson thanked Rodd for the information and said that was information that the PSD and the engineers needed to know. Rodd informed the Board of who was involved in the project and who the best contacts would be for more information for the engineers. Rodd said construction on the project would begin in the summer. “The Abandoned Mines people are building it,” Rodd said. “We paid for the design.”

As part of the meeting, the Board decided on a regularly set schedule for meetings. The decision on the third Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m. was made and the date for the next meeting set.

The next meeting of the Blackwater Public Service District will be held January 16th at 10 a.m. at the Davis Town Hall.

## News of Record

The following property transfers have been recorded in the Tucker County Clerk's office:

- Howard C. Leming and Patricia A. Healy, Lot 19 Winterset to Michael Ray and Marlene Alicia Ray, \$725,000.
- Joseph T. Massengill and Kerith Massengill, Dry Fork District, Unit D-2 Cedar Place to Michael G. Lee, Jr. and Tanya L. Lee, \$320,000.
- James F. Gage, Dry Fork District, Lot 52 Mountainside to Annibal Sodero and Ann Goussevskaia, \$560,000.
- Black Bear Inns 123 LLC, Dry Fork District, Unit 123 Black Bear Inn to Jeffery A. Brown and Kelli M. Steele, \$145,000.

The following marriage has been recorded in the Tucker County Clerk's office:

- Conner Miles Oldaker to Faith Marie Coomer on Thursday, Dec. 14, 2023.
- Jacob Scott Davis to Tesla Leigh Huffman on Friday, Dec. 22, 2023.

The Parsons Advocate

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TO THE VALLEYS  
YOUR HOMETOWN  
OR YOUR SECOND HOME

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Submissions must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. This is for verification purposes.

Letters can be submitted only once each 30 days and can not exceed 500 words.

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erty of The Parsons Advocate. The Parsons Advocate reserves the right to edit and/or reject letters. Personal attacks, lies, and etc. will not be published.

The views expressed in letters are not necessarily the views of the Parsons Advocate.

Thank you notes and advertising are not considered as letters to the editor. When submitting letters do not use all caps, italics or bold. Use punctuation, upper and lower case letters and indent for paragraphs.

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## The Parsons Advocate

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# OBITUARIES

## Allen "Power Wagon" Crossland

Allen "Power Wagon" Crossland, 79, of Davis, passed away on December 22, 2023, in Elkins. Born on July 19, 1944, he was the son of the late Joyl and Mary (Collins) Crossland.

Allen served his country in the United States Army. He worked as a truck driver for over 42 years and was proud that he never once had an accident. In addition to being a well-known truck driver, the surrounding communities knew him for his talent in playing musical instruments, especially the fiddle, mandolin, and guitar. In his spare time, Allen and his friends would play music for everyone around. He enjoyed working on cars and square dancing. Most of all, he loved spending time with his family and friends. He was a member of the VFW of Harman, the American Legion of



Petersburg, and FOE #936.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Sharon (Elza) Crossland; Samantha Bykofsky, who Allen proudly helped raise like his own child; three siblings, Marie Crossland, Richard Crossland and wife Wanda, and Elaine Kackley; six siblings from his wife's family who he considered his own, Max Elza and Sandra, Phyllis Webb, Winnie Kuhn,

Nancy Arbogast, Douglas Elza and wife Linda, and Jeff Elza and wife Tammy. Allen had several nieces and nephews who he treated as his own children along with many in the community who saw him as a second father.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a son, Abner Crossland, and a brother-in-law, Norman Elza.

Friends were received on Wednesday, December 27, 2023, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Hinkle-Fenner Funeral Home. A funeral service was held on Thursday, December 28, 2023, at 11 a.m. in the funeral home with Pastor John Callaway officiating. Interment followed in the Buena Cemetery.

The Hinkle-Fenner Funeral Home is honored to be serving the Crossland family at this time.

## Sandra "Sandy" Jean Helmick Mason

Sandra "Sandy" Jean Helmick Mason, 78, a resident of Hambleton, passed from this life Tuesday, December 26, 2023, at Cortland Acres Nursing Home in Thomas.

Sandy was born in Parsons on Sunday, May 13, 1945, a daughter of the late Walter Helmick and Sharlene Carr Helmick. She was twice married, first to Morris Knotts and second to Burl Mason. Both preceded her in death.

Left to cherish her memory are two children, Peggy Jean Knotts Bonner and husband, Carl, of Dry Fork, and Burl Mason, Jr, of Hambleton, five grandchildren, Autumn, Jeff, Jennifer, Cameron and Paige, eight great-grandchildren, Trevan, Adalea, Everley, Annisten, Ty, Parker, Tyler, and Jonathan, five sisters, Joyce Wilson, Patty Stukey, Brenda "Babe" Lipscomb, Janice Richards, and Janet



Goldman and husband, Mark, two brothers, Walter "JR" Helmick, Mike Helmick and wife, Carol, special caregivers, Bristol and Tammy, and several nieces and nephews.

Besides her parents and husbands, Sandy was preceded in death by a son; William Joseph "Billy" Knotts, a brother, Robert "Bob" Helmick, four brothers-in-law, Ken Stukey, Forrest Lipscomb, Joe Richards, and Jerry Wilson, and a sister-in-law, Gail Helmick.,

Sandy was a graduate of

Mountaineer High School in Thomas and was a member of the St. George Church of God. She was also a member of the Ladies Aid of the church. Sandy's last employment was caregiver for the Tucker County Senior Center. She liked watching Gunsmoke, tending to her flowers and reading. Sandy loved her dogs, Pup and Woody, and enjoyed gospel music. She especially loved talking to her family and friends.

A visitation was held at the St. George Church of God on Thursday, December 28, 2023, from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., the funeral hour. Sandy's request for cremation was then honored. The Hostetler Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements for Sandra "Sandy" Jean Helmick Mason. Send online condolences to the family at [www.hostetlerfuneralhome.com](http://www.hostetlerfuneralhome.com).

## Paul William "Coon" Sponaugle

Paul William "Coon" Sponaugle, age 86, a resident of River Bend Estates in Parsons, WV, entered into Heaven on Christmas morning, December 25, 2023, from Mountain Memories Assisted Living & Retirement Center in Elkins, WV. He laid down his head to sleep and awoke in the presence of our Lord. He had been in declining health.

Paul was born Sunday, December 19, 1937, in Hendricks, WV. He was the son of the late John Alvin and Dessie Hedrick Sponaugle. On April 20, 1957, in Red House, Maryland, he was married to Lela Lorraine Phillips Sponaugle, who preceded him in death August 19, 2022. Together, they celebrated 65 years of marriage. Also preceding him in death are one son, Robert Paul Sponaugle; two brothers, John F. "Tib" Sponaugle and Berlin "Bud" Sponaugle; and six sisters, Beatrice Sponaugle, Ruth Stalnaker, Evelyn Parsons, Lorraine Hedrick, Abbie Wamsley, and Louise Rutherford. Paul was the last surviving member of his immediate family.

Surviving are one daughter, Judy (William) Stansberry of Ft. Defiance, VA; one son, Steven Allen "Dee" (Connie) Sponaugle of Par-



sons; and a daughter-in-law, Minnie Mae Sponaugle of Parsons. Also surviving are six grandchildren: Fallon (Josh) Henline of Hendricks, Brittany (Jeremy) Carper of Falmouth, VA, Holly (Jared) Burner of Luray, VA, Kandice Sponaugle of Parsons, Steven Paul (Danielle) Sponaugle of Myrtle Beach, SC, and Katelyn Sponaugle of Parsons. Paul and Lela had nine great-grandchildren: Joshalyn and Zaken Henline; J.W. and Dorothy Grace Carper; Brynlee Kennard; and Ryder, Charlie, Chase, & Oliver Sponaugle. He is also survived by many beloved nieces and nephews.

Paul graduated from Parsons High School in 1956. He played football while in high school. In the years that followed, Paul briefly worked in the oil and gas industry in Pennsylvania, was an atten-

dant at Watchford's Service Station, a laborer at the Parsons Tannery and Kingsford Manufacturing for 10 years, and he dedicated 30 years of service to Tucker County Schools as a school bus and coal truck driver.

Paul was a man of faith and loved the Lord. He professed that he was ready to go to Heaven at any time. He attended Riverview Chapel in Porterwood and the St. George Church of God. He was an outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing, and he always raised a large garden. He was a talented carpenter and built many birdhouses, swings, and chairs among other things. He cherished time spent with his family, and he enjoyed camping, pitching horseshoes, bowling, riding his motorcycle, watching westerns, and playing cards with his friends, Frank, Sharlene, Don, and Joanne Carr. He also enjoyed his almost-daily visits with his friend, Randolph Lipscomb. He is a devoted fan of the Tucker County High School basketball and football teams, the WVU Mountaineers, and the Pittsburgh Steelers. He loved ramp digging.

The family received friends at the Lohr & Barb Funeral Home of Parsons, WV on Saturday, December 30, 2023, from 4 to 6 p.m. Final rites were conducted at the funeral home on Sunday, December 31, 2023, at 1 p.m. The Reverend James Snyder officiated and interment followed at the Brights Chapel Cemetery at Dry Fork, WV. The Lohr & Barb Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements for Paul William "Coon" Sponaugle. Condolences may be expressed to the family at [www.lohrbarbfuneralhome.com](http://www.lohrbarbfuneralhome.com)

## Rhonda Lea Kidwell Clem

Rhonda Lea (Kidwell) Clem, a force of a woman, died peacefully, surrounded by family, on Dec. 22, 2023 after battling recurrent cancer for the last seven and a half years. She was 64.

Rhonda was born Dec. 8, 1959, in Winchester, Virginia as the second, and middle, child of Roxanna Lea (Haugh) Kidwell and Donald Gene Kidwell. She spent most of her childhood growing up in Berkeley Springs, WV, where she began her quest for learning and forging many lifelong friendships. She graduated from Berkeley Springs High School in 1978.

She then went on to graduate from West Virginia University with a degree in journalism education. She worked for AT&T and later the Marriott Corporation, but she most notably enjoyed working for Wakefield School in The Plains, Virginia, where her children attended school. She was the school's registrar, the yearbook advisor and was someone they could count on.

She had many achievements and joys in her life, but none compared to raising her children, Anna and Nicolas. She so enjoyed watching her daughter compete in equestrian events and cheered from



the bleachers when her son scored his 1,000 point for the Wakefield Fighting Owls' high school basketball team.

She was a master at finding the best sales, enjoyed pulling over to see what treasures a garage sale or antique shop had to offer, and loved snuggling up with her grandsons to watch a movie or play a board game. With a keen eye for detail and deep determination, she loved working on crossword and sudoku puzzles. Jigsaw puzzles were no match for her. She also enjoyed making cross stitch pieces for her family and photographing the world around her.

Her family is eternally grateful to the Duke Cancer Center's staff, whose medical expertise gave her many more fighting years.

She is survived by her daughter Anna Grace Marie (Clem) Strouse

and her son-in-law Justin Strouse of Great Cacapon, WV; her son Nicolas Paul Coleman and her daughter-in-law Blake Coleman of Mebane, NC; her older sister Kista (Kidwell) Hurley and her husband Kevin Hurley of Chapel Hill, NC; and her younger sister Donna (Kidwell) Patrick of Canaan Valley, WV. She is also survived by her niece Anna Patrick of Seattle, Washington; her nephew Matthew Patrick of Canaan Valley, WV; and her very beloved grandsons, J.R. Strouse and Jude Strouse of Great Cacapon, WV, whom she so enjoyed spending time with and watching them grow. She is also survived by a number of aunts, uncles and cousins whom she dearly loved.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Roxanna Lea (Haugh) Kidwell and Donald Gene Kidwell.

In lieu of a funeral service, the family will hold a celebration of life ceremony in the months to come. Instead of flowers, we ask that you hug your loved ones tight.

Memorial donations may be made to the Duke Cancer Center at [giving.dukehealth.org](http://giving.dukehealth.org).

You may send condolences and sign the online register at [www.lowefuneralhome.com](http://www.lowefuneralhome.com).

## START YOUR WEEK AT WORSHIP

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If you do not have a church,  
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# Courthouse Tower Saved; Grant Applied for County Farm Cemetery

By: Lydia Crawley  
*The Parsons Advocate*

During the Tucker County Commission's meeting, the Commissioners heard updates on the work completed on the clock tower at the Courthouse, as well as the efforts being made to restore the Cemetery at Camp Kidd that was part of the County Farm.

Tucker County Commission Administrator Sheila DeVilder said the clock tower project saved the County \$50,000. The project was funded through grant money, according to DeVilder. "We just finished up a project on the clock tower and it did save us about \$50,000," DeVilder said.

According to DeVilder, the project not only restored the aesthetics of the tower, but saved the structure. DeVilder said the walls on the tower that were failing were structural in nature. "And it saved the clock tower because the walls that were falling down were actual structure walls," DeVilder said. "That was the actual structure of the clock tower."

DeVilder said the repairs saved a vital part of the Courthouse. "That repair saved the clock tower for the courthouse which is a big part of our courthouse," DeVilder said. "It's what everybody looks for."

As a part of her report to the Commission, DeVilder said she was completing work on a grant to fund the efforts to restore the Cemetery at Camp Kidd. The grant is intended to assist with a geophysical survey of the site to locate grave sites, according to DeVilder. "I have an application going out for a grant for the Camp Kidd Cemetery," DeVilder said. "The Poor Farm Cemetery. To help with the geophysical survey that we are doing down there so we can try to figure out how many people are actually buried in the cemetery and move forward with turning it into an actual cemetery for people to go."

DeVilder said the County has been working with the Tucker County Historical Society to identify those interred at the site. "We are working with the historical society to try to figure out who is buried there," DeVilder said.

The County plans to set a memorial at the site once the more information is obtained, DeVilder said. DeVilder also said she wanted the public to know of the efforts and that there will be a restored cemetery for residents to visit in the future. "I guess the ultimate plan is to put up some type of a memorial wall plaque or something once we get more information and move on from there," DeVilder said. "But just to let people know there is an actual or there will be an actual cemetery there and it's in the works now."

The following merchants urge you to attend your chosen house of worship this sabbath.

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## Riverwalk

Cont. From Front Page 1

Governmental Meetings Act aka Sunshine Laws that control how civic meetings are governed. “So, often if you look back at our town meeting agendas, well, you won't get much, though, and this is why,” Tomson said. “But we have property that's on the agenda and whenever we had to talk about this subject, we went into executive session because one of the things you're allowed to do when you want to do executive session, is the procurement of property. Because there is negotiation, there are price issues, there's all sorts of ramifications. So the State allows in the Sunshine Laws for that to be handled in executive session. So that is where it has been discussed.”

According to Tomson, the matter has been before council for the past two years. “Its been discussed in the town council for over two years on a regular basis,” Tomson said.

According to Tomson, he recommended the council pursue eminent domain in the matter. Tomson said the town council was in agreement. “My recommendation, my final recommendation here recently, was that we pursue eminent domain,” Tomson said. “And that was done with the concurrence of the town council.”

Tomson said that Johnson knew of the town's interest in the Riverwalk properties. “We've been discussing acquiring the properties with Pete (Johnson) for over two years,” Tomson said. “And part of the back and forth has been the town council's positions changing over time, but Pete knew we were interested in procuring the properties.”

Tomson also addressed the matter of the \$10,000 check that was sent to Johnson on the property. Johnson said it was sent as a “down payment” by the town. Tomson said it was sent with an offer to buy one parcel in the development. “We gave him a check for \$10,000 last year,” Tomson said. “I think it was in the spring and an offer to buy one of the parcels of land.”

According to Tomson, negotiations on the issue stalled, but the town went ahead with a more thorough appraisal of the property so that federal grant funds could be applied for. “The negotiations went nowhere,” Tomson said. “But we still had an appraisal done because we were looking at applying for federal grant funding and for those processes, you need what's called a 'Yellow Book Appraisal.' Its more detailed. Its more thorough. It has different parts of it that are not presented in a normal appraisal that you or I would do for our house.”

According to Tomson, the appraisal was below the price Johnson was asking for the property. Tomson said that the town and Johnson were still talking about setting a price at that time. “That appraisal came in, in July I believe of last year,” Tomson said. “And it was much lower than Pete's asking price. He and I discussed that appraisal and our opinions of it. And at the juncture, we were still talking with him about wanting to acquire the properties at some negotiated price.”

Tomson said he informed Johnson in July of 2022 of the town's intent to pursue eminent domain if an agreement could not be reached. “Its at that point, July of last year, that I said to Pete on the phone, if we could not reach agreement on the purchase of the land, that the town would look at pursuing eminent domain,” Tomson said. “And on that conversation, he said that was not a word he wanted to hear.”

According to Tomson, the town's legal counsel has been attempting to work with Johnson's attorney for the two sides to sit down and discuss the matter. “Since then, we have tried to continue to negotiate the purchase. We've had a lawyer for us work with his legal firm to even have a meeting to discuss it in detail and we were told we don't even have the money to buy the property. So no meeting was ever held.”

According to Tomson, the town has the funding in place to purchase the property. “I've been to the bank,” Tomson said. “I've talked to them about how much money we would need to borrow and the funds we have for a down payment. And we are able to do both, borrow and pay down payment money. So as far as to acquire the land, we have the financial means to do that.”

## Senior Center

breakfasts and hot dog roasts. A majority of the work on the facility has been completed with volunteer labor and materials purchased through the fund raisers over the past year. The Seniors have done interior work already including painting the ceiling and walls and wainscoting.

However, Thomas said the flooring is in desperate need of work. “We need a new floor now because that's just terrible,” Thomas said. “We have some money, but we don't have nearly enough.”

Thomas and Brown submitted estimates for the flooring to the Commission. Thomas said she was anticipating another estimate to come in on the work, as well. “We would just like to request some help with the cost of the new floor,” Thomas said.

Tucker County Commission President Mike Rosenau commended the Senior Center on its increase in membership, as well as on the progress the Center has made over the past year. “On behalf of the Commission, I want to commend you on the increased stuff you are doing up there,” Rosenau said. “Thank you. It serves the community really well.”

Along with a \$8,000 award from the Tucker County Commission, the Commissioners informed the Center that they would put them in touch with grant opportunities to assist with the renovation. The motion to award the money was made by Commissioner Fred Davis. The Senior Center agreed to submit invoices on the flooring project to the Com-

mission for payment and record purposes. Tomson acknowledged that Johnson questions the reasons behind the filing. “I know in Pete's letter (to the editor) from last week that he questions us doing eminent domain for public good,” Tomson said. “Because that is what eminent domain is intended to be used for. You don't do it capriciously or arbitrarily. You have to have a bona fide reason that supports the public.”

Tomson also acknowledged that the city by law has to compensate Johnson for the property at fair market value. “You end up having an appraisal done that establishes the value and you must buy the property at fair market value,” Tomson said. “Its not like you're talking it for free.”

Tomson outlined the town's plan for the public good of the land which includes parking issues on William Avenue. “There's a couple of things we are looking at doing with these properties in particular,” Tomson said. “The first one is to solve or improve the parking situation in downtown Davis. There is no other land in Davis that is suitable for creating parking lots that would take overflow parking from William Avenue, our main street. Anyone who comes here from about Friday to Sunday or for special events, recognizes very quickly that there's not sufficient parking.”

According to Tomson, the town is exploring a parking lot behind the Town Hall with lighted access to William Avenue. “So we are looking at for example, building a parking lot behind the Town Hall and the houses that are next to us,” Tomson said. “And having sidewalks and ramps that are lighted that connect the parking lot to William Avenue for people to be able to safely move between the street where we have the businesses and the restaurants and the parking we create. So parking is the first part of public good.”

Tomson said that the city intends to reopen an unofficial alleyway that residents had been using for years that runs through the Riverwalk project area. “The second is, all of the people that live on the south side of William Avenue have been using an alley for years,” Tomson said. “This is both the private residents and businesses have been using that alley. But that's not an official alley. And so Pete as the land owner is able to say, 'I don't want anybody using that road on my property any longer.' And so he's blocked off the use of that alley on the west end.”

Tomson went on to state that the town intends to open the road for private and public traffic in the area, as well as pave the existing alley and join it to the road that Johnson is building on the site. “So what we want to do is make public the road that he's building which follows a similar path to the alley and then the town to improve the rest of what's been that alley so that there's a road back there that's paved for both private business and public use.”

Tomson alleged that Johnson had offered the homeowners on William Ave use of the alley in exchange for a one time fee. “He's contacted the homeowners and said for \$5,000 I'll let you use that road,” Tomson said. “5,000 each. I think a one-time fee.”

Tomson said the town also plans to develop the park to have paved, ADA accessible trails to provide a place for people who cannot access the trails in the State Parks as easily. “Then we also want to develop the park,” Tomson said. “We want to improve the trail network with paved trails that are ADA accessible. So that maybe people that can't go into the State Parks or go into the outdoors as easily, but they have a place that they can still commune with nature in the town.”

According to Tomson, the town is seeking funding for the pedestrian bridge that is proposed by Friends of the Blackwater to connect the Riverwalk site to the trails at Blackwater Falls State Park. “We are working to secure funding, as is the Friends of the Blackwater, for a pedestrian bridge that would connect the park with Blackwater Falls State Park trail system.”

Tomson said the town aims to be a juncture for the trail networks that surround Davis and provide pedestrian and bike access to the town without the need for motorized vehicles. “The goal here is that people can come to Davis, park their car and either hike or bike through a trail network where Davis is kind of in the middle of it, connect the trails from Camp 70

to Davis, across the bridge to Blackwater Falls State Park and you don't need to use your vehicle if you don't want to.”

Tomson also said the town plans to construct a band shell and expand the park to make it more of a destination for the community. “The other thing is we are looking at constructing amenities,” Tomson said. “For example a music clam shell where we can have concerts and films in the park. So that we start using the park by both residents and visitors. And what I envision, what I've seen in other communities, you can go get a pizza, get a burrito, get a sandwich, take your family, come down into the park, be entertained, have picnic tables, have benches so that you're able to really enjoy the facilities and the nature that surrounds you.”

According to Tomson, the town is looking towards the future with its decision. “This is the only land we have to expand the park,” Tomson said. “And its now or never. If its built upon then its not available any longer. And there is a vision for the park today, as there will be 50 years from now and 100 years from now, but if the land's not available, then you've got nothing to work with. So this is looking at today and tomorrow.”

Tomson said that he was unaware of how far the Riverwalk project had progressed when the town made its eminent domain filing. “When we did the eminent domain filing, I did not understand how far along he had been working in the shadows to get under contract all the lots that he has been pursuing while he wouldn't talk to us,” Tomson said.

Tomson acknowledged that Johnson and his attorney had filed a motion to dismiss that is scheduled to go before the court in January. Tomson said the town will object to the motion at the hearing. Despite the legal battle, Tomson said the town is still willing to work with Johnson to reach an agreement on the issue. “I guess the other thing is, we are still willing to meet with Pete and look for a solution that's mutually beneficial.”

The following regulations are from an article from The West Virginia Ethics Commission website on The Open Governmental Meetings Act. In regards to the writing of agenda items, the Commission writes, “The agenda item must be descriptive enough to put the public on notice of the nature of the matter being discussed regardless of whether it will be discussed in an open session or executive session. For example, an agenda item to discuss pending litigation may read, 'Discuss pending lawsuit of Smith v. Jones with legal counsel.' Once again, generic agenda items such as 'Discuss pending litigation' are too vague to adequately put the public on notice as to the matter to be discussed.”

The Commission article also addresses the matter of voting in matters pertaining to executive sessions. The Commission writes, “Votes may not be taken in an executive session. A governing body may only vote after it reconvenes in an open session. One exception is that a governing body may vote to give its attorney settlement authority in an executive session. The fact that a governing body has authorized its attorney to engage in settlement negotiations and/or has set a settlement range is not required to be disclosed. If a settlement is reached, then the settlement agreement, including the amount, becomes a matter of public record.”

The Commission article also addresses whether minutes need to be taken or disclosed to the public from an executive session of the governing body. The Commission writes, “The decision of whether or not to take minutes for an executive session lies within the discretion of the governing body. The governing body may want to seek the advice of legal counsel concerning whether minutes should be taken. If a governing body decides to take minutes in an executive session, the Act does not require the disclosure of such minutes to the public.”

For more information on the Riverwalk Condemnation, please read the companion articles featuring Johnson's allegations and the response of a Riverwalk homeowner. The Parsons Advocate will provide updates on the story as it develops.

Cont. From Front Page 1

mission for payment and record purposes.

Other business conducted by the Commission at the meeting included the approval of several resolutions and board appointments.

Two resolutions pertaining to the Opioid Stimulant and Substance Abuse Grant we passed by the Commission. One grant in the amount of \$80,000 was approved to fund Resource Officers in Schools and a second in the amount of \$155,000 was approved in a separate motion to expand and approve substance use, mental health and peer recovery support.

A grant application was approved by the Commission for a State Historic Preservation Grant. The Commission approved a resolution on the grant application. The grant is intended to fund the restoration and identification efforts at the Camp Kidd (County Farm) Cemetery site.

Another resolution focused on a Contractual Agreement for a Cybersecurity Grant Program. The grant is intended to fund cybersecurity measures at the 911 Center. The resolution was approved by the Commission.

A new Lease Compliance Policy was approved by the Commission, as well. The policy complies with the Government Accounting Standards Board recommendations regarding the lease of equipment. The Policy defines the scope of the leasing costs and placed the County in compliance with the requirement immediately upon approval.

A Standard Operating Procedure regarding School

Related Threats was also approved by the Commission. The procedure would be added to the 911 Center's SOP Book for reference of the employees. The procedure focuses on school threats, as well as outlines what dispatchers will do in the unlikely event of a school threat and what outlines everything the dispatcher will need. The procedure was the result of interdepartmental input from multiple agencies in the County and had previously been approved by the 911 Advisory Board.

Several Board appointments were approved by the Commission. Tom Gutshall was re-appointed to the Parks and Recreation Board with an ending date of 12/31/2026. David Murphy was re-appointed to the Parks and Recreation Board with an ending date of 12/31/2025. David Lambert was re-appointed to the Parks and Recreation Board with an ending date of 12/31/2026. Carrie Alexander was appointed to the Building Commission with an amended ending date of 12/31/2026 and Garret Crossland-Bolyard was appointed to the Tucker County Community Corrections.

The following Road Name was approved by the Commission. Warren Judy had submitted a request for the name Opal Way Drive.

An appointment of Bob Elkholtm for re-appointment to the Animal Shelter Board was tabled until the January meeting. A Revised: Purchase Order and Invoice Policy was also tabled until the January meeting by the Commission.



# What's? Happening

**SILENT AUCTION: ART SHOW** 2024 1 -4 p.m., RUDOLPH'S 300 East Ave Thomas. Friends of Blackwater. Sat, Jan 13 and Sun, Jan 14



**The West Virginia Encyclopedia**  
www.wvencyclopedia.org



Jan. 3, 1921: The state capitol building in Charleston was destroyed by fire. The so-called Victorian capitol, the second one in Charleston, had opened in 1887. After the fire, a temporary wood-frame building was erected in just 42 days and became known as the "pasteboard capitol." It burned in 1927.



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

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.

Jan. 3, 1856: Musician Lewis Johnson "Uncle Jack" McElwain of Webster County was born. He was the most respected fiddler in central West Virginia during his lifetime. He took part in many fiddle contests, and no one can recall him ever being beaten.

Jan. 4, 1897: Classes began at Montgomery Preparatory School, a state institution established to prepare students for West Virginia University. The school evolved into the West Virginia University Institute of Technology.

Jan. 5, 1810: The Virginia General Assembly recognized 20 acres of land owned by farmer and trader Thomas Buffington at the confluence of the Guyandotte and Ohio rivers as the new village of Guyandotte.

Jan. 6, 1828: Ward Hill Lamson was born in Jefferson County. Lamson was friend, law partner and unofficial bodyguard to President Abraham Lincoln. President Lincoln was assassinated when Lamson was away in Richmond on

business. Jan. 6, 1931: An underground gas explosion killed eight men at the Glen Rogers coal mine in Wyoming County—eight years after another explosion had killed 27 at the same mine.

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

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

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

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

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


By Teri Cayton

The Parsons Advocate

My loyal reader Jeanette took pity on me and sent me some of my favorite candy for Christmas and I also received the recipe of the week from her monthly Alpha Delta Kappa newsletter. This is going to be a really gooooooood one! I want to thank her for sending the main ingredient for me to try and that I am going to do.

I love to hear from my readers and it gives me joy to hear that some of them shared an upbringing like mine. It was a time in life when you are shaped into who you are going to be as a person and I appreciate every lesson I got, the praise and the punishment. Momma Said, "Spare the rod and spoil the child."

I know there is difference in a spanking and a beating because I got a lot of the first. We never had to worry about abuse in our household. I know there are people out there that were not as lucky as me and my siblings growing up. I cannot condone an adult laying a hand on a child in anger or rage. We all



**Momma Said**  
This column is about tips, helpful hints, recipes and words of wisdom. I dedicate this column to my mother.  
By Teri Cayton  
The Parsons Advocate

have to learn from our mistakes and if a child does something wrong, it is not worth a beating. Communication goes a long way and that is something we do not have enough of these days.

Momma Said, "Get your nose out of your phone and pay attention to your children, sometimes all it takes is to reach out to them, to give them some of your time." It could mean a world of difference in the long run, to stop them from spiraling down into a pit of despair and hopelessness. I miss the advice that I got from my Mom and Grandma, in hindsight if I would have listened to them more maybe I could have saved myself a lot of problems and pain in the path that I chose. Momma Said, "Hindsight is 20/20."

## Rolo Cookies

A chocolate cookie with a caramel surprise in the middle, yum-yum.

### Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 eggs
- 1 package Rolo candy

### Instructions

1. Pre-heat oven to 375 F degree
2. Combine flour, baking soda and cocoa powder, set aside
3. Beat white sugar, brown sugar and butter together
4. Add vanilla, eggs and slowly add the flour mixture
5. Shape 1 tablespoon of dough around a Rolo, Dip top of dough ball in sugar
6. Bake for 8 – 10 minutes, let cool and enjoy

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## Super Crossword

CALCULATING CHARACTERS

<b>ACROSS</b>	1 Pet doc	4 "Come again?"	8 Treats maliciously	14 Tennis player Borg	19 Narcissist's problem	21 Actress Andress	22 Ate, as prey	23 Football Hall of Famer Bronko	24 Arrive on wheels	25 Frankie or Cleo of song	26 Start of a riddle	29 Noise in a comic book	30 Exotic singer Sumac	31 "The Human Stain" novelist Philip	32 Cure-all	37 Race of people in an H.G. Wells novella	39 Some sorority letters	40 Donations to the destitute	44 Riddle, part 2	48 Like much greasy food	49 See 83-Across	50 Corp. leader	51 Skip over, as a vowel	52 World War II film, when tripled	53 Charged bit	55 Place — (be active on eBay, say)	57 Cheap cigar	58 Riddle, part 3	63 Simile	66 Chaney of film	67 Song-belted Merman	68 On a pension, maybe: Abbr.	69 Military draft gp.	70 Riddle, part 4	75 ZZ Top album whose name is Spanish for "The Crazy One"	76 Hamm and Farrow	77 Neither's partner	78 Tingly feeling	82 Totally tired	83 With 49-Across, touter of green eggs and ham	84 "Yes" vote	86 Early arcade giant	87 End of the riddle	93 — -Flush (bathroom brand)	94 Architect I.M. —	95 Made angry	96 Florida fruits	97 R&B great Marvin	99 Not at all new	100 Golf club	102 Riddle's answer	111 Stalin-era labor camp	112 Polecat's kin	113 Urge against	114 Muscat native	115 Do over	116 Office squawker	117 Fender dings	118 Mimics a mad mutt	119 Helper of Frankenstein	120 Inventor Whitney	<b>DOWN</b>	1 "—, vidi, vici"	2 "The Keep" novelist Jennifer	3 Forum wear	4 Angel's instrument	5 Drunk	6 Writer Gogol	7 Third-largest city in Israel	8 Ride a wave	9 Eighth-brightest star in the sky	10 Like a hajji's religion	11 Second-largest city in Oklahoma	12 Charles Lamb's alias	13 Bay Area California city	14 Equivalent of A sharp	15 Lee Tracy's "Bombshell" co-star	16 Like praiseful poetry	17 Gossipy Barrett	18 Bakersfield-to-Boise dir.	20 Letters before	27 Swiss watch brand	28 Clueless	32 Fizzle sound	33 Sleek, informally	34 Hair removal brand	35 Top squad	36 Moe's mouthful	38 On the — (fleeing)	39 "— say more?"	41 Actresses Vivien and Janet	42 In — res (mid-plot)	43 Clay pigeons to be shot, informally	45 Three x three	46 Frozen spear	47 Eats away at	53 "Were — it all over again ..."	54 "It can't be!"	55 One of the Three Musketeers	56 Nickname for singer Justin, with "the"	57 Derisive smile	59 One of the three Furies	60 R&R alone	61 "— boy!"	62 Pisa's river	63 Nuclear trials, for short	64 Class of antimicrobial drugs, in the British spelling	65 Actress Sorkin who once hosted "America's Funniest People"	71 Like animals that don't roam	72 So-called "fifth taste"	73 Apartment near the super's, perhaps	74 Mesh well	79 Piquancy	80 Ontario tribe	81 Cat's warning	83 Pittsburgh footballers	84 "Chances —"	85 "Catch my drift, bro?"	86 Pie-mode link	88 1974 CIA parody film	89 More lacteal	90 Not cardinal, as a number	91 Plundering	92 Writer Sabato	98 Patronage	99 "— Loompa"	101 Half-dimeters	102 Journalist Brit	103 Zing	104 Lucy Liu's "Kill Bill" role	105 Insect traps	106 Exploiter	107 Mongrel mutt	108 Frilly material	109 Shrine figure	110 Moore of "G.I. Jane"	111 Shrine figure
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**DEADLINE 3PM FRIDAY**

**Weather Totals**  
December 19 - December 26

Nursery Bottom  
Parsons

**Temperature**  
Max 59° F  
Min 8° F

**Precipitation**  
Week 0.10"  
December 2.35"  
2023 46.33"

**Snowfall**  
New Snow 0.5"  
Snow on ground 0"  
Winter Total 9.5"

U.S. Forest Service

## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆**

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging  
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Puzzle answers page 7



said they would help with assistance through grant funding if any would become available.

Meador claimed that he was currently operating at a \$1,000 a month loss and was facing having to raise the cost to customers 45% to save his business. Meador said the Prodigy project was negatively impacting his business and made any future expansion of his service impossible. Meador also said he was trying to avoid shutting down his business.

Marker said he was addressing the Commission on behalf of the citizens of St. George. According to Marker, Meador's service was far superior to the town's previous provider and provides needed services to residents and business owners alike. Marker said that one resident relies on the service for her income as she works from home. "I'm here to speak on behalf of the citizens of St. George," Marker said. "We have an internet service right now by Andrew (Meador) and before that we had no internet. We had one service that if you wanted to download something, you started that morning and come back in the evening and check to see if it downloaded. But since he got his service up and running, its been great."

Marker said that if any of the customers have an issue, Meador provides excellent customer service. Marker also requested the Commission consider helping Meador however they could to help save the internet in St. George. "No issues what so ever," Marker said. "If you have an issue, you call him, he's right there."

Tucker County Commission President Mike Rosenau said that the Commission will reach out if any grants become available. Commissioner Fred Davis also said that the Commission tries to take care of the citizens of Tucker County. "We get a lot of information from the State level and the State organization, too, that notifies us of grants or assist in writing grants," Rosenau said. "So we got that level, too."

Marker said that he hoped that Meador having backing from the Commission would help convince residents who had not signed onto the ser-

vice to consider doing so. Rosenau said he was glad that St. George had good internet service and hoped getting the word out to those who may not have known about the service would help, as well.

Meador addressed the Commission partly from a prepared statement. According to Meador, he is paying for his own infrastructure and attested that he cannot compete with the government funding that Prodigy is receiving. The Prodigy Broadband Project is funded through a State grant that involved a grant match from the Commission. "I stand here before you as an internet service provider facing failure due to the government funded competition that has come into this area from Prodigy," Meador said. "My plea is not just for my business but for the preservation of fair competition and for the well being of the community."

Meador also claimed that the Prodigy project has land locked his service to St. George and made it impossible for him to expand his service. According to Meador, his business serves 80 sites in the St. George area. According to Meador, Prodigy has an unfair advantage due to the State grant funding the infrastructure costs of the company. Meador also claimed that Prodigy as a much larger company, can offer incentives such as free installation or reduced fee promotions that he simply does not have the capability to offer. "My business, which provides crucial high speed internet service in our area, is at a critical junction due to the overlapping coverage and financial advantages granted to Prodigy through government funding."

Meador also supplied a \$65,000 funding request to the Commission as a part of his address. The matter of the funding request could not be taken up by the Commission because it was not on the agenda. All Commission members said that while they sympathized with Meador and thanked him for providing the citizens of St. George with a valuable service, they could not provide funding to private industry.

The conversation became heated when Meador brought up the funding the Commission had supplied to Prodigy. Rosenau said that funding was

not given directly to Prodigy and was a grant match through the State as a part of the Broadband Roll Out program. Rosenau said that for the County to be a part of the \$8 million grant, the County needed "skin in the game" in the form of a grant match and that Prodigy came with a State funded and State approved grant. Rosenau also said that the County's grant match and the State grant monies covered expansion from the Tucker County line at Preston County to the Barbour County line and through the middle of the County. "With us, Prodigy came with a grant from the State. An \$8 million grant that was approved through the State. In order for Tucker County to be a part of that grant that Preston and Barbour Counties already acquired, we had to have skin in the game, as they call it. So that is why we invested \$50,000 from taxpayers' money in Tucker County. Prodigy just didn't come in and say that, 'We need \$65,000, Michael. We need \$65,000,' and we just write them a check. That's not the way it works. It's a grant match...We didn't just give Prodigy \$50,000 that you alluded to in giving them. We didn't give Prodigy (money), we did not do that," Rosenau said. "We gave match grant money."

While direct funding of Meador's service is out of the Commission's hands, the Commissioners said they would look for other avenues to assist Meador and if any grants or other funding opportunities arose, they would let him know. All three Commissioners said that as a governmental entity, they could not supply funding to small business owners. Meador was asked if he had applied for any grants for his business. Meador indicated that he had not. Commissioner Tim Knotts said, "We will support you in grants if we hear of any, but we can't just hand out money to private business. That's the thing, we can't do it."

Commissioner Fred Davis echoed the sentiment. "One thing about this Commission, we try to take care of our people in Tucker County. We will do whatever we can to do it, if our hands aren't tied, we'll do it. If we can't, we can't." Davis said. "We will really work hard to help."

# When to test your home water supply

Water quality is not something people think about all that much, especially in developed nations. Though it can be easy to take water quality for granted in countries with ample regulation and sophisticated filtering systems, there are times when anyone, regardless of where they live, should take stock of the water in their homes.

## Frequency of testing

One of the variables for individuals to consider is how long it's been since they last tested the water quality in their homes. For those who have never done so, those who have done it but can't recall precisely when or those who know it's been more than a year since the last test, then it's a good time to test the water. In fact, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends annual testing for coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids, and pH levels. The EPA notes this testing is especially important for anyone who is using a new well or has replaced or repaired pipes, pumps or the well casing.

## What about public water supply systems?

Testing may not be necessary for individuals who get their water from public water supplies. The EPA notes that anyone who pays a water bill gets their water from a public supply system, which is responsible for monitoring and testing water and reporting the results of those tests to the appropriate agencies as well as the individuals who use the water. Homeowners and tenants who pay a water bill should receive an annual water quality report from their water supply utility, while renters can request a copy of that report from their landlords if they do not pay the bill themselves.

## What about private water supply systems?

Individuals who receive their water from a private system, such as a household well, are responsible for conducting their own water supply testing. These tests should be conducted annually and in the aftermath of a spill or other incident that could taint the water supply.

## Are there any special circumstances to test the water?

The EPA notes that certain situations may call for testing the water supply, even if it's provided by a public supply system. For example, the EPA recommends that expecting parents test their water supply for nitrates in the early months of a pregnancy. Testing should then be conducted again prior to bringing an infant home and once more during the first six months of the baby's life. The EPA notes nitrate tests are best conducted in spring or summer after periods of rain.

An eye, taste and/or smell test also can indicate if the water supply should be tested. Water that stains, has an unusual taste and/or a conspicuous odor should be tested. In these instances, test for sulfate, chloride, iron, manganese, hardness, and corrosion.

A local chemical or fuel spill also should trigger a test of the water supply. The EPA notes that these tests can be expensive and recommends individuals contact a local expert to determine which contaminants to test for.

Water quality is easily taken for granted. However, various scenarios may necessitate testing the water supply. A local health department office can be a useful resource for individuals who want to confirm that their water supply is safe.



There are times when anyone, regardless of where they live, should take stock of the water in their homes.



A recent survey from the National Association of Home Builders found that energy-efficient features are among the most sought-after 'must-haves' among homebuyers.

# The benefits of energy-efficient homes

Consumer efforts to be more eco-conscious are more and more noticeable. For proof of that, one need look no further than the increase in vehicle charging stations. Such stations are more accessible than ever and illustrate that consumer preference is increasingly leaning toward products that leave as small a carbon footprint as possible.

Another indicator of a growing interest in eco-friendly products is the popularity in energy-efficient homes. In fact, a recent survey from the National Association of Home Builders found that energy-efficient features are among the most sought-after 'must-haves' among homebuyers. Among those surveyed, 83 percent desired Energy Star-rated windows, 81 percent wanted Energy Star-rated appliances and 80 percent preferred energy-efficient lighting.

Though eco-conscious sensibilities compel millions of homeowners to make their homes more energy-efficient, that's not the only reason to upgrade your home. The following are a handful of the many benefits of energy-efficient homes.

- Save money: Inflation was one of the biggest stories of 2022, as the cost of living rose dramatically in the wake of world events. According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, inflation led to an overall 6.5 percent increase in prices. But that increase was dwarfed by the cost of electricity, which increased by 14.3 percent in 2022. Energy-efficient appliances can help homeowners overcome that spike, as the U.S. Department of Energy indicates upgrading to

such products can help homeowners reduce their energy costs by as much as 30 percent.

- Improve resale value: As the NAHB survey indicates, modern homebuyers want energy-efficient homes. They're also willing to pay more for such homes. Research from the mortgage lender Freddie Mac found that homes with energy-efficient ratings sold for nearly 3 percent more on average than homes without such ratings.
- Live healthier: The benefits of energy-efficient homes aren't just economic, though health-related benefits certainly produce an economic incentive as well. According to the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy, insulation and air sealing protect individuals from heat waves and other ripple effects of climate change. The ACEEE notes that weatherization can improve indoor air quality and comfort, a notable benefit for asthma sufferers and seniors. In fact, the ACEEE estimates that integrating energy efficiency programs in homes could reduce seniors' risk for falls in their homes, potentially saving \$2 billion in fall-related health care costs over the next decade, and improve asthma outcomes, which could reduce health care costs by as much as half a billion dollars.

Energy-efficient products and practices pay numerous dividends, making them a worthy expenditure for any homeowners looking to upgrade their homes.

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# SPORTS

## TUCKER COUNTY GIRLS' HOST MT. STORM POWER STATION HOLIDAY CLASSIC



Mt. Storm Power Station Holiday Classic All-Tournament Team(L-R): Hurricane: Kendall Anderson, Alex Anderson, Tucker County: Ericka Zirk, Raven Matthews, Grafton: Kenna Keener, Frankfort: Lyndsey Zimmerman. Photo by Kelly Helmick.

By Chris George  
TuckerCountySports.Com

HAMBLETON – The Lady Mt. Lions Basketball team hosted the Mt. Storm Power Station Holiday Classic on December 28th and 29th at Tucker County High School.

On the first night the Tucker County Girls' faced off against Frankfort in the first game. The Lady Mt. Lions controlled the game from start to finish as they got the win 74-34.

In the first quarter Tucker County outscored the Lady Falcons 22-8. The second quarter was also controlled by the Lady Mt. Lions as they outshot Frankfort 24-4 to take a commanding 46-12 halftime lead.

The third quarter was played even at 12-12 to make the score 58-24 after three. Tucker County then turned it on in the fourth quarter as they outscored the Lady Falcons 16-10 to give the Lady Mt. Lions the win by the final score of 74-34.

Raven Matthews led the Lady Mt. Lions in scoring with 17 points, 14 rebounds and Macy Helmick added 14 points, 5 assists. The Tucker County Girls' JV team got the win over Grafton 34-24 before the varsity game.

In the other Tournament game Hurricane defeated Grafton 55-46.

On Friday December 29th the night got started with the Consolation game that featured Grafton vs Frankfort. The Lady Bearcats defeated the Lady Falcons by the score of 50-21.

In the Championship game Tucker County would play host to Class "AAAA" Hurricane. The Lady Redskins got off to a good start in the first quarter as they led after one quarter 10-5. The second quarter was a closely contested quarter as Hurricane outscored the Lady Mt. Lions slightly 15-13 to put the halftime score to 25-18 Hurricane.

Tucker County fought back in the third quarter as they held the Lady Redskins to 3 points and the Lady Mt. Lions score 11 points in the third to give Tucker County a slim

29-28 lead after three quarters. The fourth quarter went back and forth throughout the period. The homestanding Lady Mt. Lions trailed 41-39 and had the ball under their own basket with under 15 seconds left in the game. Tucker County missed 3 shots to tie or win the game and the clock expired to give the Lady Redskins the road win 41-39.

Tucker County was led in scoring by Brylee Wetzel with 10 points and Ericka Zirk added 9 points in the loss. Raven Matthews led the team with 15 rebounds.

The Mt. Storm Power Station Holiday Classic All-Tournament team was as follows: Hurricane: Kendall Anderson, Alex Anderson, Tucker County: Ericka Zirk, Raven Matthews, Grafton: Kenna Keener, Frankfort: Lyndsey Zimmerman.

Tucker County(5-2) will return to action on Friday January 5th at home against Moorefield. The JV game will tip off at 5:45pm with the varsity game after. For more info go to TuckerCountySports.Com.

## MT. LIONS GET THE WIN AT HOME OVER TYGARTS VALLEY 78-51

By Dave Helmick  
TuckerCountySports.Com

HAMBLETON – The Tucker County Boys' Basketball team hosted Tygarts Valley on Friday December 22nd. The Mt. Lions exploded for 27 points in the first quarter, and they never looked back to win the game 78-51.

The first quarter was controlled by Tucker County as their aggressive defense created problems for the visiting Bulldogs and the Mt. Lions offense was clicking to give Tucker County the 27-5 lead after one quarter of play. Tygarts Valley tried to fight back in the second quarter, but the Mt. Lions answered the Bulldogs run, to edge Tygarts Valley in scoring 20-18 in the quarter number two. This would make the halftime score 47-23 Tucker County.

The Mt. Lions offense would get going again in the third quarter as Tucker County outscored the Bulldogs 24-11 in the period. This would increase the Tucker County lead to 71-34 at the end of the third. Tygarts Valley would win the fourth quarter by the count of 17-7 to make the final score of the game 78-51 Tucker County.

Ethan Rosenau led the Mt. Lions with 19 points and Trevan Bonner added 17 points for Tucker County. Ashton Lycliter also had 15 points, 8 rebounds for the Mt. Lions and Garrett Wilfong chipped in 10 points for Tucker County. The Tucker County JV team got the win over Tygarts Valley 55-43.

Tucker County(5-2) will return to action on Friday January 5th at East Hardy. For more info go to TuckerCountySports.Com.



Tucker County's Garrett Wilfong makes a move on offense in a recent game against Elkins. Photo by Brittany Channell.

### AREA SCHEDULE:

**Wednesday January 3rd**

Tucker Valley Boys' Basketball vs Buckhannon @ Home 5:45pm

**Thursday January 4th**

Tucker Valley Girls' Basketball @ Kason 6pm

**Friday January 5th**

Tucker County Girls' vs Moorefield @ Home 5:45pm

Tucker County Boys' @ East Hardy 6pm

Tucker Valley Boys' Basketball vs Pendleton @ Home 6pm

Davis-Thomas Girls' & Boys' Basketball @ South Preston 5:45pm

**Monday January 8th**

Tucker County Boys' Basketball @ Pendleton 6:15pm

Tucker Valley Boys' Basketball @ Kason 6pm

Davis-Thomas Girls' & Boys' Basketball vs Terra Alta 6pm

**Your community. Your healthcare.**  
*Good Luck!* Tucker County High Mt. Lions  
 Tucker Valley Wildcats  
 Davis Thomas Bears

**St. George**  
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# A LOOK BACK AT THE YEAR 2023

Continued from page 1

## February

- Students' request for after school program granted.
- Upgrades and Camp Kidd go forward.
- Davis Thomas Boys' get win over Belington.
- Mt. Lions take win over Southern, Md.
- EMS informs Commission about Stryker Cots.
- Davis receives design loan for sewer projects.
- Lady Lt. Lions take wins over Elkins, East Hardy and Union.
- Mt. Lions cruise over Gilmer County.
- Davis-Thomas takes win over Harman.
- Tucker Valley Girls' and Boys' take win over Union.
- Student threatens violence at TCHS.
- Tucker Community Foundation announces creation of new endowed fund with Mount Olive Cemetery.
- Mt. Lions win at Tygarts Valley and at home over southern.
- Tucker County Girls' cruise to win over Moorefield.
- Davis-Thomas girls' and boys' win over Union, defeat Tucker Valley.
- Cardboard and duct tape sled race held at Blackwater State Park.

## March

- Massive diesel spill shuts down portion of US219.
- TC Commission conducts workshop with Animal Control.
- Tucker County Girls' win Sectional Championship over Union.
- Mt. Lions collect home wins over Tygarts Valley and Petersburg.
- Tucker Valley boys win over Tygarts Valley.
- Parsons and Thomas receive funding for water and sewer projects.
- Grand Jury indicts Hebb, Hess, Johnson, Plumley and White.
- The Snow Sports Museum of WV reopens at new location.
- Lady Mt. Lions win Regional and earn State Tournament berth.
- Tucker Boys' win over East Hardy for Sectional Championship.
- Tucker County Girls' fall in State Championship.
- Mt. Lions win Regional Championship over Tygarts Valley.
- Tucker Boys' fall in State Championship to James Monroe.
- Tucker County Girls' basketball players make All-PVC Conference.
- Local soldier, Zechariah Russell, returns home from deployment in Guantanamo, Cuba.
- Nearly 1 million dollars distributed from Harman Fund.
- Tucker Valley's Luke Barb placed first in the 400m and the high jump at Bridgeport.

## April

- Raccoons test positive for rabies in Tucker County.
- TVEMS students participate in robotics program.
- Lady Mt. Lions softball teams gets wins over Southern and East Hardy.
- Tucker Valley track team take home first place as a team and girls placed 5th.
- Dispute between brother leads to fatal shooting.
- West Virginia aims for high-speed Wi-Fi from border to border.
- Lady Wildcats softball win at home over Terra Alta and take wins at Southern and Pocahontas.
- Mt. Lions Boys track take 4th place and the girls' ended the night with a 5th place finish as a team.
- Tucker County 4-H participated at the WV Beef Expo.
- City of Parsons addresses equipment issues, sewer and water improvements.
- Tucker County Boy's beat East Hardy.
- The 51st reunion of the Class of 1971 is held.

## May

- Lady Mt. Lions softball team wins over Moorefield.
- Tucker track team competes in PVC Conference.
- Mt. Lions baseball team wins games at Parkersburg Catholic.
- Mt. Lions boys' and girls' track team take 4th place at Southern Garrett.
- Lady Mt. Lions softball wins at Pendleton County.
- Town of Davis donates \$10,000 to Blackwater Ministerial Association.
- Cassidy Nelson opens the Ol Barn Bakery in Dry Fork.

## June

- Tucker County Track Athletes qualify for State Meet.
- Tucker County Chamber of Commerce present special awards to TCHS basketball teams.
- Tucker County track competes at State Track meet.
- Congratulation to the Class of 2023.
- Triathlete, Terry Vanderwert, completes runs in all 50 US states with West Virginia being the last.
- Tucker County's Dom Mullenax signs letter of intent with Bethany College.
- Running of the 43rd Challenge in the Hills.
- TCHS athletes, Mason Kisamore, Dom Mullenax, Kadie Colebank and Paige Shaffer are selected to compete in the North South All-Star Games.
- The Honorable Judge Lynn A. Nelson holds last day of Circuit Court in Parsons.
- Tucker County Baseball's Mason Kisamore was

selected to the Class "A" Baseball All-State Honorable Mention List.

- Tyler Scott Johnson graduates from Fairmont State.
- J. Chris Michaels retires as Tucker County Assessor.

## July

- 33rd annual Uncle Sam's Birthday celebrated.
- Greg Stevens welcomed as new Tucker County Assessor.
- Garret W. Crossland-Bolyard graduates from Glenville State University.
- Armed robbery occurs at Parsons BFS.
- Tucker EMS receives new Stryker Cot.
- Mountaineer Days is a big hit.
- Susan Metzner and Dr. Elaine Moore join Ambulance Authority Board.
- Mason Kisamore earns All-PVC Conference Honors in baseball and Paige Shaffer and Kate Simmons were honored for All-Conference PVC in softball.
- Paul Wamsley was given the Friend of Philanthropy award from Eastern College.
- Eastern Foundation farm-to-Table Dinner raised \$27,000 for students and scholarships.

## August

- Tucker County 911 Center receives first Early Warning System in State.
- Solid Waste Authority welcomes Lowell More as new member.
- The Honorable Judge Robert Edward Ryan is sworn in as the new 21st judicial Circuit Judge.
- Marsha Waybright to receive WV Women in Agriculture Award.
- Tucker County Fair commences.
- Blackwater Bistro opens in Davis.
- 2023 US Capital Christmas tree selected from Greenbrier Ranger District of Monongahela National Forest.
- Attorney Timothy P. Stranko selected as New City Attorney.
- Garrett Crossland-Bolyard sworn in as Probation Officer.
- Mt. Lions football team cruises to win over Pocahontas County.

## September

- Amanda Faye (Harper) Rahman MD graduates from WVU.
- Carol Helmick retires from Solid Waste Authority.
- Joseph M. Nelson fatally shot in road rage incident.
- Lady Mt. Lions Cross Country team takes home a 2nd place team win at Lincoln and boys' get a 3rd place team finish.
- Mt. Lion football gets big win at East Hardy.
- Tucker Football team pulls away for a win at Gilmer County.
- Tucker County Cross-Country girls' team finishes 3rd at Southern and 4th in Elkins. Boy' team finish 4th at both meets.
- Tucker Valley Wildcats football team gets win at Tygarts Valley.
- PVFD Homecoming Fair kicks off.
- Cass Scenic Railroad receives Stuart Thayer's steam engine.
- Bright Bear Yoga opens in Thomas.
- Evie Grace Harper appointed as Princess for the 85th Mountain State Forest Festival.
- Mt. Lions Football get overtime win at Eastern local Ohio.
- Tucker County Volleyball gets win over North Marion. Katie Hicks wins South Harrison Meet, also setting a new course record of 20:57.78.

## October

- Corricks Ford Battlefield Organization dissolved.
- Tucker Cross Country win home meet at The Tucker County Invitational.
- Lady Mt. Lions Volleyball wins at Union.
- Tucker County Football runs by Pendleton County.
- Save the Big Green Church renovation has begun.
- Mt. Lions football get road win at Moorefield.
- At the PVC Championship, Tucker County Girls' Katie Hicks finishes 2nd and Cameron Judy takes home a 10th place win.
- Commission funds CPR assist devices for EMS.

• Dorothy Judy resigns as Parsons longest running Mayor due to health reasons.

- Tucker County runs by Smithburg, Md at home.
- Tucker Valley gets win at home over Pocahontas.
- Mt. Lions Cross Country performs well at Regional Meet.

## November

- Camp Horseshoe granted 60 year historic lease by US Forest Service.
- Mt. Lions hold off Petersburg rally to win at home.
- Tucker County Cross Country competes at State meet.
- Seven Islands Farm chosen as a West Virginia Century Farm.
- TCHS Cheer Squad placed 6th at the Regional Competition.
- Tucker County rolls to win over Hampshire.
- The Mountaintop Soccer League wins the Mountaintop Under 10 Championship.
- Terry Nelson raises a 989 pound pumpkin that would be sold to be on display at Dollywood.
- Mt. Lions get home playoff win over Midland Trail.
- Tucker County Football dominates PVC All-Conference List.
- Tucker Community Foundation welcomes Angie Pase as Development Director.
- Chris Davis resigns from The Parsons Park and Recreation Board after eight years of service.
- Walgreen's of Parsons announces closure.
- Capital Christmas Tree comes through town.
- Tucker County runs by Tug Valley for home play-off win.
- Rachel Felton makes Volleyball All-State honorable Mention List.
- City of Parsons considers redesign of City Seal.
- Bruce Kolsun sworn in as new Mayor.
- Dorothy Judy selected as Christmas Parade Marshal.

## December

- Tucker County Girls' basketball gets win in first game over Tygarts Valley.
- Live Nativity held at Camp Kidd.
- Tucker County football players that earned All-State Recognition are as follows Gavin Mullenax, Ethan Rosenau, Owens Knotts Garrett Wilfong, Maddox Anderson and Jared Reall.
- Lady Mt. Lions get wins over Pendleton and East Hardy.
- Laney Burns competed for title of West Virginia Beef Queen.
- Mt. Lions win at Mountain Ridge, Md.
- Tucker County girls cruise to road win at Union 78-32.
- Homeowners tied up in Riverwalk controversy.
- City of Thomas approves new fire service protection fees.
- Michael Drake of St. Albans caught and released a record-breaking blue catfish weighing 69.45 pounds and measuring 50.51 inches.
- Friends of Mountaintop Public Library announce that over \$5,000- more in donations have been received for the new library building.
- Tucker County boys' edge past Elkins in final seconds 47-46.

**THANK YOU FOR READING  
THE PARSONS ADVOCATE**

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## 'Tis the Season for Lower Gas Prices in West Virginia

The average price for gasoline across Northern West Virginia is five cents lower this week at \$2.911 per gallon, according to AAA East Central's Gas Price Report.

This week's average prices: Northern WV Average	\$2.911
Average price during the week of December 18, 2023	\$2.969
Average price during the week of December 27, 2022	\$2.988

The following is a list of the average prices in several West Virginia locations:

\$2.985	Bridgeport
\$2.978	Clarksburg
\$2.935	Huntington
\$3.082	Martinsburg
\$2.858	Morgantown
\$2.976	Parkersburg
\$2.758	Weirton
\$2.713	Wheeling

Trend Analysis:

The national average for a gallon of gas fell to a 2023 low of \$3.06 on December 18, but has increased over the past week to \$3.12. This marks the first weekly increase since September. Today's national average is 13 cents less than a month ago and two cents more than a year ago.

According to new data from the Energy Information Administration (EIA), gas demand dipped slightly from 8.86 to 8.75 million barrels per day last week. Meanwhile, total domestic gasoline stocks increased slightly by 2.7 million barrels to 226.7 million barrels. Robust gas demand and elevated oil prices have jolted pump prices as the US enters winter.

At the close of Wednesday's formal trading session, West Texas Intermediate increased by 28 cents to settle at \$74.22. Oil prices rose due to attacks on tankers in the Red Sea. Because of those attacks, vessels had to be re-routed around the Cape of Good Hope, which requires increased transportation costs. Additionally, the EIA reported that total domestic commercial crude inventories rose by nearly 3 million barrels to 443.7 million barrels last week.

Motorists can find current gas prices nationwide, statewide, and countywide at [gasprices.aaa.com](https://gasprices.aaa.com).

AAA East Central is a not-for-profit association with 69 local offices in Kentucky, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia serving 2.7 million members. News releases are available at [news.eastcentral.aaa.com](https://news.eastcentral.aaa.com). Follow us on Twitter and Facebook



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DEADLINE 3PM FRIDAY

LEGAL

I have before me the accounts of the Executor or Administrator of the estates of the following deceased persons:

Deceased Personal Representative(s)
Harry T. Reed Brian F. Reed
1st publication 12/27/23 1470 Ravenswood Pike
2nd publication 1/3/24 Ripley, WV 25271

Claims against any estate must be filed within sixty days of the date of first publication. Any person seeking to impeach or establish a will must make a complaint to the Tucker County Commission, Tucker County Clerk, 211 First St., Suite 205, Parsons, WV. Any person objecting to the qualifications of the personal representative or the venue or jurisdiction of the court must be filed with County Commission within sixty days after the date of first publication or thirty days of service of the notice, whichever is later.

ATTEST: SHERRY SIMMONS, TUCKER COUNTY CLERK

LEGAL

NOTICE OF FINAL SETTLEMENT OF ESTATES

To the Creditors and Beneficiaries of the following decedent's estate: JUSTIN R. KNotts Sandra Owens, Admin.

A Waiver of Final Settlement for the above captioned estate has been presented before me by the Fiduciary of said estate for approval, which report is retained in my office at 14 S. Randolph Ave., Elkins, West Virginia.

I have approved the Report as presented and will file it with the Honorable County Commission of Tucker County, West Virginia, on or after January 5, 2024.

Any person having any interest in said estate may appear before the Honorable County Commission to protect their interests as they may appear or else may be forever thereafter barred from asserting such interest.

Given under my hand 21st day of December, 2023 .

/s/ John J. Wallace, IV
John J. Wallace, IV
Fiduciary Commissioner
Tucker County, West Virginia

LEGAL

ADVERTISEMENT AND EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING SERVICES

Pursuant to W.Va. Code §5G-1-3, the Tucker County Board of Education is seeking Expressions of Interest from qualified design professions to provide Architectural/Engineering Services to include design and construction phase administration for the Waster Water Treatment Plant Replacement at Tucker County High School. Qualified firms are invited to contact Jonathan Hicks (jrhicks@k12.wv.us or 304-478-2771) at the Tucker County Board of Education Office to obtain a copy of the Statement of Qualification and submission requirements. Statements of Qualification must be received no later than 2:00 p.m. local prevailing time on January 10, 2024, at the Administrative Office of Tucker County Schools, 100 Education Lane, Parsons, WV 26287. In accordance with the requirements of WV Code 5G-1-3, these statements will be evaluated, and the county will conduct discussions/interview with at least three firms which are deemed to be the most highly qualified to provide the services required.

The Tucker County Board of Education reserves the right to reject any and/or all statements from interested firms and to make the award in any manner deemed to be in its best interest in accordance with WV Code 5G-1-3.

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## Moore, Sherman win annual Christmas Floral display



The winners of the annual Christmas Floral display held at Citizens Bank were Faith Moore, first place, Linda Sherman, second place and Sharon Kidwell, third place. We wish to thank Citizens for their support and the public who voted for their favorite. MGC meets in the Five Rivers Public Library at 6PM the first Tuesday of each month except for January and July. New members are welcome to attend.

## This Week's Submitted Photos



Beverly Ellison submitted this picture of reading the Night Before Christmas book on Christmas Eve eve to folks at the Harold Walters Nature Center.

## WVDNR announces WV State Wildlife Center to close temporarily for annual inspection

FRENCH CREEK, W.Va. — The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) announced today that the West Virginia State Wildlife Center will be closed for its required annual inspection beginning Sunday, December 31, 2023. The Wildlife Center is expected to reopen on Friday, January 5, 2024.

"We thank you for your patience and continued support of the Wildlife Center, and we look forward to expe-

riencing the new year with you all," said WV DNR Director Brett McMillion.

The Gift Shop will maintain the current operating hours of 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The West Virginia State Wildlife Center is a modern zoological facility in Upshur County, displaying native and introduced state wildlife.

For more information, contact the West Virginia State Wildlife Center at 304-924-6211.

## Create your native plant garden

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

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

### What are native plants?

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

### Natives vary by region

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

### Start native planting

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

staff whose expertise can prove invaluable to individuals seeking native varieties.

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

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

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

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

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

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

## YOU CAN HELP...

## WARM THE CHILDREN

Providing New Winter Clothing for Local Children in Need



In Tucker County, local children will go cold this winter without your help.

### Just what is The Parsons Advocate's WARM THE CHILDREN FUND?

The Parsons Advocate's **WARM THE CHILDREN FUND** is neighbors helping neighbors in Tucker County. The Parsons Advocate is asking readers to donate to the fund and the proceeds will be used to buy new warm winter clothing for local children. There are no administrative fees. All the money donated is used to buy new clothing.

### How will the children's clothing be purchased?

The Advocate's **WARM THE CHILDREN** coordinator has made arrangements with a local store and assigns volunteer shoppers to take the children and their parents shopping. Shoppers will be people like you, anyone in the community willing to help by donating a little of their time to this worthwhile cause.

No administrative fees. EVERY CENT received is used to buy winter clothing!

### How can I help?

Simply complete the coupon below and send it with your donation to the address on the coupon. Thanks for your generosity. **All donations are tax deductible.**

### CLIP & MAIL

Enclosed is my donation to the WARM THE CHILDREN FUND. Make checks payable to WARM THE CHILDREN FUND.

Please check if you do not want your name published on the donor list.

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MAIL TO: **WARM THE CHILDREN FUND**

c/o The Parsons Advocate

P.O. Box 345, Parsons, WV 26287

or drop off at the Advocate's office at 219 Central Ave., Parsons, WV

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