



# Clay County Free Press

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## Braxton/Clay Extension Master Gardeners Enjoy FFA Shiitake Mushroom Workshop



Photos by Kelsey McFarland, Clay County FFA Advisor

On Thursday, Nov. 10, the Braxton/Clay Extension Master Gardeners met at the Big Otter Volunteer Fire Department for a workshop on growing shiitake mushrooms. Clay County FFA officers presented information on growing and cultivating mushrooms to replicate natural growing conditions and then assisted with inoculating logs.

The logs were 6-8 inches round and about 3 feet long, with species including white oak and maple. Logs are cut then cured for approximately two weeks prior to drilling holes to inoculate with spawn plugs. The plugs were inserted using hammers and mallets, and then sealed with wax.

The logs should be stored in a dark, moist location out of sunlight. The spawn will grow in the logs throughout the winter, and in spring, we'll hopefully see white mycelium on the log ends. A flush of mushrooms can be encouraged by soaking the log for 8-12 hours to replicate typhoon conditions, and within 10 days, there will be the fruiting bodies of shiitake mushrooms.

After the conclusion of the workshop, the Braxton/Clay EMG had a business meeting and voted Dawn Lucas as the 2023 Braxton County Extension Master Gardener of the year. Awards were presented for volunteer service, with our local

chapter donating the equivalent of over \$33,000 in hours.

A new slate of officers was also approved as follows: President Vicki Pierson, Vice President Christi Boggs, Secretary Aine Slabaugh, and Treasurer Suzie Legg.

Master Gardener training classes are offered online in both spring and fall. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer Extension Master Gardener, please contact the WVU Braxton County Extension Service at 304-765-2809 or the Clay County Extension Service at 304-587-4267.

## Clay County Landmarks Commission and Historical Society Minutes

The monthly meeting of the Clay County Landmarks Commission and Historical Society was held at the Clay County Library on Thursday, Nov. 3, 2022, at 6 p.m. The meeting was attended by Jannette Douglas, Sandy Claybrook, Janet Koch, Jeanine Samples, David Derby, Janice Derby, Linda Rhodes, Carol Hutchinson, Oscar Hutchinson, Jim Miller, Jerry Stover, and Danny Dawson.

President Jerry Stover called the meeting to order. The minutes were read and approved, and the treasurer's report was read and approved.

We will be on winter recess beginning Dec. 2022 until Mar. 2, 2023.

We discussed the following:

- The future of the proposed Pisgah 911 Tower.
- Jerry Stover presented an article written by Lawson and Sonassa concerning the History of Clay County before 1858. It's a "good read" for someone that is interested in that type of history.
- Thank you, Katelin Hall for a wonderful job on our newsletter, "Now and Then."
- We have an update on Eloise Boggs' health. She is in the CAMC Teays Valley Hospital. She needs prayer.
- Thank you, Karen Burdette for all the work she does for the Clay County Landmarks Commission and Historical Society.

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 6 p.m., at the Clay County Library.

## Report: Continuous Eligibility for Medicaid, CHIP Benefits WV Kids

By Nadia Ramlagan for WVNS

Despite economic uncertainty of the pandemic, the number of West Virginia kids with health coverage remained roughly the same between 2019 and 2021, according to a new report.

The Georgetown University Center for Children and Families report finds the number of uninsured kids nationwide dropped by 5% in the last three years.

In West Virginia, Julianne Yacovone - director of child health with West Virginians for Affordable Healthcare - said the number of kids statewide with no health insurance has kept steady, at around 13,000.

She said the state's 12 month continuous eligibility for Medicaid and CHIP has kept more kids and their caregivers healthy.

"We have seen," said Yacovone, "that when parents go in for those necessary appointments, and parents are getting the care, the prescription they need, children are more likely to be covered."

She added that children in low-earning families were more likely to gain coverage due to pandemic-era policies, noting households of three making under \$55,000 a year saw the largest gains.

According to Census Survey data, West Virginia has had the second-lowest median household income among the states.

Yacovone added that rates for flu and Respiratory Syncytial Virus - RSV - across the state have climbed high enough to temporarily shut down schools.

She said she believes more families have been able to receive flu shots and other medical care this fall without worrying about their health insurance lapsing.

"I could only imagine," said Yacovone, "how much higher our rates of flu and hospitalizations for flu would be if people didn't have access to that coverage that ensured that they got those vaccinations."

Executive Director of Georgetown University's Center for Children and Families Joan Alker explained that while West Virginia families benefit from continuous coverage, states that haven't implemented similar protections will likely see a spike in uninsured kids in 2023.

"This continuous coverage protection is likely to expire early next year," said Alker. "And we have estimated that the child uninsured rate is very possibly going to double when that happens, which is a very scary thought."

Seventeen states and the District of Columbia currently do not have continuous eligibility for kids covered through Medicaid or CHIP.

## Williams, Casto, McKinney and Morton awarded 1st Team LKC



From L-R Jacob Morton, Noah Casto, Matteo McKinney and BJ Williams. Allen Hamrick photo.