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Two hundred fifty years - an American dream turned reality



On farms and streets, our independence was born.

By Allen Hamrick

And so it began two hundred fifty years ago in January, the descent into what some call the great revolution and others a war cry for self-preservation. This year is the 250th Anniversary of these United States, and this January marks the anniversary of the beginning of the race to sign a Declaration of Independence,

a free break from England's kingly hold on our right to self-govern. A flag was formed, a tapestry of stripes and stars full of ideals and the crisp feeling of freedom. It was more than just a bunch of stitches, but a vow hurled into the faces of the old empire controlled by the dictates of a few. It was the people's cry that their destiny could be in their own hands, that cour-

AMERICAN DREAM cont. on page 3

West Virginia Secures \$199 Million in 2026 from Rural Healthcare Transformation Fund

Governor Patrick Morrisey has announced that West Virginia has secured \$199 million for 2026 from the Trump Administration through the Rural Health Transformation Fund, marking the beginning of a historic effort to rebuild and modernize healthcare across the state. The award, almost double the guaranteed minimum for the first year, reflects the strength, depth, and statewide focus of West Virginia's plan to modernize rural healthcare delivery and improve outcomes for families and communities across the Mountain State.

"The \$199 million investment for 2026 provides a transformative foundation to improve health outcomes, expand access to care, and strengthen families and communities throughout West Virginia," Governor Morrisey said. "This award positions our state to deliver better care closer to home and build a healthier future for generations to come. It is also the highest per capita award of any state that West Virginia touches."

The funding for this program was made possible by President Trump's "One Big Beautiful Bill," which provides sustained resources over five years, positioning West Virginia as a national leader in rural healthcare. West Virginia's plan will focus on strengthening healthcare infrastructure, expanding access to primary and specialty care, addressing workforce shortages, improving coordination among providers, and developing innovative delivery models designed specifically for rural communities.

"I want to thank President Trump, Secretary Kennedy, and Dr. Oz for recognizing the unique challenges facing rural communities and for supporting state-driven solutions that deliver real results," Governor Morrisey said. "Their leadership helped make this transformational investment possible for West Virginia families. Hopefully, we will be able to

retain those numbers for all five years of the program."

As part of the development process, Governor Morrisey traveled across West Virginia to hold regional roundtables, gather public input, and host a statewide tele-townhall with more than 17,000 participants. The application, approved on Monday, incorporates those local perspectives and has received endorsements from more than 40 healthcare organizations across the state.

The approved application provides solutions to address:

- The distance between patients and providers.
- The lack of access of rural healthcare providers.
- Resources to support rural healthcare providers.
- Connecting West Virginians to the workforce as they become healthier.
- Preventing adverse health outcomes through nutrition, exercise, and lifestyle changes.

"This investment is a long-term commitment to building modern healthcare systems that work for rural communities and support economic growth across West Virginia," added Dr. Arvin Singh, West Virginia Secretary of Health.

The \$199 million investment for 2026 - more than the amount neighboring states Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania will receive next year - will be deployed strategically to enhance access to care, support the recruitment and retention of the healthcare workforce, expand telehealth services, and strengthen rural health systems statewide. The \$199 million for the first year of the five year award period is also the highest per capita award of any state that West Virginia touches. The initiative is designed to deliver measurable improvements in health outcomes while supporting community stability and economic vitality.



The Clay County High School AP Government and Politics class, taught by Mr. Ronald Starcher.

CCHS AP Government & Politics Class Wins "We the People" State Championship

Congratulations to the West Virginia "We the People" State Champions. Clay County High School's Advance Placement Government & Politics class, taught by Mr. Ronald Starcher, competed

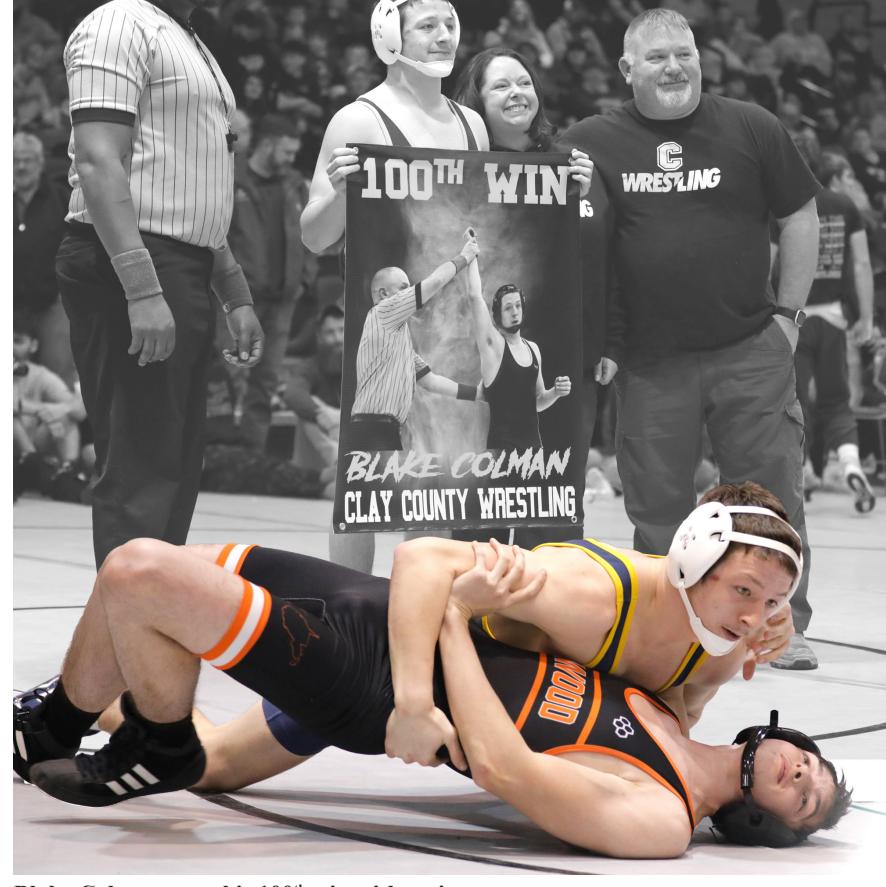
at the Robert C. Byrd Federal District Courthouse on Dec. 17, 2025, in the "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" State Competition. This is a competition where students demonstrate their knowledge of the Constitution and current issues in mock congressional style hearings. Each school participating must divide its classes into six teams. These six teams prepare a four-minute verbal response to a constitutional question and then are asked follow-up questions by a panel of three judges for six minutes. Teams are scored on their knowledge of the Constitution and their ability to apply the concepts to their everyday lives as Americans.

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

well adept at taking and defending their positions among peers as well as judges at district and state competitions. The students illustrate that hard work and dedication pay off.

Classes can have individual unit winners and overall class winners. CCHS won three out of six individual unit championships and won the overall class state championship, defeating the champions from congressional district one, Robert C. Byrd High School, and wildcard, Woodrow Wilson High School. By winning the state championship, Clay County High School has earned a spot in the National Finals in Washington D.C. in April 2026. Dual-unit winners included Ariel Dobbins, Alivia Gilliland, and Lillian Starcher. Single unit winners were Sophia Berberich, Christian Bryant, and Julianne Gallaher. Gallaher was also recognized by the judges as an outstanding performer. Members of the class are Sophia Berberich, Christian Bryant, Ariel Dobbins, Julianne Gallaher, Alivia Gilliland, Dakota James, Jakoby Nichols, Justin Nida, TJ Pritt, Lydia Shamblin, Lillian Starcher, and Owen Tinney, and Cadence Williams served as timekeeper for this year's team.

Blake Coleman notches 100th win at duals



Blake Coleman gets his 100th win with a pin.

See story on Page 8

BOOKED

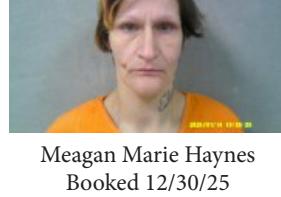


REGIONAL JAIL MUGSHOTS

BRAXTON COUNTY



Leonard Michael Bronkhurst
Booked 1/3/26
Improper registration,
possession of marijuana,
possession with intent, DUI,
expired MVI



Meagan Marie Haynes
Booked 12/30/25
Possession of controlled
substance

CLAY COUNTY



Larry Joe Cummings
Booked 1/3/26
Child neglect creating risk of
serious injury or death (x2)



Puzzle Answers

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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

Super Crossword

Answers

ALKALI	UNMASK	ACH	TUNG
ROLLIN	FIERCE	SHARPER	
BUMPKIN	ONALOG	SATIDLE	
	SEGA	NET	CEN PILE
HOD	LONGWINTER	SNAPKIN	
ENEMY	EAT	IRISES	EEE
REEL	SETS	TEASE	LED
BARKING	GRAPH	CDS	USSR
ITS	SARI	ROCCO	JOULE
CAL	OPEC	ARAL	AHA
ITA	PUSHKIN	BUTTON	NCO
DIY	OPS	ASIA	EROS
EMEND	KNEEL	SIRE	YET
SERA	ASI	SANTA	AKIN
	BARTLETT	ABLY	PINE
ASA	STATOR	BSA	STETS
PIGSKIN	INABL	BLANKET	SOS
ARLO	CDE	LAO	ITAS
TREADLE	VACUUM	PUMPKIN	
HEAVIER	ALONSO	DECIDE	
YEMENIS	NANTES	ENAMEL	

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The West Virginia First Foundation (WVFF) convened its Annual Meeting today at Oglebay Resort, located in Region 1, where the Board of Directors elected officers, approved the 2026 meeting calendar, and advanced the Momentum Initiative Grant (MIG) with a total funding allocation of nearly \$18 million. Final MIG award determinations will be released publicly once all required documentation is completed, and all applicants will receive their status on or before the end of the year. Elected officers for the 2026 term include: Chair: Greg Duckworth Vice-Chair: Dr. Matthew Christiansen Treasurer: Jeff Sandy Secretary: Dora Stutler Executive Board Member: Aly Smith “Today’s meeting reflects the continued momentum of the Foundation and the impact we are striving to create across West Virginia,” said Chairman Greg Duckworth. “It is an honor to be elected to serve as Chair for the year ahead. As we set our course for 2026 and advance major grant funding, we remain steadfast in our commitment to responsible stewardship and strengthening the communities we serve.” In the meeting, WVFF Board Member and Treasurer Jeff Sandy stated, “The wisdom and foresight of the then-Attorney General, now Governor Patrick Morrisey, to help establish the West Virginia First Foundation is what led to this momentous decision today to provide \$18 million across all of West Virginia, and for that we are truly grateful.” “We are deeply appreciative of our Board of Directors, our Expert Panels, and our staff for their dedication throughout the Momentum Initiative Grant process,” added Jonathan Board, WVFF Executive Director. “This represents one of our most significant investments to date, and we look forward to sharing final award details soon.” Following the meeting, the Board continued its Hold the Line Tour with a visit to the Wheeling Police Department, an Initial Opportunity Grant (IOG) recipient, to learn more about the department’s Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program and its impact on community safety. WVFF’s Annual Meeting concludes a year of statewide engagement, grantmaking, and collaborative partnerships aimed at preventing substance use disorder, supporting recovery, and building a healthier future for the Mountain State. Updates will continue as MIG documentation is finalized. For more information, visit wvfirst.org. About West Virginia First Foundation: The West Virginia First Foundation (WVFF) is a nonprofit organization established to address the opioid crisis and its lasting impact across the state. Created under the terms of the West Virginia First Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), WVFF was designed to receive and distribute opioid settlement funds. Guided by the principles outlined in the MOU, the Foundation operates as a private 501(c)(3) entity to support prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm reduction efforts. Through strategic funding and community collaboration, WVFF is committed to creating sustainable solutions that improve the health and well-being of all West Virginians. For more information, visit wvfirst.org.

Clay County Free Press

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Warts And All

By Joe Mazzella

Memory is a funny thing. I often can't remember what I did yesterday but suddenly a memory long forgotten from almost 40 years ago will pop back into my head. This one happened when I was a young dad in my early 20's struggling to earn enough to support my family. I had been working the late shift at a local restaurant and was getting ready to mop the floors after the doors were closed. It was only me and a lone waitress waiting for her grandmother to arrive and give her a ride home.

When her grandmother arrived, the girl dabbed the tears from her eyes and told her of how the car had broken down again. I tried not to listen but their voices carried through the empty restaurant. The girl was mainly concerned that her Dad was going to be mad at her over the car troubles and all the costs they had given him lately. The grandmother took her grandchild in her arms and laughed. "Honey," she said. "Your Dad won't be mad. He loves you, warts and all!" The girl laughed too at her grandma's unique turn of phrase and they walked outside leaving me alone with my mop.

After I finished mopping the floors I drove home alone in the dark thinking of all the people over the years who had loved me, warts and all. I thought of my Mom, Dad, Nana, two brothers, wife, baby son, and the children still to come. I thanked God for them all. And I promised to love them as well, unconditionally and with all of my heart.

Whatever your warts are then remember that you are loved. God Loves you just as you are. And God wants you to love as well. Make each day of your life here then a gift of love. Give much. Judge not. Smile often. Laugh easily. Share joy. Be kind. Help others. And love everyone in your life, Warts and all!

Home Country

Slim Randles

Delbert McLain smiled at the sign in Marvin Pinckus's yard as he walked briskly up to the front door and knocked. Marvin had seen him coming and opened it with a big smile and a handshake.

"Delbert! I've got to tell you I've really been looking forward to seeing what kind of flies we can tie up to improve your love life. You want some coffee?"

"Love life?" Del said. "Oh not today, Marvin, not today. I'm here on chamber business. Yessir."

Delbert McLain is our Chamber of Commerce. We have all designated him ... well ... okay, I guess Del kinda designated himself to let the world know we adore progress, our community is the healthiest, safest and most prosperous place to raise children or crops or make widgets.

"Official business, Del?"

"Yes indeed, Marvin. Now that you're a local businessman, you'll be needing the services of the chamber to put your love counseling and fly tying service on the map. The world (he waved his arms) is waiting to hear about the (he looked out the front window at the sign) ... the Fly Tying Love Center."

"Does it cost money to join?"

"Fifty bucks a year, Marvin. That's for a whole year!"

"And what do I get for that?"

"We list you on our chamber business list, and of course there's the monthly lunch meeting at the Mule Barn."

"Oh, you pay for lunch at the Mule Barn?"

"Uh ... no..."

"I eat there every day now, Del, and the guys tell me how to run my business and live my life, for free."

On the way back out to his car, Del thought how some businesses just weren't very progressive minded. Not at all.

x-x-x-x-x

Brought to you by "I Honked My Horse But the Tree Didn't Hear," which will be published as soon as I locate the bravest publishing company in the world.



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Where in the World Did Last Year Go?

By Dr. James Snyder

It was New Year's Day, and I got up before The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I poured my coffee and then sat in my easy chair to reflect on the day.

I was trying to get all the things in order I was planning to do today. After all, the Christmas holiday was over, and I needed to get back in the saddle again.

As I was thinking about my plans, a thought bumped into my mind. I don't have too many thoughts, but once in a while, one comes my way and hits me, and I'm not sure what to do about it.

The thought was simply this: today begins a brand-new year. I had given this too much thought recently, but last year is over. Today starts a brand new year.

What in the world happened to last year? And, where did it go?

I was getting accustomed to the year at hand and was finally writing 2025 on my checks. For most of the year, I wrote 2024. Now, a new year lay before me, and I wasn't sure what I should do.

Just then, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came into the living room, greeted me good morning and then said, "What are you thinking about today?"

I looked at her and said rather soberly, "Do you know today begins a brand-new year?"

"What," she said, "happen to the year we are living? I was just getting adjusted to that year."

She went and got a cup of coffee, then came and sat down, just staring at it. I knew exactly what she was thinking because I was thinking the same way. What happened over the last year?

One of the problems I have is this: Did I accomplish everything I wanted to accomplish last year? I'm not the kind of person who puts together a detailed New Year's resolution list. I used to, but I never could finish it, and some of the things on that list took me five years to accomplish.

I sat there quietly, thinking back over the past year trying to figure out what I really accomplished. After all, I've been retired for about four years so I have time.

Sitting in my chair with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, I thought back over the year and tried to identify what I did. Was I busy? Did I do what I had planned to do?

Looking at The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, I said, "What do you think about last year?"

The living room was relatively quiet for a few moments, and then she spoke up and said, "I really don't know what I did during the past year. I've been so busy doing things that I can't remember all the things that I did." Then, looking at me, she said, "what about your year?"

Last year had 365 days, and for the life of me, the

only day I can think of is my birthday. Thinking about my birthday, I was trying to remember what I did that day.

Looking at The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage I said, "Do you remember my birthday?"

"Oh, yes I do. It was a wonderful time don't you think?"

Not knowing exactly what she was talking about, I tried to find out more. I said, "What was the best part of my birthday last year?"

I wasn't expecting what she came up with, but she did.

"I think the best time about your birthday was the wonderful present I got you. How did you like that present?"

I don't know whether she knew what was happening or was trying to trick me. I thought, and I thought some more, but I couldn't come up with what she got me for my birthday.

"That was a wonderful present you got me. I appreciate it so much. Thank you for that gift."

I sighed very deeply, believing that I had ducked a bullet.

Looking at me with one of her infamous smiles, she said, "I spent a lot of time trying to think of that birthday gift for you. What was the best part of that gift?"

Of course, now I am in real deep water. I can't remember that birthday present. After all, that was six months ago, and I'm not sure what happened this past week. I gave it some thought and tried to remember, but nothing actually came to mind.

That's the thing about getting older: you forget things you should remember, and remember things you should forget.

I didn't know what to say, so I said, "The best thing about that birthday present was your thoughtfulness in getting me such a wonderful present. I will always appreciate you for getting me that present."

She smiled at me, and at least it worked this time. Or so I thought.

When a year passes by, it's not too good to reflect on the past. The best thing is to appreciate the past, but then put the focus on the present.

This time of the year, my favorite Bible verse is Ecclesiastes 1:8, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."

We think something is new, and it may be new to us at the time, but there is nothing new under the sun.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamessnyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamessnyderministries.com.

Judge Greear Named Chief Judge of Intermediate Court of Appeals for 2026

The Intermediate Court of Appeals of West Virginia today announced Judge Daniel W. Greear has been selected to serve as the Court's chief judge during 2026.

This will be Judge Greear's second tenure as the Intermediate Court's chief judge; he served as the Court's inaugural chief judge from July 2022 through December 2023. Judge Greear succeeds current Chief Judge Charles O. Lorenzen, who has been serving in the role throughout 2025. Judge S. Ryan White also serves on the three-member Court.

"The ICA has been well served by Chief Judge Lorenzen," Judge Greear said. "I look forward to working with Judges Lorenzen and White to ensure that the ICA continues to function to meet the needs of West Virginia and to continue to improve our judicial system."

The Intermediate Court of Appeals is an appellate court created by the West Virginia Appellate Reorganization Act of 2021 (Senate Bill 275). It officially opened July 1, 2022.

The Court's jurisdiction includes appeals of final orders or judgments in civil, family court, workers' compensation, administrative and guardianship/conservatorship cases.

The chief judge is chosen by members of the Court and serves a one-year term. In addition to Judge Greear's designation for 2026, the Court has also designated Judge White to serve as chief judge in 2027. Judge White will also serve as the Court's acting chief judge in 2026 in any instance when Chief Judge Greear is unavailable.

More information about the Intermediate Court of Appeals, the judges and its caseload is available here: <https://www.courts.wv.gov/appellate-courts/intermediate-court-of-appeals/about-the-court>.

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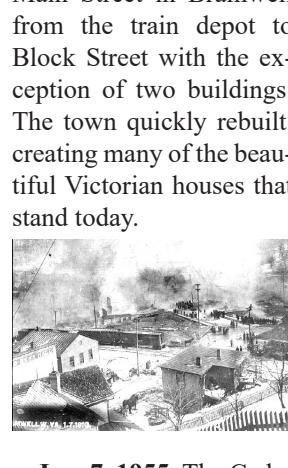
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GENERAC

THIS WEEK IN West Virginia History

Jan. 7, 1910: A fire destroyed everything on Main Street in Bramwell from the train depot to Block Street with the exception of two buildings. The town quickly rebuilt, creating many of the beautiful Victorian houses that stand today.



Jan. 7, 1955: The Cedar Lakes Conference Center officially opened, though it was not named until 1957. The name was chosen for its two lakes and an abundance of native cedar trees.



Henry Conley

Jan. 8, 1866: William Gustavus Conley was born near Kingwood (Preston County). Conley was West Virginia's 18th



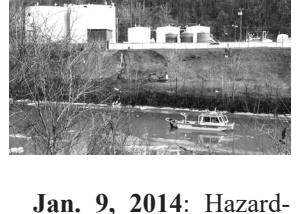
Jan. 8, 1919: The West Virginia legislature ratified the U.S. constitution's 18th Amendment in the Senate, 26-0, and in the House, 81-3. West Vir-

ginia was the 21st state to ratify the amendment. National prohibition went into effect under the Volstead Act on January 16, 1920.

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



Jan. 9, 1911: Louise McNeill was born on the family farm in Pocahontas County. She was appointed poet laureate by Governor Jay Rockefeller in 1979, holding that title until her death in 1993.



Jan. 9, 2014: Hazardous chemicals were discovered leaking into the Elk River, contaminating the water supply for a nine-county region.

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

Jan. 10, 1928: Gov. Howard Gore appointed Minnie Buckingham

Harper of McDowell County to fill the unexpired term of her husband, E. Howard Harper. She was the first Black woman to serve in a state legislative body in the United States.

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

Jan. 11, 1865: Confederate forces under General Thomas Rosser burned the covered bridge at Beverly. Bridge builder Lemuel Chenoweth rebuilt the damaged span in 1872-73.

Jan. 11, 1893: U.S. Senator Harley Martin Kilgore was born in rural Harrison County. Kilgore served as a senator from

West Virginia from 1940 until his death in 1952.



Jan. 12, 1869: Newspa-

perman Herschel Coombs Ogden was born near Fairmont. In 1888, he re-

located to Wheeling and entered the newspaper business.

Jan. 13, 1905: Joseph

H. Diss Debar died in

Philadelphia. A supporter

of the movement to create

West Virginia, Diss De-

bar was commissioned in

1863 to design the Great

Seal of West Virginia.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY
HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



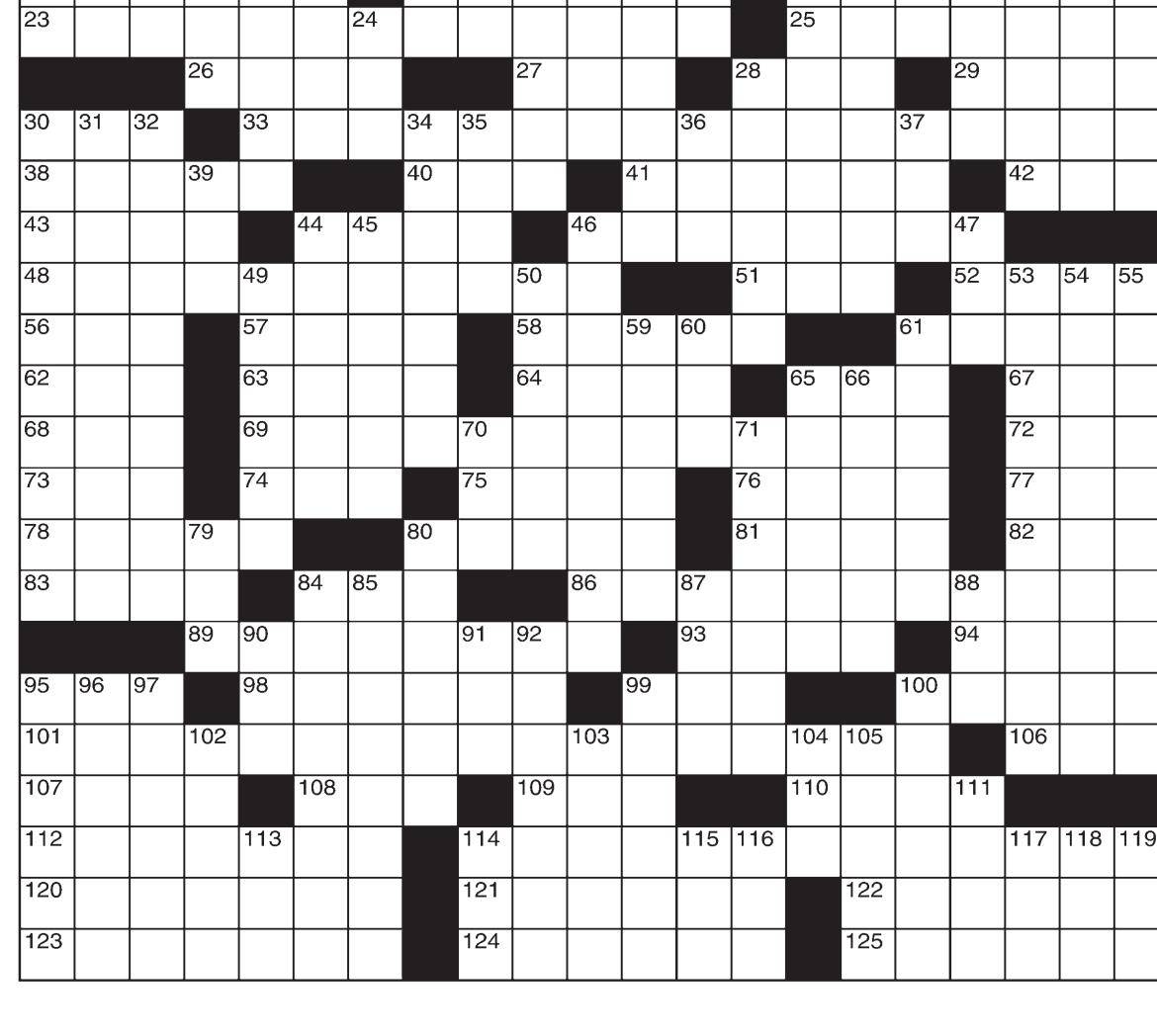
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Missing: 6. Thumb is moved.
3. Chart is different. 4. Plant is taller. 5. Briefcase handle is different.
Differences: 1. Band around hat is wider. 2. Blinds are different.

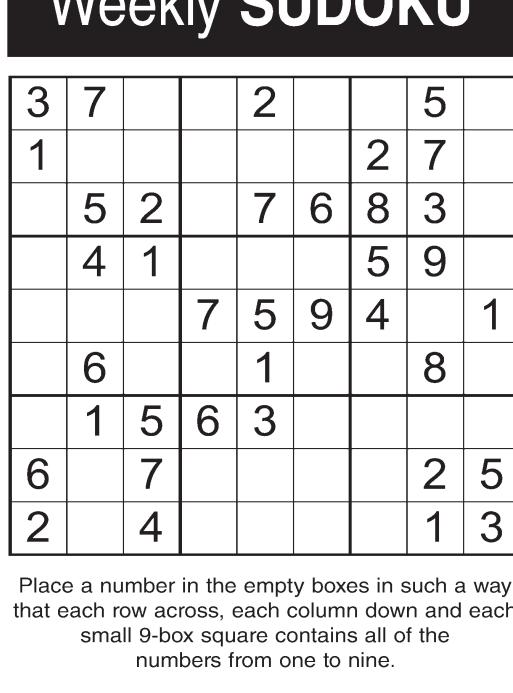
Super Crossword

FAMILY EXPANSION

ACROSS	43 Spool	78 Revise	122 Choose	28 Big name in	71 Nuclear trial
1 It turns	44 Gets firm	80 Prepare to	123 Aden citizens	shortening	prohibition
litmus paper	46 Produced a	give a ring?	124 French edict	30 Weedkillers	79 Catch cold
blue	napped	81 Horse father	site of 1598	31 Singly	80 Tartan skirt
7 Strip a dis-	surface on	82 Beijing-to-	125 Nail coater	32 James Fenimore	sporter
guise from	48 Chart show-	Shanghai dir.		Cooper	84 First
13 "— Baby"	ing the highs	83 Shot fluids		novel, with	Constitution
(#1 U2	and lows	84 "— see it ..."		"The"	section
album of	of actress	86 One of the		34 Grow	85 Risen people
1991)	Ellen's	Skywalkers		wealthy	87 Galileo's gp.
20 Arrive like	career?	dressed up		35 "I — Male	88 Inclined (to)
the tide	51 LP replacers	as St. Nick?		War Bride"	90 Petition, e.g.
21 Savage	52 KGB's milieu	89 Kind of pear		36 History unit	91 History unit
22 Less dull	56 "— all over!"	93 With skill		37 Suffix of	92 Light refrain
23 Rural	57 Asian dress	94 Fir's cousin		enzymes	95 Disinterest
lumber-	58 Alex of "The	95 "Ender's		96 "No —!"	("Uh-uh")
jack resting	Godfather"	Game" star		97 Glistening	99 Hall-of-Fame
after	61 Unit of work	Butterfield		100 Flower organ	footballer Mel
chopping?	62 Orioles great	98 Unmoving		102 Dry, white	
25 Lounged	Ripken	machine part		Italian wine	
around	63 Gp. for	99 Troop gp.		103 Strips for	
26 Dreamcast	Qatar	100 They negate		breakfast	
producer	64 Sea in 75-	deles		104 Currency	
27 Get as clear	Across	101 Afghan-		unit of Laos	
profit	65 "Now I see!"	wrapped		105 Musical	
28 100-yr.	67 Matchstick-	football?		exercise	
period	removing	106 "Help!"		111 Lab safety	
29 Heap (up)	game	107 Guthrie at		org.?	
30 Trough for	68 Suffix with	Woodstock		113 Major racket	
toting bricks	señor	108 B-to-F string		114 U-Haul	
33 Extended	69 Item pinned	109 Thai tongue		rental	
cloth used	on to support	110 "Think of		115 Capitalize on	
for messy	a Russian	— a loan"		116 Cal. dozen	
cold-weather	poet's elec-	112 Foot lever		117 — Jong-un	
meals?	tion to office?	114 Clean a		118 Suffix with	
38 Hostile force	72 Sarge, e.g.	jack-o'-		chlor-	
40 Down food	73 Abbr. for a	lantern with		119 — "Blu Di-	
41 Purple	handy-andy	a Hoover?		pinto di Blu"	
spring	74 Mil. missions	120 More		(1958 hit)	
blooms	75 Qatar locale	weighty			
42 Wide-shoe	76 Lovers' deity	121 Alicia of			
letters	77 Still	ballet			



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

Clubs And Classes At Widen Schools

FOOTLIGHTERS' CLUB NEWS

The Footlighters Club of Widen High School wishes to announce that they will be presenting a play in the assembly on December 31, 1958, at the Y.M.C.A. auditorium. Any parents who wish to come are cordially invited.

The name of the play is "The Ghost In The Green Gown." The cast of characters are:

Mary Louise ... Joyce Workman

Ida Marie Judy Shaffer

Catheline Rosa Gibson

Ronda Brenda Butcher

Lillian Norris Bailey

Cassy Nancy McMillion

This cast has been practicing furiously for the last month and

will be for the next few weeks

in order to make ready. At the

same time a different cast is prac-

ticing on a pantomime, "The Still

In The Night," which will be pre-

sented in the assembly also. The

characters in the pantomime are:

The Reader Mary Hamrick

An Old Hill Billy ... Selena Bego

Her Bruiser Brother—

Brenda Butcher

His Son Drema Dodrill

A Hill Billy Girl ... Betty Wilson

SEVENTH GRADE NEWS

We drew a map of West Virginia and a map of Clay county and to every ones' surprise we found that we weren't such bad artists.

The club has been discussing

questions which might be asked on the Golden Horseshoe Test, which will be given later this year.

JUNIOR CLASS NEWS

We, the Junior Class of Widen High School, wish to thank everyone who bought chances on the quilt we raffled off, on October

31. It was won by Ira Lane of Widen.

We are still selling Magazines and would like to have your services again. Contact any member of the Junior Class if you wish to subscribe for magazines. Soon the juniors will have a bake sale. There will be plenty of delicious pies, cakes, and other scrumptious things to eat on sale. Come and look things over and we are sure you will find something to your satisfaction.

Note: Our magazine sale is over November 17.

THIRD GRADE NEWS

Miss Graham's third grade has been writing poetry. Here are some samples of their work:

A Poem Of Flowers

I like all kinds of flowers,
Red, blue, yellow, purple and pink,
I love to smell all kinds of flowers,
I could pick some flowers
And smell them all day long.

Dawne Arbogast

Me

I'm a boy nice and bright,
And I never get into a fight
I help with the cleaning and chores
But one thing, I forgot to close
the doors.

Danny Keen

Once I threw a ball

And it went to Paul.

Paul said "that must have been a
grounder."

Jack said "that must have been
a pounder."

Bob said "Oh, that was a good
hit."

I thought so too, because it hit
right in my mit.

James Dorsey

Poem

When the moon shine is bright
The stars come out and shine right
in my eyes.

I love the stars to shine in my
eyes,

Do you like for the stars to shine
in your eyes?

Bari Bailey

FUTURE HOMEMAKERS

The members of the F.B.L.A. chapter of Widen have once more decided to become an active club. They are sure that their club will be a success.

They have set up a project that every member has taken part in. That project is to help the teacher, to whom he is assigned, in any work the teacher may have planned. Throughout the year the F.B.L.A. will be working on other projects that will be helpful to the school and the community.

The president, Carol Neal, appointed a committee to take care of the class constitution. They were: Lilly Nash, Chairman; Mary Hamrick, Kyle Barnette and Victor Frame.

Also a committee was appointed to make up a set of by-laws as student-of-the-month for the club. They were: Karen month of November.

Mick, Chairman: Linda Rapp, Virginia Nettles, and Barbara Young.

All the members of the Widen F.B.L.A. chapter are looking forward to the annual convention of all F.B.L.A. clubs at West Virginia Tech.

The convention will be held in the early part of next year, and all members plan to attend.

OFFICE NEWS

Parents were welcomed to Widen High School during American Education Week beginning Sunday, November 9 and ending Saturday, November 15. On Wednesday, November 12, visiting parents were guided by students stationed in the halls throughout the day. These students conducted parents to rooms in which they wished to visit.

The following were chosen to act as guides:

First Period — David Hamrick and Judy LaCorte.

Second Period — Wanda Barnette and Betty Windon.

Third Period — Karen Donohue and Lillie Nash.

Fifth Period — Ruby Rapp and Rosa Gibson.

Sixth Period — Jane Gibson and Virginia Nettles.

The names of those parents who visited will be published next month.

Hot lunches were available to the parents.

Student - of - the Month



MISS ROSA GIBSON

Miss Rosa Gibson, 17 year old

daughter of Mrs. Prussia Gibson,

of Wilson Ridge, has been selected

as student-of-the-month for the

month of November.

Rosa is Vice president of Student Council and vice president

of the Senior Class. She is secre-

tary-treasurer-reporter of Nation-

al Honor Society and secretary-

treasurer of Dramatics Club.

She represented Widen High School at Rhododendron Girls' State, at Jacksons Mill in June, 1958.

She attends Walnut Grove Methodist Youth Fellowship of that church.

Rosa has a "B" average in school and is a very active member of Widen High.

Some of her favorites include: Song, Devotion; Color, Sky Blue; and Food, Pumpkin Pie.

Mystery Student

This is station M-Y-S-T-E-R-Y coming to you from the Journalism class of Widen High School. We wish to present a novelty—a young person who sings "My True Love" while eating French Fries.

She is usually seen in a Chevrolet, but, of course, there are a few exceptions to everything.

She is liked by everyone who has known her in the Widen High School. She is the classical blonde type—5 feet 6 inches tall; has brown eyes and very attractive features. She is in Senior High. In fact she is a Doll!

She gets her mail at the post office. anyone seeing this girl, please notify the Journalism class, station M-Y-S-T-E-R-Y, so she can be run down and put back to work.

"Tarzan Huh"

Y-E-E-O-W-W-W-W It couldn't be Tarzan! Swinging from one girl's arm to another's, although he does resemble him! His heart is with the fairer sex. You may see him swinging to Journalism Class on the arms of classmates.

We don't know what his favorite song is in Africa, but here in America it is "Twilight Time." Besides swinging from arms he has a yen for basketball. When he eats out, he usually has shrimp. He came from out of the Jungle three years ago to get an education in Widen High School.

His body is similar to that of Tarzan's because he is over 6 feet tall. He has brown hair and hazel eyes. He and a senior from another high school may be seen together often! If you see this fellow tell him that the "Natives" in the Junior Class wish that he would hurry back.

AMERICAN DREAM

Continued from Page 1

courage would overshadow the cause and unrest that would sure follow. It would prove to be a shroud for fallen heroes and a cloak for the shattered. So, while the years pass into history and our flag becomes tattered and faded and the stars seem to shine less, the entwined threads will always endure.

Now, 250 years later, our flag, our Declaration of Independence and our constitution have flaked off some of the luster that once was as the friction of history has taken its toll. Our flag is a testament, a living archival proof that a nation's true glory is not found in the gales and hardship but in the courage to still fly while bearing them up. Our founding fathers threw themselves against the ancient thrones to form a new standard to which all men should live free so we could walk

on this Earth in our own country unyielding and relentless in our pursuit of justice and a way of life.

In January of 1776, Thomas Paine published Common Sense, a pamphlet which simply said, and not with flowery language, "A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right," telling people that the ways of the past are not necessarily a good idea for future growth. Two hundred fifty years later, here we set in winter as we also live in constant political upheaval and a fog overshadows the USA, keeping us from seeing the path forward.

Common Sense was the first shot fired for the beginning of our independence, and by its own words is what fuels our path ahead in 2026 for the next 250 years. Common Sense of yesterday is no longer

enough to fill the dreams of now...common sense.

For the American colonists, the future was uncertain and tore apart loyalties as well as families still loyal to the king of England. It was difficult to answer the question that was the headline of the time - do we stay with England or do we move ahead? America has never been a stagnant map of history. America has always been an agitated and shifting tide of human will and emotion.

We are a nation built and founded on the idea of "self-evident" truth that through 250 years has been debated in halls across this country. We have seen thousands of sunrises with a heartbeat that has never straight lined. We have swelled in times of success and shrank in times of anxiety - the Great Depression,

wars on our own soil, sacrifices made in the name of our future - yet here we are. Why? Perhaps it's because we are not held together by a king or by limited boundaries of thought and reality, but by a single piece of paper that holds us all together, daring us to be a better person than we were yesterday.

So, as the months of 2026 lead us up to July 4th, we have to ask ourselves if we are just pawns of history or are we creators of the history ahead of us. The ink on the documents of 1776 is dry, but the ink of 2026 is still waiting to be feathered. America is still like a lightning bolt caught and held in a safe place and we are the keepers of it. America continues 250 years later and the most important history is the history we are about to write, after all its Common Sense.

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You will take notice that JOSPEPH DOW JONES, the purchaser of the following real estate, Cert. No. 2022-C-000232, located in OTTER District, 3682 AC N S ELK O&G 1/2 OF 1/3 OF 1/4 INT, which was returned delinquent or nonentered in the name of JARVIS JOHN K, and was sold by the deputy commissioner of delinquent or nonentered lands of CLAY County at the sale for the delinquent taxes on the May 4, 2023. JOSPEPH DOW JONES requests that you be notified a deed for such real estate will be made on or after March 1, 2026, as provided by law, unless before that day you redeem such real estate. The amount needed to redeem on or before February 28, 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 2021 - 10289.

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 2022 - 10258.

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 February 28, 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 December 16, 2025

Christal G. Perry

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

(2022-C-000231 - Clay County - JOSPEPH DOW JONES)

To: JOHN K JARVIS, SALLY ANNE JARVIS, CHARLES E. BARNETT III, EMILY JO WILLIAMSON, 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.

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You will take notice that JOSPEPH DOW JONES, the purchaser of the following real estate, Cert. No. 2022-C-000231, located in OTTER District, 3682 AC N S ELK O&G 2/3 OF 1/4 & 1/2 OF 1/3 OF 1/4, which was returned delinquent or nonentered in the name of HALL O L, and was sold by the deputy commissioner of delinquent or nonentered lands of CLAY County at the sale for the delinquent taxes on the May 4, 2023. JOSPEPH DOW JONES requests that you be notified a deed for such real estate will be made on or after March 1, 2026, as provided by law, unless before that day you redeem such real estate. The amount needed to redeem on or before February 28, 2026 will be as follows:

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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 February 28, 2026 by paying the above total less any unearned interest.

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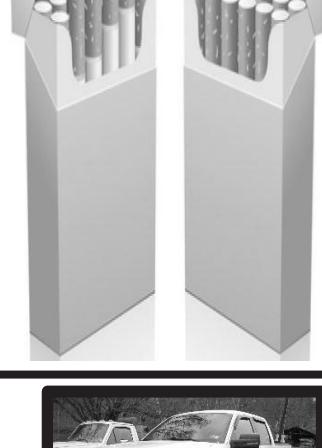
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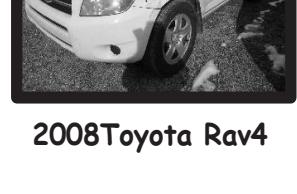
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Panther wrestling places 16th at National Guard Duals in Summersville

By Allen Hamrick

The Panther wrestling team participated in one of the biggest wrestling tournaments in this state - the annual WV Army National Guard Duals at the Summersville Armory on Friday and Saturday. Twenty-six of the toughest teams from all the A's competed. A top ten team finish here is like getting the last piece of meatloaf at a pro football linemen brunch. This tournament is no place for tissues and pacifiers; rather

it's a place where muscle meets brains and brains get squashed.

Whoever has the most of both gets the win. The Panthers are no slouch when it comes to taking the meat off a bone - they hit the mats and take no mercy. Both Blake Coleman and Caiden Bryant went 9-0 stomping some pretty big egos into the rubber. It was also the day set in the history books that Blake Coleman's hand was raised on his 100th win. Sam Clevenger was named team MVP for the weekend.

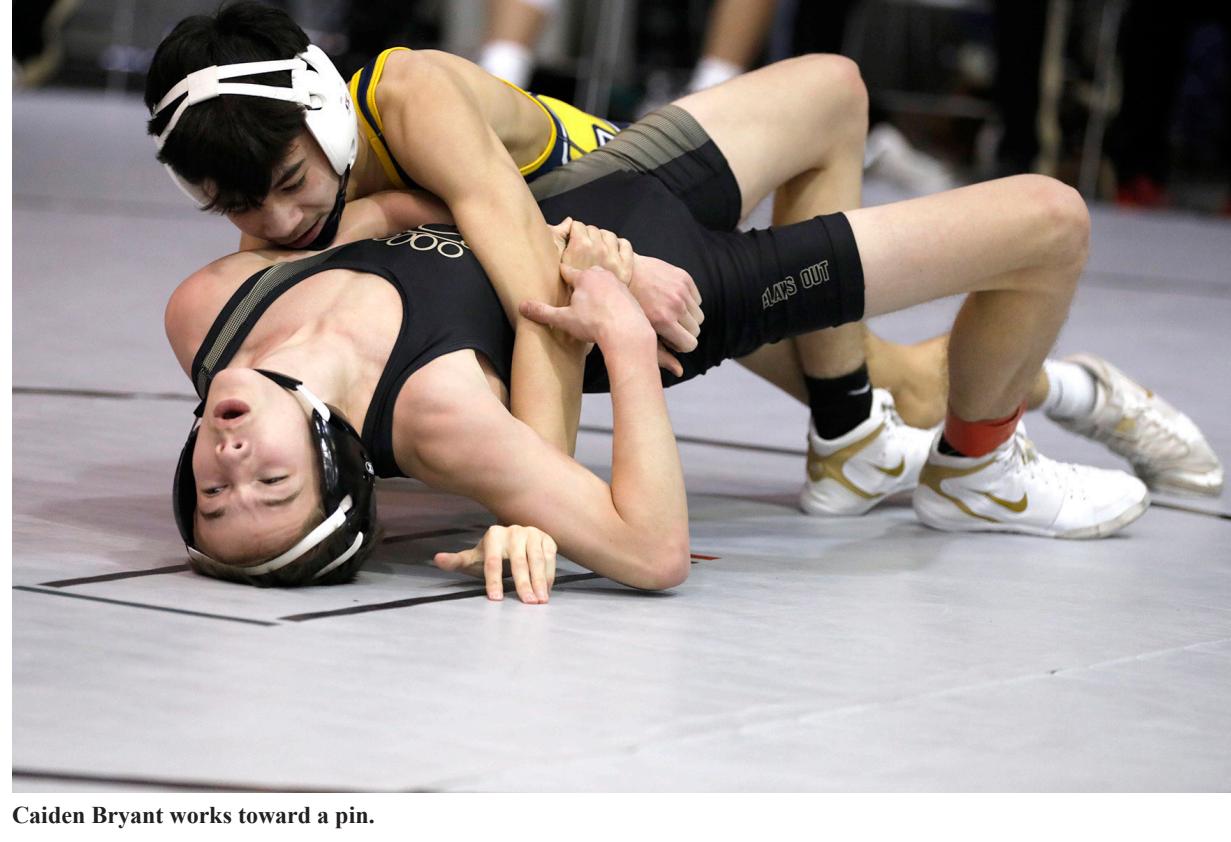
With their ground and pound style of wrestling, the Panthers placed 16th as a team. That may not seem like a big feat, but it is. Panthers can hand out the pain. As a team, they were 5-4 for the weekend. Congratulations to the Panthers on a great finish. They will be tearing up the mats once again this weekend at Saint Mary's. Come out and catch a match for some pretty good wrestling action.



Landon Delwarte works the pretzel for a pin.



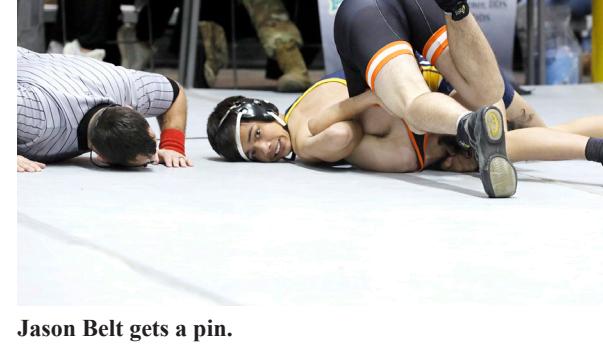
Lady Panther wrestlers Jayda Stricker and Zaiah Minger participate in the Parkersburg Women's Winter Classic, with Zaiah placing 4th. Photo Kacie Minger



Caiden Bryant works toward a pin.



Sam Clevenger showcases one of his wins.



Jason Belt gets a pin.

Lady Panthers fall to the Lady Skyhawks

By Allen Hamrick

The Lady Panthers were at home against Scott this past week trying to shake the gremlins that have kept them from the winner's circle. The JV Lady Panthers were called to the court first and proceeded to keep a noose around the high scoring Lady Skyhawks holding them to a baseball score at the nets with some good defense. Neither team looked like they were going to get invited to a shootout championship any time soon, but they kept the fans on the edge of their seats. The game was neck and neck going into the final seconds when a

foul call on one of the Lady Panthers sent a foul shooting master to the line to sink both buckets. The Lady Panther JV team went down by the score of 19-20.

Lady Panther Varsity was set to come out and deliver some revenge, but the Lady Skyhawks had other ideas. Both teams came out and were setting their range on the nets, and the points started racking up. It quickly became time for seesaw basketball. The lead was neck and neck, and it looked like the Lady Panthers were going for gold. However, the prospector's mule decided otherwise. The game got away from the Lady Panthers

as their shooting percentage started dropping.

When the smoke cleared, the Lady Panthers suffered their fourth straight loss: 30- 42.

The Lady Panthers will be back in action this week both at home and on the road. On Jan. 6, they will be at Buffalo, and on Jan. 8, they will play at home against Poca. Come out and support Lady Panther basketball. Panther basketball will have a four-game home stretch this week and next. First up will be Roane on Jan. 6 followed by Gilmer on Jan. 9. Come out and catch the action - the boys are firing on all cylinders.



Autumn Rapp looks for a lane.



Cheyenne Taylor gets the steal.



Layla Parker gets two just inside the mark.