



# Clay County Free Press

Home of the Clay County Golden Delicious Apple



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The AP Government and Politics class will now move forward to the national finals in Washington DC this April.

## CCHS AP Government & Politics Class Wins State Championship

*This is the ninth consecutive year that the class has won the "We the People" competition*

Congratulations to the West Virginia State "We the People" Champions. Clay County High School's Advance Placement Government & Politics class, taught by Mr. Philip Dobbins and coached by Mr. Mike Mullins, competed at the Robert C. Byrd Federal District Courthouse on Dec. 14 in the "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" State Competition. This is a competition where students demonstrate their knowledge of the Constitution and current issues in mock congressional style hearings. Each school participating must divide its classes into six teams. These six teams prepare a four minute verbal response to a constitutional question and then are asked follow up questions by a panel of three judges for six minutes. Teams are scored on their knowledge of the Constitution and their ability to apply the concepts to their everyday lives as Americans.

This year's Advanced Placement Government and Politics class is made up of sophomores, juniors, and seniors with strong interests in the United States Constitution and the inner workings of national, state, and local governments. These students are eager to discuss controversial issues and are well adept at taking and de-

fending their positions among peers as well as judges at district and state competitions. These students illustrate that hard work and dedication pay off.

Classes can have individual unit winners and overall class winners. Clay County High School won six out of six individual unit championships and won the overall class state championship, defeating the champions from congressional district one, Robert C. Byrd High School, and wildcard, Woodrow Wilson High School. By winning the state championship, Clay County High School has earned a spot in the National Finals in Washington D.C. in April of this year. Holt Dawson, Sawyer Dobbins and Trey Lindenthal were also recognized by the judges as outstanding performers in their respective units.

Members of the class are Elijah Armes, Earle Boggs, Isaac Brown, Christina Brown, Gracey Champ, Holt Dawson, Caden Delwarte, Sawyer Dobbins, Hunter Evans, Alexis Gilliland, Gabrielle Jackson, Trey Lindenthal, Dylan McCumbers, Ethan Morris, Joshua Walker, Kirsten Woods, Elizabeth Young, and Madison Paxton, "We the People" alum, served as timekeeper for this year's team.

## Year in Review: From Completed Projects to New Beginnings West Virginia Department of Transportation Looks Back at 2022

As 2022 comes to an end, the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) is looking back at a year full of completed projects and new beginnings.

West Virginia Secretary of Transportation, Jimmy Wriston, P.E., said when he looks back on the year, one of the biggest takeaways is that the department is starting to see the fruits of its labor.

"We've completed a full maintenance cycle on Governor Justice's Secondary Roads Initiative," Wriston said. "We are seeing better road conditions after decades and decades of neglect and lack of funding. We're starting to turn things around. Our systematic, data-driven approach is starting to pay dividends."

A legislative audit of the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) maintenance budget, released in November, confirms the same.

Results of the legislative audit of WVDOH's maintenance budget confirmed that extra money spent on road maintenance over the past several years is paying off in better roads throughout the state. According to the audit, the WVDOH has doubled the total number of completed projects from the calendar year 2019 to 2022, while steadily increasing production each successive year.

The Secondary Roads Initiative, launched by Governor Jim Justice in 2019, in conjunction with the \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity Program, specifically targets the roads West Virginians drive on every day for targeted underfunded maintenance work. The core maintenance program, which includes ditching, drainage, mowing, milling and filling potholes, and tree canopy clearing focuses on

activities that extend the life of roadways.

Jake Bumgarner, the Director of the Operations Division for WVDOH, said more than 2,300 miles of paving was done in the past year and 223 acres of tree canopy clearing.

Bumgarner said that recent WVDOT updates to policies

*PROJECTS cont. on page 4*



## Inspire, Stay Strong, and Fight



Jacob "Salty" Morton and Katie Price

By: Betty Lee

This holiday season looked a little different for two Clay County High school students. As most of Clay County is aware, Jacob "Salty" Morton suffered severe injuries following an auto accident in late October. This accident was one that would make you question how he walked away from it alive.

Jacob underwent multiple surgeries, and was flown and spent weeks at John Hopkins hospital where he started his recovery and rehab from the injuries. Morton was released to go home on December 7, just in time for Christmas.

Katie Price, a freshman at Clay County High School, has bravely been fighting cancer with many stays in Morgantown for treatment, surgery, etc. Katie recently celebrated her 15<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 22 and Christmas

with short visits home. Katie has faced many obstacles this past year and has had the support of Clay County, friends, and family all along the way.

Katie has spent lots of time in Morgantown this holiday season, Jacob made a visit to uplift Katie on December 29- because if there is one thing you can say about being a Clay County Panther and that is... "We INSPIRE each other, we stay STRONG for one another and we FIGHT as hard as we can FIGHT."

These two amazing teenagers have surely fought hard, not standing alone, and being backed by all of Clay County every step of the way. This community is known for coming together and being there for one another in any way possible, it is nice to see that even the youth of Clay County have carried on that characteristic.

**#SaltyStrong**  
**#TeamKatie**

## Bob Stover Duals 2022 is in the history books



Noah Casto is named Most Outstanding Wrestler. Allen Hamrick photo.

See Story on Page 8



## BOOKED CENTRAL REGIONAL JAIL

**BRAXTON COUNTY**

**CLAY COUNTY**

**NICHOLAS COUNTY**



**Sarah Beth Stump**  
Booked 12/30/22  
Trespassing asked to leave



**Matthew Scott McCourt**  
Booked 12/28/22  
DVP violation



**Christopher Ryan Nottingham**  
Booked 12/27/22  
Possession of a controlled substance



**Lisa Lynn Wright**  
Booked 12/29/22  
Trespassing



**Michael Deric Bennett**  
Booked 12/28/22  
Assault



**Robert Ray Clevenger**  
Booked 12/30/22  
Receiving or transferring stolen goods, burglary

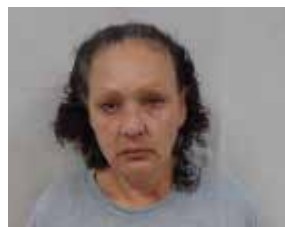
**NICHOLAS COUNTY**



**Heather Kristen Hall**  
Booked 12/29/22  
Child abuse, domestic battery



**Samuel Ray Kesterson II**  
Booked 12/27/22  
Failure to register as a sex offender, Capias



**Camilla Ann Ramsey**  
Booked 12/27/22  
Court Order



**Otis Sylvester Young Jr.**  
Booked 12/27/22  
Fugitive from justice

## Courthouse News

**Friday, January 6, 2023 Docket Schedule for Magistrate: Rider, Charles "Jeff:"**

03:00 PM, State v. Nuria Dawn Craddock, Bench Trial, Knowingly or intentionally possessing a controlled substance without a valid prescription (x3)  
03:30 PM, State v. Brittany Nicole Hannah, Bench Trial, Unsafe and improperly equipped vehicles (x3), No vehicle insurance, Consumption of alcoholic beverage in passenger area of motor vehicle on public highway, License to be carried and exhibited on demand, Driving a vehicle while in an impaired state (less than .15)

**Monday, January 23, 2023 Docket Schedule for Magistrate: Rider, Charles "Jeff:"**

09:00 AM, State v. Danny Kyle Adkins, Bench Trial, Driving while license impaired or revoked, No insurance  
09:15 AM, State v. Darrell Leon Carpenter Jr., Bench Trial, Driving while license revoked – DUI, Improper use of evidences of registration, Unsafe and improperly equipped vehicles  
09:30 AM, State v. George T. Ruff, Bench Trial, Driving suspended (misc.), No insurance  
10:00 AM, State v. Kayla Katrina Davis, Bench Trial, Knowingly or intentionally possessing a controlled substance without a prescription  
10:30 AM, State v. Samuel Todd Murphy, Bench Trial, Knowingly or intentionally possessing a controlled substance without a prescription  
10:45 AM, State v. Samuel Dale Nottingham, Bench Trial, Knowingly or intentionally possessing a controlled substance without a prescription  
11:00 AM, State v. Charles Anderson Truman Jr., Bench Trial, Knowingly or intentionally possessing a controlled substance without a prescription  
11:30 AM, State v. Haylli Morgan Blackwell, Bench Trial, Child neglect by parent, guardian, or custodian creating risk of bodily injury  
01:00 PM, State v. Rodney Mark Daniels, Bench Trial, Knowingly or intentionally possessing a controlled substance without a prescription  
01:30 PM, State v. Michael Timothy Peyatt, Bench Trial, Knowingly or intentionally possessing a controlled substance without a prescription  
02:00 PM, State v. Bo Joseph Shamblin, Bench Trial, Driving while license revoked – DUI, Safety equipment and requirements for motorcyclists  
02:30 PM, State v. Franklin Daniel Moore Jr., Bench Trial, Improper use of evidences of registration, Unsafe and improperly equipped vehicles, No vehicle insurance, Registration card to be signed, carried, and exhibited on demand (registration unsigned), License to be carried and exhibited on demand, Operation of vehicles with safety belts

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## THIS WEEK IN West Virginia History

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](http://www.wvencyclopedia.org).

by a Senate vote of 26-0 and a House vote of 81-3. West Virginia became the 21st state to ratify the prohibition amendment. National prohibition became effective under the Volstead Act on January 16, 1920.

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

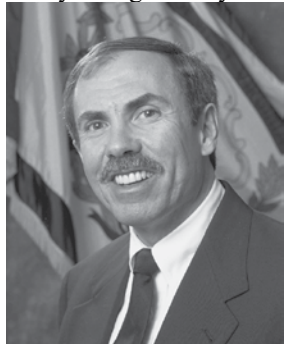


**Jan. 8, 1926:** Comedian Soupy Sales was born Milton Supman. Raised in Huntington and graduating from Marshall College (now Marshall University), he achieved fame as a wacky television personality.

**Jan. 5, 1887:** Governor Emanuel W. Wilson hosted a ball and banquet to formally open the new capitol in Charleston. The so-called Victorian capitol burned in 1921.

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

**Jan. 6, 1931:** An underground gas explosion killed eight men at the Glen Rogers coal mine in Wyoming County.



**Jan. 6, 1948:** Bob Wise was born in Washington D.C. He served in Congress and was the state's 33rd governor.

**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, 1919:** The West Virginia legislature ratified the U.S. constitution's 18th Amendment



**Elk River chemical spill at Freedom Industries**



**Jan. 10, 1925:** Judge Elizabeth Virginia Hallanan was born in Charleston. She was West Virginia's first female federal court judge.



**Jan. 10, 1928:** Gov. Howard Gore appointed Minnie Buckingham Harper of McDowell County to fill the expired term of her husband, E. Howard Harper. She was the first Black woman to serve as a member of a state legislative body in the United States.



**Jan. 10, 1940:** The Pond Creek No. 1 mine at Bartley in McDowell County exploded. The blast killed 91 miners, with another 47 escaping. Rescue teams worked five days to retrieve the bodies, but found no additional miners alive.

*e-WV: The West Virginia Encyclopedia* is a project of the West Virginia Humanities Council. For more information, contact the West Virginia Humanities Council, 1310 Kanawha Blvd. E., Charleston, WV 25301; (304) 346-8500; or visit *e-WV* at [www.wvencyclopedia.org](http://www.wvencyclopedia.org).



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Michael Showell, Publisher

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## Receiving With Love

By Joseph J. Mazzella

My daughter had overbought several times over the last six months so her food pantry was full and she wasn't sure she would be able to eat all the stuff she had left. She asked me then to donate two full boxes of dry goods to the local food pantry. I was happy to do so and took them over. I was overwhelmed, though, by the enthusiasm, the joy, and the love with which her donation was received. The lack of donations plus the high price of groceries had hit the charity hard and their shelves needed every donation they could get. We were thanked over and over and as I drove home smiling my mind went back to another time when we were the ones in need.

Money was tight. My job barely paid the rent and extra bills that month had cut into what we had saved for the groceries. My next check was a week away and we didn't have enough food to get us there. We went to a food pantry and I watched our little kids playing outside while my wife picked up a box full of food to feed us. I was worried, nervous, and scared. I had never had to seek help like this before and I just hoped it would be enough so our children wouldn't go hungry that week. My heart swelled with gratitude when my wife finally walked out with a smile on her face and the box in her arms. And as we drove home I silently prayed and thanked God for all the good people who had given so we would not go hungry.

Our Heavenly Father created this great, big, round world for all of us to live on. It is one huge circle of love. Sometimes you are giving that love to others. And sometimes you are receiving that love from others. It is all the same, however. It is all one. It doesn't matter whether you are giving with love or receiving with love as long as you are LIVING WITH LOVE.

Take your place in the circle then. Never be ashamed to receive a gift of love. Never be afraid to give a gift of love. It is what we are all here for. It is what life is all about.

**THE FREEPRESS**  
**'50's and '60's**

## ROCK 'N' ROLL TRIVIA

There are at least three songs from the 50's and 60's that relate to WV's nation-leading industry during that same period. Two of the songs were #1 hits, one in 1955 and one in 1966. The other song reached #12 in 1966. Can you think of them?

Answer to last week's Trivia: This 1965, #1 song by the Beatles that, according to The Guinness Book of Records, is the most covered rock era song in history is: "Yesterday" (Oct. '65)



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## THE BAPTIST CLASSROOM

Pastor Doug Newell, IV

### Live Not By Lies



Martin Daguerre was born in the early 1500s and settled down with his family in the Pyrenees of southwestern France. When he was around 14 years old, his family arranged a marriage to an even younger girl from a wealthy family. After eight years of marriage, one day he disappeared. Was he dead? Was he abducted? No one knew. And what of the fair Bertrande, his forsaken wife? Catholic law forbade her to move on, so she remained, in effect, a widow with a young son.

Eight years later, lo and behold, Martin returns. The couple is happier now than they had ever been before and in three years, they added two more children to their brood. But it wasn't going to last. Martin's father died, and as a son typically does, he claimed the inheritance, but his uncle tried to stop him. Why shouldn't the son get the inheritance? Because the uncle said that he was not the real Martin Daguerre.

Martin claims his greedy uncle is trying to take his inheritance and that it's absurd to think he fooled every last person in town, his own family, and even his wife. But doubts grew, and speculation increased until it went to court and the first of two sensational trials began. Was this the real Martin Daguerre? The judge in the first trial said it was not, and he was found guilty of being an imposter but quickly appealed. The judge was about to let him go, but guess who sauntered into the court? None other than the real Martin Daguerre. Not only was he alive, but he came back to claim his wife, family, and inheritance. The real Martin abandoned his family and joined the army. He got tired of the rambling life (probably after he heard he had a sweet inheritance due him) and came back home. Once the family saw the face of the prodigal, there was no denying who was who. The pretender confessed and was put to

death. The real Martin and Bertrande were reunited, and they lived not so happily ever after.

How did he fool everyone? The two men had similar looks, and people just assumed he filled out a bit after all that time. Plus the imposter had an uncanny ability to tell people what they wanted to hear and to answer questions in a way that removed all doubt. So much so, rumors spread that he was under the influence of the forces of darkness that enabled him to bewitch people. He didn't fool his wife. She didn't like the first Martin and a fake Martin was better than no Martin at all, so she went along with it.

The Bible tells us there are false teachers who put on a good show of things and fool many people (2 Peter 2:1) but some churchgoers, like Bertrande, want to be deceived (1 Timothy 4:1-2). The prefer smooth talk and fair speeches over the truth of God.

## The Misconception of a New Year

Dr. James L. Snyder

Christmas is the best time of the year, especially when it involves family. It's the one time of the year that families get together to celebrate together.

Of course, at least from my perspective, it is also the most hectic time of the year. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has an entirely different perspective regarding family get-together time.

This year, we had a special new family member, our second great-grandchild, born a week before Christmas.

As you might imagine, that little one was the center of everybody's attention. Therefore, everybody had to hold the little one at least once.

I could see the little one had absolutely no idea what was happening. Although these were wonderful memories for us, that little one will never remember this time together. But there will be other times, I assure you.

One daughter was taking pictures of just about everyone, which is important. The one picture she took, and I probably was the only one who understood, was between The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and that little great-granddaughter.

The beauty of that picture was there was the oldest and the youngest person in our family together. Don't let her know that I said this because I may not get any older.

It was a fun time, and when it was all over, everybody went home, even the family's newest member. The mother of the new baby had to spend a lot of time wrestling her from the great-grandmother.

That night my wife and I sat together reflecting on our family get-together. As usual, it was a wonderful time, and I'm glad I've lived long enough to enjoy it. Whether I get to another Christmas or not is anybody's guess.

As we sat together drinking hot apple cider, we reflected on the past year, which was a transitional year

for us. It's hard for me to pick out the greatest time this past year but if I had to pick one it would be Christmas.

Sighing deeply, I said, "It sure has been a great year, hasn't it?"

Thinking deeply, which is the beginning of trouble, my wife said, "It was a great year." Then, after more deep thought, she continued, "But the New Year is going to be so much better."

Not learning from the past, I replied, "What's so new about the new year?"

She looked at me as though she had never seen me before, and with one of her sarcastic tones, she said, "It's a new year, and everything is going to be new."

"What do you think is going to be new about this coming New Year?" I responded.

"Everything will be new this coming year, and I can't wait to see all the new stuff."

Pausing for a moment, she then said, "Last year, we didn't even know at this time that we were going to have a great-granddaughter. She is new in our family."

Well, she had me on that one for sure. Maybe she was expecting another new great-grandchild this coming year. So I didn't pursue that.

"So," I said rather slowly, "what will be new this coming year?"

"Everything is going to be new this coming year." She said with a smile dancing on her face.

"Except for a new family member," I said to her, "everything this next year is going to be the same."

She could not let me get away with that and said most vehemently, "Everything is going to be new. Trust me."

I had her just about where I wanted her and was very careful in my next steps.

"So, tell me, how many months will there be this coming year?"

Looking at me, she smirked and said, "There will be 12 months this coming year. What are you talking about?"

## Home Country

Slim Randles

Doc was just getting up to leave the philosophy counter as Herb walked in. Herb was grinning and flexing muscles and had the look of eagles in his eyes. We stared.

"Herb," said Doc. "You know, you can overdo a good thing."

"Why Doc ... whatever do you mean?"

"I realize that getting more exercise is your resolution for the new year, but a man your age ... you need to pace yourself a little, that's all. Don't try to get in shape all at once."

"Why Doc, I've never felt better in my life. Hey, you were so right to get me on this exercise kick. I've been meaning to thank you. It's just what I've been needing. What would you think about my playing some football in the spring? I mean, it's just touch football, but I miss the ol' razz-matazz, you know?"

Doc shook his head sadly and walked out. Herb started laughing and sat down with us and flipped his cup over for his morning eye opener.

"What was that all about, Herb?" Dud asked.

"A little joke I'm playing on Doc, that's all," Herb said. "You remember how Doc has been on my case to get more exercise and slim down some? Well, there was only one way to shut him up, so I started running. I bought a sweat suit and started running. I run past his house each morning. Then, about an hour later, I run past his house the other direction, huffing and puffing and looking at my watch."

"An hour? You run for an hour each morning?"

"Of course not," Herb said, laughing. "I run past Doc's house then walk the block to the library. An hour later, I run past Doc's house and then walk two blocks

home."

We stared at him.

"What?" he said. "You know Doc's going to worry about me one way or the other. I just thought I'd change it up a bit."

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Super Crossword

Answers																						
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and programs in place have helped set up a direct vision of what the organization is accomplishing on the ground with its core maintenance program. One core maintenance cycle is three years long; meaning that 2023 will mark the beginning of the second core maintenance cycle under the Secondary Roads Initiative.

“What I see when I drive around the state is a lot of work that has been completed,” Bumgarner said. “That is reflected in our core plans and the data we collect. You can see that difference from not too long ago that we are making on the roads for the citizens of West Virginia.”

Along with the strong core maintenance figures, 2022 saw the completion of major Roads to Prosperity projects. When the Roads to Prosperity bond vote passed with 73 percent of West Virginians in favor in October of 2017, it marked the beginning of a program which included over one thousand, two hundred projects. Roads to Prosperity projects, such as the I-70 Bridges project which consisted of the replacement or revitalization of 26 aging bridges, would not have been completed without funding from the program, which made it possible to complete the projects right away rather than little by little over decades. 2022 was a year of looking back on progress made possible by Roads to Prosperity.

“We’re seeing those big, regionally significant projects starting to come to completion. The I-70 Bridges in Wheeling are nearing completion, with just a few punch list items to complete, and the Nitro St. Albans Bridge is half done and the end is in sight.”

The Nitro-St. Albans I-64 Widening projects replaces the four lane Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge, opened in 1962, with the Nitro WWI Memorial Bridge to carry four lanes westbound and a new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge carrying four lanes eastbound. Continued growth through the region resulted in bottlenecks and backups at the old, four lane bridge. Increasing travel lanes through the area will allow continued economic growth and provide increased safety for the traveling public. On October, 28, 2022, Governor Justice and Secretary Wriston cut the ribbon on the new Nitro WWI Memorial Bridge. On December, 21, 2022, the 1,720,000 pound center section of the old Donald M. Legg Memorial bridge was lowered to a barge below. Moving into 2023, a new bridge, a twin to the new bridge just completed will be built to carry the eastbound lanes, permanently alleviating the bottleneck.

In addition to the ribbon cutting ceremony on the new Nitro WWI Memorial Bridge, WVDOT celebrated major announcements on the Cheat River Bridge and Babcock Trail Grants, groundbreaking on the Coalfields Expressway to Welch, Wheeling Streetscape, and Culloden Interchange, and ribbon cuttings on the Bluefield Area Transit Transfer Station and Seneca Skyway, Capitol Circle and Cranberry Corridor Mountain Rides Routes, to name a few. Through a partnership with Tourism, some of West Virginia’s most scenic routes are now celebrated through the Mountain Rides program.

During 2022, WVDOH continued the expansion of its capabilities of work completed by its own crews; paving with its own pavers, drilling with its own drills, and completing types of work not previously attempted -- such as the restoration of the historic Carrollton Covered Bridge. The bridge, badly damaged by arson, saw new life thanks to the careful work of WVDOH’s own District 7 Bridge crews. Expanding capabilities on paving and drilling does not replace the work of its contracting partners, but allows the Division to gain ground on previously underfunded projects. Work completed with WVDOH’s own crews comes at a significant cost savings and allows the Division the flexibility to schedule crucial projects, such as those along school bus routes, more quickly.

WVDOT was recognized for several awards in 2022, including;

Regional America’s Transportation Award at the Southern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) 2022 annual meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi. The award was presented for Operations Excellence for the Oakwood RCUT project, which opened to traffic in late summer 2021.

2022 ENR Mid-Atlantic Owner of the Year Award. The award cited innovation and creativity throughout the region as well as contributions to the community.

Marshall University’s College of Engineering and Computer Science named WVDOH as its Employer of the Year, citing a strong Co-Op program which helps students transition from college to gainful employment and a tuition reimbursement program which helps students achieve their educational goals.

WVDOT was also recognized at the Annual American Society of Civil Engineers Student Chapter Technical Conference in Beckley by faculty and engineering students at WVU Tech for its partnership and Co-Op program.

In 2022, WVDOH responded to 12,126 citizen requests for information about specific roads and projects. Citi-

zens can receive answers to their questions by calling 1-833-WVROADS, where they will receive a response within seven days letting them know the status of projects on the roads that matter most to them.

WVDOT also welcomed a new Division in March, when Governor Justice signed a bill creating the new Division of Multimodal Transportation Facilities (DMTF.) The Division combines the Port Authority, Aeronautics Commission, Division of Public Transit, and State Rail Authority under the oversight on new Commissioner, Cindy Butler.

“I can’t tell you how proud I am of this organization and the way it’s pulled together,” Wriston said.

Working together as One DOT and in partnership with other agencies has allowed the WVDOT to accomplish projects such as Trout Run Bridge on Cass Scenic Railroad, which was washed out in the flood of 1985. All four WVDOT agencies, the West Virginia Division of Highways, Division of Motor Vehicles, Parkways Authority, and Division of Multimodal Transportation Agencies have realized projects and met goals not possible without this partnership. These projects include the Bluefield Area Transit Transfer Station, West Virginia Turnpike Chuck Yeager Bridge Painting now underway and innovations to Division of Motor Vehicles Online Services.

From the structural changes within the WVDOT to expanding partnerships to growing capabilities of its workforce, WVDOT begins 2023 in the midst of progress already set in motion. As Secretary Wriston explains, real change is accomplished when you focus on the systems and take a data driven approach.

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# Super Crossword

## WHAT IN THE WHAT?

<b>ACROSS</b>													<b>DOWN</b>																																																																																																																				
1 "Pet" annoyances	7 Dance click	13 Extreme right-wing doctrine	20 Polio vaccine developer	21 2008 presidential campaign coinage	22 Caine/Ustinov adventure film	23 SKILglintLET	25 Scorn	26 Poem with six stanzas	27 PUsmackSS	29 Boob tubes	31 Born, to Luc	32 Arab ruler	33 COsimianRE	44 "Certainly"	45 Open with a click	46 "Star Trek" crew woman	47 43rd U.S. pres.	49 Prairie preyer	50 FORchildEST	57 Pursues prey	58 ISP with a butterfly logo	59 Be in the hole	60 Like wickerwork	61 Hobbit enemy	62 Actress Lupino	64 Tabriz native	68 Thin iPod	69 LAcobraWN	73 — California (Mexican peninsula)	76 The Jordan River flows into it	77 CPR expert	78 Pas' counterparts	81 Kafka or Liszt	83 Freezer cubes	84 "I'm freezing!"	86 Fully grown	88 TUbIazeMMY	93 Napoli's land	94 Retrovirus material	95 On — to nowhere	96 Member of a sorority	97 Kenan's sitcom mate	100 DEVspiritICE	105 "— to laugh!"	107 German cry of vexation	108 Column's counterpart	109 NblastGHT	116 Caribbean island nation	122 Afternoon show	123 GRcreaseIT	125 One going in	126 "Hakuna —" ("The Lion King" song)	127 Vindicate	128 Little puzzles	129 Stage whispers	130 Neatens up	13 Went without food	14 Novelist Sholem	15 Oxford, e.g.	16 — latte (espresso variety)	17 Extreme disrepute	18 Doll who is Barbie's 96-Across	19 Bishops' headwear	24 Peaceful "Avatar" race	28 Outlaw Kelly	30 Gives the cold shoulder	33 Many, informally	34 "Time is — side"	35 "Girlfriend" boy band	36 Lace snarl	37 Has dinner at home	38 Less — stellar	39 Central area	40 Prior to, in poetry	41 — tai	42 Size above med.	43 "How icky!"	48 Helpful things	51 Nada	52 Little branch	53 One listening	54 Reproductive gametes	55 Wildcat's lair	56 Lead-in to cone or Caps	58 Reach a goal	63 Pappy	64 Elected group	65 U.S. Hwy., e.g.	66 "Caught you!"	67 "Rambo" setting, for short	69 More reasonable	70 Per person	71 Concept, in Cannes	72 Crackling radio noise	73 Very close pal, for short	74 Onassis or Fleischer	75 Jam holder	78 Prefix with task	79 Non-earthling	80 Gawk rudely	82 Pizazz	84 Unexciting	85 Winona of "Stranger Things"	87 Quick sprint	89 Casual refusal	90 "Anna and the King" actress — Ling	91 Suffix with southeast	92 Fate	93 "Caught you!"	97 Fate	98 Gas in fuel	99 Ray of "GoodFellas"	101 Westerns, in old slang	102 Univ., e.g.	103 Louise's film cohort	104 Over 50%	106 Hogs' homes	110 Concerning	111 — -do-well	112 "Buenos —" ("Good day," in Granada)	113 Prefix with tank	114 Enjoy a novel	115 Toy flown on a windy day	117 — Strauss	118 Exercised	119 Child's plea	120 "Bus Stop" playwright William	121 Fruit-flavored drinks	124 "One Mic" rapper

## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Mailbox is missing. 2. Cap is reversed. 3. Number is different. 4. Sign is missing. 5. Bricks are missing. 6. Chair is missing.





# THE WIDEN NEWS



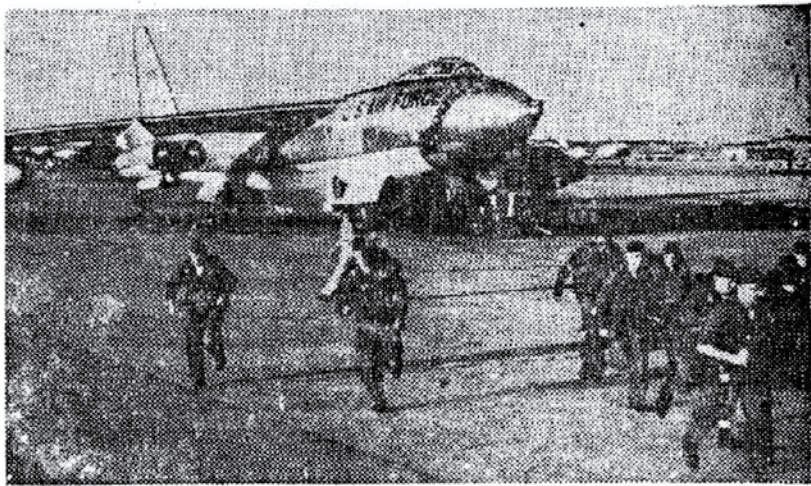
The people who think alike should vote alike.

## "DUNDON" RED ASH COAL

Where all think alike, no one thinks very much.

January 1957

### Bomber Crew 'Scramble'



One call from the Widen Observation Post could be responsible for sending the bomber crews like these into the air against enemy targets, as shown in the photograph. The ground observer corps stands ready to defend the United States just as much as a person in uniform.

**Detachment Five  
4717th Ground Observer Squadron  
(Defense) (ADC)  
United States Air Force  
2520 Washington St., E.  
Charleston 1, West Virginia  
27 December 1956**

Mr. Herbert C. Johnson  
Editor Widen News

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I was most happy to receive a copy of the December 22nd issue of "The Widen News," and also to learn of the splendid support you are giving the Ground Observer Corps in Widen.

Without a doubt, the organization of a Ground Observation Post in Widen would not be possible without the support of the press. I have found, in most cases, that the public must be receptive to such a program, and without newspaper support, the latter could not be possible.

I am enclosing the article you requested from Sergeant Paterson on your visit to the Filter Center, and hope that it will be satisfactory to you.

Sincerely  
**EDWIN S. HOFFMAN**  
Captain, USAF  
Adjutant and Information Services Officer

This tremendous task was delegated to the Department of the Air Force by the Defense Department. The Air Defense Command of the United States Air Force immediately set out to provide more adequate protection by building additional radar stations throughout the United States, and by increasing the number of fighter aircraft. After this was accomplished, it was found that it would be impractical to provide radar coverage for the entire United States. Because radar is ineffective for surveillance of aircraft under 5,000 feet, it was determined that the only possible method for detecting these planes was by human eyes. So the Grand Observer Corps was organized. The Corps, composed entirely of patriotic civilian volunteers, is now standing ready to cover these so called "blind spots" in our radar network.

Scattered throughout the United States are Ground Observation Posts. These posts represent the fundamental part of the Ground Observer Corps, and could be the source of aircraft information which could start the entire air defense network of the Air Force into operation. The Widen post, under the supervision of Mr. John L. Henley, and Mr. Scott Williams, is considered an intricate part of the West Virginia Ground Observer Corps operation. The post will report all aircraft in the Widen area to the Air Defense Filter Center at Charleston. The Center will relay the information to a radar station, who will either make positive identification, or send Air Force jet fighters into the air to destroy the aircraft, if it is identified as enemy. **Captain Richard S. Becker, Air Force officer in charge of the West Virginia**

Ground Observer Corps operation was gratified to learn of the additional air surveillance which will be provided by Widen post. Says Capt. Becker, "The addition of the Widen post in this part of West Virginia has increased the effectiveness of the Ground Observer Corps throughout the state."

Daniel Webster once said, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty". Patriotic citizens of West Virginia can truly be proud of their American heritage. To cite an example, do you realize that 15 citizens of the Mountain State have been awarded our highest decoration; The Medal of Honor. The Ground Observer Corps offers every citizen an opportunity to serve his country. George Washington aptly phrased it when he once said, "... Where is a man to be found who wishes to remain indebted for the defense of his person and property to the exertion, the bravery, the blood of others without making serious effort to repay the debt ... "

MRS. RUSSELL H. PARSONS



### Widen Foreman's Wife Receives High Honor

Mrs. Russell H. Parsons, Worthy Matron of Strange Creek Chapter No. 154, Order of the Eastern Star, was honored last month by being presented with an official citation from the Grand Chapter of Saskatchewan in which she was "constituted and appointed as the Grand Representative of Saskatchewan in West Virginia for the ensuing three years."

The appointment was made on the recommendation of Mrs. Lelah K. Ball of Grantsville, Worthy Grand Matron of the Grand Jurisdiction of West Virginia, and was signed and seal affixed on December 17th, 1956 in the town of Kam-sack by Fern Jones, Acting Worthy Grand Matron of Saskatchewan, and Ethel E. Carss, Grand Secretary.

Mrs. Parsons served as president of the Widen Woman's Club a few years ago until their family moved to Servia where they own their own home.

### Choral Group Delights Woman's Club Members

One of the interesting and enjoyable features of the Christmas season was the appearance of a choral group from Widen school, before the members of the Widen Woman's Club at their annual Christmas party.

The group sang a tuneful program including the following selections:

Good King Wenceslas; O Holy Night by Adams, with Miss Gayle Butcher singing the solo part; three piano solos by Miss Dawne Carol Backus which included a Christmas Medley, Invention, by Bach, and Dancing Lady.

Those who made up the group under the direction of Mrs. B. Eugene Taylor included, besides the ones mentioned;

Ronald Conner, Juinita Forte, Carolyn Hutchinson, Judy La-Corte, Nancy McMillion, Lillie Nash, April Manning, Sandra Williams, and Judy Shaffer. Mrs. Taylor is a member of the Widen Woman's Club, and the club extends its thanks to these singers

### WIDEN HIGH SCHOOL WINS CLOSE ONE IN EXTRA PERIOD

The Widen High School basketball team won its first game of the season at Clay gymnasium on January 19, in a dramatic fashion, going two overtime periods to defeat Sand Fork, 73-71.

Joe Hutchinson threw the goal on a one-handed jump shot to win the game for Widen in the second overtime period. Two minutes of the second period had elapsed of the second overtime period when Hutchinson made the winning shot.

The regulation game ended in a 69-69 tie. Marks scored for Sand Fork and John Henley for Widen in the 3-minute first overtime.

Carl Ellis led Widen with 18 points, while Johnson of Sand Fork was the game's top scorer with 23 points.

Widen, which now has a 1-4 standing, entertained State High of Institute at Clay Tuesday night.

Widen High School basketball team may be favorably heard from in the future because Elk River Coal and Lumber Company is furnishing the school a better place to practice as well as for other school activities.

Last Tuesday Widen lost a heart-breaker to Institute by a score of 65 to 54 after holding a safe lead throughout three-quarters of the game, which was played in the Clay gymnasium.

### Widen Air Defense Fits Into State Plans

By Technical Sergeant  
**Ralph C. Paterson**

In this age of intercontinental bombers and atom warfare, one cannot overemphasize the importance of an adequate air defense system for the United States. Today, as never before, the United States is forced to defend herself against a sneak enemy air attack.

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"We Treat Others As We Like To Be Treated Ourselves." - Matthew 7:12



# OBITUARIES

Glenna Carol (Bird) Moore, 57, of Gauley Bridge, WV went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, December 22, 2022, at Charleston Memorial Hospital in Charleston, WV.

Born on October 12, 1965, in Charlton Heights, she was the daughter of the late Harry Vencil Bird and Carline Sue (Bush) Bird. In addition to her father, she was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, Johnny and Gay Bird, and her maternal grandparents, Dan and Thelma Bush.

Glenna is survived by her mother, Carline Sue Bird; sister, Tammy (Robert) Murphy;

brother, Harry Bird Jr.; son, Shane Moore; husband, Gary Moore; four grandchildren; and many other family members.

Glenna enjoyed reading, embroidery and communicating with many friends and family on the computer. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.carlwilsonfuneralhome.com](http://www.carlwilsonfuneralhome.com).

Pennington Smith Funeral Home is honored to be serving the Moore Family.

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# LEGAL

## Horizontal Natural Gas Well Work Permit Application Notice by Publication

**Notice is hereby given:** Pursuant to West Virginia Code 22-6A-10(e) prior to filing an application for a permit for a horizontal well the applicant shall publish in the county in which the well is located or is proposed to be located a Class II legal advertisement.

**Paper:** Clay County Free Press  
The following applicant intends to apply for a horizontal natural well permit which disturbs three acres or more of surface excluding pipelines, gathering lines and roads or utilizes more than two hundred ten thousand gallons of water in any thirty day period.

**Applicant:** Mountain V Oil & Gas **Well Number:** C3H WV0489  
**Address:** PO BOX 904  
Buckhannon, WV 26201

**Business Conducted:** Natural gas production.  
**Location -**  
State: WV County: Clay  
District: Henry Quadrange: Elkhurst 7.5  
UTM Coordinate NAD83 Northing: 4,260,072.81  
UTM coordinate NAD83 Easting: 485,102.33  
Watershed: Horner Fork & Laurel Creek

**Coordinate Conversion:**  
To convert the coordinates above into longitude and latitude, visit: [http://tagis.dep.wv.gov/convert/1lutm\\_conus.php](http://tagis.dep.wv.gov/convert/1lutm_conus.php)

**Electronic notification:**  
To receive an email when applications have been received or issued by the Office of Oil and Gas, visit <http://www.dep.wv.gov/insidedep/Pages/DEPMailingLists.aspx> to sign up.

**Reviewing Applications:**  
Copies of the proposed permit application may be reviewed at the WV Department of Environmental Protection headquarters, located at 601 57th Street, SE Charleston, WV 25304 (304-926-0450). Full copies or scans of the proposed permit application will cost \$15, whether mailed or obtained at DEP headquarters. Copies may be requested by calling the office or by sending an email to [DEP.comments@wv.gov](mailto:DEP.comments@wv.gov)

**Submitting Comments:**  
Comments may be submitted online at <https://appa.dep.wv.gov/oog/comments/comments.cfm> or by letter to Permit Review, Office of Oil and Gas, 601 57th Street, SE Charleston, WV 25304. Please reference the county, well number, and operator when using this option.

Regardless of format for comment submissions, they must be received no later than thirty days after the permit application is received by the Office of Oil and Gas.

For information related to horizontal drilling visit: [www.dep.wv.gov/oil-an-gas/pages/default.aspx](http://www.dep.wv.gov/oil-an-gas/pages/default.aspx)

# LEGAL

## IN THE JUVENILE COURT OF CLAY COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

**THAT BEING THE JUVENILE COURT OF SAID COUNTY**  
IN RE: State v N.S. Case Nos. 22-JA-65-67

In the matter of N.S., and the unknown whereabouts of Amber Smith, Adult Respondent Mother of said Infant,  
**ORDER OF PUBLICATION**  
And  
**NOTICE OF ANSWER**

To: **Amber Smith**  
(The object of this action is to notify the Adult Respondent Mother of an abuse and neglect petition herein filed so that said Adult Respondent Mother may answer the same to protect her interest.)

You are hereby notified that an abuse and neglect and/or abandonment petition has been filed with the Circuit Court of Clay County, West Virginia, on the 15th day of December 2022, and assigned Case Numbers 22-JA-65-67, wherein it is alleged that the Adult Respondent Mother of the Infant Respondent N.S. (DOB: 6/30/12), is Amber Smith, and that said Infant Respondents be placed in the custody of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, with said Infant Respondents remaining in the care, custody and control of the said Department since that time in accordance with WV Code §49-6-3. You are hereby notified that you have the right to answer said petition and you have the right to have counsel present at all stages of these proceedings and ALL PROCEEDINGS CAN RESULT IN THE PERMANENT TERMINATION OF CUSTODIAL AND PARENTAL RIGHTS TO SAID INFANT CHILD.

Accordingly, it is **ORDERED** that the Adult Respondent Mother, Amber Smith, shall appear before the Honorable Jack Alsop on the **27th day of January 2023, at 11:00 a.m.** at the Clay County Courthouse, 246 Main Street, Clay, West Virginia, otherwise judgment be default will be taken against them at any time thereafter, and termination of your custodial and parental rights may be ordered by the Court.

A copy of said Petition can be obtained from the Office of the Circuit Clerk of Clay County, West Virginia, at the Clay County Courthouse, Clay, West Virginia.

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA AND WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES, CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES DIVISION.

BY: Jim E. Samples, Prosecuting Attorney Clay County, West Virginia  
Entered by the Clerk of said Court on the 21st day of December, 2022.

*Michael W. Osbury*  
Clerk of Court

# LEGAL

## WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Division of Highways NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS

Bids will be received electronically by the West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways through the Bid Express Bidding Service ([www.bidx.com](http://www.bidx.com)) and by sealed proposals (only when prequalification is waived) being received at its office in Building 5, Room 843, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East, Charleston, West Virginia, until February 14, 2023 at 10:00 AM (Eastern Standard Time). The bids will be downloaded and/or opened and read publicly thereafter for the constructions of the following project(s):

Call	Contract	State Project	Federal Project	Description
005	2021000694	S381-STR/IP-23 00	STP-2023(100)D	PAVEMENT MARKINGS ROADWAY STRIPING DISTRICT WIDE COUNTY: BOONE, CLAY, DISTRICT 1, MASON, PUTNAM

**DBE GOAL:** 8% OF CONTRACT BID AMOUNT. BIDDER MUST PROVIDE WRITTEN ASSURANCE OF MEETING GOAL ON FORM IN PROPOSAL

**REMARKS:**  
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 include one of the following forms properly executed with each proposal: Proposal Guaranty Bond, Cashier's Check, or Certified Check for \$500.00 or 5% of the total bid, whichever is greater.

The West Virginia Department of Transportation, Division of Highways reserves the right to defer, delay or postpone the date for receiving and publicly opening proposals for any project designated in this advertisement, without the necessity of renewing such advertisement. All bidders holding valid bidding proposals will be notified of such deferment, delay or postponement and the date that proposals will be received and publicly opened.

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

# LEGAL

## Tariff Form No. 8 (Tariff Rule 10.1 .a et seq.) PUBLIC NOTICE OF CHANGE IN RATES WITH PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE

NOTICE is hereby given that Hope Gas, Inc. ("Hope Gas" or the "Company"), a public utility, has filed with the PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WEST VIRGINIA, revised tariff sheets containing new terms and conditions for furnishing gas service to approximately 112,000 customers within its service territories in Barbour, Boone, Braxton, Calhoun, Clay, Doddridge, Gilmer, Harrison, Jackson, Kanawha, Lewis, Lincoln, Logan, Marion, Marshall, Mason, McDowell, Mingo, Monongalia, Nicholas, Pleasants, Preston, Putnam, Raleigh, Randolph, Ritchie, Roane, Taylor, Tucker, Tyler, Upshur, Wetzel, Wirt, Wood and Wyoming Counties, West Virginia.

Hope Gas is proposing to make changes to its tariff to accommodate unconventional gas producers who desire to interconnect with Hope Gas's distribution and gathering pipelines. Hope Gas will need to blend gas from the unconventional gas producers to meet tariff specifications prior to delivery of the gas to customers. Unconventional gas is becoming more prevalent as a source of supply, and the Company needs to modify its tariff to accommodate additional sources of supply. Hope Gas will recover all costs to interconnect from the unconventional producers and charge them for gas blending and operation of the interconnect.

The Company provides resale service to the following customers: Standard Gas Company, Consumers Gas Utility Company, Cardinal Natural Gas Company - Northern Division (Lumberport), Mountaineer Gas Company, Southern Public Service Company, Cardinal Natural Gas Company - Northern Division (Blacksville), and Peoples Gas WV LLC.

The Company's proposed changes to its tariff will not impact its current rates and charges for natural gas service.

Anyone desiring to protest or intervene should file a written protest or petition to intervene prior to January 12, 2023 unless otherwise modified by Commission order. Failure to timely protest or intervene can affect your rights to protest any rate increases and to participate in future proceedings. All protests or requests to intervene should briefly state the reason for the protest or intervention. Requests to intervene must comply with the Commission's rules on intervention set forth in the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. All interventions may be mailed and addressed to The Executive Secretary, Public Service Commission of West Virginia, P.O. Box 812, 201 Brooks Street, Charleston, West Virginia 25323, or may be hand-delivered. Protests may be filed on line through the Commission website ([www.psc.state.wv.us](http://www.psc.state.wv.us)) using the "Submit a Comment" link or may be mailed to the Executive Secretary at the same address above.

A complete copy of this tariff, as well as a representative of the Company to provide information requested concerning it, is available to customers, prospective customers, or their agents at any of the following offices of the Company: Jo Carol Farmer, SVP, Rates and Regulatory Relations, 48 Columbia Boulevard, Clarksburg, WV 26330.

A copy of the proposed rates is available for public inspection at the office of the Executive Secretary of the PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION at 201 Brooks Street, Charleston, West Virginia.

# HELP WANTED

Looking to hire someone to plow parking lot and shovel sidewalks at the Clay County Department of Health and Human Resources Office in Clay, WV.

If interested, please contact Patty Martin at 304-872-0810.

## West Virginia Statewide Classified Network

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<b>CAREER</b> TRAIN ONLINE TO DO MEDICAL BILLING! Become a Medical Office Professional online at CTI! Get Trained, Certified & ready to work in months! Call 877-635-0244. The Mission, Program Information and Tuition is located at <a href="http://CareerTechnical.edu/consumer-information">CareerTechnical.edu/consumer-information</a> . (M-F 8am-6pm ET)	APPLYING FOR SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY or Appealing a Denied Claim? Call Bill Gordon & Assoc. Our case managers simplify the process & work hard to help with your case. Call 1-844-448-0317 FREE Consultation. Local Attorneys Nationwide [Mail: 2420 N St NW, Washington DC. Office: Broward Co. FL (TX/NM Bar.)]	UPDATE YOUR HOME with Beautiful New Blinds & Shades. FREE in-home estimates make it convenient to shop from home. Professional installation. Top quality - Made in the USA. Call for free consultation: 877-802-8381. Ask about our specials!
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# SPORTS

## Panthers take 2nd at Bob Stover Duals



Second place goes to the Panthers. Photo Krechella Evans

By Allen Hamrick

It was party time in Clay County as the Bob Stover Duals 2022 got underway. The Clay High Panthers have been kicking some butt the last couple of weeks as well as taking some shots on the chin, but now the game was on Panther turf and a team better bring their A game. Who needs those sissy faced, smack talking so called,

pro wrestlers? Give me high school wrestling anytime. Go to a Panther match and you will see gut busting, shoulder twisting, bone breaking action; it is not for the faint at heart.

Eight teams from around the state including Liberty Raleigh, Clay, Roane, Doddridge, Calhoun, Chapmanville, Logan, and the X-team brought their best teams

and competed in a feeding frenzy, king of the hill type wrestling. It was some of the best and toughest wrestling I have watched. You simply cannot come into the Panther den and whip them out as easy as a team would think. The Panthers are a tough team that works hard to send the other teams to Grandma's house for milk, cookies and

a big box of tissues to dry their tears. The new CCHS gym was packed on both sides with teams and fans to watch another great Bob Stover Tournament.

There were some great matches, and if your heart wasn't pounding, you need to go back to your sand box and merry go round. Fans were standing to their feet as underdogs came out on top and others just couldn't be beat. Being that this tournament is a duals tournament, there were no individual champions, but one could see that if it had been a bracketed tournament, the Panthers would have had a few in the finals. There were two pools in the tournament which included four teams in each. Clay was the top dog in one pool and Roane was top dog in the other after the first round of matches. In the re-pool, Liberty Raleigh took over the top spot in the first pool



Ethan "Spike" Morris gives no quarter. Allen Hamrick photo.



Caden Delwarte tacks shoulders to the mat. Allen Hamrick photo.

and set the Panthers in second. Roane stayed in the top spot in the second pool and the matches got intense with the #2 Panthers going head to head in a war against #1 Roane. When it was over, the Panthers won by just one point over their rivals 36-35 - it was a great nail biting match. Liberty Raleigh butted heads with Doddridge and came out on top by the score of 54-29. When it was all, over Liberty Raleigh was king of the mats with the Clay Panthers in a close second, Roane was 3rd and Doddridge was 4th.

This was another great Bob Stover Duals - all of the teams gave the fans their money's worth. Many thanks go out to the numerous people who made this tournament go off without a hitch, from the volunteers to the home town cooks. The Panther hos-

pitality room is second to none and looked more like a king's banquet. A lot of effort goes into the tournament, and the tournament and its hospitality room are talked about around the state for its high quality.

Individually, the Panthers have some wrestlers that will no doubt grace the floors at the state tournament. Noah Casto, one of the roughest and toughest on the mats, went 5-0 for the tournament and grabbed the Most Outstanding Wrestler in the upper weight classes. Curran of Doddridge County also grabbed the Most Outstanding Wrestler award for the lower weight classes. The Panthers will be back in action on January 6th and 7th in Nicholas County at the National Guard Duals. Come out and see some great mat action and support your wrestling team!



Zane Minger goes undefeated. Allen Hamrick photo.

## So ends 2022; 2023 it's your turn

By Allen Hamrick

The year 2022 applied the brakes and is now in the past, and 2023 is kicking off an unknown future that has the common person scratching their heads trying to figure out what they can do in the new year. To say that 2022 was just another year would be like giving a dictionary to a dog; neither would make any sense. The price of building materials is still higher than party goers at Woodstock and many other items, like gas and oil, are still at a premium. We started 2022 with the idea that the pandemic was riding into the sunset and was a closed chapter in history. However, it still lingers on, like the smell of a skunk on your dog, and returns randomly attempting to disrupt what we have gained back inch by inch. Politics waged a civil war of its own turning neighbor against neighbor and family against family; wars of words split friendships, families, people and the government, and, at times, it got heated enough to release blows as common sense left the building. The struggle to find the truth and where the county was headed became nothing but a foggy mist laced with hysterical mudslinging and thoughtless behavior. As 2022 rolled on, our government stayed at odds often branding each other's butts like a cattle drive of politicians as the jackasses and elephants warred over the best feeding grounds. When the fallout hit the fan, all of it blew like on the rich and the poor like a manure spreader on a farm.

Most Americans just went on with life as if nothing was going on - meatloaf and potatoes were still on the menu and paychecks kept the wolves at bay and added a jingle to our wallets as what was left over was just enough to fill the change pocket and keep your dreams of living high on the hog reality. We pulled our heads out of the sand because our butts just couldn't think for themselves. The job market became so that companies were advertising everywhere; a person could suddenly get a job no matter what your age or handicap was, they just needed bodies. Grandma and Grandpa were getting back out and flipping burgers and the drive up window as a whole became friendly once again. It was great - most mom and pop businesses that didn't shut their doors in the dark ages of the pandemic became viable to the com-

munity once again, keeping their doors open thanks to a generation that could now come out of retirement and help their country once again. In 2022, if you were a person that wanted to work you could, and if you didn't, you didn't have to according to those in power.

As we rolled on with everyday life, a guessing game became part of life after coffee and a donut. What was going to hit us next? Shutdowns, shortages, new variants of some disease, war, famine, killer weather, border wars? Would that rare hundred dollar bill that you saved as mad money in a sweaty part of your wallet for months still be worth a hundred dollars when you go to buy bread? Things are becoming so advanced that AI (artificial Intelligence) has been taking over the computer world. With AI, anything is possible. From cameras to cars there is nothing that can be imagined that AI isn't capable of making a reality. What was once unheard of is now possible. Will AI take over the job markets as computers are now thinking for themselves? Will we be the future generation that lives as slaves to machines? Who knows? Keep a bucket of water handy just in case you're HP desktop suddenly gets cocky enough to start calling the shots.

In 2023, we have to make a difference before we no longer have the opportunity to do so. We want to keep the process of life we have gotten used to. The hunter and gatherer society has been going on since the beginning of time with change being the one true thing; all good things come to an end but are beginnings to a new future. We need to make 2023 a better place to live, not just for ourselves but also for our future families and our country. Our landscape is changing, and the great outdoors is becoming a single track. It is changing at a pace that many will not be able to keep up. Whether we like it or not, change is inevitable and most likely will take over our lives. It can either consume us or make us better. So, where do we begin as a people in 2023? How do we go forward from 2022 into the uncertain future that we will face as a generation? Those questions have to be answered by the individual who can't change the world but can, at the same time, change just a little around us. After all, it is the duty of all of us to survive, protect, love,

and most of all have charity. Nobody will ever change politics - it will always be the Democrat will against the Republican will with no care given for the consequences that roll like an avalanche downhill into our homes. Just read the history books, it's been going on since the beginning. Where there is free tax money to be spent, one can rest assured politicians will be there to spend it for you. All we can do is to try to inspire the people around us in whatever circumstance we are faced with.

In 2022, we saw a lot of good as most of the country didn't dwell on what they couldn't change. We saw common folk answering the call for help and those that stood on the front lines of tough situations with no thought of themselves. How we approach the new year does not depend on anything but us. Children depend on the decisions people, families and friends make now. The only thing that matters is what good we did while we were here, not what we had. Albert Pike said, "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." Don't dwell on 2022 so much that the days coming are wrought with fear and depression. The year 2022 ended with a deep freeze and showed us that nobody is invincible, the next day could be our last. The one thing we must remember as people is that there is always hope, and how we use that ideal going forward will determine our fate in 2023. Let's make 2023 a good one or at least the best we can for ourselves and our families so that those that come after will be able to enjoy the freedoms we have now. Happy New Year!



What's next?