



Clay County Free Press

Home of the Clay County Golden Delicious Apple



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Clay County teams take top honors at the 2025 West Virginia Envirothon



Members of the first-place team from Clay County High School receiving their award on April 17 at Cedar Lakes Conference Center. From (l to r) in the photo are: WV Envirothon Committee Chairman Wayne McKeever, team members Hollie Conley, Skylar Adkins, Brooklyn Anderson, Sophia Berberich and Grace Bass; team advisor Kelsey McFarland and WV Envirothon Education Committee Chairman Johnny King is at far right. *Davin White | WV Envirothon Committee*



Members of the second-place Clay County team receive their award on April 17 at Cedar Lakes Conference Center. In the photo (from left to right) are: WV Envirothon Committee Chairman Wayne McKeever, team members Kaylah Kennedy, Parker Taylor, Maddy Morton, Trent Hinkle and Jamie Grose. Team advisor Kelsey McFarland is at far right. *Davin White | WV Envirothon Committee*



Members of the first-place team from Clay County High School are (l to r): Sophia Berberich, Brooklyn Anderson, Hollie Conley, Skylar Adkins and Grace Bass. *Davin White | WV Envirothon Committee*

Two teams from Clay County High School earned first and second place at the West Virginia Envirothon Thursday afternoon at Cedar Lakes Conference Center in Jackson County.

The Clay County team that included students Skylar Adkins, Hollie Conley, Brooklyn Anderson, Sophia Berberich and Grace Bass took home the top prize, a \$5,000 scholarship to share, and will go on to represent West Virginia at this summer's NCF-Envirothon, which will be held July 20-26, 2025, at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

The second-place team consisted of students Parker Taylor, Maddy Morton, Trent Hinkle, Jamie Grose and Kaylah Kennedy, and took the name "Clay County Conifers." They will share a \$4,000 scholarship.

Five-member teams who participate in the Envirothon explore current environmental and earth sciences within the

framework of five disciplines: aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and a current environmental topic known as the "fifth topic." This year's fifth topic scenario was "Fostering Stewardship in WV's Changing Forest."

The scenario required students to help two landowners manage their property through forest stewardship and help them choose and meet their objectives, then explain their reasoning during an oral presentation.

The two Clay County teams topped a team from Morgantown High School, which finished in third place and will share a \$3,000 scholarship; the Ravenswood FFA team from Ravenswood High School (\$2,000), which finished in fourth place; and the fifth-place Doddridge FFA team from Doddridge County High School, which earned a \$1,500 scholarship.

Rounding out the top 10 teams were:

ENVIROTHON cont. on page 3



Valedictorian Kenzie Corwell gives her farewell address.



Salutatorian Delila Burkhamer

Clay County High School seniors move into the future

By Allen Hamrick

The Clay County High School Graduation of 2025 is now in the history books. Thirteen or more years of education have all boiled down to this day, a day when all that graduates have accomplished so far heralds them into the next phase of either higher education or on the job training.

In the early years of learning how many fingers were on each hand and realizing those things they had put in their mouths could also help to count to twenty helped students to begin to understand that those same fingers and toes could calculate the earth's rotation or develop algorithms for AI technology. Seemingly endless years of cultivating friendships, trying to make the sports teams, learning the 3 R's – reading, "righting" and 'rithmetic all seemed part of a never ending cycle... but they have now ended.

These first years of education were carefully planned by those behind desks that suffered the same fate of learning when a paddle named White Lightning was the final judge of discipline and you could smoke 'em if you had 'em during lunch period; days when squirrel tails were tied on rusted Ford, Chevy and Dodge truck antennas and a shotgun and fishing pole hung in the back glass. Smoking the tires off thundering muffler less muscle cars, whether a '74 impala or a '68 mustang, determined student status in that day. Those days are long gone and those that were carefully planning them have passed the torch to those that would usher in the age of high tech and cell phones.

The education world has changed dras-

tically since the good ol' days. In years gone by, students learned a lot and became pillars of society, but now dictionaries and libraries are dust covered and the graduates of today can, by the touch of a few buttons, learn anything they want, do anything they want, create whatever they want, friend whoever they want, or completely turn reality off and live in a virtual reality world of their own design. However, the high tech world is just a tool that can be used for great things.

CCHS graduates have proved that hard work, determination, skill, and pure grit are the true motivation for success. Maddie Morton proved just that by doing something that's so rare in today's world that only the student who has a drive beyond the box can achieve. Maddie earned a two year Associates Degree in General Studies with an emphasis on Land Resources from Glenville State University. On top of her regular school curriculum, her time on the sports teams and other extracurricular activities, she managed to complete a two year degree before she even arrives for her first day of higher education classes. That's what hard work and determination will get you.

In a gym packed wall to wall with parents, friends and supporters, attendees watched as seniors, who had a look of, "Thank goodness it's over," walked in with smiles and a bright eye toward their future. Some will go on to higher education and others will join our military, while others will join the work force and begin their road to paying taxes and Social Security. There were many awards given in memory of others who have

SENIORS cont. on page 8

May We Never Take America for Granted



Gone but not forgotten.

See story on Page 7

BOOKED

REGIONAL JAIL MUGSHOTS

BRAXTON COUNTY

 Danny Lee Blankenship Jr. Booked 5/21/25 DUI second offense, driving revoked – second	 Shawn Michael Helmick Booked 5/24/25 Domestic assault	 Carl William James Booked 5/23/25 Sexual abuse first degree, sexual abuse second degree, sexual assault first degree, gross neglect of child creating risk of injury or death, sexual abuse by parent, guardian, custodian, etc. (x2)	 Robin Louise James Booked 5/23/25 Gross neglect of child creat- ing risk of injury or death	 Christopher Lee Nottingham Booked 5/23/25 Assault	 Hunter Lee Taylor Booked 5/24/25 Trespassing
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NICHOLAS COUNTY

 Charles Elijah-Martell Barnhouse Booked 5/22/25 Capias	 Melanie Jane Carr Booked 5/25/25 Shoplifting	 Dillon Lee Foster Booked 5/24/25 Possession with intent, ob- struction, driving suspended, DUI, reckless driving, no proof of insurance, fleeing on foot, fleeing while DUI, improper registration	 Thomas William Grimmett Booked 5/20/25 Possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance, driving on revoked (second offense), False information, obstruct driver's view, obstructing officer, DOR/DUI	 Dylan Cord Hayhurst Booked 5/24/25 Possession with intent	 Christopher Dewayne Morris Booked 5/22/25 Capias
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CLAY COUNTY

 John Henry Cunningham Booked 5/22/25 Fugitive from justice	 Gary Wayne Harlow Booked 5/23/25 Destruction of property, indecent exposure
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Midwestern Businessman Betting On Clay County Coal: Jerry Guess Is Bullish On Coal Country

It was late January when the businessman Jerry Guess completed a call with a coal business broker, Pete Thompson. Guess was interested in the mining industry, primarily for precious metals businesses to compliment an existing business within Guess & Co. Before calling Pete Thompson, Jerry Guess had just completed a call with a boutique merchant banking firm about potentially purchasing \$500 million in precious metals monthly and he wanted to own a precious metal mine to meet their client interests. “I never really thought about the coal business as something we would get into,” said Jerry Guess, chairman, president and CEO of Guess & Co. He did not have anything against the industry; he only had concerns. “My primary concern was safety, I remember being a teenager in 1999 and watching the news when coal miners were trapped in West Virginia, I remember feeling very badly for them and their suffering and it was just something I never forgot,” said Guess. Guess is known as someone who genuinely cares about people. “If we got into the business, I was determined to make safety a priority and take care the workers,” he said. Thompson had precious metals opportunities, but he had more coal acquisition opportunities available. He provided Guess with a list and after reviewing and making offers, Thompson introduced Guess to the sellers to put deals together. For as much as he is caring, Guess is also a tough and aggressive deal maker. He often demands that deals are completed in days and not weeks but with generous terms. “In my life, I have been through hell and back throughout my career, so I absolutely despise wasting time, no grass grows under my feet”, said Guess. After discussing the coal business with members of his Board of Directors, he decided to move forward. “The first deal moved

with lighting speed,” said Mandy Hall, vice-chairman, COO& CFO of Guess & Co. “I was on standby to countersign closing documents for our first deal and thought it would be a few days, he made the offer on a Friday afternoon, and the deal closed the next day on a Saturday afternoon, Mr. Guess does not mess around, when he wants to get something done, he does,” said Hall. The first deal was the acquisition of an anthracite coal business in Pennsylvania which included 56 acres of land, and a breaker, Guess & Co. acquired it for \$8 million including debt. The company’s largest deal to date in the coal industry came less than a month later, when it acquired over 2,700 acres of coal land in Clay County, West Virginia from D.C. Chapman Ventures for \$200 million. Mandy Hall has been with Guess & Co. since just before the pandemic and has held several management positions prior to her most senior role. She describes Guess as a very hard worker. “It seems like he is always working, I am not surprised to receive an email from him at three in the morning in which he is providing our team with an update or putting something together for a customer, he works very hard”, said Hall. Kevin James Kline, a retired FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the New Haven Division soon joined the team. He holds a law degree and had a long and decorated career with the FBI. Shortly after his retirement, Guess reached out to him to join the company as a special adviser, which he did in 2020. “My phone has gone off many times at 5:00 a.m. from Mr. Guess’ early morning emails, I have watched him be diligent over the years and he gets things done,” said Kline who currently serves as senior deputy chairman on the parent company board for Guess & Co. Guess & Co. is the only company in the U.S. focused on rural revitalization through its core businesses of finance,

mining, insurance, agriculture, technology, real estate, energy, and health care. Jerry Guess launched the business in 2017 with a team of seasoned lawyers, business professionals, retired federal officials and retired federal law enforcement. The company’s Board members early on included a former adviser to multiple U.S. presidents and an adviser to a U.S. attorney general, other members have included the former president of an NFL team. Jerry Guess started his first business when he was 12 years old. As with any entrepreneur, he had failures and setbacks throughout his career, some small ones and some really big ones. A man of faith, he gets up early in the morning before the sunrise to begin his day with prayer time before he sends an email or takes a phone call. “Faith is very important to me and is at the center of my life”, Guess said. Guess & Co. recently engaged Corporate Chaplains of America for its management and employees to provide chaplaincy services underscoring how important faith is to Guess. Jerry Guess is skilled at building relationships. In 2017 when launching Guess & Co., he traveled to Washington, D.C. to discuss potential business opportunities with the late Bill Richardson, former governor of New Mexico and former cabinet secretary in the Clinton Administration. In 2021, he met with White House officials regarding rural communities after he connected with former chief of staff for then-president Biden. “You can name a major company CEO, and there is a good chance, Mr. Guess knows them,” said James Jackson, who serves on the parent company board for Guess & Co. as deputy chairman. “He knows how to get to the head man of a company and get a conversation started, I’ve watched him connect with high level individuals that most people would not be able to talk to”,

said Jackson. Guess who took the LSAT in 2023 and plans to attend law school in the near future, despite turning 40 years old this year. He knows that having a roster of good law firms is important to a businesses success. For his company’s coal deals, he engaged the well-known law firm of Bowles Rice in Charleston, West Virginia to advise his company. The firm has advised coal companies for over a century. Guess & Co. has been advised by Charles Dollison and his team. Dollison served as in-house counsel for a coal company that was sold to a private equity firm. Jerry Guess is building Guess & Co.’s coal business into a fully integrated company from coal mining to processing to brokerage, storage and transportation. The company has the benefit of owning a finance business that it is also building alongside its coal business, which is important as it plans to invest over \$100 million in capital expenditures to build a mining complex in Clay County for the coal land it recently acquired which is valued at over \$3 billion based on current market prices for coal. Guess is betting that coal will be in high demand for the next 20 years with increased electricity needs from bitcoin mining and data centers being built to support artificial intelligence. A Goldman Sachs analyst recently noted that while the coal industry has been in decline largely due to competition from natural gas, coal is now competitive with natural gas. In April 2025, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to boost coal production in the U.S. to meet increasing energy demand. “We are looking forward to the revitalization of an industry leading to the revitalization of communities, we are committed to building a coal business that provides safe and good-paying jobs, and contributes to economic growth and prosperity for years to come”, said Guess.

Guess & Co.™

Guess & Co. is bringing American coal back. We are committed to revitalizing the coal industry and revitalizing communities. Guess & Co. is proud of our commitment to Clay County following our recent \$200 million acquisition of coal land. We plan to invest millions more to build out a mining complex which will lead to hundreds of jobs at every level.



Jerry D. Guess
Chairman, President &
Chief Executive Officer



Kevin James Kline, J.D.
Senior Deputy Chairman



James R. Jackson
Deputy Chairman



Jeffrey A. Hundman, M.B.A.
Vice-Chairman



Mandy L. Hall
Vice-Chairman, Secretary-Treasurer,
Chief Operating Officer & Chief Financial Officer

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Eternally Young

By Joe Mazzella

My family and I had stopped to eat at a fast food place before we went grocery shopping the other day. I had my daughter order while I went to the restroom. When I got back she told me the amount and I went to the counter to pay. The cashier asked for less than what she had said and I paid him. When I got back to our table my daughter laughed and pointed to the receipt. I had gotten a “senior discount.”

Now I don’t mind getting a senior discount but I never ask for one. What got me was the 20 year old cashier had taken one look at me and decided I certainly looked senior enough to get it. This morning I looked in the mirror and sadly had to agree with him. My face and balding head were covered in age spots. What hair I did have was thin and 95% silver. The wrinkles in my forehead and around my eyes were DEEP. I certainly looked like I was 58 years old. In fact, I probably looked a lot older than that. What got me, though, was on the inside there still was this really young guy wondering what the heck happened.

In truth, all of us tend to feel this way at times. It is the paradox of aging. On the inside we are a soul that is both ageless and eternal. We are a spirit that is forever young. On the outside, however, we are a body that keeps aging and wearing down with each extra year we spend on this world. It can be endlessly confusing and sometimes irritating too.

I decided then not to pay too much attention to that face in the mirror. I will do my best to keep my aging body healthy but I will also always try to live from that young, loving, joyful spirit within. That is who I truly am. That is who we all truly are. Whether you are 7 or 70 then always remember that you are an eternally young Child of God. You are Loved. You are meant to Love. And the more Love you share, the younger you will feel.

Home Country

Slim Randles

When the world is hot and my skin is fried, scratching from the constant dry, let the clouds boil up, boil up high. And then shade the earth with the darkening sky and bring the secrets and the smell of rain. The coolness and the blessed rain, again.

Our land is brown but blessed, stressed in the heat, the shiny heat of day. The slender green of rivers slide along, striving to continue, to feed its own along the banks, the banks where the dust rises. Rises, powdery clomp by clomp as we walk, walk the shady way.

And though the heat, the dryness of heat, pushes down our weary feet, we plod along. Ours is the blessing of challenge, to live, to thrive in the heat. To toil and sweat, to make the cold drink at day’s end that much sweeter. Sweeter as it goes down, cooler as it falls, dropping the coolness inside us and forcing us to smile. That summer smile.

When the heat falls hard, on many days, unquenched by the dark of night, we ask, in quiet times, we ask. Bring us the clouds, the black-bellied clouds, the clouds that softly hold the heads of gods in their moistening grasp. The clouds, those big-bellied busters that hold the violence, the wind, the flashes, the noise. The clouds we wait for and pray for and look for on the western ridge. Let them come, with their silver tops and their bellies black as night and cool as forgiveness. The summer clouds, the clouds that define our culture, our art, our summer, our hot, heavy summer.

A rain, a storm, a suddenness of life and blast and sweet charity designed to keep us living here, here in the rain, here in the sun, and keep us praying, here in the rain, and looking toward the west for more, always to the west, always looking for more.

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GENERAC

Who Has The License to Drive Me Crazy?

By Dr. James Snyder

I will confess that I am crazy, but I didn’t get there by myself. Somebody has been driving me crazy. When I use the word “somebody,” I mean a lot of people.

I didn’t always know I was crazy until a few years ago The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me and said, “Are you crazy or what?”

I did not know what led to that declaration. Reflecting on the past, she was likely correct. I am crazy, but I am not the one behind the wheel driving me crazy.

Over 30 years ago, a friend and I went to New York City. We took a train there, and he picked up a taxi when we arrived. We spent the rest of the day driving around in a taxi. I’ve never been in a taxi before. I was impressed by how much the taxi driver knew. He could negotiate traffic better than anybody I’ve ever seen before. I wish I had his skills.

If you’ve ever been in New York City, you know how crazy the traffic is. That was over 30 years ago, and I’m sure it’s much worse today. That taxicab driver got us to where we wanted to go, and we had nothing to worry about.

I thought about that the other day as I was driving across town. Our town used to be small and quiet, with not much traffic. We had snowbird traffic in the winter-time, but then the traffic almost died in the summer. I enjoyed those days.

That has changed in the last few years. I can’t tell the difference between snowbird time and summertime. The traffic is just simply crazy.

Almost every day, we hear news of a traffic accident within the scope of our neighborhood. The other day, somebody drove into a daycare center, and several children were killed.

The lady driving was drunk.

How do crazy people get a license to drive in our community?

Every time I drive across town and return, I’m slightly crazier than when I started. The fact that I’m still alive is almost a miracle.

Each time I come back, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage sees I’ve gotten a bit crazier. She often replies, “You seem a little more crazy than when you left. Is everything okay?”

If she thinks I’m crazy, she should ride with me across town. It’s been a long time since she rode with me. Usually, she drives her Sissy Van, and I ride along with her.

I wouldn’t repeat this out loud, but I’ve recently noticed that drivers stay clear of her as much as possible. They don’t want to cross paths with her.

Last week, we drove across town to our Sunday morn-

ing ministry. The traffic was a bit jammed, slower than usual, and some people behind us seemed to be in a hurry. They couldn’t get around us, so they beeped their horns to get us to hurry up.

They did not know that the person driving the car was The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. You don’t cross her and live to tell about it.

The more the person behind us blew their horn, the slower The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage went. I could see that one driver was very anxious and blowing his horn.

Finally, the traffic eased up, and he could drive around us. As he did so, he shook his fist in the air and pointed us toward heaven. He used the wrong finger, but everybody makes mistakes. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked in his direction and gave him one of her signature smiles.

I would’ve loved to have been a fly on the wall when he got home.

As for me, I just kept quiet, tried not to smile too much, and pretended I didn’t see what happened.

If The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage thought I was crazy, she should sit in my seat and see things the way I see them.

Driving to our Sunday ministry, I wondered, “Where did she learn that kind of driving?”

I almost blamed it on her father. Then the truth hit me smack in the face like a pie. I was the one who taught her how to drive after we got married. I sighed deeply and thought, “How did I get it all wrong?”

We finished our Sunday morning ministry and were driving back home.

It is very hard to keep quiet around my wife. She seems to know what I’m thinking before I even think it. Halfway home, she glanced at me and said, “What are you thinking?”

This can go either way. Either I get in trouble, or I say nothing.

“Are you thinking,” she finally said, “about the nice service we had this morning?”

Very few times, I have had an open door out of a situation. I smiled at her and said, “I loved your piano playing while we sang hymns this morning. It was wonderful!”

I’m not sure, but I think I dodged a bullet. That doesn’t happen often.

I was reminded of a Bible verse along this line. Ecclesiastes 7:9, “Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.”

This is seen on highways across town. Why can’t people just rest and not be hasty in their lives? A hasty spirit leads to anger, which never solves any problem.

ENVIROTHON

Continued from Page 1

the Moorefield High School team in sixth place; the Jefferson High School “Fungis” team in seventh place; the Webster County High School “Crispy Critters” team in eighth place; the Jefferson High School “Goopy Gars” team in ninth place and Oak Glen High School’s “Ecomaniacs” team in 10th place.

Teams who scored the highest in each of the five Envirothon “stations” also shared \$500 awards. The Doddridge FFA team won the Wildlife station award; the Morgantown High School team won the Aquatics station award; the Clay County Conifers won the Forestry station award and the first-place Clay County team, with the name “Tuff Titmice,” took the Soils station award. Webster County’s “Crispy Critters” team won the fifth topic station award.

The top-scoring Clay County team that included Adkins, Conley, Anderson, Berberich and Bass also won the Top FFA Team award. The team’s advisors are Kelsey McFarland and Hunter Hannah.

The highest-scoring rookie team this year was Oak Glen’s “Ecomaniacs” from Hancock County.

This year’s statewide competition also tested students’ problem-solving abilities and their knowledge about the environment, natural resources, and conser-

vation.

Teams participated from: Braxton, Clay, Doddridge, Hampshire, Hancock, Hardy, Jackson, Jefferson, Monongalia, Monroe, Pocahontas, Roane, Tyler, Webster and Wood counties.

Sponsors for the West Virginia Envirothon include the Weyerhaeuser Foundation, Berkshire Hathaway Energy Gas Transmission and Storage, the West Virginia Conservation Agency, the EQT Foundation, the Northern Panhandle Conservation District, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the West Virginia Department of Education, the West Virginia Forestry Association, the Western Conservation District and the Potomac Valley Conservation District.

Numerous volunteers make up the West Virginia Envirothon Committee, which includes representatives from the West Virginia Association of Conservation Districts, the West Virginia Division of Forestry, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, WVU Extension, the West Virginia Conservation Agency, USDA-NRCS and several of the state’s 14 conservation districts.

Puzzle Answers

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

Super Crossword

Answers

M	A	C	A	D	A	M		G	U	L	F	O	I	L		S	H	I	R	E
C	Z	A	R	I	N	A		O	N	E	L	A	N	E		M	I	N	E	D
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K	N	O	T	S			S	E	S	T	E	T	S		I	S	O	G	R	A

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THIS WEEK IN West Virginia History

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

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



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

May 28, 1998: The Robert C. Byrd United States

Courthouse in downtown Charleston was dedicated. The 440,000-square-foot building incorporated Neoclassic, Egyptian and Art Deco designs.

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

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

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

May 30, 1883: The Soldiers Aid Society of Wheeling dedicated the Soldiers and Sailors Monument to honor Civil War Union veterans. It now stands beside West Virginia Independence Hall in Wheeling.

May 30, 1914: Nurse Dolores Dowling was born in Ohio and graduated from Huntington’s St. Mary’s Hospital. During World War II, she was one

of the first American nurses to land during the 1943 Sicily invasion at Gela.

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

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

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



May 31, 1946: Writer

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

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



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

traditional vocal styles of West Virginia.

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

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



June 3, 1856: Harriet B. Jones was born in Pennsylvania. After attending

Wheeling Female College and graduating from the Women’s Medical College of Baltimore, she opened a private practice in Wheeling, becoming the first woman licensed to practice medicine in West Virginia.

June 3, 1861: The first land battle of the Civil War between organized troops took place in Philippi. About 3,000 federal troops drove about 800 Confederates from the town.

June 3, 1861: A company of Confederate soldiers known as the Logan Wildcats was created at the Logan Courthouse. The company, consisting of about 85 men, first saw action at the Battle of Scary Creek.

June 3, 1880: Benjamin Rosenbloom, to date the only Jewish member of Congress from West Virginia, was born in Pennsylvania. As a Republican in Congress from 1921 to 1925, he was an outspoken opponent of Prohibition.

June 3, 1936: The first Strawberry Festival was held in Buckhannon. More than 6,000 spectators attended the festivities, which also included a parade of 30 princesses down Main Street.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Man is moved. 2. Leg is moved. 3. Purse in window is moved. 4. Hand is not showing. 5. Hat is different. 6. Letter E is larger.

Weekly SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

© 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.

Super Crossword

MIXED-UP
SINGERS

ACROSS

- 1 Fuel dispenser
8 Lord's home
14 Made untidy
20 The Beatles' Rigby
21 Coated with gunky stuff
22 Box up
23 "Sk8er Boi" singer making an exit?
25 Stir to action
26 Go kaput
27 Italia's capital
28 Very sad tune from the "Sir Duke" singer?
30 Stephen of the screen
32 Very big bird
34 Seattle-to-L.A. dir.
35 Jaded
36 Hazard encountered by the "Thank U, Next" singer?
42 By birth
44 Diatribe deliverers
45 Many a stencil user
48 Dog in "The Thin Man"
52 Consent (to)

- 53 "Lean on Me" singer makes twisting movements?
55 Pub potable
56 Unit of petrol
57 "@" signs
58 Total up
59 Cambodian money unit
61 Part of QED
63 Actor Carroll O'—
64 "Grease" singer's big country home?
69 Subway system named after the "Careless Hands" singer?
72 UFO crew
73 Czech-German river
75 Infirmary-free
76 Leah's father, in the Bible
77 Ellipsis part
79 "That's someone — problem!"
81 Lacking hair
85 Webpage for devotees of the "Don't Speak" singer?

- 88 Spain's peninsula
90 Morays, e.g.
91 Creator of body designs
92 Splash, as cooking oil
93 Stanley Cup org.
94 Person painting a portrait of the "All My Ex's Live in Texas" singer?
96 Port in Iraq
100 Hawaiian strings, for short
103 Binge-watching aid, in brief
104 Part of R&R, in brief
105 "Toxic" singer dissects a sentence?
110 Soothe
112 Cut (off)
115 California city
116 "Hound Dog" singer's noisy pet dogs?
119 Totally ruins
120 Ornamental tuft on a hat
121 Funeral tunes
122 Set of nine
123 Dior dresses

- 124 Jean Arp or Max Ernst

DOWN

- 1 Neuter, as a horse
2 Jai —
3 Pay to a fired worker
4 — gow poker
5 Not marked, as a test
6 Not stereo
7 People studying to be docs
8 Suffix with Sudan
9 Deli dish
10 Brand of 103-Across
11 Despot Idi
12 Ministers (to)
13 Sword parts
14 Honey drink
15 Clothe
16 Angry look
17 Sweatbox
18 Twisty turns
19 John of plows
24 Dalai —
29 Freshens up
31 Key in
33 Dark
36 Snatch
37 Relay, say
38 Prior to
39 "Dream on!"

- 40 Rarefied air
41 Map no.
43 Botch it up
46 Poets' Muse
47 Q-U linkup
48 Make up (for)
49 Redirect, as a train
50 Choir voice
51 Jetsons' dog
53 Actor Ferrell
54 "— in peace"
56 Hawaiian string, of a sort
59 Lisa of "Soap Talk"
60 ICU tubes
62 Painter's studio
63 Cartoon pic
64 Dijon dance
65 Off to — start (behind)
66 Insult in print
67 Toronto Maple —
68 Unleash on
70 Syngman of South Korea
71 Family VIPs
74 Make drunk
77 Contact by phone
78 Many a time
80 Fine fiddle
81 Singer Midler

- 82 Constitution part establishing the executive branch
83 Whoppers
84 Pub missile
86 Final degree
87 Refusals
88 Hoppy brew, for short
89 Drove fast
92 Wandered
93 C.S. Lewis' fantasy world
95 Tony winner Judith
96 Back half of a 45
97 Chef's cover
98 Five plus two
99 Lift
101 Iota follower
102 Flynn of film
106 Mail out
107 Highway rig
108 X Games ailer
109 — gin fizz
111 Actress Ward
113 Rich rocks
114 Hushed "Hey!"
117 Trio in "mammal"
118 Links org.

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119									120								121							
122									123								124							



THE WIDEN NEWS

The people who think alike
should vote alike.

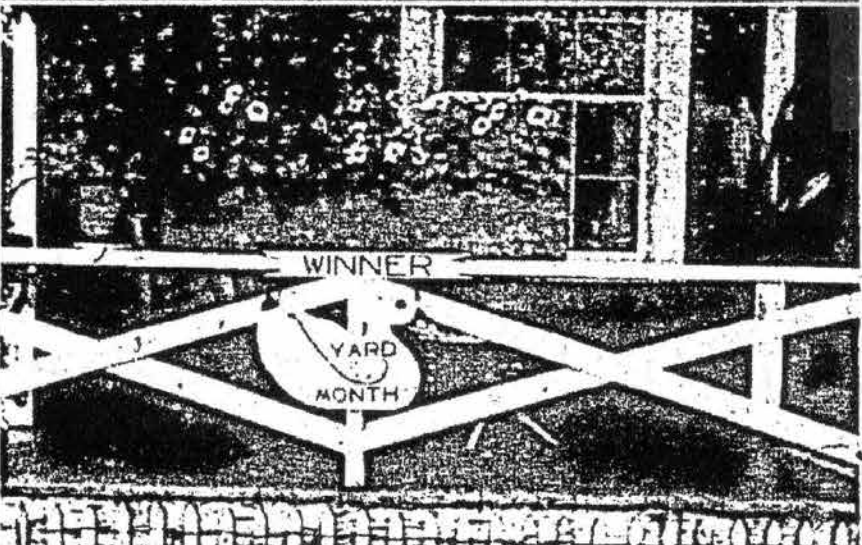
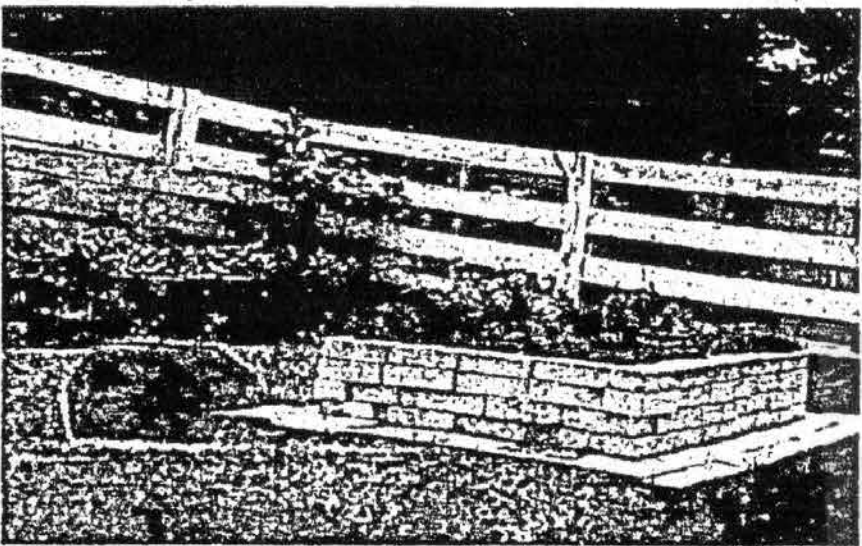
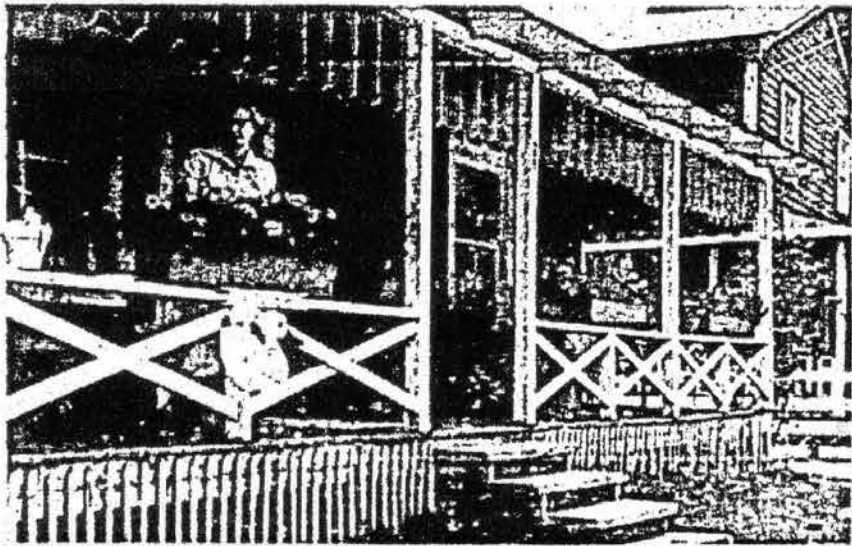
"DUNDON"
RED ASH COAL

Where all think alike, no one
thinks very much.



June 1958

Mrs. Grace Starcher Wins Yard-of-the-Month Contest For June



For the past two years, it has been a project of the Widen Woman's Club to have a "Yard-of-the-Month" contest in Widen, during the months of June, July, August and September.
Mrs. Lakey Starcher was the winner for the month of June, ac-

cording to the judges: Mrs. Charles H. Vaughan, Mrs. LaVerne Holcomb and Mr. A. E. Clevenger, all of Dille, West Virginia.
As can be seen by the pictures above, Mrs. Starcher has a very beautiful yard with nice arrangements of petunias, roses, etc.



Lillian Dodrill

May 28, 1958
The Students of the Month in respective order from October through April were Lillian Dodrill, Helen Ellis, Joan Truman Dawson, Ruby Lee Holcomb, Judy LaCorte, Sandra Henderson and Patricia Manning. Of this group Lillian Dodrill was chosen Student of the Year by the members of the Faculty who had a

chance to observe her some time during the 57-58 school term. Her selection was based on the following points:

1. Is the candidate trustworthy?
2. Is the candidate honest?
3. Does the candidate show himself or herself to be a good sport?
4. Is the candidate considerate of others?
5. Is the candidate willing to help?
6. Is the candidate courteous?
7. Is the candidate appreciative of his opportunities?
8. Is the candidate sincere?
9. Is the candidate open-minded?
10. Does the candidate accept responsibility?
11. Is the candidate reliable?
12. Does the candidate possess initiative?

Special Meeting Held By Band Boosters Club

A special meeting of the Widen Band Booster's Club was held June 19, 1958, to further discuss plans for building and operating the "Snack Bar" at the Buffalo Valley Sportsmen's Club recreation area.

Also, the Club voted to purchase a Baritone Saxophone. Mr. Simmons, Widen School Band Director, made a trip Saturday, June 21, to Charleston to purchase the instrument. Marilyn Lewis, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Lewis, will play this instrument in the concert band.

Mr. Simmons read the band by-laws and discussed them for the benefit of parents present.

DRIVE CAREFULLY

Charleston, W. Va. — "Speed violations were factors in nearly two out of every five fatal crashes in 1957." Colonel Hazen H. Fair stated that fact today, as he gave the full support of the West Virginia State Police to the nationwide speed control program.

"A speed violation is exceeding stated speed limits or driving at an improper speed—that is, too fast or too slow for conditions," Colonel Fair said.

"It is imperative that the public realize the dangers of improper speed, understand the speed laws, the meaning of speed signs and above all, how to adjust their speeds to conditions of drivers, vehicle, weather and roadway," Colonel Fair continued. "A bit of common sense goes a long way in traffic safety. Every driver on the road must accept his responsibility to drive safely."

West Virginia Statewide Classified Network

Featured in WVPA Newspapers Across West Virginia

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MISCELLANEOUS

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ment. Call 1-844-640-0583

PREPARE FOR POWER OUTAGES TODAY with a Generac Home Stand-by Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-844-901-2301 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

UP TO \$15,000.00 OF GUARANTEED LIFE INSURANCE! No medical exam or health questions. Cash to help pay funeral and other final expenses. Call Physicians Life Insurance Company - 888-217-5559 or visit www.Life55plus.info/wv

SAFE STEP. NORTH AMERICAS #1 WALK-IN TUB. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1-844-803-1282

GET A BREAK ON YOUR TAXES! Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind Today at 1-855-368-9004 today!

JACUZZI BATH REMODEL can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, waiving ALL installation costs! (Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. (Offer ends 6/30/25.) Call 1-855-576-4703



Spring showers may bring costly home repairs

Spring rain can overwhelm clogged gutters, leading to overflow causing damage to your home.

CALL 1-844-295-2840**TO SCHEDULE YOUR FREE INSPECTION**

Promo Code: 285

*\$250 discount (no cash value) is for same-day signing only. This offer cannot be combined with any other promotion or offer. No obligation estimate valid for 1 year. Expires 6/30/25. See website for all license and registration numbers.



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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) 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 July 22, 2025 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
001 2023990108	S399-064-5.87 00	NHPP-2025(046)D	PAVEMENT MARKINGS 2025 RPM Various COUNTY: STATEWIDE

Proposals will be received from prequalified and West Virginia licensed contractors only except that on Federal-Aid Projects a contractors' licence 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. The deferment, 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 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

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WEST VIRGINIA CHARLESTON

CASE NO. 24-0854-E-42T
APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY and
WHEELING POWER COMPANY

Rule 42T tariff filing to increase rates and charges.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT AND EVIDENTIARY HEARING

Appalachian Power Company and Wheeling Power Company (the Companies), public utilities, filed with the Public Service Commission of West Virginia a tariff containing increased rates, tolls and charges for furnishing electric service to approximately 460,921 customers in their service territories in the counties of Boone, Brooke, Cabell, Clay, Fayette, Greenbrier, Jackson, Kanawha, Lincoln, Logan, Marshall, Mason, McDowell, Mercer, Mingo, Monroe, Nicholas, Ohio, Putnam, Raleigh, Roane, Summers, Wayne, Wetzel, and Wyoming. This filing is a replacement of Case No. 24-0669-E-42T that was dismissed by the Commission on September 18, 2024. The rates, tolls, and charges proposed in this filing are in lieu of, and NOT in addition to, those proposed in the dismissed Case No. 24-0669-E-42T.

The proposed increased rates and charges were suspended by the Public Service Commission through August 28, 2025, in an Order entered on November 21, 2024. If approved, the requested rates will produce approximately \$250,500,000 annually in additional revenue, an increase of 14.12 percent. The average increase for the various classes of customers will be changed as follows:

	(\$) MONTHLY INCREASE	(%) INCREASE
Residential	\$27.15	16.16%
Commercial	\$57.09	14.04%
Industrial	\$32,385	11.63%
Resale	N/A	N/A
Other	\$1.33	12.01%

A residential customer using 1,000 kWh would experience a monthly increase over current rates of \$23.74 or 13.54%.

Resale customers of Appalachian Power Company include Old Dominion Electric Cooperative, City of Radford, Craig-Botetourt Electric Cooperative, City of Salem, Kingsport Power Company, Black Diamond Power Company and Virginia Tech Electric. Resale rates are subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and are not affected by this West Virginia jurisdictional rate filing. The increases shown are based on the averages of all customers in the indicated class. Individual customers may receive increases that are greater or less than average. Furthermore, the requested rates and charges are only a proposal and are subject to change (increases or decreases) by the Public Service Commission in its review of this filing. Any increase in rates and charges will not become effective until authorized and approved by the Public Service Commission.

The Commission will conduct an evidentiary hearing beginning at 9:30 a.m. on June 17, 2025, and continuing through June 19, 2025, if necessary, in the Howard M. Cunningham Hearing Room, Public Service Commission of West Virginia, 201 Brooks Street, Charleston, West Virginia.

The Public Service Commission will conduct a public comment hearing in this matter on June 17, 2025, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The public comment hearing will be held in person and virtually, allowing for interested persons to make a comment either telephonically, through the Microsoft Teams application from the internet, or in-person at the Commission headquarters at 201 Brooks Streets, Charleston, WV. Interested persons intending to make a virtual public comment should register with the Commission by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, June 16, 2025. Registration may be made by any of the following methods:

- (1) Through the Microsoft Teams meeting link located on the Commission's website, <http://www.psc.state.wv.us> under the "PSC Hot Topics" section located at the top of the homepage;
- (2) By calling 304-340-0822 (Alexis Weimer) or 304-340-0820 (Andrew Gallagher); or
- (3) By emailing aweimer@psc.state.wv.us or agallagher@psc.state.wv.us

The link for the Microsoft Teams meeting will also be in a future press release from the Commission. Interested persons wishing to comment in-person at the public comment hearing should attend and sign up to speak prior to 5:30 p.m. at the Public Service Commission, Howard M. Cunningham Hearing Room, 201 Brooks Street, Charleston, West Virginia.

As an alternative to speaking at the public comment hearing, written comments regarding this case may be submitted by mail or hand delivery to Executive Secretary, P. O. Box 812, Charleston, West Virginia 25323 or online at <http://www.psc.state.wv.us> by clicking on "Submit A Comment" in the left column and following the directions provided. All written comments should be marked as pertaining to Case No. 24-0854-E-42T.

Interested persons should monitor the Commission's web docket and website because the public comment or evidentiary hearing may be cancelled or changed for good cause.

APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY and
WHEELING POWER COMPANY

LEGAL

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF CLAY COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

In The Matter of Petition of Name Change of
Jerri Ann Ferreebe Civil Action No. 25-P-9

Current Name Jerri Ann Ferreebe
To
New Name Jerri Ann Mesecher

Legal Notice Of Publication Change Of Name

Order of Publication Circuit Court of Clay County West Virginia

Notice is hereby given that on the 7th day of July, 2025, at 10:00 AM, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, Petitioner Jerri Ann Ferreebe will apply by Petition to the Circuit Court of Clay County, West Virginia, for the entry of an order by said court, changing name of Jerri Ann Ferreebe to Jerri Ann Mesecher at which time any interested party may appear and be heard, if they so desire.

A copy of said Petition can be obtained from the undersigned Clerk at his office.

ENTERED by the Clerk of said Court this 13th day of May 2025.

Christina Hinchshaw
Clerk of the Court

LEGAL

"NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING"

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection has scheduled a public meeting on June 18, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. to discuss the **Draft Fiscal Year 2026 Intended Use Plan** for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds Program. A part of the Intended Use Plan is the Fiscal Year 2026 Priority List. The meeting will take place in person at the WV DEP's Headquarters in Charleston, WV. An option to attend remotely or call-in is below. A copy of the draft Fiscal Year 2026 Intended Use Plan is available, and may be requested by calling, writing, or sending an email request to the address below. The plan can also be viewed on DEP's web site.

Contact

Katheryn Emery
WV Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Water & Waste Management
Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds
601 57th street, SE
Charleston, WV 25304
(304) 926-0499 Ext. 43830
Katheryn.D.Emery@wv.gov

Google Meeting information

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/yzc-duqu-poo>
Dial in number: (US) 1-208-696-4303
PIN: 860 396 880#
Promoting a healthy environment.

LEGAL

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF CLAY COUNTY THAT BEING THE CIVIL COURT OF SAID COUNTY

IN RE: Randy L. White and Joyce R. White Case No. 25-C-14
v.

Lavon D. Hunter, in her own person, Lawon D. Hunter, a non-resident of Clay County, and the State of West Virginia, Lavon D. Hunter, believed to be a deceased person, the HEIRS, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN OF LAVON D. HUNTER, a deceased person, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, in his own person, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, non-resident of Clay County, and the State of West Virginia, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, believed to be a deceased person, the HEIRS, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN OF JOSEPH T. HUNTER, a deceased person and OTHER UNKNOWN DEFENDANTS.

In the matter of Randy L. White and Joyce R. White. V. Lavon D. Hunter, in her own person, Lawon D. Hunter, a non-resident of Clay County, and the State of West Virginia, Lavon D. Hunter, believed to be a deceased person, the HEIRS, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN OF LAVON D. HUNTER, a deceased person, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, in his own person, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, a non-resident of Clay County, and the State of West Virginia, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, believed to be a deceased person, the HEIRS, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN OF JOSEPH T. HUNTER, a deceased person and OTHER UNKNOWN DEFENDANTS.

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

And

NOTICE OF ANSWER

To: Lavon D. Hunter, in her own person, Lawon D. Hunter, a non-resident of Clay County, and the State of West Virginia, Lavon D. Hunter, believed to be a deceased person, the HEIRS, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN OF LAVON D. HUNTER, a deceased person, JOSEPH HUNTER, in his own person, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, a non-resident of Clay County, and the State of West Virginia, JOSEPH T. HUNTER, believed to be a deceased person, the HEIRS, AND UNKNOWN OF JOSEPH T. HUNTER, a deceased person and OTHER UNKNOWN DEFENDANTS..

(The object of this action is to notify the above-named Defendants of this pending action by the Plaintiffs to Quiet Title, or in the alternative award judgment for Adverse Possession in favor of the Plaintiffs by the Circuit Court of Clay County, West Virginia).

You are hereby notified that a Civil complaint has been filed with the Circuit Court of Clay County, West Virginia, on the 22nd day of May 2025, and assigned Case Numbers 25-C-14. You are hereby notified that you have the right to answer said complaint and you have the right to have counsel present at all stages of these proceedings.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED that the above-named Defendants, **Lavon D. Hunter, Joseph T. Hunter, and any Known or Unknown Heirs**, shall file an answer or any other pleadings by mailing the same to the Clerk to the Circuit Court, at 246 Main Street, Clay, WV 25043, with copy to Randy L. White and Joyce R. White at 1132 Clinic Dr., Ivydale, WV 25113 within thirty (30) days of the filing of this publication, or judgement by default in favor of the Plaintiff, may be taken against him.

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

BY: Randy L. White and Joyce R. White,
1132 Clinic Dr., Ivydale, WV 25113

Entered by the Clerk of said Court on the 22nd day of May, 2025

Christina Hinchshaw
Circuit Clerk

LEGAL

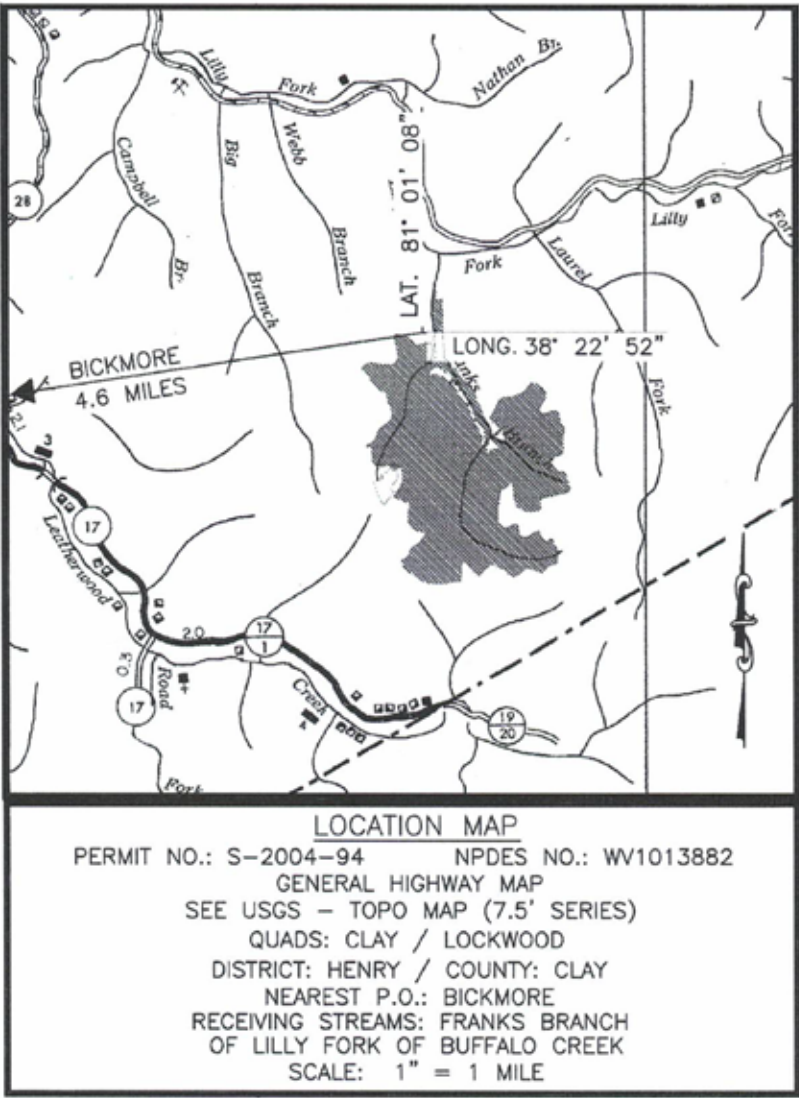
ADVERTISEMENT

Notice is hereby given that WV RECLAIM CO, LLC, 2122 LEATHERWOOD ROAD, BICKMORE, WV 25019 has submitted an application with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), 47 School Street, Suit 301, Philippi, WV 26416-1600 for a Phase 2 and 3 release on Permit Number S200494 Increment Number 1 issued for 447 acres.

The permit is located in HENRY District of Clay County, 4.6 miles east of BICKMORE, on Franks Branch of Lilly Fork of Buffalo Creek of Elk River.

WV RECLAIM CO, LLC completed final reclamation on 3/18/2010 and is requesting 100 percent of the reclamation performance bond currently in the amount of \$703,080.00.

Written comments will be received at the DEP address above until 7/14/25, or thirty (30) days from date of **final publication**.



LEGAL

Tariff From No. 12
(Tariff Rule 23.1 et seq.)

PUBLIC NOTICE OF CHANGE IN RATES BY NON-LRR MUNI UTILITY

NOTICE is hereby given that the TOWN OF CLAY (the "Town"), has adopted by ordinance on May 13, 2025, a tariff containing increased rates, tolls and charges for furnishing water service to its 548 customers in Clay County, West Virginia.

The proposed increased rates and charges will become effective 45 days from the date of adoption of the Ordinance unless otherwise ordered by the Public Service Commission and will produce approximately \$102,869 annually in additional revenue, an increase of 20%. The average monthly bill for the various classes of customers will be changed as follows:

	(\$) INCREASE	INCREASE (%)
Residential (3,400 gallons)	\$ 6.08	20%
Commercial (6,800 gallons)	\$ 11.29	20%
Public Authority (9,900 gallons)	\$ 16.02	20%
Resale (per 1,000 gallons)	\$ 0.96	20%

Resale customers include Clay-Roane Public Service District and Clay County Public Service District.

The Increases shown are based on averages of all customers in the indicated class. Individual customers may receive increases that are greater or less than average. Furthermore, the requested rates and charges are only a proposal and are subject to change (increases or decreases) by the Public Service Commission in its review of this filing. The Commission shall review and approve or modify the increased rates only upon the filing of a petition within thirty (30) days of the adoption of the ordinance changing said rates or charges, by:

- (1) Any customer aggrieved by the changed rates or charges who presents to the Commission a petition signed by not less than twenty-five percent of the customers served by such municipally operated public utility; or
- (2) Any customer who is served by a municipally operated natural gas public utility and who resides outside the corporate limits and who is affected by the change in said rates or charges and who presents to the Commission a petition alleging discrimination between customers within and without the municipal boundaries. Said petition shall be accompanied by evidence of discrimination; or
- (3) Any customer or group of customers of a municipally operated natural gas utility who are affected by said change in rates who reside within the municipal boundaries and who present a petition to the Commission alleging discrimination between said customer or group of customers and other customers of the municipal utility. Said petition shall be accompanied by evidence of discrimination.

All petitions should be addressed to the Executive Secretary, Public Service Commission of West Virginia, 201 Brooks Street, P. O. Box 812, Charleston, West Virginia 25323.

A complete copy of the proposed rates, as well as a representative of the utility to provide any information requested concerning it, is available to all customers, prospective customers, or their agents at the Recorder's Office, Town Hall, 956 Main Street, Clay, West Virginia 25043.

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, P. O. Box 812, Charleston, West Virginia 25323.

May We Never Take America for Granted

By Allen Hamrick

Memorial Day is once again upon us, a day that we pause and remember the American fallen that we should give thanks for each day anyway. We pack a cooler and lift a cold drink to those in cemeteries that dot our countryside, soldiers who died during the wars as well as those who, after returning home, succumbed to the battle that raged within. No one can truly understand what our military men and women have went through unless you have personally experienced the pain, heard the shells and bullets or felt the fear of each one with your name possibly attached to it. There was no Hollywood in the trenches, no John Wayne to lead you into glory, no marching band - there is nothing easy about war, just men and women called upon by their country to fight a foe at the very possible cost of their own lives. Sometimes the only peace soldiers found was at the bottom of a grave with no fanfare and no one to mourn.

“I sat on a nearby bench where a soldier from WWII had found his final resting place. He was killed on the beaches of Iwo Jima after seeing some of the worst fighting and the death of many of his comrades. I mused about his life and wondered if he would think his life was really worth giving up if he could see America today. I thought, “Yeah, I’m sure he would say yes because we still have freedom, opportunity and many other things that liberty affords.” The lives sacrificed by so many are a burden we each must bear. They did it for their country and her people, and we must remember them and the ones that are left behind to suffer the pain of loss. Each man or woman would have loved to have had the opportunity to live full lives, but they checked in to cemeteries all over this land, in the oceans and the seas, and across foreign lands. They remained



Gone but not forgotten.

dedicated to the people, to their oath to defend at all costs the Constitution of the United States, and at all costs they did. Those who have never tasted war have no idea the lasting mental impact. The fact is that many soldiers in the field were scared, starved, sick, without ammunition and alone. They stood in the face of the enemy and met them toe to toe at the price of their life!

Since September 9th, 1776, when the

Continental Congress officially renamed the thirteen colonies the United States of America, men have charged into a hail of fire to defeat an enemy bent on destroying our freedom and later, when women became part of the fighting force, they too have defended the freedoms we hold dear. There is no greater love than a man that lays down his life for a friend. Are you appreciative of the freedoms you have, the country you call home,

the sacrifices that it took for you to have what you do? The cemeteries that used to be full of people paying their respects to friends and family who were cut down by war are not so overcrowded anymore. The stillness is deafening as the birds sing like it was just another day, but their song has a sense of peace about it. Let us never take the American way of life for granted nor forget the cost of our freedom.

Clay Christian Academy announces 2025 Graduate

Clay Christian Academy has announced their 2025 graduate: Levi Elliott. His parents are Jennings and Nellie Elliott and his siblings are Isaiah, Luke, Willow, Daniel, Josiah, and Micah. Levi and his family attend Fairview Baptist Temple. He plans to attend Crown College in Knoxville, Tennessee and pursue a career in preaching.



Levi Elliott

Panther track team season ends at States



Shuttle hurdle team L-R Evan Bass, Justin Nida, Daymian Stricker and Takota Quinn

By Allen Hamrick

This past weekend was the time for the state track meet held at UC Stadium. It was a perfect day as the wind blew and clouds dotted the skies. There were many good athletes at this year’s meet which was evidenced as records were being broken or tied and new standards were being set for next year. To say the least, the competition was tough. The 4x200 meter relay team and the boys’ shuttle hurdle team competed in their respective events and were up against some of the fastest teams in the state. In the shuttle hurdle race, the boys ran as hard as anyone could ask and were once again in the top ten placing 8th in the state. The 4x200 team placed 14th

in the state after running a great time; all times were as tight as a drum head with seconds separating places. All in all, it has been a great season for CCHS track. The team gets better each year, and this year’s state competition is solid proof that if you want to be on a winning team and you’re looking for a chance to show what you’re made of, join the CCHS track team. The team continues to grow as a powerhouse and will be back next season looking for a new state title. CCHS will have some up and coming athletes from CCMS that will fine tune the team and add to the roster. Congratulations to the teams for gutting out the season and becoming some of the best in this state.

NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS

Appalachian Power plans to maintain a portion of its power line rights-of-way in West Virginia through the aerial application of registered herbicides. Weather permitting, the program will begin on or about June 1, 2025.

Questions about the program or information about sensitive areas near the power lines listed below, such as springs, wells, streams, lakes, ponds, orchards, crop areas, gardens, pastures, meadows, year-round dwellings, public recreation areas and Christmas tree farms, may be directed to the company by calling toll-free 1-800-642-3622. Maps showing the location of rights-of-way to be maintained are available for review upon request.

Right-of-way maintenance agreements between Appalachian Power and landowners are available to landowners who prefer to accept responsibility for clearing the right-of-way crossing their property instead of the company's aerial application of herbicides. The agreement compensates the landowner by an amount equivalent to the cost of aerial herbicide application, provided the work meets Appalachian Power's specifications. Landowners desiring to enter right-of-way maintenance agreements with Appalachian Power should call the toll-free number above.

Herbicides to be used have been extensively tested and are registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. They are imazapyr, metsulfuron methyl, fosamine, triclopyr, aminocyclopyrachlor and aminopyralid. All applications are performed by certified applicators.

Rights-of-way involved in the program are:

CLAY COUNTY

Bright Coal Company Tap 46kV – A transmission line on wood structures beginning at a tap off the Belva-Clendenin 46kV line, running west approximately one mile and ending at a dead end.



SENIORS

Continued from Page 1

passed as well as awards that were funded by the people of this county through programs and events to help the youth in their quest for higher learning. Kenzie Corwell was this year's Valedictorian, and when she got to the podium to give her address, you could understand why. Kenzie's speech to her class was incredibly articulate and to the point with words of encouragement and wisdom she could only glean through hard work, listening, and surviving the many ups and downs of education she experienced. She will no doubt influence this world in a positive way no matter what career she goes after or people she meets. The Salutatorian, Delila Burkhamer, also gave a heartfelt speech that would move even the blackest heart. There is

no doubt she, too, will influence the lives of those she meets and be a success at whatever career she decides to pursue. Fourth ranked students Avery Brouillard and Evelyn Young gave the inspirational reading while third ranked Keaira Asbury offered the benediction. The graduating seniors were given a great pep talk from the living legend Dr. R.B Legg, a class act whose words not only hit home with the students but were also good for those in attendance that had any life left in them. Dr. Legg has been a long standing supporter of this county and the people in it. Others in attendance, whether behind the podium or just passing by in the gymnasium or hallway, gave their pats on the back and their own interpretation of what to look

forward to as students progress into the future. To complete the ceremony, Class President, Ayden Brown, accepted the diplomas, and with caps flying high in the air, graduates signaled the end of their time as Panthers. Clay County High School has some of the most intelligent and hard working young men and women who will become a part of that force that binds family and business into hope for the future of this country, who will take the bull by the horns and make a difference. Henry David Thoreau once said, "The price of anything is the amount of life you exchange for it." From here, it is up to the graduates to make the right choices in their lives; they have been given the proverbial kick out of the nest and parents

and grandparents who are watching hope there is no predator waiting to ensnare them as they hit the ground running. It is a detail of reality in the concourse of life that youth change and make a path of their own that will sustain the ongoing process we call life. The world is an exciting place to explore, invent and become what they were born to do. Who knows what lies ahead for these students? Only time will tell, but the opportunity is there to do great things. Now graduates, know this as a wise person once said... "The only voice you will ever hear that tells the truth every time is your gut instinct. It washes away doubt, and it will see what the heart ignores and what your mind over thinks." Clay County wishes nothing but the best for you!



Fourth ranked students L-R Evelyn Young and Avery Brouillard



Third ranked student Keaira Asbury



Class President Ayden Brown



Maddie Morton accepts her associates from Glenville.



Dr. R.B Legg inspires the graduates to achieve their dreams.



Lilli Langhorn is looking forward to the future.



Graduates were anxious to get the party started



Looking to the future and what it holds.



The CCHS choir sang "Don't give up on me."



Principal Angela Nichols addresses the graduates.