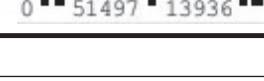




# Clay County Free Press

Home of the Clay County Golden Delicious Apple



Volume 136 No. 90

Periodical Postage Paid at Clay, West Virginia 25043-0180

Thursday, December 11, 2025

\$1.00

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## PEIA board approves 3% rate increases for 2027

By: Lori Kersey for West Virginia Watch, [www.westvirginiawatch.com](http://www.westvirginiawatch.com)

West Virginia state employees will see another increase in their health insurance costs beginning this summer.

The finance board for the West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Agency on Thursday approved 3% rate increases for employees, employers and retirees during the 2027 fiscal year, which starts in July 2026.

The board last month held a series of public hearings around the state about its plan to increase costs again this year. The board approved the plan as presented during its October meeting, with no changes.

For state employees, a monthly spousal surcharge will increase by an average of \$200 per month. The surcharge is for families that have a spouse who chose a PEIA plan despite having the option of a health insurance plan offered by their own employer.

PEIA director Brent Wolfsbarger said the spousal surcharge increase was the most contentious topic during the meetings. Wolfsbarger said state law requires PEIA to charge families the cost of the actuarial value of the spouse's plan.

"The proposed spousal surcharge increase of \$200 is mandated based on the opinions given to us by our actuaries," he said. "So the Legislature has established this policy, and if any changes are to be made, that would be a legislative decision to make."

An employer administrative fee will increase by \$2.50

Non-state agencies would be required to have at least half of their employees enrolled in a PEIA health plan.

In July, PEIA raised rates by 14% for state employees and by 16% for local government employees. Retirees also saw a 12% increase in pre-

miums.

PEIA leaders have said that the rising cost of health care — particularly inflation on prescription GLP-1 drugs that treat obesity and diabetes — are a major driver of the rate increases.

Leaders have also pointed to a report from the firm BDO that indicated that the sharp rate increases that public workers have had in recent years had been caused in large part because between the years 2018-2022, rates had been frozen. Former Gov. Jim Justice had vowed not to increase the rates during his time as the state's chief executive.

Speaking to the finance board Thursday, Dale Lee, co-president of Education West Virginia, said the Legislature should take PEIA's rising costs seriously and make the spousal charge more fair for state employees.

"I know of people, service personnel, who are making in the first or second tier and paying the same amount for spousal surcharge as the superintendent, making \$180,000 a year," Lee said. "There's something wrong. There's something philosophically wrong, in my opinion."

Lee thanked the board for researching the spousal charge so that the public knows what the answer is.

"Now we know where to turn our attention, and we turn our attention to the Legislature, because that has to be changed," Lee said. "There are other things that have to be changed in this we are more than happy to sit down and start the discussions, be a part of the discussions, be part of the solutions."

*West Virginia Watch is part of States Newsroom, a nonprofit news network supported by grants and a coalition of donors as a 501c(3) public charity. West Virginia Watch maintains editorial independence. Contact Editor Leann Ray for questions: [info@westvirginiawatch.com](mailto:info@westvirginiawatch.com).*

## Christmas in Clay set for Saturday, Dec. 13

Join us for our annual town celebration, Christmas in Clay! There will be food, crafts, hot cocoa, pictures with Santa, a photo booth, and the Christmas parade! The event will start at 4 p.m. with vendors beginning setup at 3 p.m. The parade starts at 6 p.m., and anyone participating must be lined up at the Clay County High School by 5:30 p.m.

Triple Squeeze Treats will be at the celebration, along with Jasmine's

Boujee Bites, both at 4 p.m. There will also be face painting and live music.

From 3:30 to 5:15 p.m., Santa Claus will be at the Clay Family Support Center, across the street from the Judicial Annex. Children from age newborn through 18 years old are welcome to come and share their Christmas wishes with Santa, get a gift, snap festive photos, and experience the joy of the season.

## Mustang basketball franchise has an up and down week



2025-2026 Lady Mustangs.

*See story on Page 8*

## HUD helped this disabled West Virginian get housing. Funding cuts could send people like him back into homelessness

*The Trump administration is cutting funding for a program that keeps hundreds of formerly homeless West Virginians with disabilities housed. Organizers that help the homeless expect more people to wind up in jails, institutions and on the streets.*

by Erin Beck for Mountain State Spotlight, [www.mountainstatespotlight.com](http://www.mountainstatespotlight.com)

*This story was originally published by Mountain State Spotlight. Get stories like this delivered to your email inbox once a week; sign up for the free newsletter at <https://mountainstatespotlight.org/newsletter>*

Robert Stewart used to live in Charleston. But, homeless since he was 16, he was always looking over his shoulder. Always in survival mode.

Then, he got help finding a place that gave him a roof over his head, outside the capital city in small-town Belle. There, he finally feels at home, feels like he can take his pit bull Bruce for peaceful walks. Everyone knows everyone there.

About three years ago, a local group finally helped him find a home.

Workers from the Kanawha Valley Collective found him in an emotional crisis, about to divorce, worried about how much he'd see his son.

"They had faith in me whenever I didn't," said Stewart, now 50.

The collective gave Stewart U.S. De-

partment of Housing and Urban Development rental assistance to get a roof over his head first. Then, they gave him a case manager to offer additional services, like help finding churches to pay for high utility bills, enrolling in health insurance and driving him to the grocery store.

For example, his case worker, Morgan Cottrell, drives him for visits with his 12-year-old child.

But now, West Virginians like Stewart could see the help that they need disappear, thanks to budget cuts and policy changes from the Trump administration.

Last month, HUD announced it was cutting funding for this kind of housing aid by 70%. About 850 West Virginians statewide will return to homelessness, according to the West Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness.

Traci Strickland, who oversees the Kanawha Valley Collective, which is part of the coalition, said the region's shelters are already full.

"You're going to have more people on the streets," she said. "You're going to have more people in emergency rooms, potentially more people in jail, likely in institutions."

Stewart worked on and off at restaur-



Robert Stewart stands on the porch of his apartment complex in Belle, where he finally has his own place to live after years of homelessness. Photo by Erin Beck / Mountain State Spotlight

rants, but hearing loss, vision problems and mental illness eventually made that impossible.

He gets a small disability check but wouldn't be able to afford his apartment

on his own.

"It is the only housing model that works."

The Trump administration wants to change the conditions for people like

*FUNDING CUTS cont. on page 6*

# BOOKED



# REGIONAL JAIL MUGSHOTS

## BRAKTON COUNTY



Phillip Warren Dailey  
Booked 12/2/25  
Obstructing an officer, delivery of a controlled substance, conspiracy, possession with intent to deliver imitation controlled substance

Theron Shelby-Cota Davis  
Booked 12/2/25  
Possession of controlled substance

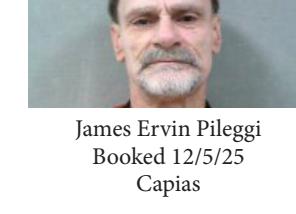
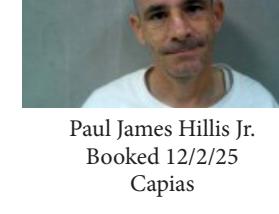
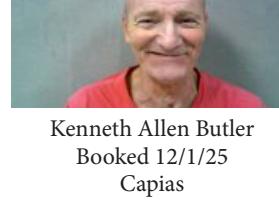
Katy June Duckworth  
Booked 12/2/25  
Delivery of a controlled substance, conspiracy, possession with intent, conspiracy

Jennifer Lynn Jordan  
Booked DOR/DUI, left of center, traffic accident investigate, seatbelt violation

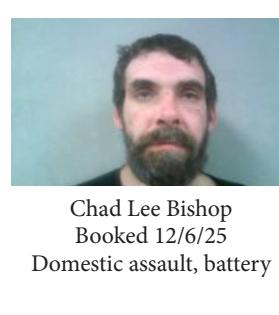
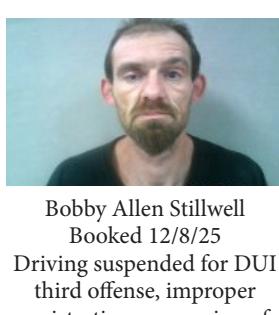
Danielle Brooke Loane  
Booked 12/3/25  
Capias

Michael T. Sandy  
Booked 12/1/25  
Burglary, trespassing, DOP

## NICHOLAS COUNTY



## NICHOLAS COUNTY



Lori Ann Robinson  
Booked 12/3/25  
Battery

Bobby Allen Stillwell  
Booked 12/8/25  
Driving suspended for DUI third offense, improper registration, possession of controlled substance

Chad Lee Bishop  
Booked 12/6/25  
Domestic assault, battery

Vincent Seth Ruggieri  
Booked 12/8/25  
Capias

## PUBLIC NOTICES

The Clay County WIC office located at 452 Main Street in Clay is open to serve the public every Monday and Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Puzzle Answers

### Weekly SUDOKU

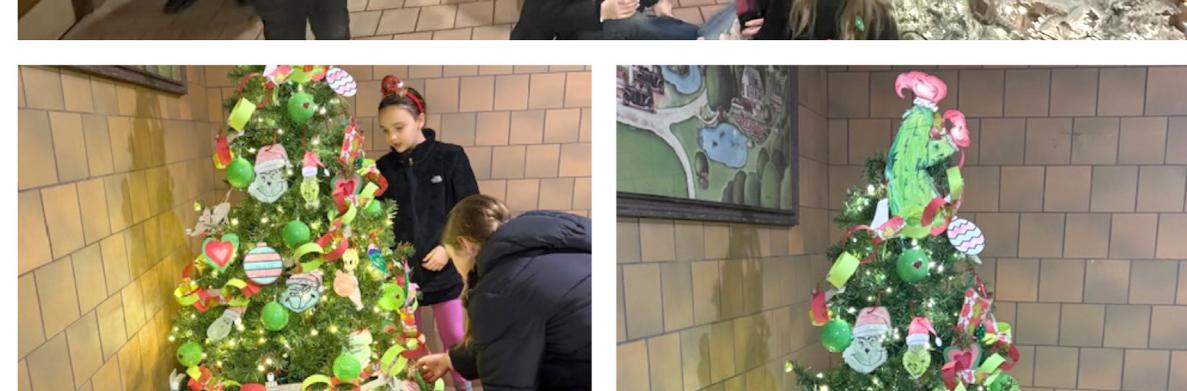
#### Answer

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

### Super Crossword

#### Answers

N	A	P	S	R	E	P	P	S	A	S	M	S	P	A	D	E
O	B	O	E	A	X	E	O	W	N	A	L	I	T	A	L	I
W	A	L	T	E	R	P	I	S	T	T	A	M	A	R	I	N
I	C	Y	Y	P	E	A	C	A	L	O	R	I	C	I	N	T
S	U	P	P	O	R	T	H	O	S	E	R	O	K			
E	S	S	N	E	T	H	O	U	I	P	H	O	E	B	E	
D	Y	L	A	N												
A	Y	N	M	I	S											
B	E	P	D	E	B	U	G	S	M	Y	S	T				
B	A	S	E	B	O	R	D	R	A	I	D	A	T			
A	S	T	R	O												
A	S	T	A	I	S	S	A	O	L	E	A	R				
S	H	A	R	P	E	N	B	O	Y	D	A	R	T			
S	E	C	U	R	I	T	Y	C	A	M	A	S	O	R		
T	T	A	T	O	S	H	O	S	H	E	O	P	E			
T	A	T	A	H	A	J	E	T	I	N	E	J	E	T		
L	A	P	T	O	B	A	T	T	E	R	I	O	N	O		
O	N	I	O	N	D	I	P	U	N	D	E	T	H	E	O	
L	A	U	R	E	A	T	E	U	R	N	S	L	U	E		
A	S	S	E	S	E	E	N	E	N	S	T	E	S	S		



Fifth grade students from Big Otter Elementary traveled to the Clay County Courthouse to help spread Christmas cheer. They decorated a Christ-

mas tree with homemade ornaments. Thank you to the Clay Courthouse for treating our students with hot cocoa!

## OBITUARY



John Gibson

John Morgan Gibson, 84, of Clay, West Virginia entered into the presences of his Lord and Savior on December 2, 2025. He was born on October 23, 1941, in Charleston, WV to the late Luther Stan-

ley and Gladys Primrose Strickland Gibson.

He is proceeded in death by his loving wife Joyce Shaver Gibson, brother M. Scott Gibson, sister Barbara Underwood, stepdaughter Noell Beth Stiver.

He is survived by his son, Terry Gibson; daughter, Anita (Benny) McKinney; stepson Timothy Butcher; stepdaughter Caroline (Rick) Taylor; sisters-in-law Margaret Gibson and Penelope Shaver Griffith. Grandchildren Timo-

thy (Kira) Gibson; Cassandra (Brandon) Harris; Jacob (Allison) Ferreebee; Chelsea Ferreebee; Matthew Dawson; Jason (Loarie) Butcher; Rick Taylor; Amber (Thad) Marling; Andy Butcher; Jada (James) Adkins; Josh Rogers; Shanay Rogers; Amber Koch. 23 Great Grandchildren 4 Great Great Grandchildren. He also leaves behind a host of family and friends that will miss him dearly.

Morgan graduated from Clay County High School in 1959. He was a gradu-

ate of Glenville State College and returned to Clay County High School to teach for a few years, before finding his career as a Forester with the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, he retired after over 20 years.

After retirement he became the owner and operator of Clay Furniture, for many years, alongside his loving wife. He also served on various civic committees in Clay County.

He was also a member of the Masonic Lodg-

es, for over 50 years, at Strange Creek No. 130 in Strange Creek, WV, and also Clay County No. 97 in Clay, WV, where he currently serves as Past Master.

He was the Master of these lodges for many years.

He was a valued member of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry 32° since 1979.

Morgan was a devoted member of Trinity Missionary Baptist Church.

Visitation will be held at Wilson-Smith Funeral

Home, 154 Main Street, Clay, WV 25043, on Saturday, December 6, 2025, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The funeral service will follow on Sunday, December 7, 2025, at 2:00 p.m., also at Wilson-Smith Funeral Home, with burial to follow at Walnut Grove Cemetery in Widen/Dille, WV.

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

Wilson Smith Funeral Home is honored to be serving the Gibson family.

# Clay County Free Press

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The Clay County Free Press (USPS 116-660) is published weekly at 291 Main Street, Clay, West Virginia. Subscription Rate: In County \$32.00; In-State \$42.00; Out-of-State \$45.00

Address all mail (subscription, change of address) to:

P.O. Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24901 or call 304-647-5724 or Fax 304-647-5767.

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## If Money Is All You Have

### By Joe Mazzella

It was a snowy Saturday in the 1980's. I had just finished carrying in some wood for the inside wood box from our stacks outside and my sneakers were soaked. I sat at the kitchen table in the seat nearest the wood stove hoping to dry them out while I munched on a cheese sandwich for lunch. Behind me I could hear my Mom washing dishes while dinner cooked slowly on the kitchen stove. The scent of brown beans filled the air and the smell was delightful.

In the living room just off the kitchen I could see my brother watching a television program. It was the one where the rich and famous people showed off their cars, boats, and houses. I watched the one being shown now. It was huge, more like a castle than a house, but as I looked at it all I could think was that it looked cold, empty, and lonely. I looked around our own home. Yes, it was tiny but it also felt warm, cozy, and full of the people I loved. And in that moment I felt richer than the guy on the TV set. I had everything that mattered and I was happy.

I read a quote recently that said: "You will never have enough money, if money is all you have." Reading it reminded me of that moment of clarity all of those years ago. I only wish I could have carried it with me every day of my life. Yes, money can buy you a lot of things in this life, but it can't really buy you the things that matter. It can't buy you family. It can't buy you friends. It can't buy you faith. It can't buy you Love. It can't buy you goodness. And it can't buy you God.

I would rather live in a tiny home full of love than a cold and lonely mansion. I would rather dine on brown beans than caviar. I would rather have one more hug from my Mom than a million dollars. This life here is brief. Don't waste it chasing after the wrong things. Instead make your own life a gift of Love and live in a way that makes your Father in Heaven smile.

## Home Country

### By Slim Randles

When Steve and Dud got up to go get a paper, it left just Doc and Bert sitting at the philosophy counter of the Mule Barn truck stop. Bert turned his head and smirked a little, being careful not to let Doc see him. Doc also didn't see Dud outside, punching in a number on his cell phone while Steve stood by as a cheerleader.

"Doc," said Loretta, from the cash register, "phone call for you, Hon."

"Here? Okay..." Doc walked over and picked up the phone.

"This here Doc?" said the caller. "The Doc what lost his squirrel?"

"Uh..." Doc looked around for help. There was none.

"Yes. Yes it is."

"Found your dang squirrel here, Doc. That reward thing still good?"

"Well... yes."

"Five dollars and a quarter, right? Now is that cash or check? I don't take no checks."

Doc is looking all around and looks wilderness-type lost. "Cash I guess."

"Only thing is, Doc. Need to be sure this is your squirrel, right? So can you describe him for me?"

"He's... gray."

"All gray squirrels are gray, now, ain't that right? How about any distinguishing marks? Tattoos?"

"No tattoos."

"So far so good. Now you said in the ad his name is Chipper. Well, I called him Chipper and the son of a gun bit me."

"He did?"

"What I mean to ask here, Doc, is did you and your squirrel get along? No squirrel problems? He looks like he needs a square meal to me. You feed him good?"

"What?"

"You know... like Squirrel Chow free choice, or did you put him on a nut ration? I mean, he ate like there was no tomorrow. Dang near ate up the whole five dollars and a quarter reward money in squirrel food."

Steve and Dud walked back into the café, then, with the cell phone still at Dud's ear, and the laughing began.

"You were right all along, Doc," said Bert. "In winter, everyone can use a good hoax."

Doc paid for the coffee.

Brought to you by Ol' Max Evans, the First Thousand Years by Slim Randles. From the University of New Mexico Press.

## Why Are Flies So Attracted to My Nose?

### By Dr. James Snyder

Throughout my life, I have dealt with many "pesky" things that provoke the dickens out of me. I sure do miss those "dickens." When I think I've got one pesky thing under control, another comes along.

I've had so many "pesky" things, but I'm still not a master in that area.

Recently, a new "pesky" thing entered my life.

The new "pesky" thing is a fly. I never knew flies could be so dominating in a person's life. After all, they're just little things with wings. About a month ago, I noticed flies buzzing around my head, especially around my nose, probably because I was wearing that suspiciously fragrant cologne I always wear.

I'm not sure why, because I blow my nose every day, and so there's nothing up my nose that should attract them. And yet, they are attracted to my nose all day long. No matter where I go, there is a fly somewhere attracted to my nose.

In a restaurant this past week, I was having lunch with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, and just as we were getting started with lunch, a fly buzzed around my nose.

I tried swatting him with both hands, but only hit my nose. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me and said, "What are you doing?"

I wasn't too happy, but I responded, "Don't you see these flies buzzing around me?"

Then she laughed. There are times I like when she laughs, and there are times when I really don't like her laughing about what she was laughing about.

Looking at me, she said, "Oh, you silly boy, where are those flies coming from? I don't see any!"

Then she told me she thought I might be seeing floaters in my eyes. I just looked at her and shook my head and tried to leave it at that.

It wasn't long until that fly came at my nose again. I clapped my hand on my nose, and wouldn't you know it, I got that fly. Looking at my wife, I grinned and said, "Does this look like a floater?"

She didn't know what to say.

Even when riding in the Sissy Van, I am being attacked by these frustrating flies. How they get into the Sissy Van is beyond anything I can think of right now. When I sit down in the Sissy Van, I buckle my seatbelt and then look around very carefully to see if there are any flies, and I don't see any.

Somehow, they have a way of hiding long enough, then attacking my nose. The good thing is that I'm not driving; otherwise, there would be serious consequences.

Trying to hide her chuckle, The Gracious Mistress

of the Parsonage said, "Maybe it is the cologne you're wearing. They may be attracted to that cologne." Then her giggle broke out.

Finally, Sunday came and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I went to our church service as we do every week. She plays the piano, I lead the singing, and then the preaching. Something we like to do every week.

I was really involved in the service and the singing, and then started my Sunday sermon, not knowing a fly was about to turn the service into a comedy show.

As I began preaching, all of a sudden, there was a fly right in front of my face. I just swatted, hoping to chase it away. For a few seconds, I didn't see it and thought it had just gone away.

Then it all began. The fly landed on my nose, almost going up my nostril. I chased it away and thought it was gone forever. However, it came back and landed on my cheek, then on my ear, and I was getting very frustrated. I didn't want anybody to know that I was being distracted by this lousy fly.

I was preaching, and when I preach, I open my mouth. I never gave that a thought, but as I was preaching, all of a sudden, the fly went inside my mouth.

Now I have a dilemma here. What do I do? How do I get rid of the fly? Do you think I should spit it out in front of everyone? I didn't know what to do.

And then I did the unthinkable. I'm known for doing things without thinking. However, here was the worst example of that I've ever had.

I swallowed the fly, hoping nobody would see what happened.

Did you ever swallow a fly? It is the most disgusting experience I've had in my whole life. I could feel that fly fluttering down my throat, landing in my stomach.

I didn't want anyone to know what I just did, so I coughed a little and then took a sip from my water bottle.

Eating a fly during a church service is not something I had ever thought about. I tried to keep my composure, hoping no one had witnessed what I just did.

On the way home, a verse of scripture came to my mind.

Philippians 4:6-7, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

No matter the aggregation, "the peace of God" is bigger and brings me peace that the world cannot take away.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail [jamesnyder51@gmail.com](mailto:jamesnyder51@gmail.com), website [www.jamesnyderministries.com](http://www.jamesnyderministries.com).

## November General Revenue Fund collections exceed estimates by \$28.5M, up 10.5% from prior November receipts

The West Virginia Department of Revenue reported strong numbers for the month of November, with a \$28.5 million surplus and collections up 10.5% from the previous year.

"I'm encouraged by the growth trends in recent months that contribute to our FY 2026 surplus," said Governor Morrisey. "West Virginia will continue making fiscally conservative decisions to capitalize on this growth and prepare for any budget challenges ahead."

November General Revenue Fund collections of \$442.4 million were \$28.5 million above the nearly \$414 million monthly estimate and 10.5% above prior November receipts. Cumulative collections of \$2.231 billion were \$131.3 million above the year-to-date estimate of nearly \$2.1 billion and 6.2% ahead of prior year collections.

Personal Income Tax collections totaled \$171.0 million in November which were \$26.5 million above estimate. Led by wage withholding tax growth of 13.2 percent, monthly collections were 12.8 percent ahead of prior November receipts. Year-to-date collections of \$877.4 million were \$65.1 million above the estimate and 2.8% above the prior year's receipts. Current tax rates are nearly 6% lower than tax rates in place one year ago.

Consumer Sales Tax collections totaled \$180.5 million in November which were \$11.7 million above the estimate and 5.7%, ahead of prior November collections. Cumulative collections of \$803.6 million were \$29.0 million above the cumulative estimate and 11.6% ahead of collections from the prior year. Cumulative collections included \$39 million in receipts associated with a recently enacted law eliminating a

payment acceleration requirement for certain Taxpayers. Adjusted year-to-date collections were 6.2% ahead of prior year's receipts.

November General Revenue Fund Severance Tax collections totaled \$27.1 million as receipts were below the monthly estimate, but 43.5 percent ahead of prior November receipts. Year-to-date General Revenue Fund collections of \$127.8 million were \$4.7 million below estimate. However, cumulative collections were \$40.5 million, or 46.4%, ahead of the prior year's receipts. A trend of higher coal and natural gas production along with higher natural gas prices were largely responsible for the revenue gain to date.

Corporation Net Income Tax collections totaled \$3.9 million in November and \$103.5 million for the year-to-date. Cumulative collections were \$1.4 million below estimate and 15.9 percent below prior year's receipts.

Interest Income totaled \$12.6 million in November and \$66.1 million for the year-to-date. Cumulative collections were \$14.6 million above the estimate and 29.8% below prior year's receipts due to a trend of lower interest rates. In addition to these collections, the State Treasury transferred \$20 million in excess banking service funds attributable to interest earnings in prior periods to the State General Revenue Fund in November. This transfer was a contributing factor to the \$28.5 million monthly revenue surplus.

Tobacco Excise Tax collections totaled \$10.6 million in October and \$56.8 million for the year-to-date. Cumulative receipts were \$4.3 million below estimate and 6.3% below prior year-to-date collections due to a trend of shifting consumption away from cigarettes to other tobacco and vaping products.

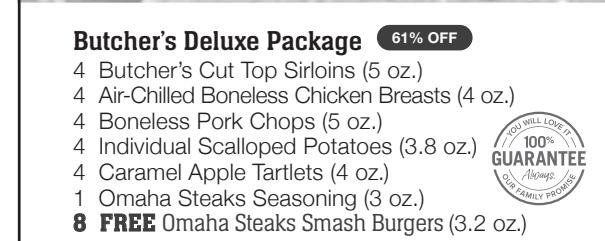
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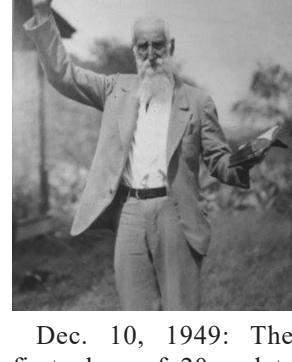
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Some products are subject to change

# THIS WEEK IN West Virginia History

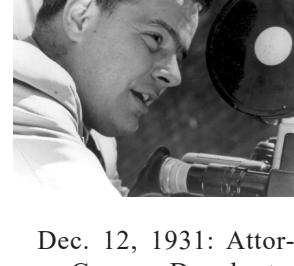
Dec. 10, 1841: Logan County preacher "Uncle Dyke" Garrett was born on Big Creek. His greatest fame was for converting and baptizing Devil Anse Hatfield in Main Island Creek in 1911.



Dec. 10, 1949: The first class of 20 cadets graduated from the West Virginia State Police Academy in Institute. The State Police purchased property for the academy on a hilltop overlooking Institute in Kanawha County for about \$3,200. Construction began in 1948, and the building was completed the next year.

Dec. 11, 1905: "Pare" Lorentz, known as

"FDR's filmmaker," was born in Clarksburg. In 1933, Lorentz created The Roosevelt Year: 1933, a pictorial review of FDR's first year in the White House.



Dec. 12, 1931: Attorney George Daugherty, better known as the comic singer, storyteller and songwriter "The Earl of Elkview," was born upstairs over a Mannington silent movie house.

Dec. 12, 1942: Internationally known jazz pianist and recording artist Bob Thompson was born in Jamaica, Queens, New York. He studied music at West Virginia State College (now University) and is the house pianist for the Mountain Stage radio program.

Dec. 12, 1953: Chuck

Yeager set a speed record by flying two-and-a-half times the speed of sound in a Bell X-1A. Yeager, who grew up in Hamlin, had broken the sound barrier six years



earlier on Oct. 14, 1947.

Dec. 13, 1861: The Battle of Allegheny Mountain, one of the bloodiest conflicts of the Civil War's first year, took place in Pocahontas County.

Dec. 13, 1926: Wheeling radio station WWVA-AM began broadcasting. The 50-watt station operated from the basement of John Stroebel's house for most of its first year. Stroebel was a physics teacher and wireless pioneer.

Dec. 14, 1910: The accidental death of a Chesapeake & Ohio Railway

engineer near St. Albans led to the popular train song "Billy Richard-



son's Last Ride."

Dec. 14, 1857: Coal operator Justus Collins was born. He owned mines at Glen Jean and Whipple, and the octagonal Whipple company store survives today as a local landmark.

Dec. 15, 1879: Roman Catholic Bishop John Joseph Swint was born in Pickens. He was responsible for building many religious institutions in the Diocese of Wheeling (now the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston).

Dec. 15, 1953: Black-

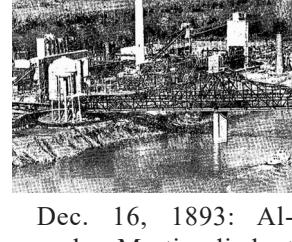
smith Jeff Fetty was born in Spencer and later graduated from Spencer High School. In 2012, he was named one of the world's top metal designers by the International Metal Design Annual—becoming only the sixth American to receive the honor.



Dec. 15, 1967: The Silver Bridge at Point Pleasant collapsed, killing 46 people. The Silver Bridge was opened to traffic on May 19, 1928. The accident led to the passage of legislation for a national bridge inspection and safety program.

Dec. 15, 1972: An

explosion at a Weirton Steel coke plant on Browns Island killed 19 men and injured 10 others. It was the worst industrial accident in Weirton's history.



Dec. 16, 1893: Alexander Martin died at the age of 71 in Green-castle, Indiana. Martin was the first president of the Agricultural College of West Virginia, which was renamed West Virginia University at his recommendation in 1868.

Dec. 16, 1897: The last public hanging in West Virginia occurred in Ripley. John F. Morgan had been convicted of murdering Chloe Greene and two of her three children in the Grass Lick area of Jackson County.

## HOCUS-FOCUS

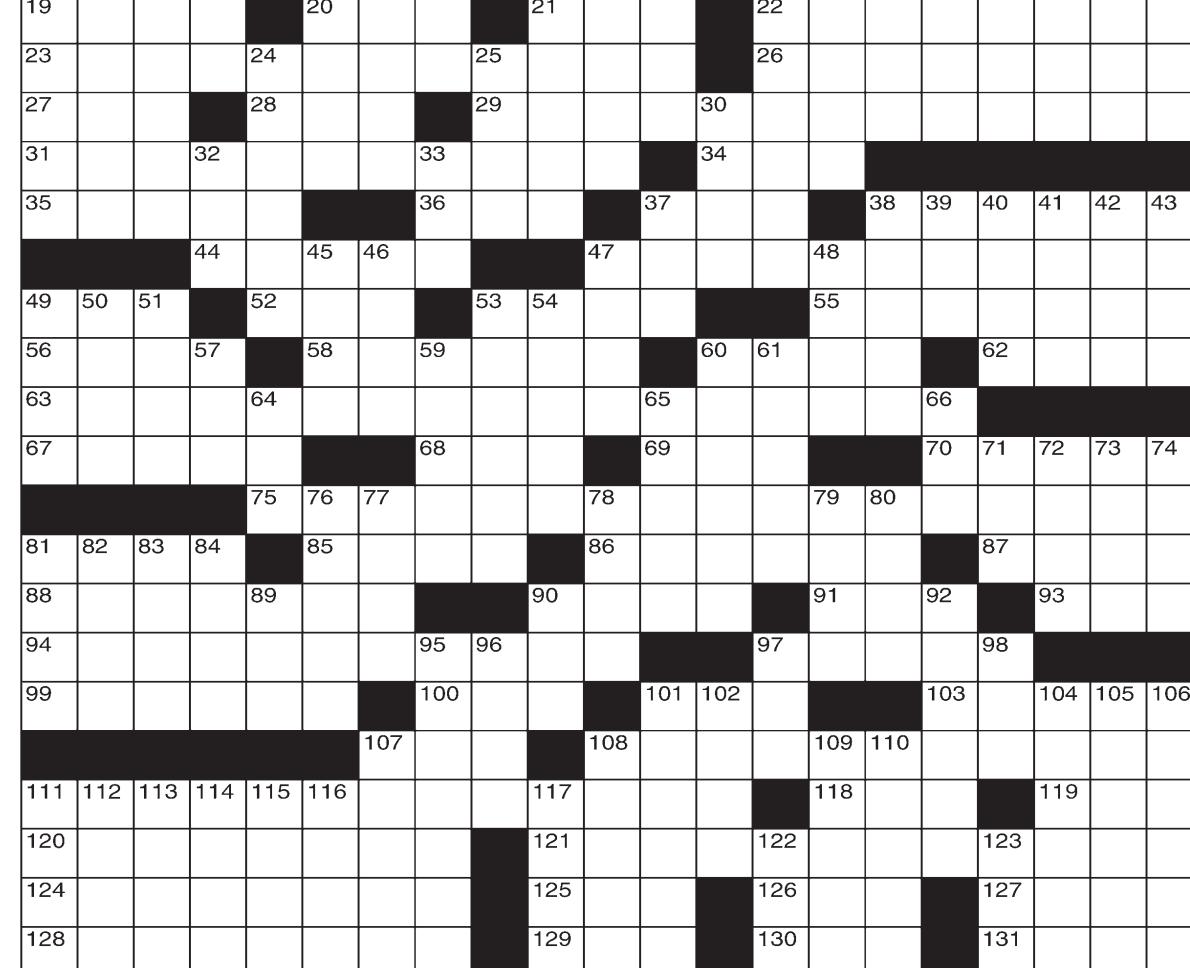
BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



MECHANICS OF SOLVING			
<b>Super Crossword</b>			
<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>53</b> Bird bill	<b>101</b> Cable TV	<b>9</b> Very
1 Has a snooze	55 Booting out	channel for	muscular, in
5 Workout unit	56 Horn honk	buying goods	modern lingo
8 Anti-DUI ad, maybe	58 Cleans up, as code	103 Flee to wed	10 Year, to Nero
11 "The Maltese Falcon" hero	60 Hit PC game of the 1990s	107 "I solved it!"	11 Like
19 Conical-bore woodwind	62 Director Preminger	108 Type of needle-free syringe	"Weekend Update" reports
20 Log chopper	63 Heater along the bottom of a wall	111 ThinkPad power source, e.g.	12 "Alas and —"
21 Possess	67 Houston ballplayer	118 Cl- or Na+	13 "Bosch" actress Rogers
22 Former airline to Rome	68 Ending for Gator	119 Gold, to Luisa	14 Lee of Marvel
23 Composer of the 1938 ballet "The Incredible Flutist"	69 CIO partner	120 Zesty potato chip go-with	15 Component
26 Squirrel-sized monkeys	70 Greek vowels	121 Where nine key words in this puzzle can be found	16 Et — (plus others)
27 Super-cold	75 Bracing wear for a body-builder	124 Word after poet or Nobel	17 Rinky —
28 Podded plant	81 Dog in "The Thin Man"	125 LA-to-MI dir.	18 Relieve
29 What a dieter may reduce	85 "Little" actress Rae	126 Tea vessel	24 Person for whom a thing is named
31 Pressure-reducing elastic stockings	86 Mrs. with a famous cow	127 Swing about	25 Kilt wearer
34 Mork's home planet	87 "500" auto race	128 Evaluated	30 Butter-and-flour mixture
35 German city	88 Hone	129 Lobed thing	32 Crosswalk user, for short
36 Ordinal suffix	90 William of "Hopalong Cassidy"	130 Turndowns	33 Coop female
37 Yvette's "yes"	91 Its cap. is Buenos Aires	131 Actress Harper	37 Tree of Illinois
38 "Gremlins" actress Cates	93 Levy	<b>DOWN</b>	38 Largest dwarf planet
44 Folk great Bob	94 Video surveillance device, briefly	1 Not at all, quaintly	39 — and hers
47 Edison's phonograph medium	97 Of — (somewhat)	2 Ancient calculator	40 Aware of
49 Writer Rand	99 Bit of skin art	3 Corals, e.g.	41 Revise text
52 Prefix with treat or trust	100 Timid	4 Work out unit	42 Crooked
Differences: 1. Picture frame is higher. 2. Door knob is larger. 3. Hand is moved. 4. Collar is smaller. 5. Stripe is added to sleeve. 6. Book is smaller.			



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## Weekly SUDOKU



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

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦**

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging  
♦♦ HOO BOY!

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**Puzzle Answers Page 2**



# THE WIDEN NEWS

The people who think alike  
should vote alike.

"DUNDON"  
RED ASH COAL

Where all think alike, no one  
thinks very much.



November 1958

## THE WIDEN NEWS

WIDEN, WEST VIRGINIA

H. L. BEATTIE

MANAGING EDITOR

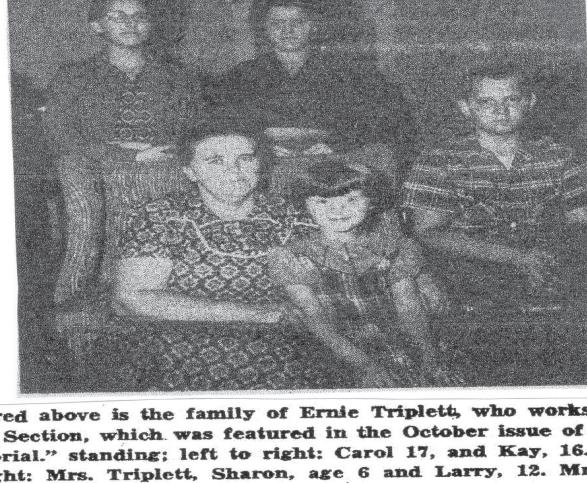
ASSOCIATE EDITORS

PEARLE D. WILLIAMS

VICTOR B. SHINGLER

ADVERTISING RATES FURNISHED UPON APPLICATION. THE PUBLISHERS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO  
REJECT ANY ADVERTISING. PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY EMPLOYEES OF ELK RIVER COAL AND  
LUMBER COMPANY.

### ERNE TRIPPLET FAMILY



Pictured above is the family of Ernie Triplett, who works on the No. 1 Joy Section, which was featured in the October issue of "Widen New Pictorial." Standing: left to right: Carol, 17, and Kay, 16. Seated: left to right: Mrs. Triplett, Sharon, age 6 and Larry, 12. Mrs. Triplett is a teacher at the Flat Fork School where her two youngest children are students. Carol and Kay attend school at the Clay County High School.

### Little Talk With Big Thoughts

There are three boys in our town who have grown up together. Played together. Studied together. All three families, of the boys, are about equal in the social group; one perhaps richer; one a little poorer.

The boys are now in their late teens. Pete was recently arrested for malicious assault. John wrecked his car playing "chicken". His father laughed. Collected the insurance and gave John a new car. Mike won a scholarship for college and medical school.

I asked Mike's mother what had made the final difference in these boys.

"I don't know, unless it is something we live by at home. 'Honor thy father and thy mother'. However, we believe if we expect our children to do this, we ourselves must give them something to honor and above all love."

### Bill Douglas, Elrico Employee, Killed

William Roger Douglas, 33, an employee of the Elk River Coal and Lumber Company, was killed Sunday, November 9, 1958, when his car ran off West Virginia Route No. 4 at Ivydale and struck a tree.

Services were held at 2 P.M. Tuesday, November 11, at the Ivydale Methodist Church, conducted by Rev. E. H. Lafon and Rev. Glen Phillips. Burial was in the Douglas Cemetery at Ivydale.

Surviving are his wife, Laura; three daughters, Anna Ruth, Jenny Rhae and Elizabeth Jane, all at home; two sons, Gary and William Paul, both at home; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Douglas of Ivydale; three sisters, Mrs. Curtis Salisbury of Ivydale, and Mrs. Lloyd Bledsoe and Mrs. James Boggs of Charleston; six brothers, Darrell, James, Johnny and Carl all of Ivydale, Woodrow of Charleston, and Ralph of Canton, Ohio.

The body was at the home of the parents and was taken to the church an hour before service.

### Mr. Robert Elliott Speaks To Students

Mr. Robert Elliott, Mine Superintendent, was guest speaker at the high school assembly on November 5, 1958. He advised students to reach for the highest goals and not to be satisfied with the average.

Miss Janice Triplett was crowned as Queen of the Carnival before the assembly. Molly Dorsey and Frank Donohue of the fifth grade were crowned queen and king of the grade school. Carol Neal, representative of the senior class, who sponsored the contests for the annual Halloween Carnival, presented the crowns.

Charles Edward Shaffer was presented a savings bond as winner of the baby contest.

Mr. Baer directed a fire drill to acquaint students as to how to leave the building quickly and safely.

### Mrs. Helen Holt Thanks Friends



Dear Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the people of your County for your friendship and support.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the privilege of serving the people of West Virginia as their Secretary of State, and I am grateful for the many friends that I have made throughout the State.

Sincerely,

Helen Holt

### NOTICE

The Project Committee of the Widen Woman's Club has announced that the Widen Woman's Club will sponsor a Christmas lighting contest again this year. Three cash prizes will be awarded. Judging for the decorations will be on Christmas eve.

### Smokey Says:



### LEGAL

#### PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WEST VIRGINIA CHARLESTON

CASE NO. 25-0426-W-42T  
WEST VIRGINIA-AMERICAN WATER COMPANY,  
Rule 42T application to increase rates and charges.

CASE NO. 25-0428-S-42T  
WEST VIRGINIA-AMERICAN WATER COMPANY,  
Rule 42T application to increase rates and charges.

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING

The Commission will hold a public comment hearing on December 15, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. The public comment hearing will be held virtually, allowing for interested persons to make a comment telephonically, through the Microsoft Teams application from the internet, or in-person at the Commission headquarters. Interested persons intending to make a virtual public comment should register with the Commission by 4:00 p.m., Friday, December 12, 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 [aweiimer@psc.state.wv.us](mailto:aweiimer@psc.state.wv.us).

Interested persons wishing to comment in-person at the public comment hearing should attend and sign up to speak at 5:30 p.m. at Public Service Commission, Howard M. Cunningham Hearing Room, 201 Brooks Street, Charleston, West Virginia.

An alternative to speaking at the public comment hearing virtually or in-person, individuals or entities interested in providing written comments regarding these cases should submit their comments by mail or hand delivery to Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 812, Charleston, West Virginia 25323 or online at [www.psc.state.wv.us](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 with Case No. 25-0426-W-42T or Case No. 25-0428-S-42T. Interested persons may also attend the public comment hearing in-person or via webcast to observe the public comment hearing. The webcast may be viewed by clicking "Commission Webcast" located under the "Inside the PSC" section in the left column on the Commission's website: [www.psc.state.wv.us](http://www.psc.state.wv.us).

WEST VIRGINIA-AMERICAN WATER COMPANY

### LEGAL

(2024-C-000007 - CLAY COUNTY - HOLLINS WAYNE DUFFIELD)

To: DONVILLE C. DEEMS, SR., JOHN WAYNE CANTRELL II, NANCY KAY BYRD C/O JOHN WAYNE CANTRELL II, STEVEN LEE CANTRELL C/O JOHN WAYNE CANTRELL II, STEVEN LEE CANTRELL, STEVEN LEE CANTRELL, STEVEN LEE CANTRELL, NANCY KAY BYRD C/O PATRICIA MORALES, NANCY BYRD, THE UNKNOWN HEIRS, DEVISEES, CREDITORS & ASSIGNS OF CHARLES FORD DEEMS, DONVILLE [DONVAL] C. DEEMS, SR., ELIZABETH CANTRELL, MARJORIE PAYNE, JOHN WAYNE CANTRELL II, STEVEN LEE CANTRELL AND NANCY KAY CANTRELL BYRED, or heirs at law, devisees, creditors, representatives, successors, assigns, all known heirs, guardians, conservators, fiduciaries, administrators, lienholders, co-owners, other parties having an undivided interest in the delinquent property, and other parties that may have an interest in the subject property.

DISTRICT BUFFALO MAP 12 PARCEL 0052 0000 0000

You will take notice that HOLLINS WAYNE DUFFIELD, the purchaser of the following real estate, Cert. No. 2024-C-000007, located in BUFFALO District, 1.88 AC ROCK CAMP SUR, which was returned delinquent or nonentered in the name of DEEMS CHARLES FORD, and was sold by the deputy commissioner of delinquent or nonentered lands of CLAY County at the sale for the delinquent taxes on the August 20, 2025. HOLLINS WAYNE DUFFIELD requests that you be notified a deed for such real estate will be made on or after May 1, 2026, as provided by law, unless before that day you redeem such real estate. The amount needed to redeem on or before April 30, 2026 will be as follows:

Amount equal to the taxes and charges due on the date of the certification, with interest, for tax year ticket number 2023 - 667.

Back tax tickets, with interest, and charges due on the date of certification for ticket number

Subsequent of taxes paid on the property, with interest to for tax year 2024 - 659.

Additional taxes with interest.

Auditor's Certification, Publication, and Redemption fee plus interest.

Amount paid for Title Examination, notice to redeem, publication, personal service,

Secretary of State with interest.

Additional Statutory Fees with Interest.

Total Amount Due and Payable to WV State Auditor - cashier check, money order, certified or personal check.

You may redeem at any time before April 30, 2026, by paying the above total less any unearned interest.

If the above real estate is your primary residence, you may petition the Auditor to redeem the real estate in not more than three incremental payments that equal the total amount required to redeem the real estate prior to the issuance of the deed described above.

Given under my hand November 24, 2025

Christal G. Perry

Deputy Commissioner of Delinquent and

Nonentered Lands of CLAY County, State of West Virginia

Please return this letter and payment to the

West Virginia State Auditor's Office, County Collections

Division 1900 Kanawha Boulevard East

Building 1, Room W-114

Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Questions please call 1-888-509-6568

#### LEGAL NOTICE:

In accordance with Chapter 11, Article 3, Section 2a of the Code of West Virginia, I am notifying all real property and personal property owners of Clay County that for Tax Year 2026, all real property and personal property will be assessed at 60% of its current market value. This may or may not result in a general increase in the assessed value of your property.

Should you have any questions concerning the assessment of your real or personal property, you may contact this office at 587-4258, or you may come in the office and we will review your appraisal with you.

If, after a review with this office, you disagree with the appraisal of your property you may appeal the valuation to the Clay County Commission sitting as a Board of Review and Equalization, during the month of February.

Teresa Davis

Assessor of Clay County

### LEGAL

#### Notice of Administration to Creditors, Distributees & Legatees

Notice is hereby given that the following estate(s) have been opened for probate in the Clay County Clerk's Office at P.O. Box 190, 246 Main Street, Clay, WV 25043-0190. Any person seeking to impeach or establish a will must make a complaint in accordance with the provisions of West Virginia Code 41-5-11 through 13. Any interested person objecting to the qualifications of the personal representative or the venue or jurisdiction of the court, shall file written notice of an objection with the County Commission through the Clay County Clerk's Office at the address listed above within 60 days after the date of the first publication or within 30 days of the service of the notice, whichever is later. If an objection is not filed timely, the objection is forever barred. Any person interested in filing claims against an estate must file them in accordance with West Virginia Code 44-2 or 44-3A.

Settlement of the estate(s) of the following named decedent(s) will proceed without reference to a fiduciary commissioner unless within 60 days from the first publication of this notice a request is filed by a party of interest or an unpaid creditor files a claim and good cause is shown to support reference to a fiduciary commissioner.

Publication Date: Thursday, December 4, 2025

Claim Deadline: Monday, February 2, 2026

APPOINTMENT DATE 09/08/2025

ESTATE NAME: ERNEST RANDOLPH BURROUGHS JR

EXECUTRIX MARGARET E STAPLETON

7125 CARRIE DRIVE

INDIANAPOLIS IN 46237-9311

APPOINTMENT DATE 09/12/2025

ESTATE NAME: LEO FRANK MURPHY

EXECUTRIX BETTY T MURPHY

PO BOX 185

404 MAIN STREET

CLAY WV 25043-0185

APPOINTMENT DATE 11/18/2025

ESTATE NAME: DANNY BILL NICHOLS

EXECUTOR RONALD LEE NICHOLS

PO BOX 130

ANGEL CAMP CA 95222-0130

APPOINTMENT DATE 03/17/2025

ESTATE NAME: MICHAEL ALLEN RAMSEY

CO ADMINISTRATRIX BRITNI ANN RAMSEY

1080 MAYSEL LAUREL RIDGE RD

MAYSEL WV 25133-8134

CO ADMINISTRATRIX HAILEY NICOLE RAMSEY

45 BLAKESTONE RD

LIZMORES WV 25125-8092

APPOINTMENT DATE 10/21/2025

ESTATE NAME: IMOGENE ROSE SAMPLES

EXECUTRIX KAREN LEA SWEENEY

1013 SHAWNEE TRAIL

ELKVIEW WV 25071-9370

Subscribed and sworn to before me on 11/24/2025

## LEGAL

Sheriff's List of Real Estate Tax Liens  
Certified to the State of WV

List of tax liens on real estate in the county of Clay, in the month (or months) of November 2025, certified for nonpayment of taxes thereon for the year (or years) 2024, and certified to the Auditor of the State of West Virginia:

## Ticket # Name

## Description

10385	KING VERNON KENNY	O&G 1/2 OF 1/2 INT 3 AC WTS STINSON	76.19
10488	LEGG HENSON ETUX	SUR 27.49 AC WTS OTTER & ELK	147.85
10500	LLB ENTERPRISES LLC	O&G 1/4 INT 30 AC WTS STINSON	76.19
10601	MCCOURT BETTY	SUR (T) LOT #3 .67 AC N S ELK	226.42
10633	MCCRACKEN HAM HRS	1/2 O&G OUT 1/5 INT 80 AC WTS O'BRION MIN	76.19

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

10635	MCCRACKEN JACKSON	COAL OUT 1/2 OF 1/11 INT 137 AC WTS	76.19
10636	MCCRACKEN JACKSON	OTTER MIN	
10637	MCCRACKEN JACKSON	O&G 1/2 OF 1/11 INT 41 AC BUTLER FORK	76.19
10704	MCLAUGHLIN LARRY ETAL	COAL OUT 1/2 OF 1/11 INT 10.5 AC BUTLER	76.19

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

10704	MCLAUGHLIN LARRY ETAL	FORK MIN	
11086	MORRIS JOHN AMOS	SUR LOT 13 & PT LOT 14 OTTER TOWN	141.06
11107	MORRIS RAY	SUR 1/3 INT 11 AC LOG SHOALS	89.98
11136	PHILLIPS RESSIE LYNN	SUR 12.9 AC WTS WEST FORK	137.96
11137	PHILLIPS RESSIE LYNN	SUR & ROW LOTS 9-10-11 N S ELK	294.56

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

11137	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	SUR & ROW (PAT'S BAR) LOTS 9-10-11 N S ELK	364.68
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	O&G 1/2 OF 1/4 OF 1/2 INT 100 AC WTS OTTER	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	ROSE TR	
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 200 AC WTS OTTER MIN	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 70 AC RUSH FORK MIN	76.19

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 70 AC RUSH FORK MIN	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	MIN 30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 48.5 AC N S ELK JMF	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	DOWNEY	
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	MIN 30% OF 1/7 INT 43 AC N S ELK JMF DOWNEY	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	MIN 30% OF 1/7 INT 13.5 AC N S ELK JMF DOWNEY	76.19

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	MIN 30% OF 1/7 INT 13.5 AC N S ELK JMF DOWNEY	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	MIN 30% OF 1/7 INT 12.5 AC N S ELK JMF DOWNEY	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	1/2 INTEREST 28.21 AC WTS WEST FORK	108.91
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	1/2 INTEREST 9.36 AC WTS WEST FORK	407.61
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	FEE 1/3 INT 55 AC RUSH FORK	158.75

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	FEE 1/3 INT 55 AC RUSH FORK	158.75
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	SUR LOT LOG SHOALS	290.47
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	SUR .62 AC WTS OTTER	176.25
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	SUR PT LOT 7 N S ELK	76.19

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	SUR PT LOT 7 N S ELK	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	ROSE TR	
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 200 AC WTS OTTER MIN	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 70 AC RUSH FORK MIN	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 48.5 AC N S ELK JMF	76.19

## Amount

## Ticket # Name

## Description

11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	30% OF 1/4 OF 1/6 INT 48.5 AC N S ELK JMF	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	DOWNEY	
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	MIN 30% OF 1/7 INT 43 AC N S ELK JMF DOWNEY	76.19
11139	PIERSON LUMBER CO INC	MIN 30% OF 1/7 INT 13.5 AC N S ELK JMF DOWNEY	76.19
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# www.cmiwv.com

## TIRE MANAGERS SPECIAL

### TIRE SALE

MASTERCRAFT COURSER CXT-275-7018 10PLY \$245.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT STRATUS HT- 275-65-18 TR \$184.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT STRATUS HT 275-65-18 TR \$139.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT QUEST PLUS 265-65-18 TR \$155.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT STRATUS HT 255-65-18 TR \$129.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT COURSER TRAIL 245-60-18 HR \$154.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT STRATUS AP 265-70-17 TR \$129.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT COURSER TRAIL 265-70-17 TR \$149.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT SRT TOURING 225-65-17 TR \$109.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT QUEST PLUS 225-65-17 HR \$124.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT STRATUS AS 225-60-17 HR \$99.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT GLACIER TREX 225-60-17 TR \$129.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT STRATUS AS 215-60-16 VR \$79.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT COURSER QUEST 215-60-16 VR \$95.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT COURSER QUEST 195-65-15 HR \$89.99 EA.

MASTERCRAFT GLACIER TREX 195-65-15 TR \$94.99 EA.

#### ATV-UTV TIRES

CARLISLE 489 25-8-12 4 PR \$109.99 EA.

CARLISLE 489 25-10-12 4 PR \$114.99 EA.

#### LAWN TIRE

CARLISLE TURF SAVER II 20-8-8 2PR \$54.99

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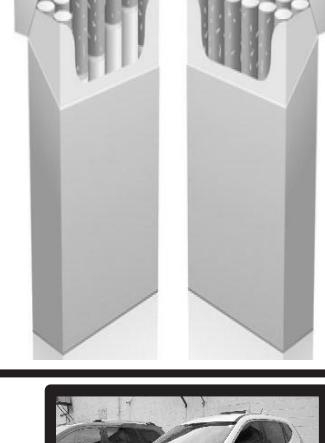
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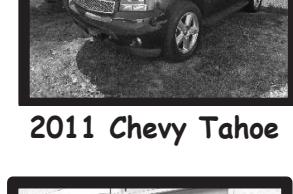
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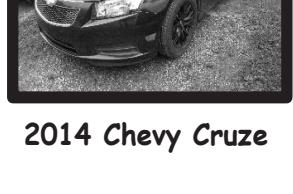
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# Lady Mustangs show some early season magic on the maple

By Allen Hamrick

The Lady Mustangs officially opened their season with a bang against Fayetteville, Webster, and Braxton this past week. When it was time for the Lady Mustangs JV to hit the floor running, this young group of wild Lady Mustangs put a thumpin' on Fayetteville 27-17 and backed that up with a woodshed smackin' of Webster 27-20 before getting handed a thorn at Braxton losing that match 8-15. It was a good run for the young team as they set the bar for the varsity team.

The Lady Mustang Varsity team engaged in wars on the maple against the

same teams. This Lady Mustangs team has the grit to go all the way once the bugs are worked out. Against Fayetteville, the Lady Mustangs fell back in the scoring and were playing catchup to the tune of 23 points before they decided to play the way they know how to. By the time they started running the boards, it was too late and they couldn't catch Fayetteville. They lost the game 37-49. With the bad taste of losing in their mouths, it wasn't long before the Lady Mustangs got a dose of Listerine against Webster as they put the basketballs to rest. They won this game 44-21.

Then came the Lady Knights of Braxton which is and will always be a great matchup for bragging rights. In this match, however, the Lady Mustangs got a little physical as they were out for blood. This allowed the Lady Knights a lot of free looks from the free line. The Lady Knights turned that opportunity into 19 points. This was a little too much to overcome, but the Lady Mustangs did a bang-up job trying. They ended up losing the game 34-40, which isn't bad considering the foul shots. The Lady Mustangs will have another crack at the nets this week against South Harrison at home

on Monday night and again on December 10th at home against Midland Trail. Come out and catch a game.

The Mustangs had a difficult time getting points on the boards as they lost their season opener against Braxton. They will get another shot at the hoops on the road at South Harrison on December 8th and again on the road at Webster on December 10th. Hopefully they will get the bugs worked out and get the season underway in the winner's circle. These boys have the heart, and with some polishing, they will be a strong team. Come out and support the team. Go Mustangs!



Ryder McMillion looking for two the hard way.



Mason Hall working under the hoop.

## CCMS Lady Panthers open season with a bang

By Allen Hamrick

The Lady Panthers opened their season against the Devilettes of Ravenswood at home. The Ladies came into this game planning to get the season started off right with some old-fashioned butt kicking basketball. However, the opening game of the season turned out to be an itch you just can't scratch.

A big ball and chain was dragging behind them as they took to the court and

tried to dominate, but the Devilettes were using a red-hot pitchfork to skewer the Lady Panthers. The Lady Panthers had some holes in their defense, and the Devilettes took advantage. The Lady Panthers were getting plenty of looks at the hoop, but it was like a snowball fight in the underworld; it seemed like a good idea at the time. The Lady Panthers just couldn't get the ball in the net and were struggling up and down the court as the

first game of the season was creeping them out. The Devilettes were burning the boards as they racked up the points. When the game ended, it was the Devilettes thumping the Lady Panthers by the score of 53-21. It was a tough game for sure.

The next game against the Lady Bison was a stampede as they trampled the Lady Panthers into the maple, beating them 67-24. The Lady Panthers

will have to figure out their issues now before the season gets full swing this week. If you get the chance, come and support the Lady Panthers as they try and work out the bugs.

The Panthers will open the season up against Poca on December 10th and won't be at home until January 6, 2026, as they start their season with a six-game road trip spree. These boys should be ready to get the job done.

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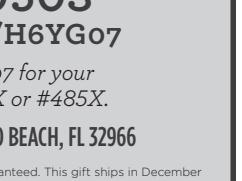
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