

# THE PENDLETON TIMES

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Volume 113, Number 1

Franklin, Pendleton County, West Virginia 26807

Thursday  
January 8, 2026



WVU Medicine and Potomac Highlands Guild have pioneered some of the rural health advances, such as mobile units, laid out in the transformation program.

## Six Categories of Need Addressed By Governor Morrisey's RHT Plan

By Stephen Smoot

With the Mountain State awarded approximately \$1 billion over the next five years under the Rural Healthcare Transformation program, the State of West Virginia sits poised to focus on long-term challenges and needs in rural health care.

Along the way, West Virginia Governor Patrick Morrisey has expressed the hope that this state's experience can lead to benefits in rural areas across the nation.

West Virginia's transformation plan is set to address six categories of need with ideas in place on how to improve outcomes.

First, the plan addresses health care access in remote areas. The governor's website states that "when possible, bring care to where patients are. And when that's not possible, take patients to where the care is." Some organizations serving the most sparsely populated counties, such as WVU Medicine and the mental health provider, Potomac Highlands Guild, have gone mobile with different testing and treatment services already. Both have vehicles taking services to the community while PHG has also pioneered

a drug recovery app.

Two innovations cited for rural health transformation funding have come from both study and experience in rural health care. A "Connected Care Grid" will help build access in remote areas to telehealth services. Additionally, "community institutions such as schools and libraries will be outfitted as access points where patients with poor home broadband access can go to connect to telehealth. Those same institutions will become locations for community clinics, where healthcare providers go on a regular basis to meet patients where they are, in person."

Furthermore, the plan will also support vehicular-based care such as WVU Medicine and PHG have established. Also, EMTs "will be trained and authorized to provide a greater range of local care." Not mentioned in the website description, these added programs, however, will have to come with added financial support to EMS, especially volunteer services facing personnel shortfalls and rising costs of providing service.

Many, however, will need transportation to their health care provider. The "Rural Health

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## Energy Producers Update Officials at Energy Summit

By Stephen Smoot

A number of entities represented at the West Virginia Energy Summit provided updates and descriptions of work during the past year and plans for the future.

Three of these, First Energy, American Electric Power, and Dominion, shared their status.

American Electric Power serves the western tier of counties in West Virginia, including the Charleston and Huntington area. One of the largest coal-fired power plants in the world, the John Amos plant near Charleston, among two others, will receive upgrades to keep those operations "in compliance with EPA regulations."

Since the Obama Administration, coal-fired plants have seen increasing regulation of

operations that have made them increasingly costly to run. AEP, however, adds the explanation that they are "rebuilding aging infrastructure to strengthen reliability throughout several West Virginia counties."

First Energy's update included signing on to Governor Patrick Morrisey's "50 by 50" plan to boost state energy generation capacity from 15 to 50 gigawatts by 2050. Their representative stated that "West Virginia is perfectly positioned to become America's energy powerhouse."

Its priorities, which included a short list of priorities, were shared. These priorities are expected to guide "transformations" undertaken in the effort to support expanding capacity.

They include "large connected loads," "resource adequacy/energy security," "generation capacity," "transmission capacity," and "customer affordability."

First Energy also shared that they put \$1.4 billion into its Mountain State operations from 2022 to 2024 and will invest \$3.5 billion more in the next several years. Much of that will go to new power plants.

Dominion Energy has a much larger footprint in Virginia, but also operates the Mount Storm power plant in Grant County. Its service area runs along the Potomac Valley in Virginia, the southeast portion of the Old Dominion, and counties in the area of Elizabeth City in North Carolina.

"Virginia is the largest data center market in the world," shared Dominion's presentation. Northern Virginia, particularly Ashburn, serves as a center of development. Virginia, however, passed restrictions several years ago on expanding generation and transmission capacity, mak-

ing West Virginia the most convenient source to serve added needs.

Its "local growth forecast" indicated that peak demand will rise from 23,000 MW in 2025 to 43,000 MW in 2034 and have pegged that number as their expansion target. Dominion operations also support those of a significant percentage of federal government operations, including the United States most important defense facilities, such as the naval base at Norfolk and the Pentagon itself.

Dominion explained that its expansion plans will include 17,534 MW from solar, 3,460 from wind, 2,000 from battery storage, 1,944 from nuclear, and 9,454 from natural gas. No plans to expand coal capacity was indicated.

In September of 2024, Mark Bayliss of the West Virginia Broadband co-op and also with the Federal Communications Commission, laid out the need for both expanded power and data centers to stay ahead of the strategic goals of Communist China.

The Pendleton Times reported at the time Bayliss told attendees that "keeping the United States ahead in data center operations is absolutely critical." As long as the United States can keep generating enough energy to stay ahead of data center and other needs, it can remain comfortably ahead of efforts by Red China and its allies, including Russia, to exceed American efforts.

Morrisey's energy expansion plans include adding value to what the state produces. During the Industrial Revolution and after, West Virginia played a primarily "upstream" role in that it extracted commodities, such as coal or timber, and sent them out of state for processing that

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## Community CALENDAR

### Quilters To Gather

The Sew and Sews Quilt Guild will meet at 6 p.m. Monday at Faith Lutheran Church in Franklin. Anyone interested in quilting is welcome to attend.

### Post 30 To Meet

American Legion Pendleton Post 30 will meet at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 14 at the Star Restaurant in Franklin. If planning to attend, contact Steve Conrad or Jack Bowers.

### Free Clothing and Household Items Available Saturday

Free clothing and other household items will be available from 10 a.m. until noon Saturday at the North Fork Baptist Church located at 20430 Mountaineer Drive in Seneca Rocks.

## Capito, Miller Work to Bring Help to West Virginia Health Care Challenges

By Stephen Smoot

Last spring, as the One Big Beautiful Bill moved through negotiations, political battles, and other issues on its way to passage, critics sounded the alarm on cuts to Medicaid included in the bill. The year 2025 saw both cuts to the federal government combined with revenue-enhancing policies to cut the yearly budget deficit and, hopefully in the future, start to pare down the dangerous levels of national debt.

While critics feared that cuts to Medicaid would result in slashed services, projected cuts ran well within Office of Inspector General estimates of the massive waste, fraud, and abuse that drains funds away from those who need it and puts the monies into the hands of criminals inside and outside of the United States. Even still, some feared the overall impact of reduced funding on health care providers.

That said, federal lawmakers added to the One Big Beautiful Bill a Rural Health Transformation Program act. States received the opportunity to submit plans on how to most effectively spend the funds. State of West Virginia officials last month received confirmation that the Mountain State's proposal was accepted by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

United States Senator Shelley Moore Capito noted that "in the crafting of this legislation that helps every American, I was proud to help shape the Rural Health Transformation Program from the start."

Federal officials lauded the program's implementation in approved states. "More than 60 million Americans living in rural areas have the right to equal access to quality care," said Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. in a release. "This historic investment puts local hospitals, clinics, and health workers in control of their communities' health care. Thanks to President Trump's leadership, rural Americans will now have af-



Part of the rural health care transformation program involves helping to recruit and train health care workers and providers for rural facilities such as Pendleton Community Care.

fordable health care close to home, free from bureaucratic obstacles."

The release from Governor Patrick Morrisey's office on the plan specifics adds the goal of helping West Virginians stay in their hometowns, adding that "rural West Virginians should not have to sacrifice their health to live in the places they love."

It goes on to explain that West Virginia can not only improve outcomes for its own people, but also benefit the nation as a whole, stating the state "is, in short, perfectly poised to become the nation's laboratory for rural health transformation."

Aspects that make the Mountain State uniquely positioned to serve in that role include "extremely serious health care deficiencies," "a heavily rural population," state leadership invested in improving outcomes, and a population small enough that the grant can have a truly transformative impact.

"We are grateful for Governor Morrisey's visionary leadership in securing these critical resources for West Virginia's rural health care system," shared Jim Kaufman, quoted in the Parkersburg News and Sentinel. He added that "this nearly \$1 billion investment over five years represents a transformational opportunity to address long-standing challenges in rural healthcare delivery."

United States Representative Carol Miller late last month announced the re-introduction of a separate bill designed to help rural

health care. The goal lies in, as Miller's release stated, strengthening "the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Program so Critical Access Hospitals have the resources they need to improve quality, modernize services, and adapt to new care models."

"It is critical to families in rural West Virginia and across the nation to provide CAHs with the adequate funding needed so folks can access care close to home," said Miller.

According to the National Rural Health Resource Center, "Congress, through the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, established the Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility (Flex) Program, which was designed to help strengthen the financial sustainability of rural hospitals and preserve access to basic hospital services (including emergency departments) in rural communities."

Benefits include having CAHs "that meet Medicare conditions of participation, and certification and survey requirements to be reimbursed on a reasonable cost basis for inpatient and outpatient services."

Through the Flex Grant system, the law "awards funds to states to support CAHs through training and technical assistance to build capacity, encourage innovation, and promote sustainable improvements in the rural health care system."

It also provides resources to boost the kind of data gathering and analysis that can improve processes and efficiencies in health care delivery.

## The Potomac Highlands' 'Warrior Road,' U. S. Route 220, Celebrates a Century in Commission

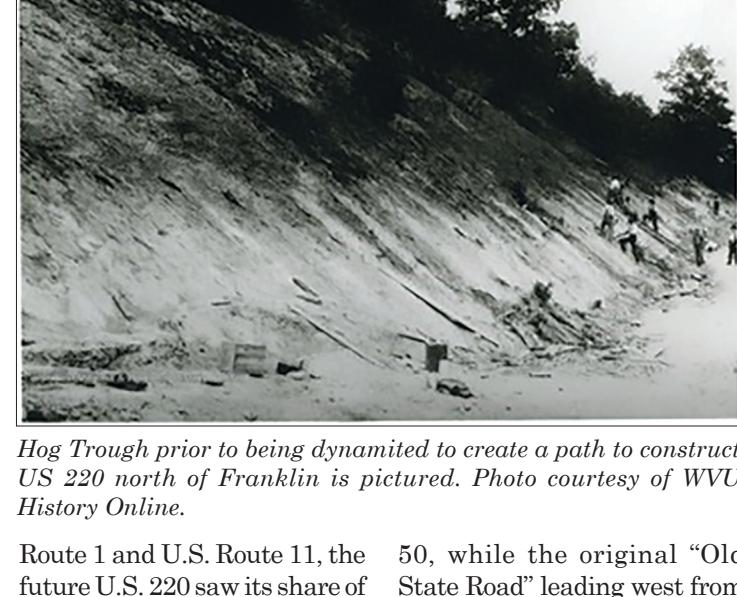
By Stephen Smoot

This opens a series of articles on the importance and the history of United States Route 220 on the 100th anniversary of the official founding of the U.S. Route system.

The Year of Our Lord 2026 features a number of celebrations, first and foremost that of the 250th anniversary of the United States itself. Of somewhat less luster, but still significant, the United States Highway System of "U. S. Routes" was established under President Calvin Coolidge in 1926.

Of local importance is the highway that started off as a long-distance connection of routes of both regional and local importance to the finished product, U.S. Route 220, once known as "the Yellow Brick Road of Rural America." Before it could adopt that role, however, it served as a "warrior road" connecting outposts and providing a path for armed forces using it in attack and retreat.

Though never called "Warrior Road," unlike the roads that would later become U.S.



Hog Trough prior to being dynamited to create a path to construct US 220 north of Franklin is pictured. Photo courtesy of WVU History Online.

Route 1 and U.S. Route 11, the future U.S. 220 saw its share of soldiers and violence.

In the late years as a colony and early years as a Commonwealth, Virginia leaders focused on east to west routes through the northwestern counties. George Washington and War of Independence veteran General Daniel Morgan advocated decades ahead of its establishment for the road that would become U.S. Route

50, while the original "Old State Road" leading west from Richmond, Virginia, eventually connected it to the Kanawha and Ohio valleys on its way to modern Lexington, Kentucky.

Long-distance patterns of migration and trade used these east to west routes and others, such as the National Road, now U.S. Route 40.

In the area that would even-

*Continued on Page 3*

# OBITUARIES



Michael Lee Adams



Ada Belle  
'Doll' Huffman



Kenneth Dale "K.D."  
Puffenbarger



Hank Gaylen Moats

Michael Lee Adams, 79, of Brandywine passed away peacefully on Jan. 4, 2026, in his home surrounded by his family.

He was born on Dec. 26, 1946, in Cumberland, Maryland, to the late Betty Jane Adams.

Mr. Adams was a proud 1964 graduate of Fort Hill High School in Cumberland, Maryland.

He honorably served in the United States Army from 1964-1967.

He worked for more than 40 years in the construction industry as a superintendent and retired from A & J Excavating.

He was an outdoor enthusiast who particularly enjoyed hunting, trapping and going on motorcycle trips with his wife, Cathy. He was a devoted husband, father and grandfather (known as "pappap") who loved spending time with his family and going to his grandchildren's sporting events.

His wife, Cathy (Crider) Adams of Brandywine, survives.

Also surviving are his sons Martin Vaccari (Susanne) of Germany, Shawn Adams (Misty) of Dayton, Virginia, Jeremy Adams (Michelle) of Mt. Sidney, Virginia, and Chad Adams of Grottoes, Virginia; nine grandchildren, Marc, Melissa, Ryan, Kyle, Taylor, Aaron, Lauren, Chase and Camden; three great-grandchildren, Robin, Maxim and Adrian; and a sister, Glenna Koontz (James) of Brandywine.

He was also preceded in death by his daughter, Candace Nicole Adams; a brother, Pat Adams; and two sisters Sandra Mongold and Rose Adams.

The family will receive friends and family at 1 p.m. Saturday at the Basagic Funeral Home in Franklin. At 2 p.m., a short celebration of life will begin with Deacon John Windett officiating.

Online condolences can be expressed at [www.basagic.com](http://www.basagic.com).

In his memory, the family requests that donations be made to the South Fork Volunteer Fire Department, PO Box 297, Brandywine, WV 26802 or to the donor's choice.

Ada Belle "Doll" Huffman, 90, of Franklin passed away on Dec. 30, 2025, at Grant Memorial Hospital in Petersburg.

She was born on Nov. 16, 1935, in Franklin, the daughter of the late William Isaac and Gladys Laura (Huffman) Hedrick.

Mrs. Huffman was a 1953 graduate of Franklin High School and a member of the Friends Run Church of the Brethren.

She had worked at Hanover Shoe Company for 25 years and was a farmer and homemaker.

She took pride in her family and gardening. She instilled a legacy of love and hard work that will forever be cherished by her children and grandchildren.

On Feb. 9, 1955, she married Marshall Rolan Huffman, who preceded her in death on April 25, 2021.

She leaves behind to cherish her memory a daughter, Sherry Hartman (Charles) of Franklin; a son, Ron Huffman (Wendy) of Franklin; three grandchildren, Torrey Huffman (Kerlin), Stephanie Hensley (Richard), and Jessica Hartman (Christian Crocker); nine great-grandchildren, Scott, Jason, Cayden, Dylan, Addy, Gracie, Freddy, Isaac and Allison; and several nieces and nephews.

She was also preceded in death by two sisters, Catherine Bowers and Delores Jean Landes.

Funeral services were held Saturday in the chapel of the Basagic Funeral Home in Franklin with Pastor Mike Lambert and Willard Huffman officiating. Interment was at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Franklin.

Memorials may be made to any Pendleton County Rescue Squad or Friends Run Church of the Brethren.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at [www.basagic.com](http://www.basagic.com).

Kenneth Dale "K.D." Puffenbarger, Sr. of Sugar Grove left this world to walk with the angels on Dec. 23, 2025. He was surrounded by his family and their love for him.

He was born on Nov. 18, 1942, in Stony Run and was the second son to the late Lester Puffenbarger and Glenna Elizabeth (Smith) Puffenbarger.

Mr. Puffenbarger was a proud United States Navy veteran and lifetime member of VFW Post 9666 in Sugar Grove. Following his military service, he found his niche as a professional truck driver with more than 3 million miles accrued throughout his 40+ years driving. He loved to remind his children and grandchildren he had backed up more miles than they had driven forward.

Lutheran by faith, he attended St. Paul Independent Lutheran Church.

The Sugar Grove community was dear to him, and he often shared there was no place he would rather be. He loved his horse "Pride" and his miniature donkeys, "Festus and Miss Kitty," who he took such amazing care of, even when he didn't feel well.

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

Arrangements were entrusted to the Kimble Funeral Home in Franklin.

A Celebration of Life was held Saturday at St. Paul Independent Lutheran Church in Moyers with Pastor Jerry Smith officiating.

Memorials may be made to South Fork Rescue Squad, PO Box 55, Sugar Grove, WV 26815 and VFW Post 9666, c/o George Armstrong, 7128 Sweenlin Valley Road, Brandywine, WV 26802.

He was born on April 6, 1955, in Moyers, the son of the late Cameron Gilbert and Gladys Gertrude (Strother) Moats.

He was a very talented man and loved playing the guitar, especially blues music. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, woodworking and collecting guns.

He was also preceded in death by three brothers, Floyd, Roscoe, Eldon (Cynthia); and four sisters, Loretha, Blanche, Geneva, and Ruby.

He leaves behind to cherish his memory a daughter, Jada Rasheeda Moats of Staunton, Virginia; a son, Jai Rasheed Moats of Staunton, Virginia; a sister, Clara Mae Johnson of Staunton, Virginia; three brothers, Otis Moats (Patty) of Staunton, Virginia, Clarence Moats and Charles Whitney Moats (Faye), all of Franklin; and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Memorials may be made to Moats Chapel, c/o Gloria Moats.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at [www.basagic.com](http://www.basagic.com).



Hank Gaylen Moats

Hank Gaylen Moats, 70, of Bridgewater, Virginia, passed away on Dec. 31, 2025, at Harrisonburg Health and Rehab in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

He was born on April 6, 1955, in Moyers, the son of the late Cameron Gilbert and Gladys Gertrude (Strother) Moats.

Mr. Moats was a 1974 graduate of Franklin High School, and he attended Moats Chapel Church.

He was a very talented man and loved playing the guitar, especially blues music. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, woodworking and collecting guns.

He was a veteran of the United States Navy, where he served as a machinist mate first class.

He leaves behind to cherish his memory a daughter, Jada Rasheeda Moats of Staunton, Virginia; a son, Jai Rasheed Moats of Staunton, Virginia; a sister, Clara Mae Johnson of Staunton, Virginia; three brothers, Otis Moats (Patty) of Staunton, Virginia, Clarence Moats and Charles Whitney Moats (Faye), all of Franklin; and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was also preceded in death by three brothers, Floyd, Roscoe, Eldon (Cynthia); and four sisters, Loretha, Blanche, Geneva, and Ruby.

Funeral services were held Monday in the chapel of the Basagic Funeral Home in Franklin with Pastor Johnny Cook officiating. Interment was at the Cameron G. Moats Cemetery in Moyers with military honors conducted by the U.S. Navy.

Memorials may be made to Moats Chapel, c/o Gloria Moats.

Memories and words of comfort may be left at [www.basagic.com](http://www.basagic.com).

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**MONDAY, JANUARY 12**

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**TUESDAY, JANUARY 13**

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**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14**

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**2026**



Meal times are from 11:45 to 12:45. All meals served with 2% milk & a bread.

Reservations served first.

Menus are subject to change.

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## January Is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month!

Did you know...

- Cervical cancer is a disease in which cells in the cervix grow out of control.
- Each year 13,000 women in the U.S. will get cervical cancer, over 4,000 will die.
- It occurs most often in women over age 30.
- HPV causes cervical cancer.
- Any type of sexual contact transfers HPV.
- The HPV vaccination is recommended for girls and boys ages 11-26.
- All women should begin cervical cancer screening starting at age 21.
- Cervical cancer is the most preventable cancer.

**Talk to your provider about getting screened done!**

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**PEND**

# Six Categories of Need

Continued From Page 1

Link" promises to bring together public transport, ride share services, and volunteers to help to get patients to appointments and serve other related needs. Currently a lot of this need falls on cash-strapped EMS systems who must respond to calls, basically, for a ride to the doctor.

In the Potomac Highlands and far Eastern Panhandle, public transit and volunteers through organizations such as the Retired Senior Volunteer Program have helped to fill those gaps.

"Allowing more patients to regularly make it to their medical appointments will directly improve health outcomes," states the website.

Shortages in personnel do not only affect EMS, but all levels of health care in rural areas. Too many medical professionals get lured by the siren song of big city salaries without considering the reality of big city cost of living.

Rural health transformation in West Virginia will take a page from the new and successful playbook of teacher recruitment. In the Potomac Highlands, through the "Grow Your Own" program at Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College, high school students start their teacher education program at home and can achieve their teaching certificate after only two years attending college.

The Mountain State Care Force will also work with high schools to identify students with an interest in the health care field. "The state will add health care faculty at regional and technical colleges to train more graduates. Financial incentives will be used to attract providers to rural areas and keep them there" while also pulling providers from other states when possible.

Those already in the health care system trying to improve their skills and credentials will receive added help in earning them.

Providers in West Virginia face an extraordinarily high cost per patient ratio. Similar to how rural broadband expansion faces higher costs per customer expansion rates in sparsely populated areas and how school systems in those regions receive vital help under the 1,400 floor plan, the State of West Virginia will work with health care providers in such areas to mitigate those high per capital costs.

According to the site, the "proposal will provide rural practices with technology and administrative support to reduce their operating expenses. And it will transition the state to a value-based care model in which providers have financial incentives to improve outcomes—and thereby decrease costs."

Next comes a painful truth that has gradually emerged in a state that once boasted population work ethic as an economic asset. The governor's release states it starkly, that "West Virginia's economic challenges are directly related to our poor health care outcomes. We have the lowest workforce participation rate

in the country. Thousands of West Virginians who otherwise would participate in the workforce have stopped looking for work because of poor physical or mental health or addiction."

To address this, the proposal includes developing resources under the aegis of a Health to Prosperity pipeline. Chronic conditions need not form a barrier to obtaining work that pays the bills, but does not worsen health. As the site states, "West Virginians with chronic illnesses will receive improved care coordinated with placement services to connect them to jobs that they can perform when their conditions are properly managed."

This category includes helping those who have recovered in their drug addiction to also find gainful work. West Virginia has pioneered a number of programs, such as day report and drug court, that already serve as a strong potential foundation for such an effort.

Not always as popular as programs engineered to help people to improve their outcomes, but just as vital in overall community health, the transformation program adds an element of individual education and personal responsibility. Poor health outcomes later in life often have their origins in poor decisions made earlier.

To reverse this trend," the Personal Health Accelerator—focuses on motivating (and incentivizing) West Virginians to eat better and move more." Part of this involves infusing a competitive spirit between communities in state and against other states. Those that can boast the best collective improvement and outcomes will receive recognition and awards.

Resources will go to expand offerings of healthier food in rural areas, such as a program to "enhance existing food and wellness programs like local farmers markets and healthy hospital menus." Also "innovative care models" will help those with chronic health conditions recover to their best potential. The proposal uses reversing Type 2 diabetes as an example.

Personal responsibility also includes "wellness and prevention education" and expanded access to computerized health care tracking systems, such as blood sugar monitors embedded in the skin or steps trackers for exercise.

Finally, the "program's HealthTech Appalachia initiative will invest—along with private partners—in technologies that address chronic disease and addiction and that promote personal wellness." Here again, the program links health care development with the economic, explaining that innovations can lead to the rise of businesses and jobs.

One of the benefits that West Virginia brings has lain in an honest and proactive approach to battling economic, social, and health challenges. Organizations such as the West Virginia First Foundation, Eastern Action, Potomac Highlands Guild, local farmers markets, and other entities have pioneered much of the groundwork.

The RHT provides a unique opportunity to combine these energies and build upon those efforts to make them greater than the sum of their parts.

# Energy Producers

Continued From Page 1

added value. Locating data centers in state helps to put West Virginia in mid and downstream applications for raw materials extracted here.

Weirton hosts a business that adds value to West Virginia generated power while also serving the needs of data centers and other modern businesses in a different fashion.

Form Energy has three facilities in Somerville, Massachusetts, Bay Area, California, and Weirton. The eight-year-old company employs 450 in its Weirton facility, almost half of its total employee base, to "create low-cost, multi-day energy storage capable of providing cost-effect firm capacity to the electric grid around the globe."

"Multi-day iron batteries" produced there "can store and discharge energy for 100 hours."

According to Form, "unlike lithium-ion batteries, which can only provide energy for a few hours at a time due to their relatively high costs, iron air batteries can deliver energy for multiple days at a time."

The website goes on to speculate that "achieving Form Energy's cost and performance targets will unlock tens of gigawatts of demand for multi-day storage." Production of the batteries also uses materials commonly found in the United States, not requiring trade with foreign adversaries to acquire materials.

PBS' Nova program focused on Form Energy's Weirton plant in 2023. It explained the technology originally developed by NASA. From an article based on the program, "Humans have known for millennia that when water, oxygen, and iron mix, they create rust." It goes on to state that "we've learned more recently that that reaction also releases energy. Iron-air batteries capture that energy and turn it into an electric current – then recharge it by reversing the reaction 'unrusting' the iron."

Data centers utilize huge banks of batteries as part of their operations to ensure that when the grid experiences issues, they do not. A decade ago they best resembled very large automobile batteries, but the technology has advanced since then.

Additionally, mining for lithium is an extensive operation in terms of steps needed to extract lithium from groundwater and also to process it for use. The environmental impact of that process detracts somewhat from the "green" credentials of their chief users, including electric powered vehicles.

The Energy Information Administration of the United States Government also stated early last year that "China dominates global trade of battery minerals," meaning that reliance on lithium batteries is tantamount to reliance on Communist China, America's most powerful foreign adversary.

But Form Energy's use of Appalachian iron and other resources means that Americans benefit and not America's enemies.

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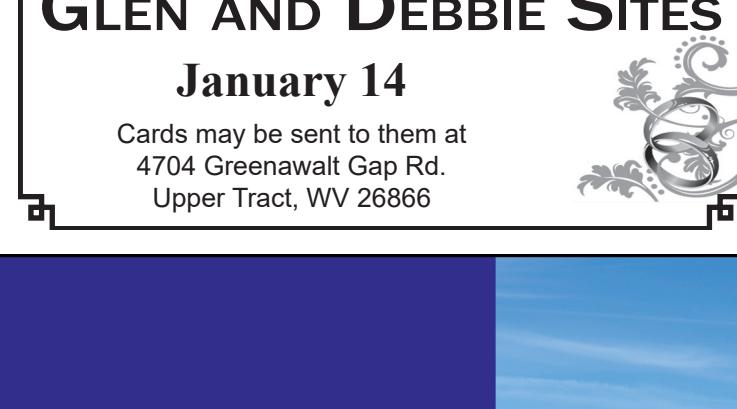
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# TIMES PAST

10 Years Ago  
Week of January 7, 2016

## Brandywine Takes On New Landscape

The primary interchange in Brandywine has undertaken some changes in the last month. Long time landmark, H & J Superette, formerly owned by the Harry Scott family, has been leveled and in addition, excavation is underway across the street on a vacant lot soon to house a new Family Dollar store.

The H & J property to the south of Route 33 was recently purchased by Mark Lambert of Franklin, owner of Long Mountain General Store.

After weighing his options,

Lambert decided he would be money ahead to demolish the former convenience store and start fresh. The new building will be dubbed Brandywine General Store and will feature Sunoco gasoline, on- and off-road diesel, hunting and fishing supplies, gifts and groceries.

H & J Video and Tan,

adjacent to the one-acre site, will be connected to the new structure and will be renovated to feature a kitchen and eating area. Norman "Sonny" Shaw of Marlinton is overseeing construction of the new business.

Lambert hopes to open the doors to his new venture in early spring.

The vacant lot to the north of the site has also undergone some changes. M & W Excavating of Brandywine broke ground on Nov. 5 on the construction site of a Family Dollar store. The \$2.2 million project will include over 8,300 square feet of retail space and will bring approximately 10-12 new jobs to the community.

According to courthouse documents, the property, a little over two acres, is owned by Brandywine FDS, LLC, of Charlotte, N.C.

20 Years Ago  
Week of January 5, 2006

## Commission Approves FHS Class Portraits in Community Building

It isn't only a matter of

properly preserving the history of Franklin High School graduating classes.

It also has to do with the preservation of a big piece of Pendleton County history.

Those were the words of Donna Hoover (Circleville High (class of 1963) and her husband, Olin, who graduated from Franklin in 1960 and was the high school's principal from 1980 until it was closed in 1998 to make for Pendleton County High School.

What the "it" refers to is finding a fitting place to hang the class portraits of every Franklin High School class, the same class photos that once graced the walls of the old high school.

On Tuesday morning, the Hoovers and county school superintendent Doug Lambert met with the Pendleton County

Commission to ask for approval to honor the FHS class portraits—all 68 of them—by displaying them in the Pendleton Community Building. The commission unanimously voted to allow that to happen.

Since 1998, FHS portraits have been gathering dust in the Kline building.

Some time ago, there was intermittent discussion at school board meetings of getting all the Circleville and Franklin class photos and hanging them on a wall in the PCHS building.

However, the Circleville class portraits are now on striking display in the restored Circleville High School building.

"I'm so proud of what the CHS Preservation committee for everything they've done," Donna Hoover said. "Circleville doesn't begrudge Franklin doing for their history what the Circleville alumni have done for ours."

Olin Hoover, who made it a personal project to find and assemble about six years' worth of missing FHS class portraits when he was the principal, said that a couple of class portraits appear to be missing from the Kline building.

It appears that they may have been loaned for class reunions and haven't yet been returned.

Also, some of the glass on the picture frames is broken and needs to be repaired.

Some of the old portraits need to be cleaned and restored. The average size of the older class composites is 27 inches by 29 and one half inches. For the larger ones, the average size is 32 by three eighths inches by 42 and one half inches.

30 Years Ago  
Week of January 4, 1996

## SUGAR GROVE

A friend of the writer gave her a list which was presented as rules for having a happy 1996. Feel free to take any or all items on the list and use them as resolutions. If you follow them, your new year will certainly be a happy one.

Hug a kid, cry during movies, tell a joke, cuddle a baby, learn to watch snails, laugh at Republicans, laugh at Democrats, walk somewhere, hug trees, open up, listen to old people, giggle with children, hug a friend, nuzzle a puppy, laugh a lot, believe in magic, give money away, take lots of naps, make friends with freedom and uncertainty, plant impossible gardens, swing as high as you can on a swing set...by moonlight, cultivate moods, write thank-you letters, play with everything, take moon baths — Have a Happy New Year!

40 Years Ago  
Week of January 9, 1986

## Lottery Tickets Go on Sale Today; Tickets Available in Pendleton

Pendleton County will be

well supplied with West Virginia Lottery tickets when they go on sale today at 12:15 p.m. Doris Bonner of Elkins, lottery marketing specialist, was in Pendleton County Monday delivering lottery tickets to the seven retail outlets that will handle the sale of lottery tickets here.

In Pendleton County, tickets will be sold at five locations in Franklin— Franklin IGA Store, Franklin Meat Market, High's Dairy Store, Thompson's Motel and the West Virginia ABC Store; and at Raines Store at Riverton and at Kile's Store at Upper Tract.

## Contracts To Be Let Friday for Work on South Branch

Contractors interested in bidding on river channel work on the South Branch of the Potomac River in Pendleton County from Franklin south to the Highland County line will get a first hand view of the work to be done today when they are taken on a tour of the river by personnel of the Soil Conservation Service.

Similar plans will be followed in reclaiming the following reaches of Potomac River tributaries:

North Fork from Virginia to Mouth of Seneca, North Fork from Mouth of Seneca to the mouth, South Branch from Virginia to Route 33, South Branch from Route 33 to Moorefield, South Branch from Moorefield to the Trough and including Lost River and New Creek, the Smoke Hole and Trough sections of the South Branch, South Branch from the Trough to the mouth, and the South Fork in Pendleton County.

50 Years Ago  
Week of January 8, 1976

## DAHMER

Some weeks ago, the Dahmer writer mentioned that the month of February 1976, had five Sundays. A nice letter was received from Alonzo Teter of Oneida, stating the people on that side of the mountain enjoyed a good riddle or joke and that we are wondering if you know when was the last time February had five Sundays.

The last time was 1948, the one before that was 1920, this year 1976, and no more in this century. Mr. Teter knew the answer and he made me scratch my head on that one.

60 Years Ago  
Week of January 6, 1966

## One of Town's Oldest Retail Firms Included Among First-of-Year Sales

One of Franklin's oldest mercantile firms changed hands January 1 in a rash of property transactions which appeared to highlight the beginning of the new year in Franklin.

Boggs Mercantile Company, which has been

one of Franklin's leading retail establishments under one name or another since its founding back in the 1880s, was sold Saturday by Miss Sylvia Boggs to Mr. and Mrs. Grant Alt of Franklin.

The firm was founded by Miss Boggs' father, the late M. K. Boggs in the early 1880s. He had various partners in the business and the firm was operated under various names until 1930 when the business was taken over by Miss Boggs. She has operated it under the name of Boggs Mercantile Company since that time.

When Miss Boggs assumed management of the firm in 1930, the store was located on the east side of Main Street next to the Mary Spaulding residence where the Boggs apartment building is now located. In 1932 Miss Boggs built the present store building on the west side of Main Street and moved the business to that location.

Among other property

transactions which marked the beginning of the new year in Franklin was the purchase by Sites Chevrolet, Inc., of three separate properties from Mrs. Laurene Rettner.

Included in the Sites Chevrolet, Inc., purchase were a parking lot on Pine Street which the Chevrolet distributor has used under lease for a number of years as a used car lot, a dwelling house and lot on the corner of High Street and Spruce Street adjoining the Riddle Meat Market, and a dwelling house and lot on the corner of High Street and the alley leading from High Street to the Franklin Grade School.

In another transaction, Robert Jackson Sites of Franklin purchased the building now occupied by Sites Parts Company from Mrs. Pauline Keller, Eleanor Kay Mitchell and Judy Ann Mitchell.

The Sites Parts Company building is located on the corner of Main Street and Spruce Street and is the building originally occupied by the Franklin Bank and later used as the Franklin Post Office.

## County Has 67 Car Wrecks in '65

A total of 67 automobile accidents occurred in Pendleton County during 1965, an accident analysis recently completed by the local State Police Detachment shows.

The accidents resulted in 45 personal injuries, one fatality, and \$62,010 in property damage. Officers made 50 arrests as a result of the accidents.

Upon completing the analysis, officers said the most dangerous place in the county is the concrete bridge on Route 33 in Brandywine.

## COW HAS 4 CALVES IN 1 YEAR

Mr. Marvin Simmons is the proud owner of a cow having four calves in 1965. The cow gave birth to a set of twins

on January 4 and again on December 21. All the calves were living and healthy.

70 Years Ago  
Week of January 5, 1956

## DAHMER

Wyoming, Delaware  
December 17, 1955

Dear Mr. Dahmer,

It has just occurred to me that fifty years ago this winter you taught our school on Upper Timber Ridge.

Though I was but a small lad at that time, I seem to remember some of those days almost as well as if it were but yesterday.

You were an excellent teacher, Mr. Dahmer; so fair and just in your dealings with the pupils, and so interested in their welfare and training. So I wish to take this opportunity to thank you.

J. Mayne Bennett

## EDITORIALS

### "Sixteen Tons" --

One of the current hit songs is entitled "Sixteen Tons"— a lament depicting the hard lot of the coal miners. It makes a good song but it's to be hoped that no one gains the impression it describes today's conditions in the mines. Changes in coal mining have been revolutionary with power taking the place of muscle.

The coal miner is one of the highest paid industrial workers in the nation. Modern machinery to accomplish almost every task connected with the production of coal is rapidly making hand labor a thing of the past. The miner is becoming a highly skilled machine operator. Just in the last five years progress has been phenomenally rapid, with production per man-day increasing from 6-3/4 tons to approximately 10 tons.

Mechanization, in addition to easing the lot of the miner, has also been of prime importance in the industry's efforts to meet the competition of other fuels and to provide abundant high-grade coal tailored to fit the needs of every class of consumer from large industrial boiler to small home furnaces.

Yes, the coal industry depicted in "Sixteen Tons" is long gone in America. All forecasts indicate that the energy demands of the energy demands of our nation will grow at an increasing rate for as far as we now can see into future years. All forms of energy, whether they be oil, coal, gas or atomic, will be called upon to meet the demand which rapidly increasing energy requirements will place upon it.

THE PENDLETON TIMES  
(USPS 425-240)  
(ISSN 2833-8979)  
Michael Showell, Publisher

The Pendleton Times is published weekly by Mountain Media LLC, 77 North Main St., Franklin WV 26807. Periodicals Postage Paid at Franklin WV 26807 and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Pendleton Times P.O. Box 906, Franklin, WV 26807

Subscription Rate:  
\$40.00 a Year In-State  
\$42.00 a Year Out-of-State  
Phone: 304-358-2304  
Email: ads@pendletontimes.com

## Smith Creek/ Friends Run

by Dave Ellis

Welcome to the new year of 2026. Who knows what the future of this year will be? But, take each day at a time and enjoy what the good Lord blesses one with.

Smith Creek and Friends Run Churches of the Brethren: shut-ins — Bucky Moyers, Pam Riner, Anna Tesi, Larry Moyers, Sandy Washburn, Mary Alice Simmons, Anna Lee Mitchell, Carol Propst and Romona Luckel; prayer list — Richard Campbell, Joshua Shirk, Ava George, Kenny Williams, Debbie Horst, Neal Eye, Ruth Bauer, Rick Waggy, Gloria Moats, Ruthalene Judy, David Berg, Tim and Dee McCormick, Jessie Simmons, Minny Rhoads, Larry Rexrode, Troy Bennett, Jim Fawley, Tom and Judy Borror, Danny Nelson, David M. Parkinson, Cleo Simmons, Tom Butterworth, Sherry Hedrick, Bobby Parsons, Robert Bennett, Rick Phares, Chuck Hiett, Virgil "Bub" Yokum, Hannah Hedrick, Barbara Judy Harman, Betty Smith, John Moyers, Norma Auville, Shana Johnson, Woody Hoover, Sherry Chambers, Ginger Kimble, Kaylee Bennett, Bruce Lambert, Paul Mallow, Kristin Bodkin, Bonnie Mitchell, Holly Beachler, Donald Burns, Wayne Simmons, Phil Downs, Glenn Sites, Genevieve Bible, Jennifer Scott, Earl Smith, Brian Calhoun, Bobby Bodkin and the family of Ada Belle Huffman.

Prayer thought: "Accepting Jesus' sacrifice for the wrong things we've done means waking up to a new day, completely free from the burden of sin."

High and low temperatures and precipitation for Dec. 29 through Jan. 4 were as follows: Dec. 29 - 56°, 19° (59°, 45°, .11"), Dec. 30 - 23°, 17°, .25" snow (53°, 41°), Dec. 31 - 33°, 8° (50°, 36°), Jan. 1 - 33°, 22°, .25" snow (35°, 28°), Jan. 2 - 39°, 29° (31°, 25°), Jan. 3 - 41°, 31° (34°, 19°, 25" snow) and Jan. 4 - 36°, 24° (21°, 15°).

Total rainfall for December was .59", compared to 2.25" in December of 2024. Rainfall for 2025 was 43.36", compared to 53.52" in 2024.

Total snowfall for December was 7.75", compared to .5" in December of 2024. Snowfall for 2025 was 27.25", compared to 16.25" in 2024.

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# Community Loses Admired and Respected Resident

## Sugar Grove

By Paula Mitchell

The third of six children born to Lester and Glenna Puffenbarger on Nov. 18, 1942, was Kenneth Dale "K.D." Puffenbarger. The family lived at the "head of Stoney Run" in the home of Evelyn Varner, after which they moved to the Mongold Place. It was in his teenaged years that he had his mother to sign for him to join the Navy, spending about four years of service, basically in Adak, Alaska.

When he was in the Alexander hospital, he met his wife, Verla, who worked at the Lunch Box which was owned and operated by K.D.'s uncles. They married Sept. 25, 1964, after which they spent some time in Kentucky to help take care of Verla's mother. Upon their return to Sugar Grove, they lived in Possum Trot, next to the Virgil Homan home.

Three children joined the family, Danita, Beth, and Kennie with all attending the local schools. In time he had five grandchildren, and two great-grandsons. The family then moved to Stoney Run where K.D. had bought some land from his aunt and uncle, Leora and Everett Grogg.

K.D. took up professional truck driving, leaving out Sunday afternoon and returning Friday. Prior to leaving, Danita would shine his boots, after which the children would line up to bid their goodbyes. For his 44 years of trucking, he was given the plaque for the 3 million Mile Club, of which he was very proud. He worked for Bowman Bag Company, and North and South Lines. His handle was "Tricky Foot," and he kept his truck in a meticulous condition. As a matter of fact, all of his vehicles would be kept in a meticulous order.

He taught all of his children to learn to drive with a stick shift. He felt that they would be quite knowledgeable under any circumstance were they to have this experience.

His love for animals was evident with his horse "Pride" and miniature donkeys, "Festus" and "Miss Kitty." Making sure they were well taken care of was his main objective.

The VFW was near and dear to his heart. He was a lifetime member of the VFW Post 9666, having been a U.S. Navy veteran. The Saturday Sugar Grove Lions Club and VFW barbecue chicken was where he would stock up on chicken for his family. K.D. was a neat freak and very particular in the landscape that surrounded his home. His hobby — he loved to be always working in the Sugar Grove community which he loved. He especially loved eating hot dogs!

Being a Lutheran all of his days, his

funeral was held at St. Paul Independent Church. A hymn that speaks to the

occasion would be: "And when my task on earth is done, When, by Thy grace, the

vict'ry's won, E'en death's cold wave I will

not flee, Since God thro' Jordan leadeth



*Kenneth Dale "K.D." Puffenbarger*

me. He leadeth me, He leadeth me! By His own hand He leadeth me! His faithful foll'wer I would be, For by His hand he leadeth me."

Sympathy is extended to the family during this difficult time.

New Years little instructions for daily living include the following:

1. Pause to notice beauty.
2. Be kinder than necessary; e.g. if a person sees someone being ignored, find a way to include them.
3. Don't dwell upon minor things that could affect relationships.

4. If one sees someone falling behind, walk with them.

5. Always remind people of their worth.

6. Family means having someone to love one unconditionally in spite of a person and one's shortcomings. Family is loving and supporting one another even when it's not easy to do so. Be kind.

Christmas decorations were pretty scant along all roads leading out of Sugar Grove. The writer believes that this is the first time in 100 years that Sugar Grove did not have any Christmas decorations.

Tuesday morning found the residents enjoying about an inch of snow. Winds have been very chilling with temperatures staying very low.

The first full moon of 2026 was the Wolf supermoon, appearing larger than normal in the sky due to being near the closest point of its earthly orbit.

This week's quotes are as follows:

"When you begin a journey of revenge, start by digging two graves: one for your enemy, and one for yourself." — Jodi Picoult

"Friendship is a sheltering tree." — Samuel Taylor Coleridge

"A lie doesn't become truth. Wrong doesn't become right and evil doesn't become good, just because it's accepted by the majority." — Booker T. Washington

"Gratitude. Help us to see what is there instead of what isn't." — Annette Bridges

"Heart is what separates the good from the great." — Michael Jordan

Sitting by the fireplace is the best place to hear the "Talk of The Grove."

Christmas is a time for families to enjoy the season with dinners that include much laughter.

At the home of Tom and Paula Mitchell, much fun and delicious foods that was surrounded with

many Christmas memories, was enjoyed by Jennifer, Tim and Morgan Hoover of Bridgewater, Virginia, Allison and Damian Morris of Fulks Run, Virginia, Janelle, Jace, Destiny and Ben Sroka of Charlotte North Carolina, and Brandon, Cara, Macie, Carson, and Carly Mitchell.

Saturday found 30+ family and friends gathering at the home of Evelyn Varner to enjoy their Christmas dinner with delicious foods and lots of laughter. A good time was had by all in attendance. New Year's Eve found Evelyn, Rose Brackman, Janet Judy and Terry Harper motoring to Dayton's Victory Fellowship Church to enjoy Jeff and Sherri Easter's concert. They also enjoyed hearing the Will and Langdon Reid duo.

During Christmas break, Wesley, Becky, Emma, Ben and Nathan Puffenbarger visited with Wesley's aunt, Bonnie Reynolds in Toronto, Ohio. They also saw the Christmas lights at Oglebay Resort in Wheeling.

While visiting with Phil Downs, Tara Kelley and Amelia Gibson attended the funeral of K.D. Puffenbarger. Phil reports that he visited with his aunt, Cleo Simmons, on Christmas Day, and with the K.D. Puffenbarger family on Christmas Eve.

Natasha Nieves of Boca Raton, Florida, spent several days visiting with her grandparents, Willard and Judy Rader. Willard, Judy and Natasha enjoyed a delicious Christmas Eve noon meal and visiting in the beautiful home of Mike and Robin DelBiondo in Stoney Run. They also enjoyed Christmas Eve playing games and good food in the home of Willie and Donna Rader. Natalie Nieves, granddaughter, and Alex Fattore of Huntington also spent several days visiting with Willard and Judy. Willard, Judy, Natasha, Natalie and Alex also had another delicious meal on Christmas Day in the home of Benny and Linda Custer. They had a great Christmas.

Great-great-grandmother, Mary Lea Rexrode of Franklin, and great-grandparents, Wayne and Paula Price, are very proud at the birth of Wrenley Elizabeth Rexrode. She was born Nov. 4, having the same birthday as her grandmother, Rachel Rexrode. Congratulations, Addison and Destiny.

Helen and Rhonda Nash enjoyed the holiday season with Christmas celebrations over the course of several days. Their visitors included Vickie Nash of Fredericksburg, Virginia, Todd and Cathy Nash of Kinston, North Carolina, Terri Lowery of Spotsylvania, Virginia, Holly Mangum and children, Kinsley and Levi of Rutherford, Virginia, Dorsey and Scott Owens of Buckhannon and Greg and Julie Jessee of Monterey, Virginia. Christmas gifts are still under their tree, awaiting more loved ones. They may extend the season into midwinter and continue to light up the dark nights.

Clickety-clacks for the chin wagers are as follows:

• A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.

• Chickens can distinguish between 100 faces.

• Ketchikan, Alaska, is the home to one of the world's largest stands of totem poles.

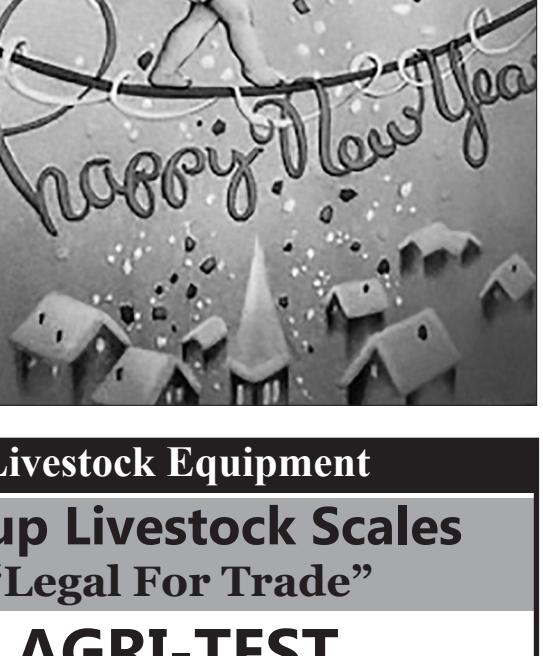
• Separate mountain ranges in Papua, New Guinea, have called for each village to have its own language with around 1,000 languages spoken on the island.

Birthdays for January include Janelle Mitchell Sroka, Carroll Propst, Lia Hull and Wanda Shaffer, first; Lyle Simmons, second; Wendell Nelson, fourth; Ivan

Lamb and Kathy McKenzie, fifth; Laney Bowers, seventh; Bridget Nelson, Sue Kimble and Jeff Pitsenbarger, eighth; Ronnie Kimble and Bonnie Huffman, ninth; Charles Nelson, Julie Koontz and Helen Nash, 10th; Joanne Moyers, 11th; Bob Hoops and Donna Bowers, 12th; Patsy Hammer, Margaret Hedrick and Amy Gardiner, 13th; Tammy Mitts, Joyce Burgoyne and Ricky Bennett, 14th; Danielle Hull and Junior Crider, 15th; and Danny Wilburn, 16th.

Concerns are for Mike Adams, Charles Anderson, Alfred Armstrong, Joan and Roger Ashley, Mike Baker, Dave Basagic, Allen Beachler, Bobbie Bodkin, "Bo" Boggs, the John Burns family, Larry Byers, Doreen Calhoun, Joyce Calhoun, Marie Cole, Kim Crane, the Ronnie Crisco family, Stanley Dahmer, Kim Davis, Tommy Davis, Phil Downs, Steve Durham, Jennifer Errett, Isaac Eye, Mary Eye, Carl Gant, David Gillispie, Nan Goland, Nancy Gonshor, Patsy Green, JC Hammer, Steve and Armanda Heavner, Hannah Hedrick, Jack and Starr Hedrick, Chuck and Tracy Hiett, Jim Hiner, Evan Hise, Tim Hively, Edsel and Mary Ann Hogan, Karen Holsten, Julia Homan, Charlie Marie Hoover, Keith Hoover, Debbie Horst, Bob and Cynthia Hurry, Mike and Lisa Jamison, Linda Jones, Richard Judy, Marsha Keller, Tara Kelley, Ruth Kile, Kim Kline, Tracie Knight, Laura Kropp, Melissa Lambert, Robert Lambert, Rex Landis, Shannon Maloy, Donna Mallow, Roger and Skip Mallow, Audree Marsh, Anna Mauzy, Ed May, Dave McConnell, Gary McDonald, Rose Miller, Bruce Minor, Carroll and Dottie Mitchell, Dennis and Jamie Mitchell, Tom Mitchell, Barbara Moats, Gloria Moats, Sherri Moyers, Helen Nash, Aaron Nelson, Dominique Nelson, Dwight Nelson, Ruth Nelson, Cheryle Paine, Terri Parker, Andy Pond, Wayne Price, Janice Propst, Alda Propst, Mike Propst, Sheldon Propst, Eldon "Butch" Puffenbarger, the K.D. Puffenbarger family, Tom Rader, Willard Rader, Jason Rexrode, Jimmy Rexrode, Linda Fay Rexrode, Vesta Ruckman, Bernie Sasser, Annie Simmons, Erin Simmons, Eva Simmons, Greg Simmons, Judy Simmons, Nelson Simmons, Tonya Simon, Robbie Sites, Mike Skiles, Bruce Smith, Ed and Carolyn Smith, Iva Smith, Natalie Stephenson, Tina Stuben, Steve Stump, Carolyn Thomas, Linda and Larry Vandevander, Judy Vetter, Junior Waggy, Mary Louise Waldschlager, Rene White, Sherry Wilfong, Judy Williams, Patty Willis and Ann and Ed Wimer.

The writer wishes her readers "A Happy New Year!"



## A Heartfelt Thank You



As our 2025 Salvation Army bell ringing season ends, we want to express our thanks to the many bell ringers — you are so appreciated for giving of your time to this worthy cause. To all of you who dropped coins or cash into the kettle, our most sincere thanks. Even during these tough economic times, you have opened your hearts and reached into your pockets, giving generously to help your neighbors in need here in Pendleton County, and we graciously thank each and every one of you for your kindness and generosity.

We also want to thank the owners of T&K Markets for giving us a warm, dry place to ring the bell, and to the store employees for their pleasantness and courtesy shown to us.

For those in need of assistance from the Pendleton County Salvation Army collections, please contact Edna Mullenax at the Pendleton County Family Support Center in Franklin.

Barb Hamilton and Judy Grimm  
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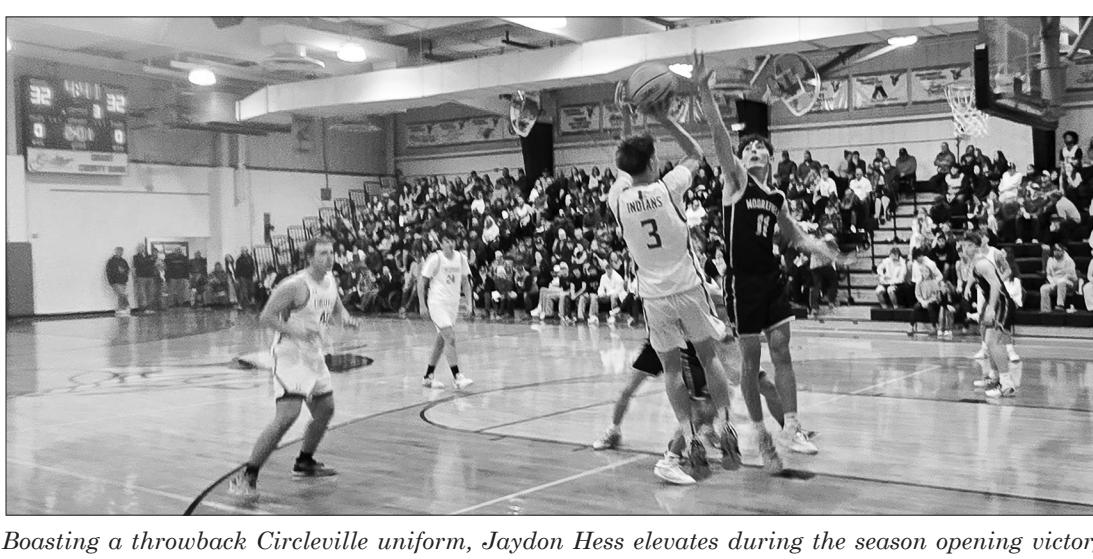
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Boasting a throwback Circleville uniform, Jaydon Hess elevates during the season opening victory over Moorefield at Petersburg.

## Holiday Joy As Pendleton Defeats Moorefield in Season Opener

By Stephen Smoot

One of the worries of Pendleton County boys' basketball coaches in early December lay in the limited practices available for the football players who pushed to the semifinals in November. Would they have enough time to master the plays and get in "basketball shape?"

Four weeks after that, the unruly weather had kept the team off the court, but allowed much more time for coaches to get the team prepared for the season. For the Wildcats, however, their season opened in Petersburg, in front of a half hostile and thoroughly riled up crowd, and against the rival that gets a Wildcat's blood up the most.

Game one of the season versus Moorefield at the Petersburg Holiday Tournament is normally not ideal, but don't tell that to first-year coach Josh Owens or his squad.

An unexpected resignation left Owens to steer the team. On this day, he had Travis Heavner, the girls' head coach, on the bench beside him. Owens shared that he will soon round out his staff with former star player Clayton Kisamore and also Rod Cooper. Cooper last led the Wildcat volleyball squad into its first of three straight state tournament appearances.

Fans likely had a double take as they entered the gymnasium, with Pendleton County sporting throwback Circleville High School uniforms. They would don those of Franklin High School on night two in the title game against Petersburg.

Moorefield seized the opening tip, but it took time for the teams to feel each other out. The Wildcats had added rust from not yet having played. The Yellow Jackets took the first draw of blood as they connected on a post move and layup. A foul called on the play gave them a free throw, which they converted for an early 3-0 lead about two minutes and a handful of seconds into the contest.

Scoring in the first quarter came as often as rain in the second half of last year. With 4:40 left in the quarter, Jaydon Hess put Pendleton County on the scoreboard when he floated in and completed a finger roll, cutting the deficit to 3-2. On the next possession, Henry Warner took two big dribbles in from the wing, pulled up from seven feet, and put the Wildcats in the lead.

The Yellow Jackets then applied the sting in a six to nothing run, giving them a 9-4 advantage. At the 2:40 mark, Chase Owens opened up on Moorefield, burying a three-point shot from the top of the key. The Wildcats forced a steal, then Travis Owens connected on a three-point shot from the wing for a 10-9 lead.

Moorefield hit a free throw and a layup to get out to a 12-10 lead, but Colton Roberson took an inbounds pass for a layup to tie it up. The quarter ended with a Moorefield last second three and a one-point deficit.

Pendleton County and Moorefield traded punches like evenly matched heavyweights in the second quarter. At 6:05, Chase Owens' 12-foot jumper put his team up 17-16, but two Yellow Jacket layups reversed that to a 20-17 advantage for the opposition. At the 2:05 mark, Moorefield appeared to have established momentum, seizing a 25-19 lead, their largest of the game.

Hess then took a steal down the lane and drew a foul, connecting on both charity shots. Chase Owens drove the middle on the next possession, kicking it out to Hess who buried a corner three. A Hess pass to a cutting Travis Owens cut the Moorefield lead to one.

The first half concluded when Hess again found with precision passing a player near the basket, this time Roberson whose layup gave his squad a slender 28-27 halftime lead.

Hess helped to set the second half tone on the first play, stealing the ball and driving in for a layup. Moorefield completed a three-point shot, but Hess found Cashton Kisamore for an inside score. Scoring came sparsely again in this quarter, but by the 2:23 mark, the opposition had battled out to a four point lead.

Then Kisamore's pass from one post to the other got Roberson a layup. Travis Owens' kickout to Hess for a three at the 1:27 point put his team up 39-38.

Then came a play that by the end of the game looked like a backbreaker.

Chase Owens exploded into the passing lanes, leaping to grab a steal, which he then took in himself for a layup and a 41-38 lead. Two more three-point shots blew the game open for Pendleton County by quarter's end.

Coach Owens explained after that game that "we mixed in the one-one-three and two-three zone defenses to get them off balance." That slowed down the Moorefield offense, for the most part, forcing the Yellow Jackets to run long offensive sets to look for a shot, eating valuable time as they did.

Meanwhile, the Wildcats continued to put up points. Travis Owens found Kisamore on the post. He shifted, pivoted, and maneuvered through two defenders to lay the ball in. Between the five and four minute marks, Pendleton County cruised with an 11-point advantage.

Then came a ghost from the past.

Two years ago in the same tournament and against the same team, Pendleton County enjoyed a similarly comfortable lead. Moorefield then exploded in the final minutes, bringing frantic energy on offense and defense, willing their way to the win.

Between four and three minutes remaining, Moorefield went into a press, dialing up the intensity on offense and defense. Two steals led to five points and cut the lead to 53-47 with 3:09 left.

Chase Owens scored a layup with 2:51 left. Then Roberson swiped the ball from Moorefield, leading to a Travis Owens corner three. Same player took a Yellow Jacket miss, launched a long pass, and watched Hess lay it up for a 60-47 advantage with 1:45 left.

Both teams got three more to end the game with the score 63-50.

Coach Owens praised his squad, saying, "The boys have been playing on teams together since first grade. These guys know the game."

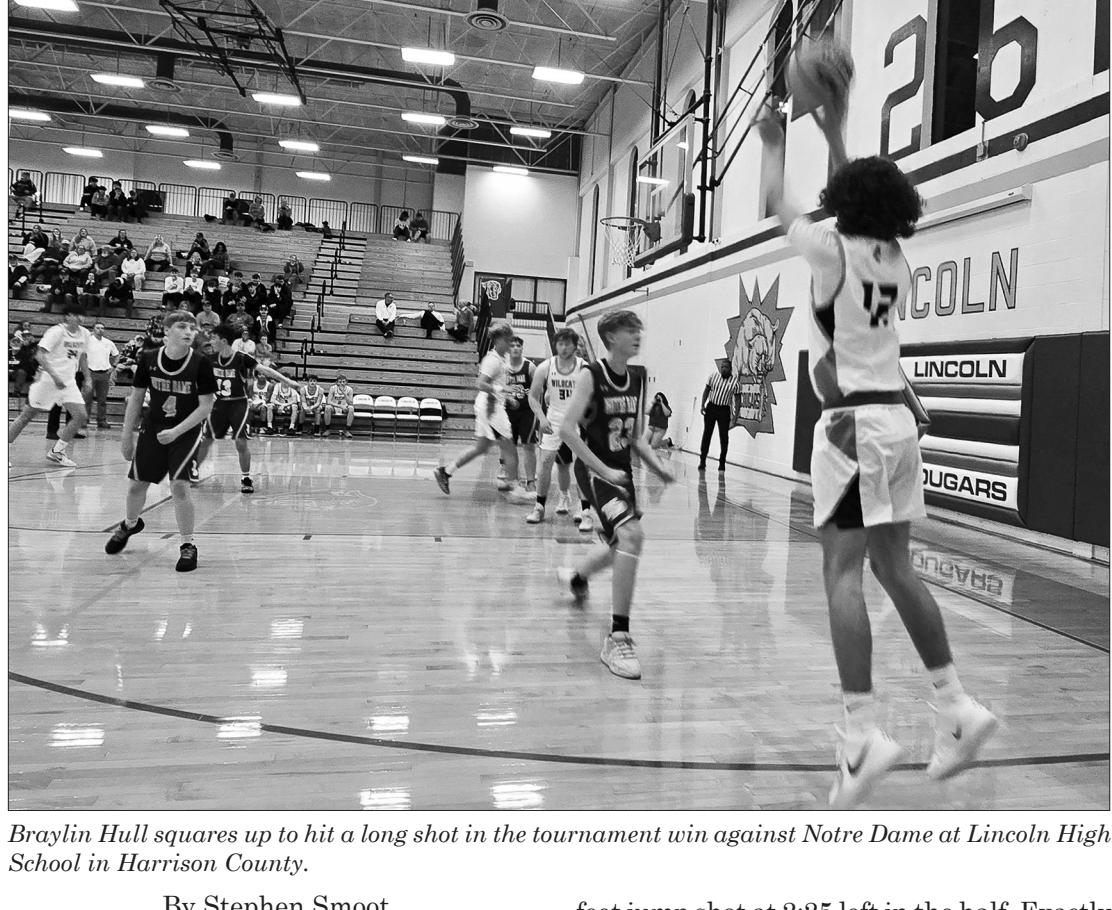
"I'm very proud of them," he said.

Chase Owens led with 21 points, followed by Hess with 15, Travis Owens with eight, Kisamore seven, Warner four, and Ty Heavner with two.

In the title game, Petersburg held off the Wildcats and earned a 54-53 victory.

The Wildcats will host the Yellow Jackets beginning at 6:15 p.m. on Saturday.

## Wildcats Power through Fighting Irish on Way to Winning Tournament in Shinnston



Braylin Hull squares up to hit a long shot in the tournament win against Notre Dame at Lincoln High School in Harrison County.

By Stephen Smoot

The 2025-26 version of the Pendleton County basketball team has truly embraced the idea of "better late than never." After missing almost the entire month of December due to postponed contests, the Wildcats took on two Class AA teams to open the season. They bullded through Moorefield and came within a point of upsetting tournament host Petersburg.

From one tournament to the next, Pendleton County took the long bus trip to Shinnston for a two-day tournament, facing the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame High School in Clarksburg.

There, Pendleton County posted a breakout statement win as it dictated the game on both ends of the floor.

Notre Dame won the tip as the solid senior Brayden Helmick elevated for the ball. Helmick and guard Jovanni Minnoci served as the two focal points of the offense, one inside, one out.

Jaydon Hess got the Wildcats started, however, when he fired a pass inside to Cashton Kisamore for the first points of the game. Forty seconds later, Chase Owens teed up a three-point shot from the top of the key and buried it. He would connect on seven of 10 for three-point range alone for a blistering 70 percent from deep.

Helmick overpowered the Wildcat inside for the Fighting Irish's first score, but Owens then drained a three-pointer from the corner. At 5:21, the squad from Clarksburg closed the score to within 8-7. That was the closest they came to Pendleton County for the remainder of the evening.

Travis Owens quickly tipped in a Hess miss to extend the lead to 10-7, followed by a reverse layup on a baseline drive, courtesy of Chase Owens. From then through the rest of the first, the Wildcats built up a 24-17 lead from which to open up the second quarter.

Early in the second, the Fighting Irish had opportunities. They hit a three to close the lead to 24-20, then had a three on one fast break chance. Hess, however, used his athleticism to disrupt the play.

From the 7:15 mark until about 3:15, the Wildcats scored 13 unanswered, including two threes from Tony Vanmeter shortly after he checked into the contest. He would hit three of three from deep on the evening while bringing tight and active defense out front.

Helmick made two layups to break the run, but Pendleton County kept running wild on the scoreboard. Henry Warner drove from the wing, pulled up, and hit a silky smooth 12-

foot jump shot at 2:25 left in the half. Exactly one minute later, Travis Owens snagged a steal, drove the length of the floor, and brought the house down with a two-handed slam dunk.

Defense and rebounding limited Notre Dame's shooting chances. Ty Heavner picked up a steal with 2:59 left, then blocked a shot shortly thereafter. Dalton Rohrbaugh came in and kept the Irish off the boards, picking up two in the final minute to close out the half.

Josh Owens, head coach, opened the third quarter with a 49-27 advantage and his reserves on the floor. They did not miss a beat with the new player grouping as Cole Harper hit a three only 30 seconds in. He scored on the next play by grabbing an offensive rebound and laying the ball in for a 54-27 lead. A Vanmeter steal was fired ahead to Cayson Armstrong, who drove in for a layup.

He scored again two minutes later to set the lead at 61-27.

Notre Dame scored four points in the quarter as Pendleton County employed a one-three-one zone for much of the time. The Wildcat squad boasts long-armed, tall, athletic players who jam up driving and passing lanes with ease. Vanmeter brings a different style, using his more diminutive, but just as quick, form to get in close and harass ball handlers into making mistakes.

As the quarter wound down, Warner and Braylon Hull both connected on long-range shots to put their squad up 73-31 by the end of the quarter.

The fourth quarter featured more highlights, including Colton Roberson finding a streaking Hull for a layup that capped Wildcat scoring at 84. Defensive intensity never wavered, even to the final minute as Knoxx Wright committed a foul while playing strong and aggressive defense. He also picked up two offensive rebounds during his time in the action.

Chase Owens led scoring with 25, Warner followed with 13, Kisamore 11, Vanmeter nine, Hull and Harper both seven, Travis Owens six, Armstrong four, and Hess two. Hess and Travis Owens both had six assists, helping to set the table during the big night.

The next night, Pendleton County confronted tournament host Lincoln and came away with a 50-41 victory. Chase Owens again led the squad with 15. Kisamore gave his squad a powerful inside advantage with 10 points and a perfect four for four from the field. Pendleton County traveled to Frankfort on Saturday for yet another game to gain experience against a school in a higher class.

## Pendleton County Pushes Tourney Host Hard in Setback

By Stephen Smoot

Robert C. Byrd, as they hosted its own tournament, probably did not reckon on having a huge fight on their hands in the opening game. After all, their Class AAA size on paper should have made it dominant versus the Class A Wildcats.

That said, birds should always stay wary of aggressive cats!

Throughout the first half, Robert C. Byrd and Pendleton County battled evenly. The Wildcats lean heavily on two scoring mainstays from last year to drive their offense. Senior Jameigh Miller, a Potomac State signee for basketball, has changed roles from last year. She would move from the post to the wing, rebounding and scoring well. This season, Travis Heavner, head coach, asked her to assume more of the ballhandling duties in addition to giving the team a strong threat to score from outside.

Susan Vincell, junior center for the Wildcats, operated at will inside against the Flying Eagles until they started throwing more bodies and playing more physically against her. With three minutes left in the second quarter, their head coach could be heard throughout the building, shouting, "You better get 42!"

Not long after, "42" grabbed an offensive rebound, scored a layup, and put her team up 19-18.

At the two minute mark, Robert C. Byrd connected on a three-pointer to retake the lead 21-19. Not long after, Miller drove in for a layup and picked up a free throw. With just under a minute, Jess Parker hit Vincell with a lob that she laid in for a 26-21 lead. The Flying Eagles, however, closed out the half with a last second three for a 26-24 lead.

Pendleton County and Robert C. Byrd got their best shots in against each other in the third quarter. The home team



The Flying Eagles had to ramp up their physical play to outlast the Wildcats in Clarksburg. Photo courtesy of Light in Motion Photography.

tied the game quickly, but Vincell got fouled on an offensive rebound and putback attempt. Her free throws restored the two-point advantage, but the Flying Eagles tenaciously answered 30 seconds after.

Miller with under six minutes in the third dribbled to eight feet, pulled up, and drained the shot. A minute later, she drove to the same spot and pulled up, but found two defenders awaiting her. Undeterred, she pivoted and faked twice, shook off the defenders, and hit the open shot to put her team up four. After the home team closed the lead to 32-31, Tia Heavner fired a pass to Katie Heavner for a layup to extend the advantage.

The third quarter saw the home team playing more aggressively on defense, but the calls more often put that squad on the line. They converted a number of free throws to edge ahead as the third quarter wore down. Over the next four and a half minutes, extending into the final quarter, the Flying Eagles scored eight straight to seize the lead for good at 39-34.

Tia Heavner's 17-foot shot from the wing narrowed the gap at the 6:25 mark, but the home team hit a layup to set the score at 41-36. Miller drained a three, but the Flying Eagles answered with a layup. With 3:37 left, Vincell's pass to Parker put the Wildcats within three, but the Flying Eagles took off afterward to seal the win.

Shayne Clutter's old style running one hander bank shot closed scoring for the game. Robert C. Byrd prevailed 53-44 in a game much closer than the final score indicated.

In the tournament final, the Wildcats played well, but fell to Elkins. Competition against larger schools, however, has served to help Pendleton County perform better later in the season against Class A rivals.

# Classifieds



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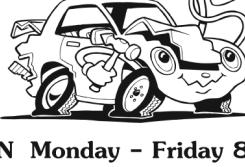
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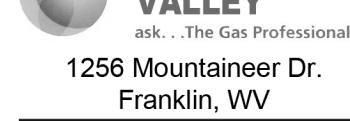
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WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE, 601 57TH STREET SE, CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25304-2345 TELEPHONE: (304) 926-0440.

APPLICATION FOR A CLASS 5 UNDERGROUND INJECTION CONTROL PERMIT.

Public Notice No.: JKL-02-26

Public Notice Date: January 8, 2026

Paper: Pendleton Times

The following has applied

for a Class 5 Underground

Injection Control Permit for

this facility or activity:

Appl. No.: 0489-02-071

Applicant: Leonard Landis

27 Wildwood Lane

Seneca Rocks, WV 26884

Facility: Appalachian Cabins,

Rt. 55 and 28,

2026 at 10:00 AM (Eastern

Seneca Rocks, WV 26884

Latitude: 38:52:31

Longitude: 79:20:38

Activity:

Disposal of solely sanitary waste into a septic tank and leachfield

The State of West Virginia will act on the above application in accordance with the West Virginia Legislative Rules, Title 47, Series 13, Section 14.24 issued pursuant to Chapter 22, Article 11 and Article 12.

Standard Time). The bids will be downloaded and/or opened and read publicly thereafter for the construction of the following project(s):

Call 033

Contract 2023360023

State Project

S336-33-20.45 00

Federal Project

STBG-0033(515)D

Description

RESURFACING

ROOTS RUN RD- NORTH

MTN.

Midpoint of Project

COUNTY:

PENDLETON

any interested person may submit written comments on the draft permit and may request a public hearing in writing within thirty (30) days of the date of the public notice. Comments or requests

should be addressed to:

Director, Division of Water and Waste Management, DEP

601 57th Street SE

Charleston, WV

25304-2345

ATTN: Judy Lupson,

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Proposals will be received from prequalified and West Virginia licensed contractors only except that on Federal-Aid Projects a contractor's license is not required at time of bid, but will be required before work can begin.

Registration is required with the Department of Administration, Division of Purchasing,

in accordance with Chapter 5A, Article 3,

Section 12 of the West Virginia Code. All contractors submitting bids on project(s) must

submit electronically with their bid a Proposal Guaranty Bond for \$500.00 or 5% of total bid,

whichever is greater.

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

The West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways hereby notifies all bidders that it will

affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, minority business enterprises

will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will

# Belsnicklers Continue Tradition, Visit Neighbors

German roots run deep in Pendleton County. From the names of the county's local landmarks, foods that one eats, and family traditions, there is no denying the Germanic heritage of Appalachia.

Friday night, several residents from the Schmucker Road area decided to revive an almost forgotten tradition of belseckling. The formal definition of belseckling is a German American holiday tradition where people go door-to-door during the Christmas season, often disguised in masks, rags, and furs to surprise neighbors. The neighbors then invite the guests inside where they must guess the identity of each belseckler.

Though times have changed since the inception of this tradition, nobody wore furs and the group called ahead to let neighbors know masked strangers would be appearing on their doorstep, many of the traditions remained the same. The belsecklers wore masks, stuffed pillows into their clothing to change their shape, and altered their voices. Once inside the visited homes, the neighbor would ask a series of questions to see if they could guess the identity of each belseckler. If questions were not enough,



Friday night, this group of friendly belsecklers continued an Appalachian tradition by visiting homes in the Upper Tract and Deer Run areas.

## Warrior Road

Continued From Page 1

eventually became West Virginia, according to Otis Rice, author of West Virginia, a History, the Mountain State's eventual main two-lane roadways had an interesting origin. As he described in his textbook for college and advanced high school students, the "roads" originated as trails laid out by herds of buffalo, deer, and other large animals as they moved from place to place in the rugged wilderness.

In their own fashion, they followed paths of least resistance. Indian hunting parties, particularly after the conquest of central Appalachia by the Iroquois League and Cherokee Nation, widened the animal trails by following in search of food supplies. Settlers used the same pathways and their governments, from

time to time, saw utility in grading many and paving a few with crushed stone.

North to south routes connected emerging settlements and both public and privately built military posts. As early as the 1730s, settlers had moved upstream on the Potomac River to Shawnee Old Town, now Oldtown, Maryland, and Fort Cumberland constructed at the city that still bears the name.

When he was merely 16 years old, George Washington accompanied his employer, George William Fairfax, to survey lands in the vicinity of the valleys of the various forks of the South Branch of the Potomac. They took the generally used route that extended upstream along the Potomac River itself and ran into the usual barriers.

By March 18, Washington shared in his journal that heavy rains and rapid snow melts "in the Allegheny Mountains" had raised the

river and its tributaries to the point that the party had to wait at a host's home for a few days. On the 21st, they took a canoe upstream to the trading post and home of Thomas Cresap, whose property lay 15 miles east of Fort Cumberland, near Shawnee Old Town.

Shawnee Old Town lay almost across the Potomac River from current Green Springs, where the South Branch and the North Branch join waters. From there, the team went upstream, crossed at the mouth of Patterson's Creek, then made their way back to the South Branch. Their path of work took them up the South Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac "to one Michael Stump's" and surveyed as far as 10 miles upstream from there.

Several years later, after his defeat at Fort Necessity, Virginia militia Colonel Washington labored to effect the construction of a series of forts in the modern Potomac Highlands of West Virginia. These would guard roadways, passes, and other strategic points in the South Branch watershed, while providing shelter for frontier families threatened by attack.

Official forts manned by Washington's "Virginia Regiment" joined smaller stockades and fortified houses constructed by families or small communities of settlers. Every 15 miles, an official Virginia regiment fort guarded a line of defense patrolled by local militia to serve as a wall against attacks by the French or their allies among the American Indian nations.

According to historian Samuel Kercheval, American Indian nations outside of the orbit of the Iroquois League and centered north and west of the Ohio River regarded Virginia and

hints were given. Once a belseckler's identity was correctly guessed, they would remove their mask.

The belsecklers traveled throughout the Upper Tract and Deer Run areas. They visited a total of seven homes where laughter was in ample supply. Neighbors who had been visited then offered candies, drinks, and refreshments to the revelers.

In times when people can feel so divided, it is traditions like this that remind one of the importance of community and neighborly love. It is truly hoped that this tradition not only endures but grows in the years to come.

As somebody who was raised in Pendleton County and moved away, it was food for Carr's soul to participate in this almost-forgotten tradition. Seeing the delight on the faces of the young and old, the sense of community, and hearing the stories of belseckling of years past was a joy that could not be found anywhere else. To be able to share this experience with her mother and her daughter was a true gift. One small belseckler even announced, "This is more fun than trick or treating."

Submitted by Karen (Kile) Carr.

its people with a powerful respect borne of fear. They called Virginia "the Big Knife" and its people "the Long Knives."

From Cumberland south to Monterey, Virginia, new fortifications arose and of those built privately, some were strengthened and manned by the Virginia Regiment. Along modern U.S. Route 220 in Pendleton County stood lonely wilderness outposts such as "Trout Rock Fort," which guarded a narrow area of the South Branch River several miles upstream of Franklin and Fort Upper Tract about the same distance north.

In the vicinity of modern Petersburg sat a number of private fortifications built at or near the homes of settlers by residents near today's Pansy, Duron, and other areas. More significant fortifications arose at Fort Buttermilk west of today's Moorefield, the Old Fields property of Isaac Van Meter, at the Fort Pearsall settlement near modern Romney, and also at Fort Ashby.

Connecting all were various incarnations of U.S. Route 220 along both its original and modern paths, following the general southwest to northeast track of the ancient valleys and ridges.

After independence and the recession of the threat of attack by American Indians and foreign powers, those roadways again reverted to local travel and trade via connections to more heavily used roads and rivers.

The coming of the Civil War would bring back the warriors as once again the Potomac Highlands took on the qualities of a frontier. This time a frontier not between civilization and the wilderness, but between the United States of America and the Confederate States of America.

Continued next week.

## Santa Letter Arrived Late

A letter written to Santa was delayed getting to the North Pole.

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