BOOKED REGIONAL JAIL MUGSHOTS | P.2

Clay County Free Press
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Local Democrat receives statewide recognition

Pamela Corey, a former resident of Clay County received special recognition from Democratic leaders in honoring her posthumously as one of West Virginia's Outstanding Democrats of the Year. This Outstanding Democrat was selected by local county leaders for her lifetime of hard work and dedication to the Democratic Party in Clay County. Pamela received tribute from Democrats assembled at the recent Roosevelt-Kennedy Dinner Celebration held at the Beni Kedem Temple, in Charleston, WV on Saturday, October 3, 2026. This year's special guest speaker was the Chair of the Democratic National Committee, Ken Martin.

Karen Coria, a Putnam County Democratic Party leader and chair of the 41st Annual Awards Ceremony indicated that the award was established to recognize local Party officials and volunteers whom Democratic leaders feel have contributed most to the Party's efforts. "Our goal is to recognize these special people who have distinguished themselves by contributing to our society, by working within the framework of our democracy and political Party system," Coria said.

Marissa Atha sets records and makes history

By Allen Hamrick

Throughout this cross-country season Marissa Atha has become one of the most prolific runners on the trail. She has the distinction of becoming the first in CCHS history to win the Regional Championship for the sport. It wasn't the crowds cheering her on that raised her to this level but the hundreds of quiet miles she put in on the trail. Those miles were traveled with complete focus, self-control and silence. This past Saturday the Cross-Country Championship was run at the YMCA Kennedy Center, and it was where the autumn air met the trail and history in the making. It was time for Marissa to turn months of hard work into a moment that will resonate halls of CCHS for a long time…and she is just getting started as a freshman.

Being a freshman means nothing when a runner chooses to not run in the shadow of others but to blaze their trail. Atha set the pace early and never wavered from it; as the trail got longer and weakness set in on the other runners, there was no doubt that her championship stride wouldn't be broken. She ran the event at 20:15.1, nearly a full two minutes ahead of second place. The rest of the team, inspired by her quick pace, dug deep and ultimately grabbed the Region IV runners up title while scoring 40 points which comes with a trip to the state competition held in Huntington this Saturday. The team turned this historic run for Marissa into a victory for the whole crew. When the dust settled, the Lady Panther runners as well as the Panther runners qualified and will all get a chance at a state title.

The CCHS teams have been running the horizons all season and now it belongs to them. The trail ahead will be a tough one, but after this weekend they proved that CCHS Cross Country knows how to make the miles count. Congratulations to Marissa on her history making accomplishments and to the rest of the team for their State Championship berth.

In other sports news, Panther football defeated Ravenswood 34-22 on Friday and are now 5-3 for the season. Mustang football defeated Spencer for 7th place in the CWVAC tournament on Thursday. The Lady Mustang volleyball team placed 4th in the CWVAC tournament on Saturday with Charlotte Elliott grabbing All Tournament honors and Kinley Collins and Savannah McMillion grabbing the All-Conference awards.



L-R Head Coach Abbie Boggs, Kinley Collins, Savannah McMillion, Charlotte Elliott and Assistant Coach Anissa Collins. Photo Kathy Atha



Blades Celebrate Victory—and a Vision for Soccer in Clay County Schools

By Stephany Bryant

The Clay County Youth Soccer League's U12 Blades stepped onto Bradley Field at Clay County High School for the first time on Saturday, October 17, earning an impressive 6–2 victory over Midland Trail's Thunderbolts. But the significance of the day reached well beyond the final score.

For 12 young players who love the game, the matchup was an opportunity to show the community what soccer could look like in Clay County's schools. Playing with pride and purpose, the Blades represented both their team and the young athletes who may one day follow in their footsteps.

Angela Brown live streamed the game, with Jamie McDonough providing commentary, allowing viewers beyond the stands to share in the excitement.

Although this was the Blades' first appearance on Bradley Field, the hope is that it will not be their last. The game offered a glimpse of what school soccer could bring to Clay County: opportunities for students to compete, develop their skills and represent their community.

The Blades' roster includes John Althage, Sophia Althage, Felicity "Flea" Bryant, Gage Lucero, Promise Lucero, Ezekiel "Zeke" McLaughlin, Levi McLaughlin, Jameson Mollohan, Corey Rose, Anna Sears, Vaida Walton and Lailah Witt. The team is led by head coach Patrick Shepherd and assistant coaches Micheal Bryant and Lil Jon McCormick. Isaac Brown, Scott Wilson and Stephanie Priest served as referees.

The league extends its sincere thanks to the Clay County Board of Education for its support, Clay County High School for the use of Bradley Field, and Roy's Kitchen for providing food. Special thanks also go to the parents and fans whose encouragement helped make the day memorable.

For these 12 players, it was more than a game. It was a chance to help pave the way for soccer's future in Clay County.

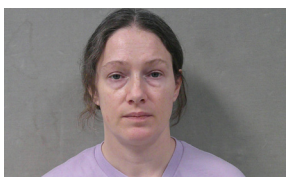
Marissa Atha earns Regional Champion Cross Country title



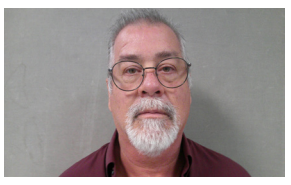
L-R Miranda Morris, Tara Conley, Regional Champion Marissa Atha, Sophia Berberich and Abigail Grandon photo Larry Lundberg

BOOKED REGIONAL JAIL MUGSHOTS

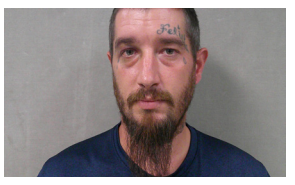
NICHOLAS COUNTY



Natasha Marie Hayes - Booked 10/21/2026, Domestic Battery, Battery on Officer, Obstructing an Officer, Fingerprint Refusal



Marty Doyle Morris - Booked 10/21/2026, Probation Violation, Failure to Register as a Sex Offender



Howard Edgar Lane - Booked 10/22/2026, Brandishing a Deadly Weapon, Fleeing from Officer

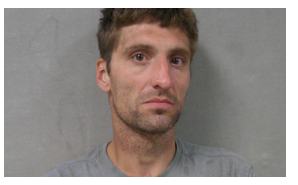


William Lynn Swarthout - Booked 10/22/2026, Financial Exploitation of an Elderly Person, Protected Person, or Incapacitated Adult, Obtaining Money, Property, Services by False Pretenses



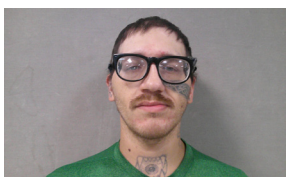
Charity Kay Baker - Booked 10/23/2026, Possession
Gary Lee Foor Sr. –Booked 10/25/2026, Resisting Arrest, False Information to Law Enforcement, Assault

BRAXTON CTY. –



Zachary Thomas Nassif - Booked 10/20/2026, DUI First Offense

CLAY COUNTY —



Henry Earl Stutler Jr. - Booked 10/20/2026, Capias

FOLLOW US ON

Governor Morrisey Declares State of Emergency to Provide Diesel Fuel Relief for West Virginia Families

Executive order will save businesses and drivers 20.5 cents per gallon as diesel prices reach $6.34 in West Virginia

CHARLESTON, W.Va. - Governor Patrick Morrisey recently declared a 60-day state of emergency across all 55 West Virginia counties and signed an executive order to provide temporary relief for the use of red-dyed diesel fuel. The action will save businesses and drivers 20.5 cents per gallon, helping lower transportation costs that affect the prices West Virginia families pay for everyday goods.

"Making West Virginia more affordable means looking for every opportunity to help families keep more of their hard-earned money," said Governor Morrisey. "Transportation costs affect the prices we pay at the grocery store and throughout our economy. Today, we're giving businesses and citizens an opportunity to lower those costs, so that savings will benefit West Virginia families."

According to AAA, the average price of diesel fuel in West Virginia reached $6.34 per gallon on October 20, compared with $3.57 at the same time last year. The Governor's emergency declaration cites rising diesel prices and limited supply as threats to the delivery of essential goods, farm operations, emergency services, and other activities that West Virginians depend on.

President Donald Trump signed an executive order on October 5 providing temporary federal relief for the highway use of red-dyed diesel. Governor Morrisey's executive order takes similar action at the state level by temporarily suspending penalties tied to the use of red-dyed diesel on highways and directing state agencies to stop fuel inspections aimed specifically at detecting its use.

Red-dyed diesel, normally used in off-road equipment, is generally cheaper than regular highway diesel. At 20.5 cents per gallon in savings, a truck buying 200 gallons of diesel will save $41 on a single fill-up. For businesses operating fleets of trucks, those savings can add up quickly.

The relief will benefit industries that are central to West Virginia's economy, including coal, natural gas, agriculture, forestry, and trucking, which depend on diesel-powered vehicles and equipment to move products to market. Whether it's a truck hauling coal or transporting timber, lower transportation costs can mean savings throughout the supply chain.

"The unprecedented rise in fuel costs for surface mining and coal haulage have added to the challenges facing West Virginia coal. The suspension will reduce cost pressure and help us compete in a very difficult market."

Chris Hamilton, President and CEO of the West Virginia Coal Association

"Loggers are essential to West Virginia's rural economies and the first link in the forest products supply chain. Unprecedented operational costs, particularly rising fuel costs, are threatening their ability to remain in business. The West Virginia Forestry Association appreciates Governor Morrisey's willingness to recognize the severity of the situation and take steps to provide relief."

James Smith, Executive Director of the West Virginia Forestry Association

"Fuel is a significant cost for the producers, service companies, and contractors who keep West Virginia's natural gas and oil industry operating, and rising diesel prices are putting real pressure on them. We appreciate Governor Morrisey's decisive action to provide temporary flexibility that helps businesses keep trucks moving and keep costs under control."

Rebecca McPhail, President of the Gas and Oil Association of West Virginia

"When we help the businesses that produce and transport the goods we depend on, we're helping the families who buy those products," said Governor Morrisey. "This is another step in our efforts to make West Virginia more affordable while supporting the industries and workers who keep our economy moving."

The state of emergency will remain in effect for 60 days unless ended earlier. The executive order takes effect immediately and directs state agencies to carry out the temporary relief. West Virginia's motor fuel excise tax and commercial vehicle safety inspections remain in effect.

Big Otter Elementary Update



By Megan Boggs

Big Otter Elementary School would like to recognize the top student for the Little Caesar's Fundraiser. Fifth grade student Gannon Cummings was the top seller for the Little Caesar's Fundraiser! Gannon received a gift card for being the top seller. THANK YOU to everyone who supported Big Otter Elementary School! It's a great day to be a Big Otter Brave!

Puzzle Answers

Weekly SUDOKU Answer

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

Super Crossword Answers

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



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Home Country

Slim Randles

It happened in the checkout lane down at the Soup 'R' Market last week.

As sometimes happens, when we are glancing at the tabloids to see who fathered Bigfoot's new baby, we get into discussions of trivia. Annette was sliding broccoli and corn flakes over the glass-window dinger machine, and we were just chatting about … I think it was bears this time. You know…

"I read," said Annette, "that a bear can run 45 miles an hour, faster than a race horse."

To which I added, "Did you know a polar bear's skin is black, and a black bear's skin is white?"

"Really?" Annette said, weighing the plastic bag of apples. "And did you know," she said, "that horses can't vomit?"

Horses just hadn't heard me sing yet, that's all.

So it was then that the next guy in line, a young fellow dressed in camouflage, smiled and joined in.

"You know the song, 'The Duke of Earl'?" he asked.

Well, of course we did. We used to slide around the dance floor to that when Elvis was still a pup. Wasn't as good for snuggling as a Johnny Mathis tune, but what is? Half the marriages in this town began while dancing to "The Twelfth of Never."

"Well, here's something to think about," our young friend said. "If you are driving down the highway, and you tap your foot on the accelerator each time the car goes by one of those broken yellow lines, and if you do it in time to 'The Duke of Earl,' you're doing exactly 55 miles an hour."

"You're kidding!"

"Nope. I'm a trucker, and I can tell you it's a fact. Heard it on the radio and gave it a try. Fifty-five miles an hour."

Let's see … Duke, duke, duke, duke of earl, duke, duke, duke of earl, duke…

Might come in handy if the speedometer goes on the fritz.

xxxxxx

Brought to you by the novella "Whimsy Castle" by Slim Randles. On the internet.

A good walk

Joe Mazzella

I have always loved a good walk. When I was a boy I used to walk in the woods and down the railroad tracks near my home. When I was in college I would explore the paths and roads around my campus. After I had children I would take them for walks with me on a trail around the local lake.

Even through it was good exercise I didn't walk mainly to stay fit. I walked to clear my head, calm my heart, and quiet my soul. I walked to get away from the noise of the world and allow the gentle breezes of nature to touch my spirit. I walked to silence all the chattering voices in my mind so that I could hear the gentle whispers of God in my heart and soul. I walked to work out my problems and allow God to guide me on how to best live my life. And at a certain point in my walk I would feel a peace settle over me. I would feel the warmth of God's love fill me and I would feel the joy of being alive in this world once again.

I don't get to walk that much anymore. Duties and responsibilities make it hard to find the time to take a good, long walk. I exercise inside now and usually when I walk it is to take my dogs outside to relieve themselves. But I have still found a way to walk in my soul. I turn off or tune out the internet, the television, and the radio. I pray, quite my mind and let myself listen for the gentle, loving voice of God to speak in my thoughts and touch my feelings. And when I do I always find the wisdom I need. When I do I always feel the love of God inside me. When I do I always get that sense of peace and joy that I used to feel whenever I took a good walk.

Always try to take a good walk then whether you use your legs or not. Turn off the world, calm your mind, quiet your soul, and let God's Love fill you. Let God's wisdom guide you. Let God give you peace and joy. Then walk out into the world and share it with everyone.

Maybe We Should Go Back to the Horse-And-Buggy Days

Dr. James Snyder

Every Sunday morning, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I go across town for our ministry at an assisted living facility. We've been doing this for approximately four years now. It's a wonderful ministry we enjoy.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage always drives her Sissy Van while I sit in the passenger seat. She prefers to drive because she really doesn't like riding in my pickup truck. I don't blame her, so I allow her the privilege of driving across town. I'm not too fond of riding in the Sissy Van, but I have no other choice. Getting in and out is quite the task.

Last week, as we were going across town, the traffic was horrible. I can't remember when traffic was this bad. It seemed like we were driving bumper-to-bumper all the way across town. Where do all of these cars come from? And why are they on the road on Sunday?

Of course, in this kind of environment, there are many accidents. During the last year, I had 4 friends killed in an automobile accident.

When I was young, people drove on Sunday to go to church. Now, that seems to be off the schedule for most people today. I have no idea where they are going. The important question for me is why are they driving so crazy?

This week, as we were driving across town, I thought about something from back in the day. We had quite a few Amish people in our community. I even had an Amish friend. My great-grandmother was Amish but was shunned because she dated an "English" guy, who became my great-grandfather.

As you might know, the Amish do not drive automobiles. They don't have electricity in their homes, or plumbing, or anything like that. They don't believe in that sort of thing. They live a very simple lifestyle.

The most significant thing about the Amish is that, instead of driving an automobile, they drive a Horse-And-Buggy. I remember riding with my friend in a Horse-And-Buggy, and I had a great time.

Thinking about the Horse-And-Buggy community, I realized there were very few accidents. In fact, I can't remember a single accident involving a Horse-And-Buggy.

Compared to automobiles, I'm not quite sure how many accidents happen with automobiles each year. I'm sure it's pretty high, and I'm sure many people die as a result of automobile accidents.

But I have yet to hear of somebody dying because of a Horse-And-Buggy accident. I'm not saying it hasn't happened; I've just never heard of it.

What if we went back to those Horse-And-Buggy days? Back to the time when we weren't all caught up with the latest technology available.

Maintaining a Horse-And-Buggy is far cheaper than an automobile. Gas alone can bankrupt a person. Gas is a lot more expensive for a car than the oats and hay a horse eats.

As we were traveling across town, I looked at my wife and said, "Maybe we should get a Horse-And-Buggy instead of this Sissy Van."

She looked at me, then said, "Neeeeeigh."

I didn't mention that again because I understood exactly what she was saying. I'm not going to nag her about that.

It was rather warm that morning, and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage turned on the air conditioner and said, "I like air conditioning, don't you?"

As I enjoyed the air conditioning, I understood exactly what she meant. I've ridden in several Horse-And-Buggies, and not one of them had air conditioning. In fact, riding down the road, I was exposed to the weather all around me. Sometimes it was a sweating experience.

There are some advantages to Horse-And-Buggy, I suppose. But as I thought along these lines, I realized the advantages of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage's Sissy Van are far greater.

Usually, when I rode in a Horse-And-Buggy, it was out in the country, with very little traffic. It just occurred to me what an advantage that is.

Even though the Sissy Van is not my favorite mode of travel, I must confess it has advantages I should learn to appreciate. I thought long and hard about that, then turned to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and said, "I must confess that I really do enjoy your Sissy Van."

She looked at me, then chuckled and replied, "I don't know if you're telling me a joke or setting me up for one of your pranks." Then she laughed some more.

I remember one time going into an Amish store. They had a big book section that I liked to go through. Amish are really into books. The store had no electricity, no lights, and no air conditioning. They did have lanterns throughout the store.

When I found a book, I went up to pay for it, and you will not guess what I saw there.

On the counter was the latest cash register, with all the perks I have ever seen.

When it comes to money, people will contradict their beliefs.

Thinking along this line, I remembered a wonderful verse of scripture.

"Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

One of the great things in life as a Christian is appreciating other people, not because you agree with everything they do. Finding something to appreciate in everyone's life is a great challenge sometimes. Then I focus on that one area I appreciate. Not everything matters.

Farm Credit Mid-America launches $17,500 Youth in Ag Innovation Program

New program accepting applications through December 1, 2026

Young people with ideas to strengthen agriculture and rural communities have a new opportunity to bring those ideas to life through Farm Credit Mid-America's Youth in Ag Innovation Program.

Farm Credit Mid-America is accepting applications for the new program through Dec. 1, 2026. A total of $17,500 will be awarded to three youth organizations to implement projects that advance agricultural innovation and demonstrate measurable impact.

"Some of the best ideas for the future of agriculture may come from the young people who will help lead it," said Hannah Walker, community investment manager at Farm Credit Mid-America. "Through the Youth in Ag Innovation Program, we want to give young people the opportunity and resources to take an idea, put it into action and make a difference in agriculture and their communities."

The program encourages young leaders to identify opportunities and develop creative solutions connected to agricultural practices, food production or access, sustainability and conservation, and agricultural technology or systems.

The top three projects will receive:

Top Project Award: $10,000

Excellence Award: $5,000

Impact Award: $2,500

Award funds must be used to implement the proposed projects.

Eligible applicants must be youth-led groups affiliated with an established organization, such as 4-H, FFA, a school-based science or agriculture club or another recognized youth-serving organization. Participants are recommended to be ages 12-18 and must work with an identified adult advisor or sponsor.

Youth must take an active role in developing, planning, implementing and evaluating the proposed project. Applications should include clear project goals, measurable outcomes and a basic timeline while explaining how the project could benefit agriculture, youth development or the community. Projects that demonstrate strong partnerships, connections to their communities and rural leadership development are encouraged.

Applications will be evaluated on the creativity and originality of the idea, likelihood of successful implementation, potential benefit to agriculture or the community, depth of youth leadership and involvement and strength and completeness of the application.

The three finalists will be selected from all eligible submissions and invited to present their projects at Farm Credit Mid-America's February 2027 Advocate Council Meeting. Customers attending the meeting will vote to determine the final award placements. The Top Project Award recipient will also be invited to the following year's meeting to share the impact of the completed project.

Applications are due Dec. 1, 2026. Program details, eligibility requirements and the application are available through the Youth in Ag Innovation Program at fcma.com.

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This Week in West Virginia History

Oct. 28, 1929: Painter Charles Lewis "Chuck" Ripper was born in Pittsburgh and later moved to Huntington. He was one of the country's best-known wildlife artists, with paintings appearing on nearly 100 magazine covers and 80 U.S. postage stamps.



Oct. 28, 1972: Singer, musician and songwriter Brad Paisley was born in Glen Dale, Marshall County. Paisley has won three Grammys, 14 Academy of Country Music Awards, 14 Country Music Association Awards and two American Music Awards.

Oct. 29, 1861: Confederate commander Robert E. Lee ended his ill-fated western Virginia campaign. His three months in the region were marked by rain, mud, inexperienced officers, diseases among the troops and rampant criticism of his leadership.

Oct. 29-30, 2012: A rare October blizzard struck West Virginia as an aftermath to Hurricane Sandy accompanied by strong mid- and upper-level troughs in the jet stream. While the East Coast was getting flooded with rain, snow totals here were reaching up to three feet in Raleigh, Fayette, Nicholas, Webster, Upshur, Randolph, Pocahontas, Tucker and Preston counties. Some areas received nearly four feet.

Oct. 30, 1825: Randolph McCoy was born in Logan County. In 1878, McCoy's accusation against a cousin of Anderson "Devil Anse" Hatfield for stealing a hog set off a deadly series of events in the Hatfield-McCoy Feud.



Oct. 30, 1930: The first Mountain State Forest Festival in Elkins began on this day. It has been held ever since except for an eight-year gap in the 1940s and in 2020-21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Oct. 31, 1877: Herman Guy Kump was born in Capon Springs, Hampshire County. He was the 19th governor of West Virginia, serving from 1933 to 1937.

Oct. 31, 1940: Gale Catlett, West Virginia University basketball player and coach, was born in Hedgesville, Berkeley County. Catlett coached WVU to 13 20-win seasons before he retired in 2002. His 439 victories make him the winningest men's basketball coach in WVU history.



Oct. 31, 1946: Labor leader Cecil Edward Roberts Jr. was born on Cabin Creek, Kanawha County. A sixth-generation coal miner and a fiery orator, Roberts served as president of the United Mine Workers of America from 1995 until his retirement in 2025.

Oct. 31, 1951: Football coach Nick Saban was born in Fairmont. As a quarterback, he led Monongah High School to a 1968 state championship. He went on to coach Louisiana State University and the University of Alabama to seven national championships (six with Alabama), the most by any head coach in college football history.

Oct. 31, 1990: A nearly 20-month bitter lockout at Ravenswood Aluminum began when union contract negotiations broke down and supervisors turned away workers reporting for the midnight shift.

Nov. 1, 1688: Morgan Morgan was born in Wales. Traditionally, Morgan was considered the first White settler of West Virginia, but others were likely here first. He settled in the Bunker Hill area of present-day Berkeley County in 1731, building a log house that still remains.

Nov. 1, 1848: Israel Charles White was born in Monongalia County. White was West Virginia's first state geologist, appointed in 1897 and serving until his death in 1927, working without pay for all but two of those years.

Nov. 1, 1946: Wheeling-Ohio County Airport officially opened.

Nov. 1, 1961: The first non-commercial radio station in West Virginia, WMUL-FM at Marshall University, began broadcasting.



Nov. 1, 1968: Fayette County native Charles Rogers earned the Medal of Honor for actions that began on this date near the Cambodian border during the Vietnam War.

Nov. 2, 1859: John Brown was convicted of murder, treason and insurrection in the Jefferson County Courthouse at Charles Town. Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry galvanized the nation, further alienating North and South and drastically reducing any possible middle ground for compromise to avert the Civil War.

Nov. 2, 1944: Despite being mortally wounded during a bombing mission over Germany during World War II, B-17 navigator and Huntington native Robert Femoyer refused medical aid and guided his damaged plane safely back to England. His skill and bravery saved the entire crew, though he died 30 minutes after landing, earning the Medal of Honor.

Nov. 2, 1952: Tri-State Airport in Wayne County was dedicated, with the first official landing made at 11 a.m. by Piedmont Airlines.

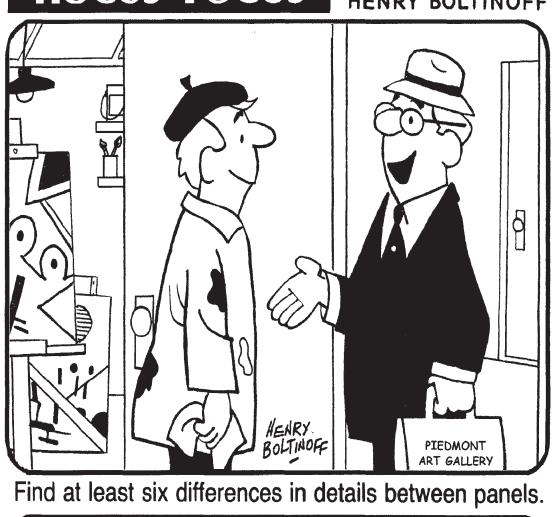
Nov. 2, 1996: Baseball player Toni Stone died. Born in Bluefield, she joined the Negro American League in 1953, becoming the first woman to play pro baseball in a previously all-male major league.

Nov. 3, 1943: Governor Matthew Neely named James Lowell McPherson state poet laureate. At age 22, McPherson was the youngest person ever to serve in that role.

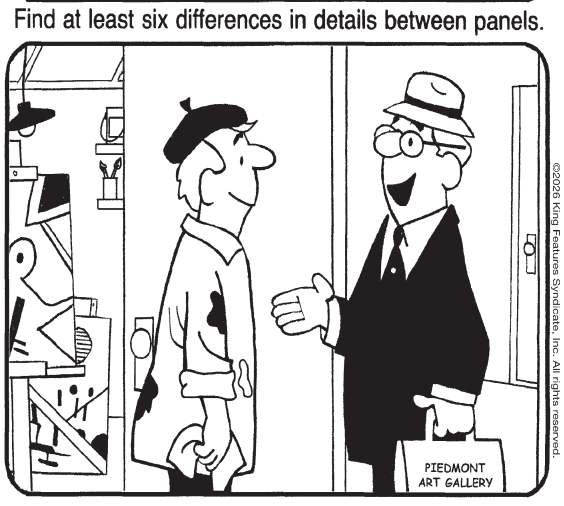
Nov. 3, 1947: Kanawha Airport (now Yeager International Airport) was dedicated. World War I ace Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker was among the dignitaries present.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Light is moved. 2. Sleeve is rolled up. 3. Hand is moved. 4. Door is moved. 5. Thumb is moved. 6. Painting is different.

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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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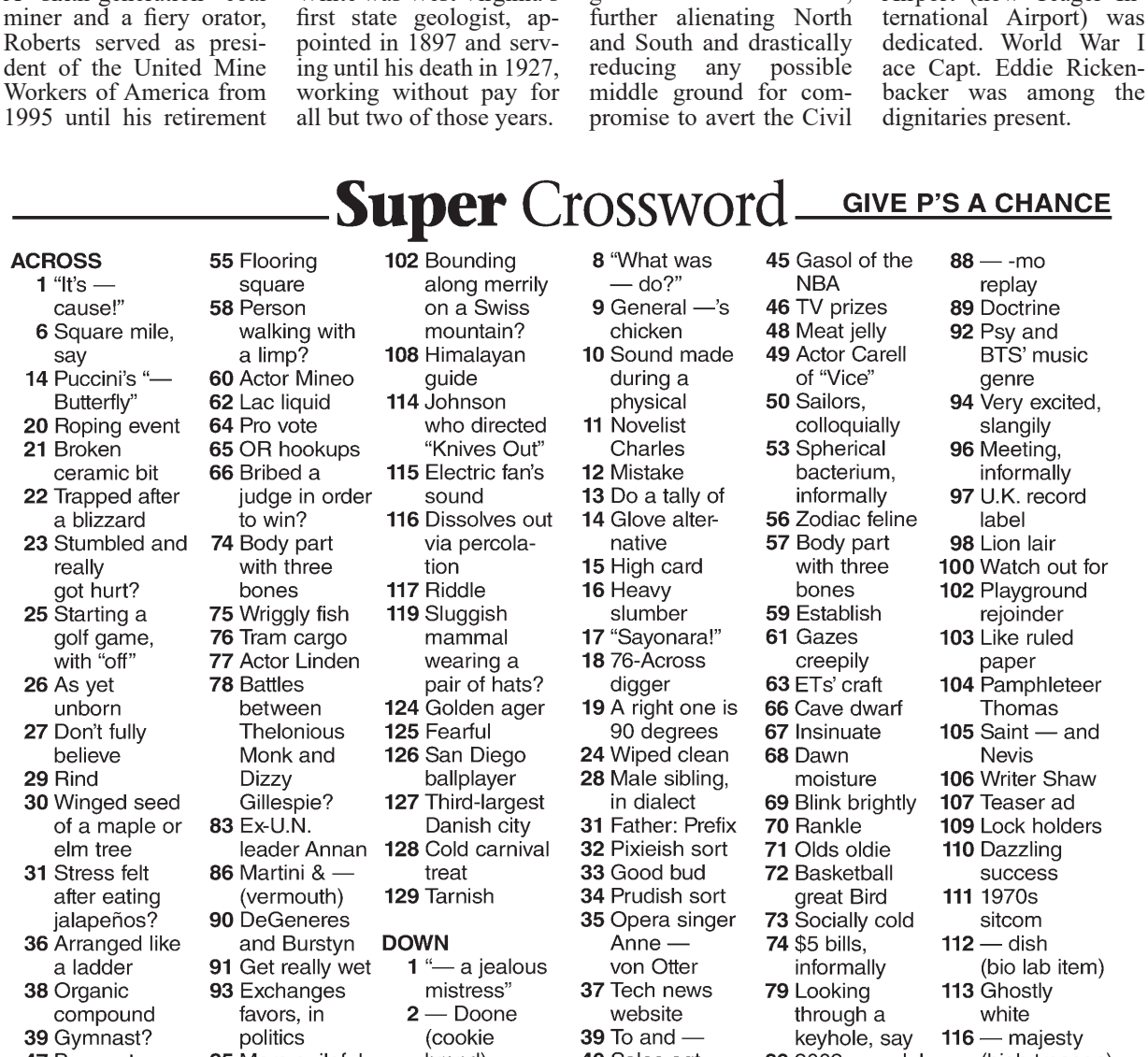
Super Crossword — GIVE P'S A CHANCE

ACROSS

1 "It's — cause!"
6 Square mile, say
14 Puccini's "— Butterfly"
20 Roping event
21 Broken ceramic bit
22 Trapped after a blizzard
23 Stumbled and really got hurt?
25 Starting a golf game, with "off"
26 As yet unborn
27 Don't fully believe
29 Rind
30 Winged seed of a maple or elm tree
31 Stress felt after eating jalapeños?
36 Arranged like a ladder
38 Organic compound
39 Gymnast?
47 Banquet
51 One giving paid money back
52 U.S. territory since 1898
53 Noonday nap
54 Sight-related
55 Flooring square
58 Person walking with a limp?
60 Actor Mineo
62 Lac liquid
64 Pro vote
65 OR hookups
66 Bribed a judge in order to win?
74 Body part with three bones
75 Wriggly fish
76 Tram cargo
77 Actor Linden
78 Battles between Thelonious Monk and Dizzy Gillespie?
83 Ex-U.N. leader Annan
86 Martini & — (vermouth)
90 DeGeneres and Burstyn
91 Get really wet
93 Exchanges favors, in politics
95 More guileful
96 Mailed in the opposite direction of?
99 Hoops great Bryant
101 Last Greek letters
102 Bounding along merrily on a Swiss mountain?
108 Himalayan guide
114 Johnson who directed "Knives Out"
115 Electric fan's sound
116 Dissolves out via percolation
117 Riddle
119 Sluggish mammal wearing a pair of hats?
124 Golden ager
125 Fearful
126 San Diego ballplayer
127 Third-largest Danish city
128 Cold carnival treat
129 Tarnish

DOWN

1 "— a jealous mistress"
2 — Doone (cookie brand)
3 Strong dislike
4 Train system in Philly
5 Heavy drinker
6 Raised coif
7 Negating word
8 "What was — do?"
9 General —'s chicken
10 Sound made during a physical
11 Novelist Charles
12 Mistake
13 Do a tally of
14 Glove alternative
15 High card
16 Heavy slumber
17 "Sayonara!"
18 76-Across digger
19 A right one is 90 degrees
24 Wiped clean
28 Male sibling, in dialect
31 Father: Prefix
32 Pixieish sort
33 Good bud
34 Prudish sort
35 Opera singer Anne — von Otter
37 Tech news website
39 To and —
40 Sales agt.
41 Small newt
42 Old cereal with an alien mascot
43 Open, as a drink bottle
44 British tavern
45 Gasol of the NBA
46 TV prizes
48 Meat jelly
49 Actor Carell of "Vice"
50 Sailors, colloquially
53 Spherical bacterium, informally
56 Zodiac feline
57 Body part with three bones
59 Establish
61 Gazes creepily
63 ETs' craft
66 Cave dwarf
67 Insinuate
68 Dawn moisture
69 Blink brightly
70 Rankle
71 Olds oldie
72 Basketball great Bird
73 Socially cold
74 $5 bills, informally
79 Looking through a keyhole, say
80 2002 scandal company
81 King, in Nice
82 Devitalize
84 Writer Fannie
85 Ames' state
87 35mm camera type
88 — -mo replay
89 Doctrine
92 Psy and BTS' music genre
94 Very excited, slangily
96 Meeting, informally
97 U.K. record label
98 Lion lair
100 Watch out for
102 Playground rejoinder
103 Like ruled paper
104 Pamphleteer Thomas
105 Saint — and Nevis
106 Writer Shaw
107 Teaser ad
109 Lock holders
110 Dazzling success
111 1970s sitcom
112 — dish (bio lab item)
113 Ghostly white
116 — majesty (high treason)
118 Year divs.
120 AAA service
121 Tolkien fiend
122 Malti- — (hybrid dog)
123 Play on words



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Puzzle Answers Page 2

ELK RIVER COAL & LUMBER CO. — "ELRICO" LUMBER — RESAWING and SURFACING — Manufactured and Shipped From SWANDALE (Mill) W.VA.

THE WIDEN NEWS

The people who think alike should vote alike.

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April 1959

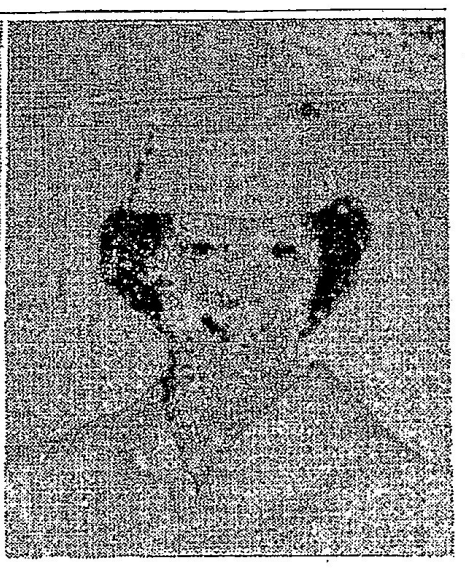
Widen High School Senior Class . . . . .



CAROL GENE NEAL
President



ROSA ELLEN GIBSON
Vice President



RUBY LEE HOLCOMB RAPP
Secretary-Treasurer



CHARLES WILLIAM SIGMAN

* * *

CAROL GENE NEAL

CAROL GENE NEAL is the 18-year-old daughter of Mrs Dorothy Neal of 39 Nicholas Street, Widen, West Virginia.

She is president of the Senior Class and president of F. B. L. A. She is a member of Student Council; she won a certificate in the seventh grade from West Virginia Club. Carol was reporter in the 8th grade for her class. In the 9th she was a member of the Widen High School Band, member of the Chorus club, and a member of Dramatics Club. She left Widen in her sophomore year and attended school in Baltimore, Maryland.

She came back to Widen in her Junior year and held the office as vice-president of her class and was a member of Dramatics Club.

In her junior year she attended "Know Your State Goverment Day" at Charleston. She will give senior class Address of Welcome, at Commencement on May 14,1959.

Her ambition is to go to Florida for a while and then go into training for a nurse.

* * *

ROSA ELLEN GIBSON

ROSA ELLEN GIBSON is the 17-year-old daughter of Mrs. Prussia Gibson of Wilson Ridge.

She has been vice-president of her class two years and has been a member of Student Council for two years, one of which she was vice-president.

She was taken into National Honor Society in 1957 and is now secretary-treasurer. She was a member of West Virginia Club for two years and a member of Chorus Club for two and a half years.

She attended Rhododendron Girls' State in June, 1958 and was Mistress of Ceremonies at the Homecoming Game in February 1959.

She was a member of Dramatics Club and is secretary this year. She was a member of the cast of "The Ghost in the Green Gown"; "Crazy Violet"; and the senior play, "Ghost Tails."

She was Hallowe'en Carnival Queen in October 1957 and she maintains a "B" average.

She is secretary - treasurer of M. Y. F. at Walnut Grove Methodist Church.

Rosa attended the Leadership conference at Morgantown in February 1958. She will give the Farewell Address at her Graduation on May 14, 1959.

She is planning to spend the summer at home and then attend an airline school in the fall.

RUBY LEE HOLCOMB RAPP

RUBY LEE HOLCOMB RAPP is the 18 year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Holcomb of 7 Nicholas Street, Widen, West Virginia.

She was secretary of her class for four years and president of the Junior Class.

Ruby was cheerleader for the Grade School Basketball Tournament and secretary of the Girl Scouts in the seventh grade.

She was a member of the West Virginia Club for two years and took the State Golden Horseshoe Test.

She was a member of the Dramatics Club for five years; during that time she held the offices of president, vice president for two years, and secretary.

Ruby was a regular cheerleader for the Junior High Basketball Team in 1954-55.

She played the clarinet in the band for two years and was a majorette.

Ruby was the Sophomore princess for the Basketball Queen at the Homecoming Came in 1957. Also, in 1957 she attended Camp Horseshoe, leadership camp, sponsored by the Women's Club.

She was a member of National Honor Society for three years, president in her senior year, and attended the Rotary dinner for the Society. She will receive a gold ribbon from the Society for having an "A" average from the ninth grade to the twelfth.

She was a member of Student Council and Student of the month for April in her junior year. Also, in that year she was Mistress of Ceremonies for the Homecoming Game.

She was chosen Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow for 1959 and will receive a Homemaker pin. She was selected to attend Rotary Club for high grades for the first nine weeks of her senior year. She was Student of the Month for March of her senior year.

Ruby has been on the honor roll for twelve years, eleven years on the "A" and one year on the "B".

She was named valedictorian of her class and will receive a year's subscription to the Reader's Digest and a certificate.

Ruby was married to Daniel Rapp during her senior year and they plan to live at 14 Kanawha Street.

CHARLES WILLIAM SIGMAN

CHARLES WILLIAM SIGMAN is the 18-year-old-son of Mr. and Mrs. Oral Sigman of Widen, West Virginia.

He was a member of the West Virginia club for two years; a member of the Athletic Club for two years; president of the Library Club for one year; and Vice-president in Art Club for one year.

He was a member of the Dramatics Club in his senior year and his ambition is to find a job.

Seniors Attend College

The seniors, in full dress, and in gay, holiday spirits, left early Thursday morning, April 23, for the Annual Glenville High School Senior Day Program which is held on the Genville State College campus each spring.

The program is sponsored to provide an opportunity for high school seniors who are interested in attending college to visit the campus while classes are in session.

A full day of activities was scheduled, beginning with a general program in the auditorium of 10:00 A. M. and followed by directed campus tours, dancing, swimming, baseball games and open house by all departments. Lunch was served in the school cafeteria.

The Widen seniors took in everything and had a wonderful time.

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LEGAL

IN THE FAMILY COURT OF CLAY COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

TO: Magistrate Court Case No.: _____
Lucas Wayne Dunlap
Respondent Family Court Civil Action No. 26-DV-32
447 Charlton Heights Road
Kanawha Falls, WV
DOB: 10/08/94

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

1. The object of this suit is to obtain Domestic Violence Protective Order
2. The object of this publication by Class I legal advertisement is to notify the above-named individualof the action pending before the Court specified below.

Clay County Family Court

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

If appearing by evidence duly taken in this action that you could not be found in or that you have left the State of West Virginia, you are hereby notified of the above-referenced action,a copy of which may be obtained at the Clay County, Circuit Clerk's office.

A Final Hearing is scheduled for the 19th day of November 2026, at 10:30 AM, before the Clay County Family Court.

Issued this 10/22/2026 at 2:45 p.m.

Clarissa Hanshaw
Clerk of the Court

LEGAL

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF CLAY COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

In the Matter of Petition of Name Change of
Pierce James Taylor-Adkins Civil Case No. 26-P-15
Current Name Pierce James Taylor-Adkins Judge Morton
To
New Name Pierce James Taylor Adkins

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLICATION CHANGE OF NAME

Order of Publication
Circuit Court of Clay County
West Virginia

Notice is hereby given that on the 7th day of December, 2026, at 3:00 PM or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, Petitioner Pierce James Taylor-Adkins will apply by Petition to the Circuit Court of Clay County, West Virginia, for the entry of an order by said court, changing name of Pierce James Taylor-Adkins to Pierce James Taylor Adkins at which time any interested party may appear and be heard, if they so desire.

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

ENTERED by the Clerk of said Court this 8th day of October, 2026.

Clarissa Hanshaw
Clerk of the Court



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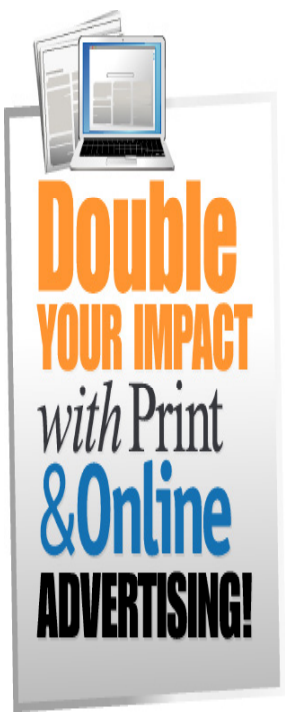
Notice of Administration to Creditors, Distributees & Legatees

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 44-3.

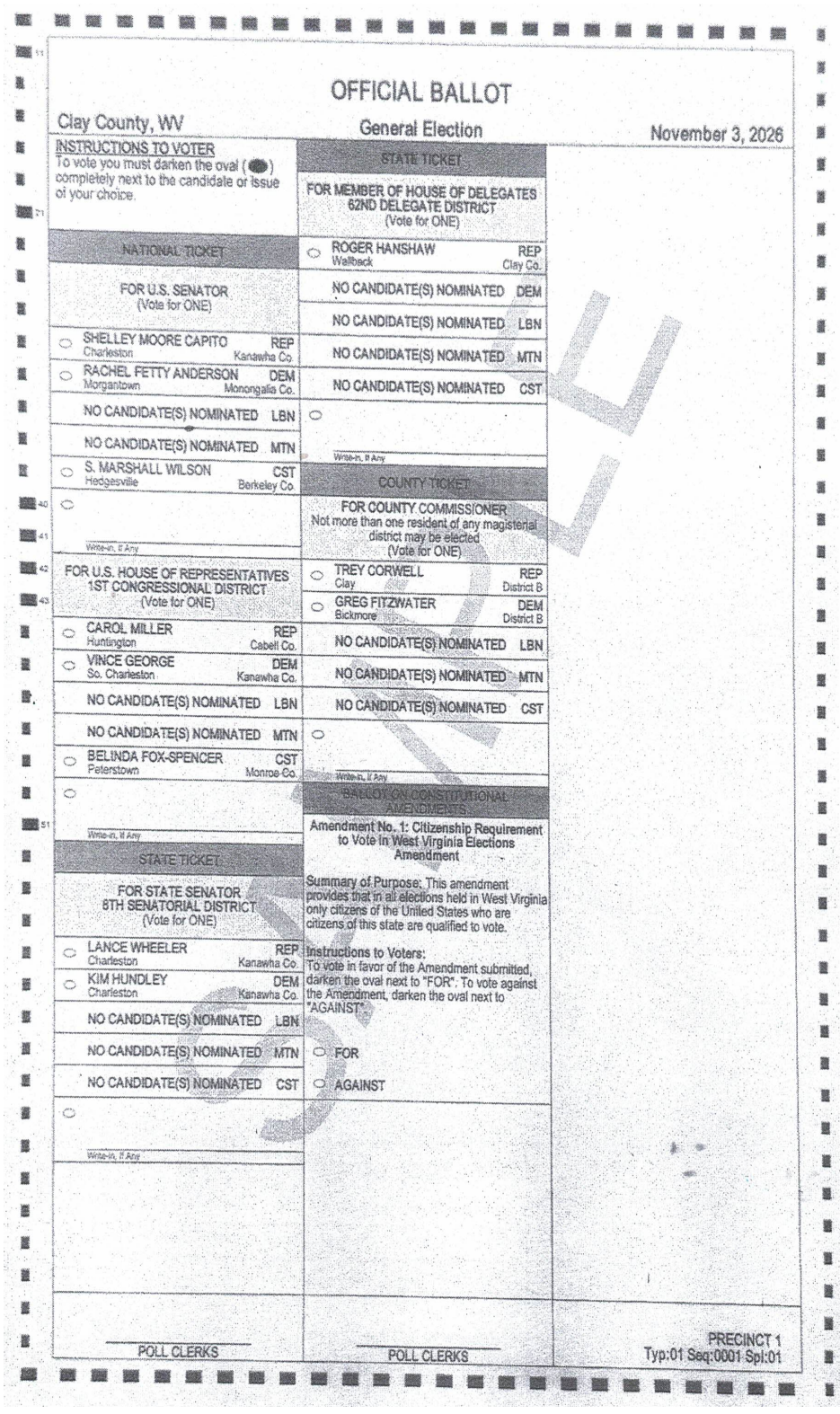
Settlement of the estate(s) of the following named decedent(s) will proceed without reference to a fiduciary commissioner unless within 60 days from the first publication of this notice a reference is requested by a party of interest or an unpaid creditor files a claim and good cause is shown to support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

Publication Date: Thursday, October 29, 2026
Claim Deadline: Monday, December 28, 2026

ESTATE NUMBER	911
APPOINTMENT DATE	10/23/2026
ESTATE NAME:	DEBRA GOLLIHUGH WITT
ADMINISTRATOR	JOHN GARY RYAN WITT 849 RIVERS STREET BELTON SC 29627



LEGAL



OFFICIAL BALLOT
Clay County, WV — General Election — November 3, 2026

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTER
To vote you must darken the oval ( ) completely next to the candidate or issue of your choice.

NATIONAL TICKET

FOR U.S. SENATOR (Vote for ONE)
- SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO REP Charleston Kanawha Co.
- RACHEL FETTY ANDERSON DEM Morgantown Monongalia Co.
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED LBN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED MTN
- S. MARSHALL WILSON CST Hedgesville Berkeley Co.
- Write-in, If Any

FOR U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT (Vote for ONE)
- CAROL MILLER REP Huntington Cabell Co.
- VINCE GEORGE DEM So. Charleston Kanawha Co.
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED LBN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED MTN
- BELINDA FOX-SPENCER CST Peterstown Monroe Co.
- Write-in, If Any

STATE TICKET

FOR STATE SENATOR 8TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT (Vote for ONE)
- LANCE WHEELER REP Charleston Kanawha Co.
- KIM HUNDLEY DEM Charleston Kanawha Co.
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED LBN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED MTN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED CST
- Write-in, If Any

STATE TICKET

FOR MEMBER OF HOUSE OF DELEGATES 62ND DELEGATE DISTRICT (Vote for ONE)
- ROGER HANSHAW REP Walback Clay Co.
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED DEM
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED LBN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED MTN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED CST
- Write-in, If Any

COUNTY TICKET

FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER Not more than one resident of any magisterial district may be elected (Vote for ONE)
- TREY CORWELL REP Clay District B
- GREG FITZWATER DEM Bickmore District B
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED LBN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED MTN
- NO CANDIDATE(S) NOMINATED CST
- Write-in, If Any

BALLOT ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Amendment No. 1: Citizenship Requirement to Vote in West Virginia Elections Amendment

Summary of Purpose: This amendment provides that in all elections held in West Virginia only citizens of the United States who are citizens of this state are qualified to vote.

Instructions to Voters: To vote in favor of the Amendment submitted, darken the oval next to "FOR". To vote against the Amendment, darken the oval next to "AGAINST".

- FOR
- AGAINST

POLL CLERKS POLL CLERKS

PRECINCT 1
Typ:01 Seq:0001 Spl:01

LEGAL

(2024-C-000249 - Clay County - BRIAN HAINES)

To: CONNIE SUE MILLER, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ESTATE OF JOHN CLINTON ROGERS, JAMES CLIFTON ROGERS, ROGER DALE ROGERS, ANNA MARIE MOORE, OCCUPANT, 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 UNION MAP 25 PARCEL 0026 0000 0000

You will take notice that BRIAN HAINES, the purchaser of the following real estate, **Cert. No.** 2024-C-000249, located in UNION District, 28 AC WTS LITTLE SYCAMORE SUR, which was returned delinquent or nonentered in the name of ROGERS JOHN CLINTON, and was sold by the deputy commissioner of delinquent or nonentered lands of CLAY County at the sale for the delinquent taxes on the April 10, 2025. BRIAN HAINES requests that you be notified a deed for such real estate will be made on or after January 1, 2027, as provided by law, unless before that day you redeem such real estate. The amount needed to redeem on or before December 31, 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 - 18654.	$	231.12
Back tax tickets, with interest, and charges due on the date of certification for ticket number	$	0.00
Subsequent of taxes paid on the property, with interest to for tax year 2024 - 18666.	$	198.44
Additional taxes with interest.	$	0.00
Auditor's Certification, Publication, and Redemption fee plus interest.	$	216.85
Amount paid for Title Examination, notice to redeem, publication, personal service, Secretary of State with interest.	$	695.55
Additional Statutory Fees with Interest.	$	452.55
Total Amount Due and Payable to **WV State Auditor** - cashier check, money order, certified or personal check.	**$**	**1,794.51**

You may redeem at any time before December 31, 2026, by paying the above total less any unearned interest.

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A Kite Flies Against the Wind

By Bryan Golden

Given a steady wind and a properly balanced kite, the kite will soar to great heights. But if the nose of the kite is pointed downward, the same wind will send it crashing into the ground.

Just as wind can either lift a kite or destroy it, criticism can either motivate you to reach lofty goals or dissipate your drive. Those who criticize far outnumber those who achieve. Yet no statue was ever erected to a critic. Rather than seeking to appease and mollify critics, utilize their admonition to stay on track.

Criticism is human nature. Instead of creating or innovating, people find it easier to criticize. If you want to accomplish something, critics will have an endless number of reasons why you won't or shouldn't succeed.

To use criticism to reach great heights, understand that if you are being criticized you are in the company of all great doers. By reaching out and extending yourself you rise above the horizon and become a target.

What kind of criticism do you think the following person would receive? He dropped out of grade school. He ran a country store. He went broke. It took him 15 years to pay off his bills. He married, but had an unhappy marriage.

He ran for congress and lost twice. He then campaigned for the senate but also lost twice. He delivered a short speech and the audience was indifferent. He was attacked daily by the press and despised by half the country.

How many would label this man a loser who would never make it? Who was this man? Abraham Lincoln. What was the short speech? The Gettysburg Address.

Put yourself in this situation. After only three months of schooling your teacher informs your parents that you don't have the intellectual capacity to pursue an education. So, you are taken out of school.

But you have an insatiable curiosity and want to make a living discovering and inventing. Would your dreams be condemned? Might you be laughed at? Probably. However, Thomas Edison did reasonably well with only three months of schooling and an "inferior" mind.

Ponder the plight of this poor fellow. He had a radical new concept for transmitting information. His ideas were so preposterous that his friends and family tried to have him locked up in a psychiatric institution. Undeterred, in the 1890's, Guglielmo Marconi proceeded to successfully develop the radio.

Are you routinely chided or ridiculed for your dreams, desires plans or goals? If so, take a look at the people offering their negative opinions. Are they experts in the areas that you are striving for? Have they already accomplished what you are trying to do? Are they presenting their "advice" because they want you to succeed? If the answers are no, why would you ever allow their criticisms to deter you?

How do you fly against criticism? Believe in yourself and your goals. You don't need approval. You aren't obligated to convince anyone that your ideas are worthwhile. Often, it's prudent to keep your aspirations mostly to yourself. Seek out others who are also working towards their dreams and form a motivational group to help each other.

When you succeed, some people will tell you they knew you could do it. Others will insist you must have been lucky or were in the right place at the right time. These will be the very same people who were convinced you'd never make it.

Use criticism to feed your determination and strengthen your resolve. Make it the wind that will propel you to new and exciting achievements.

Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com Copyright 2026 Bryan Golden

The Courage to Ask, "What If?"

By Brian Neal Bollinger

Along the Elk River Trail between Ivydale and Duck, a towering Bigfoot built by Clay County students gives visitors a reason to stop, look, and start talking. To me, it also represents something familiar to anyone who has encouraged a young person to pursue an idea: possibility takes shape when imagination meets effort and support.

That is the message behind my request for a proclamation from West Virginia's governor.

I am asking Gov. Patrick Morrisey's office to consider recognition of a personal journey through America's reportedly haunted places, inspired by the storytelling traditions I grew up with in West Virginia. My hope is that recognition can become another way to encourage students and families to take their own possibilities seriously.

I am a Parkersburg native who now lives in Maryland. My work as a WVU Student Financial Coordinator takes me into classrooms and communities, helping students and families understand college costs and financial aid. West Virginia remains the place that shaped my curiosity, my commitment to helping others and the persistence behind this request.

Across years of travel, I have sat in historic places, followed trails and listened to stories that stayed with me long after I left. At home, I have sat in classrooms with students facing a different unknown: whether the education and future they want are within reach.

Both experiences have taught me to respect the work between imagining a goal and accomplishing it. They have also reminded me how much difference another person's encouragement can make.

Travel writer Robin Catalano provided that encouragement before she knew my name. Her Reader's Digest article about 20 haunted destinations gave my curiosity a direction. I read it and asked myself, "What if?"

What if I visited them?

The question became a goal pursued across multiple trips and years, through tours, overnight stays and exterior stops. Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum in Weston and Lake Shawnee Abandoned Amusement Park in Mercer County brought that national journey back to West Virginia.

Catalano has since reviewed the photographs I shared representing the destinations in her article, including Batcheller Mansion images she endorsed in a follow-up email. Her personal feedback is separate from formal record certification, but hearing from the writer who inspired the journey has been deeply meaningful.

It is a reminder that we do not always know what our words might make possible for someone else.

West Virginia's tourism efforts recognize that stories can inspire people to explore. On Oct. 1, 2024, the state launched its Paranormal Trail, connecting local legends and historic attractions through a digital passport. Clay County's student-built Bigfoot was among the attractions highlighted at the launch.

There is something wonderful about that connection. Students made something tangible, and their work became part of an invitation to discover their community. A visitor drawn by an unusual roadside figure can leave knowing a little more about the people and place behind it.

A story can open the conversation. A community gives it substance.

I have seen that spirit as my work takes me from Wyoming County to McDowell County, from Jackson County to Tyler County, and from Clay County to Wood County. Especially during this season, people remember the stories they grew up hearing, the places that frightened them and the relatives who knew how to tell a tale.

Those memories deserve an audience. They connect generations and give people an opportunity to share something of themselves.

This Halloween week, a family does not have to travel across the country to experience that connection. It can begin by asking someone at the table what story they remember. For travelers, it can begin by stopping long enough to hear about the community beyond an attraction's name.

My proclamation request grows out of that same belief: something personal



Brian Bollinger and Bigfoot

can become an opportunity to encourage others.

The journey has required travel, research, documentation and follow-through. I have been grateful for the family, educators, writers and others who have offered time, guidance and encouragement along the way. Their support has helped me keep working toward a goal whose outcome remains uncertain.

In an Oct. 19 letter, U.S. Rep. April McClain Delaney of Maryland congratulated my exploration of American history and the stories associated with haunted destinations, while recognizing the importance of responsible documentation. I am thankful for that acknowledgment and continue seeking consideration from the governor's office in my home state.

A related submission for 25 documented locations is also under RecordSetter Council review. That is another part of the journey; no world-record listing has been awarded yet.

What I hope to carry into the next classroom is an example students can recognize: an interest became a goal, the goal required work, and people helped make the effort possible.

College plans require that same willingness to ask questions, seek accurate information and accept help. I want students to know their voices matter and that a difficult first step does not have to be taken alone.

A governor's proclamation would hold particular meaning because of the state that raised me and the communities I continue to serve. I would welcome the opportunity to use that recognition to keep those conversations going.

Somewhere in a West Virginia classroom, another person has an idea they are not quite ready to say aloud.

I hope they find someone willing to listen to. I hope they ask, "What if?"

And I hope they discover what so many West Virginians already understand: perseverance grows stronger when people stand beside you. That, too, is a story worth telling.





The Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum. Photo Brian Bollinger

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