

Governor Tomblin Supports Autism Awareness by Joining in Light It Up Blue Campaign

On Tuesday, April 2, 2013, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin joined children, families, and autism advocates to light the State Capitol blue in support of the Autism Speaks *Light It Up Blue* campaign.

“There is no greater joy than caring for a child – and as parents, we enthusiastically support our kids in everything they do,” Governor Tomblin said. “There are times, when we cannot do it alone – we must rely on the support of family, friends, and others in our communities. For this reason and many more, I’ve proclaimed April as Autism Awareness Month.”

In support of World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Awareness Month, the State Capitol and Governor’s Mansion were illuminated blue for the evening. The Capitol and mansion joined nearly 3,000 iconic structures, buildings, and landmarks in more than 600 U.S. cities, and 50 countries around the world, that shine a bright light on autism.

Throughout the month of April, many other West Virginians lent their support by lighting up their homes, businesses, places of worship, or even websites blue. For more information, visit www.lightitupblue.org.



On Tuesday evening, April 2, 2013, the West Virginia State Capitol radiated a beautiful blue hue in support of the Autism Speaks Light It Up Blue Campaign. Photo courtesy of the Governor’s Office.

Hurry! Open Enrollment for PEIA Ends at Midnight on April 30

If you’ve needed to make changes to your health or life insurance, the time to do so is now.

The Public Employees Insurance Agency’s (PEIA) Open Enrollment Period began April 1 and runs through April 30. Any changes made will be effective July 1, 2013.

The best thing to do is set aside some time to look through the Shopper’s Guide. If you can’t locate the copy that was mailed to your

home, you can still access it online at www.peia.wv.gov – there’s a link to it right on the homepage. Be sure to also note that there is a link to a correction on the Guide.

Regardless of whether you make changes to your insurance coverage, you must report your tobacco use status. This must be done on PEIA’s website. Go to the website above and click on the “Manage My Benefits” button on the left side, select

the Open Enrollment option, and then follow the prompts. Households that are tobacco-free are eligible for discounted premiums of \$25/month for single coverage or \$50/month for family.

For questions, contact your agency’s Benefits Coordinator or call PEIA’s Open Enrollment Helpline at 1-877-676-5573.



State Readies to Celebrate 150th Birthday

The State Capitol will be the site of a grand four-day celebration to commemorate West Virginia's 150th birthday. In April, Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin, joined by members of the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission, announced the plans for the birthday celebration.

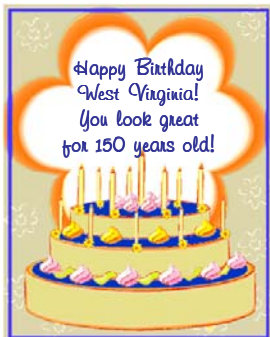
"This June, our state will commemorate a milestone in its history – West Virginia will celebrate its 150th birthday," Gov. Tomblin said. "It'll be a celebration you won't want to miss – so mark your calendars, and join us at the State Capitol June 20-23 as we make history."

Highlighting the four-day event is a special three-dimensional film entitled, "150 in 3D: A Century and a Half of West Virginia Pride." This 3-D film uses cutting-edge technology to project the movie directly onto the face of the Capitol building without a screen. The film will be shown at 10 P.M. on June 20, 21, and 22 with a fireworks display by the world-renown Zambelli family to be launched from the Capitol rooftop.

Gov. Tomblin kicks off the celebration with a state-wide bell ringing in Charleston on June 20 at 1:50 P.M. and events will continue through Sunday, June 23. Scheduled events include several performances of the Broadway musical, "Civil War"; the Smoke on the Water Chili Cook-off; outdoor concerts, Civil War re-enactors; vintage car show; children's activities and more. Please visit www.wv150.com for more information.

Children's Art Contest Part of West Virginia's 150th Birthday Celebration

As West Virginia turns 150 years old this year, the Department of Commerce is joining in the celebration by promoting a statewide art contest.



The contest is open to all children in grades kindergarten through 12th grade. Participants will be divided into three different groups. Those in grades K-5 will create a birthday card for West Virginia's special celebration.

Students in grades 6-8 and 9-12 can create videos, either by themselves or in teams of two. Themes for the videos are "Happy 150th Birthday West Virginia - What Makes West Virginia Unique" and "What Makes West Virginia Special?" Videos have a time limit of not more than two minutes, and students should wish West Virginia a Happy 150th Birthday in it.

Prizes will be awarded in each group, and include Kindles and gift cards. Winning artwork will be showcased in the rotunda during the West Virginia 150th birthday celebration at the State Capitol.

Each piece of artwork or video must have an official application, which is available online at www.wvcommerce.org/art150. Entries will be accepted through May 15, 2013; there is no entry fee.



ABOVE: Governor Tomblin announces plans for West Virginia's 150th birthday celebration.

BELOW: Jesse Estep, from General Services, hangs lamp post banners in preparation for Governor Tomblin's press conference to announce plans for the State's 150th birthday celebration.

Both photos courtesy of the Governor's Office.



Celebrate State's 150th Birthday with West Virginia Reunion Kits

The West Virginia Department of Commerce is offering reunion kits for people coming home to the Mountain State in 2013. Perfect for reunion planners, the kits welcome people to West Virginia by providing everything needed to celebrate this important birthday, including postcards, State highway maps, travel guides and goodie bags.

The State celebrates its sesquicentennial birthday on June 20, and West Virginians reuniting with friends, family and former classmates can take part all summer long by downloading birthday fliers or banners at www.wvcommerce.org/reunions.

"Summer reunions present West Virginians with an exceptional opportunity to catch up with friends, family and colleagues," said Governor Earl Ray Tomblin. "Reunions are the perfect occasion to highlight all that makes the Mountain State great. And, this year, we have one more reason to celebrate – it's our State's 150th birthday!"

More than 800 reunions received kits in 2012. This year, the kits will include a 150th Birthday T-shirt and three 150th Birthday hats to offer as reunion door prizes. Additional birthday memorabilia can be purchased at www.wv150.com.

The free starter reunion kit contains:

- 25 plastic convention bags with the 150th birthday logo
- 25 Happy Birthday balloons
- 25 West Virginia highway maps
- 25 State park bookmarks
- 25 special edition WV EDGE magazines
- 50 assorted scenic postcards of WV
- 15 State park brochures
- 15 State travel guides
- 01 WV-shaped cookie cutter



Regional tourism information will be added to the kits when they are picked up at the local participating Convention and Visitors' Bureau welcome center. Additional kits, t-shirts, and hats can also be ordered online and picked up at the center.

Event coordinators may request reunion kits by visiting www.wvcommerce.org/reunions or calling 304.957.9332 or 304-957-9363. A completed official application form may be submitted online at www.wvcommerce.org/reunions or downloaded and mailed to the Department of Commerce, 2013 Reunions, 90 MacCorkle Avenue, SW, South Charleston, WV 25303.

The promotion period runs from Memorial Day until Labor Day, or while supplies last. First come, first served. Only school, family, or community reunions are eligible, and the reunion must take place in West Virginia.

Reprint courtesy of the Department of Commerce.

CONSIDER ONE OF WEST VIRGINIA'S SCENIC AND CONVENIENT STATE PARKS FOR YOUR FAMILY REUNION!

Planning a family reunion can be both exciting and exhausting. Take away most of the frustration by scheduling yours at a West Virginia State Park.

West Virginia has parks with varying facilities located in all corners of the State. By choosing the right location, you and your family can:

- ◆ Eliminate lodging issues with a number of different affordable and comfortable accommodation choices – with no overstaying house guests!
- ◆ Relax in knowing there are ample facilities and space for any size group.
- ◆ Enjoy numerous extra activities that are available for children and adults.

Which park is right for your family? Click on the State Parks logo above, or on the following links to see a [map of locations](#) or to download [specific park brochures](#).

FOR MORE HELP, DIAL 1-800-CALL-WVA



Are you searching for additional West Virginia Birthday Celebration information and activities? You'll find everything you need – historical information, news, souvenir details, and up-to-date events – at the Sesquicentennial Commission's website. Head to: www.wv150.com.

Governor Tomblin Signs Landmark Education Bill Into Law

On April 10, 2013, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin joined legislators and education advocates, as well as business and labor leaders, to sign the landmark education reform bill, Senate Bill 359 (SB359), into law.

“This landmark legislation will make a difference in classrooms across our State, and more importantly, in the lives of our State’s children,” Governor Tomblin said. “I’m truly grateful for every West Virginian who participated in the community forums and worked with our legislators to make sure our kids receive the best education possible. I believe, through our continued collaboration, we can help prepare our kids for future opportunities and ensure a brighter future for the State of West Virginia.”

Senate Bill 359 will raise student achievement by:

- Giving local school boards more flexibility to develop a school calendar that works for their communities and ensures students receive 180 instructional days in the classroom.
- Providing an optional full day, five days per week four-year-old preschool program in every county.
- Ensuring all children read on grade level by the end of the 3rd grade.
- Making sure our high school graduates are ready to either enter the workforce or make a seamless transition into college or vocational school.
- Changing how we measure the success of our schools to include AP classes and graduation rates among other measurements.
- Empowering our teachers to participate in the hiring process as well as in determining the professional development needed.



*Legislators and education advocates, as well as business and labor leaders join Governor Tomblin as he signs SB 359.
Photo courtesy of the Governor’s Office.*

In addition to SB 359, Governor Tomblin is working with the State Board of Education to bring more technology and digital learning to the classroom. The Governor has also issued two executive orders related to student achievement. The newly established Governor’s Commission on Middle Grades will work to better meet the needs of our middle school students. And just last week, the Governor re-established the West Virginia Workforce Planning Council to better align classroom learning with workplace needs.

Reprint courtesy of the Governor’s Office.

DHHR Wood County Income Maintenance Department Receives National Award

The Wood District Income Maintenance Department was recognized as a Silver medalist in the Federal Food and Nutrition Service 2012 Hunger Champion Awards. This award is a national award with seven gold medal winners, eight silver medal winners and twenty-two bronze medal winners.

The award was granted based on efforts of this office in June of 2012 when a major wind storm, Derecho, hit West Virginia causing significant power outages and property damage. During the aftermath of the storm, the office established a functional satellite office to support the anticipated large volume of customers seeking services. The office saw over five thousand customers in ten working days while maintaining a smooth flow of services to the individuals seeking assistance.

“Not only were services provided through the Income Maintenance Department,” Rocco Fucillo, DHHR Cabinet Secretary, said, “but the rest of our services were provided as well without interruption.”

Reprint courtesy of the Department of Health and Human Resources.

New Student Representative Joins State Board of Education

A Berkeley County student has joined the State Board of Education as a student representative, offering a young voice on issues before the board.

Aishwarya Saluja, a senior at Hedgesville High School, began serving in March, and will continue through May. Saluja is involved in student government, Key Club and other groups. She currently is president of her school's Key Club and has represented her school at Rhododendron Girls State. At her school, she is active in peer-to-peer mentoring, where she helps other students who are experiencing difficulties understanding math.

"We welcome Aishwarya and look forward to her participation with the State Board of Education," said West Virginia Board President Wade Linger. "Student representatives add value to the board's deliberations by providing an important



Student State Board of Education representative Aishwarya Saluja hopes to address adoption and statewide standards issues. Photo courtesy of the West Virginia Department of Education.

perspective on policies that affect them and their families. In addition, student participation enhances policy

debates by forcing adults to avoid jargon, provide background information, and explain their positions more thoroughly."

The State Board launched its student representative project in 2007 in an effort to promote civic awareness, garner teen input, and give high school students the opportunity to see government in action. Students wishing to be considered for the board's program must complete an application, obtain parental permission, and submit letters of recommendation and a transcript.

Saluja hopes to address issues dealing with adoption and implementation of statewide standards, particularly in science and math.

For more information, contact the Department of Education's Office of Communication at 304-558-2699.

Reprint courtesy of the Department of Education.

Shepherd University Establishes New Chapter of Wounded Veteran Kayak Program

West Virginia's Shepherd University, in partnership with the Martinsburg VA Medical Center, has established a Team River Runner (TRR) chapter to assist wounded veterans and their families find health, healing, and new challenges

through an innovative water sports program.

Team River Runner is a non-profit, all-volunteer national organization that works in conjunction with the Wounded Warrior Project and Disabled Sports USA to help mili-

tary personnel recover from war-related injuries through kayaking, and other paddling sports.

"We really want the veterans to be able to focus on developing new strengths and new skills that support their healing and rehabilitation and to do it in the context of community supporters," said Tracy Seffers, registrar at Shepherd and chapter secretary.

A kick-off event for volunteers and the core support team was held on Thursday, April 18 at the Shepherd Wellness Center pool.

Initially, TRR-Shepherd will serve up to five veterans through weekly training sessions in the pool Wednes-



Wounded veterans get an opportunity to receive support in their healing and rehabilitation through the Wounded Veteran Kayak Program.

Shepherd University began a new chapter of this program as an effort in community support and development.

Photo courtesy of Team River Runner.

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Southern Area Public Library Named “Best Small Library in America 2013” by the *Library Journal* and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

By Preston Richardson, West Virginia Library Commission.

The *Library Journal* and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have named the Southern Area Public Library (SAPL) the Best Small Library in America for 2013.

“It’s great to be recognized for our hard work,” said library director Mary Beth Stenger, who wrote the winning grant application. The award comes with \$20,000 to spend on anything in the library, plus money to send Stenger and one of her staff to the Public Library Association Conference in 2014.

To win “Best Small Library in America,” the Southern Area Public Library had to demonstrate accomplishments over time. “The Journal was looking for a library that had turned itself around,” Stenger said. “Since I took over in July, 2010, patron visits went from 3,000 to almost 8,000, an increase of 156%. Our computer usage increased 32%. Our programming increased 888%. We made a lot of changes that brought people in.”

The award looked at technology use as well. The library has an up-to-date website, a Facebook page, a Google calendar, and accounts with Twitter and Pinterest. “We stay involved online,” according to Stenger.

Demonstrating collaborative efforts was also important for the award. The library sponsors a different charity each month and invites patrons to make donations. In January, library volunteers created “birthday in a box” kits for children at the Clarksburg Mission. With the kits, homeless children in the shelter can “open the box and have a party.”

The *Library Journal* considered whether the library had features that other libraries can replicate. “We are the first library in the State to be part of the Geek the Library program,” Stenger said. Geek the Li-

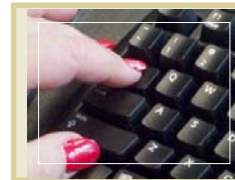
brary creates awareness about library funding. “We’re hoping to get other libraries in West Virginia excited about that.”

Lost Creek, home of the Southern Area Public Library, is a Harrison County community of fewer than 500. The library draws patrons from neighboring communities and even other counties. The library’s collection of home schooling resources is one reason. “We have two shelves of home schooling materials that people can check out for a whole semester,” Stenger said.

The Southern Area Public Library is a fixture of Lost Creek and the surrounding area. “For a lot of people in the community, we are their home away from home,” Stenger said. “We have kids get off the bus here and spend the afternoon. We have snacks for them.”



Southern Area Public Library.
Photo courtesy of the facility’s website:
<http://southernarea.lib.wv.us/>



INTERNET EXPLORER TIP:

Are you looking for an easier way to move between those several website tabs that are open in your Internet Explorer browser? Your keyboard shortcut is **Ctrl + Tab**.

For the 22nd Year ...

It’s Time to Get Tee’d Off!

The West Virginia Public Employees Annual Golf Tournament will take place on Monday, May 20, 2013 at Twin Falls State Park. Here’s the information you need to know:

- Entry deadline: May 6
- \$50/person, includes greens fees, shared cart, and cookout
- Open to federal/state/city/county/public education employees – retirees welcome
- Rooms \$60/night plus tax - call and identify yourself as a tourney participant: 1-800-CALLWVA or 304-294-4000
- Awards in men’s and women’s divisions
- Low Gross and Low Net Scores using the Callaway System
- Closest to Pin, Longest Drive, and Longest Putt Contests
- Optional Skins Game

... DOOR PRIZES ...

- Want a practice round? Sunday ‘Fun Scramble’ – May 19 - \$20, includes \$8 fee and \$12 for half cart. Tee times begin at 1 P.M.
- Tourney goes on rain or shine, unless it’s a total rainout. Total rainout will yield a partial refund equal to entry fee less fixed tournament costs; Twin Falls rainchecks will also be used.



For more details, contact Brian Wetzel, Twin Falls Pro Shop, 304-294-4044

CPRB Ensures Public Employees are Charted on the Right Course for Their Retirement

When public employees conclude their careers and set sail into retirement, one State agency stands ready to assist them in making sure they're traveling on a well-charted course.

The Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB) was created by the state Legislature in 1991 to consolidate and manage all of the state's retirement plans. Prior to that legislative action, there were separate retirement boards for teachers and public employees. To date, CPRB administers plans for retirees who live in 49 states, the Virgin Islands and 11 foreign countries.

"CPRB administers nine retirement plans and each is unique and distinctive," said CPRB Executive Director Jeffrey Fleck. "What is common is that each of the plans has retirement advisers, so no matter which plan public employees are in, they can contact CPRB and speak to a retirement adviser who is knowledgeable and an expert in any of these particular plans."

There are 84 full-time employees at the CPRB, Fleck said, which presents a challenge considering it deals with approximately 130,000 people (75,000 active employees and 55,000 retirees among the nine retirement plans). The plans include the Public Employees Retirement System, Teachers' Retirement System, Teachers' Defined Contribution, Judges' Retirement System, Deputy Sheriffs' Retirement System, Troopers Plan A, Troopers Plan B, Emergency Medical Services Retirement System, and Municipal Police Officers and Firefighters Retirement System.

"The staff members at CPRB take the task that is assigned to them very seriously. In my six years at CPRB [more than four years as compliance officer and one-and-a-half years as director], I have seen first-hand the



The Consolidated Public Retirement Board was created in 1991 to consolidate and manage all of the State's nine retirement plans. Its 84-person staff administers plans for retirees in 49 states, the Virgin Islands, and 11 foreign countries. Photo courtesy of the Department of Administration

dedication and hard work of this staff and the positive affect they have on people's lives," Fleck said. "The public employees and teachers of the State of West Virginia work extremely hard all of their lives to get to the point where they can enjoy their retirement years. We at CPRB feel privileged to assist them with their financial security during those 'golden years.'"

In addition to the employees who administer the many detailed facets of the nine retirement plans, CPRB also has other sections, including:

- The Accounts/Loan section, which handles the monthly payroll for approximately 55,000 retirees and beneficiaries, processes agency accounts payable, and monitors the agency budget.
- The Legal/Compliance section, which handles any appeals that are filed, assures compliance with all applicable federal and state law and handles internal audit duties.
- The Information Technology section, which handles all computer equipment and telephones, programming duties, provides support for all of agency hardware and software, and is responsible for the imaging of all of agency documents.
- The Administration section, which handles the scheduling of appointments, incoming telephone calls, receptionist duties, mail service, the ordering of supplies, and overall administrative duties.

See RETIREMENT – Page 8

RETIREMENT – Continued from Page 7

Public employees wishing to learn more about the Consolidated Public Retirement Board may visit the agency website or contact its office listed in the information box below.

Reprint courtesy of the Department of Administration.

LOOKING AT ADMINISTRATION: THE CONSOLIDATED PUBLIC RETIREMENT BOARD

Mission Statement: The West Virginia Consolidated Public Retirement Board earnestly manages the collection of the members' contributions, guarantees that all transactions are completed according to the law and in a timely and accurate manner by staff that is discerning, honest, and responsible.

Authority: *West Virginia Code*, § 5-10D, et seq. enacted in 1990 by the West Virginia Legislature created the Consolidated Public Retirement Board to replace the Public Employees Retirement Board and The Teachers' Retirement Board.

Full-time Employees: 84

Website:

www.wvretirement.com

Address:

4101 MacCorkle Ave.S.E.
Chas., WV 25304-1636

PH: 304-558-3570

KAYAK – Continued from Page 5

day evenings from 6 to 8 P.M. and monthly outings in open water on the weekends. Training begins in May.

Seffers said Shepherd University makes an ideal site because of its indoor pool and the many surrounding water resources and paddle trails, as well as its commitment to community service. She said the chapter is a natural connection between the school and organization.

"Shepherd is connected to the community, and we want to support and develop the community that surrounds us," Seffers said. "It's why we educate our students, so they can go out and make a difference, and so we commit to making a difference while we're here."

The Department of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Sport at Shepherd and national TRR are providing kayaks and gear.

Seffers said kayaking or canoeing experience is helpful, but it is not necessary for volunteers. They will be needed to help load kayaks and gear, manage paperwork, accompany veterans in the water, organize open-water trips, and assist with marketing and fundraising.

"There are all kinds of opportunities for different skills," Seffers said. "Opportunities for additional training for new skills, including kayaking, will be available to volunteers as well."

In addition, though the national organization supports the chapter monetarily at the onset, in the future it will be self-sustaining through fundraising and donations.

Seffers is a kayaker herself and said she finds a feeling of competence while out on the water as well as camaraderie with her fellow paddlers.

"If we can connect rehabilitating veterans to the sense of being capable and self-sufficient and the sense that they are not alone, that they are in the midst of a community that supports them, we all win," she said.

For more information, contact Seffers at tseffers@shepherd.edu or 304-876-5463, or go to www.teamriverrunner.org.

Reprint courtesy of Shepherd University.

REMEMBER MOMS and DADS

Mother's Day - May 12, 2013

"My mother was the most beautiful woman I ever saw. All I am I owe to my mother. I attribute all my success in life to the moral, intellectual, and physical education I received from her."

-George Washington



Father's Day - June 16, 2013

I talk and talk and talk, and I haven't taught people in 50 years what my father taught by example in one week.

-Mario Cuomo

Don't Let Elder Abuse Stay an Invisible Problem



WEST VIRGINIA
Department of
**Health
Human
Resources**

Above Graphic By:



According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, research suggests that 93% of elder abuse cases go unreported each year. The signs aren't always obvious. If you suspect a problem, please visit DHHR's Adult Protective Services website for information on how to report it.

[www.wvdhhr.org/bcf/
children_adult/aps/report.asp](http://www.wvdhhr.org/bcf/children_adult/aps/report.asp)

Be Aware – Watch Out for Fake Virus Alerts

Rogue security software, also known as “scareware,” is software that appears to be beneficial from a security perspective (i.e. free virus scan) but actually provides limited or no security. In reality, it generates erroneous or misleading alerts, or attempts to lure users into participating in fraudulent transactions.

How does rogue security software get on my computer?

Rogue security software designers create legitimate looking pop-up windows that advertise security update software. These windows might appear on your screen while you surf the web.

The “updates” or “alerts” in the pop-up windows call for you to take some sort of action such as clicking to install the software, accept recommended updates, or remove unwanted viruses and/or spyware. When you click, the rogue security software downloads to your computer.

Rogue security software might also appear in the list of search results when you are searching for trustworthy antispyware software, so it is important to protect your computer.

What does rogue security software do?

Rogue security software might report a virus, even though your computer is actually clean. The software might also fail to report viruses when your computer is infected. Inversely, sometimes, when you download rogue security software, it will install a virus or other malicious software on your computer so that the software has something to detect.

Some rogue security software might also:

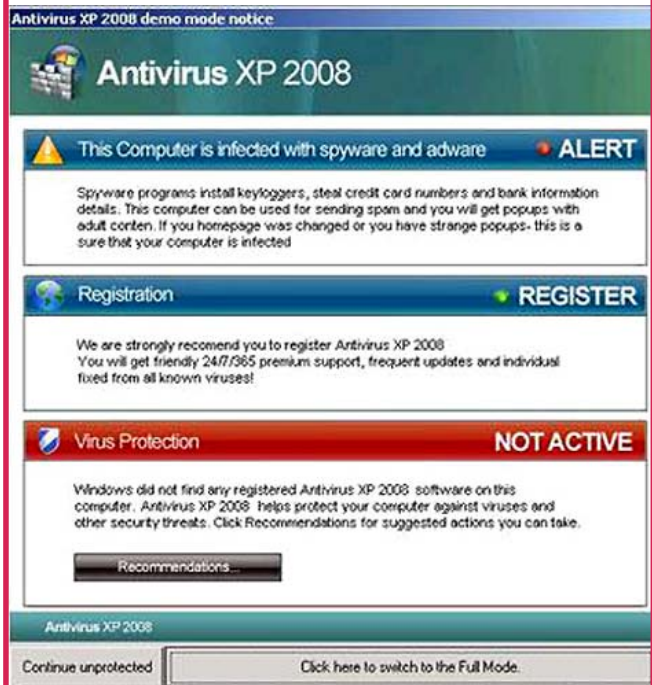
- * Lure you into a fraudulent transaction (for example, upgrading to a non-existent paid version of a program).
- * Use social engineering to steal your personal information.
- * Install malware that can go undetected as it steals your data.
- * Launch pop-up windows with false or misleading alerts.
- * Slow your computer or corrupt files.
- * Disable Windows updates or disable updates to legitimate antivirus software.
- * Prevent you from visiting antivirus vendor websites.

Rogue security software might also attempt to spoof the Microsoft security update process. Here’s an example of rogue security software that’s disguised as a Microsoft alert but that doesn’t come from Microsoft.

Whenever you’re in doubt about a security warning or any other type of technology issue, follow your agency’s protocol to contact the Office of Technology Help Desk or internal technology staff.

FAKE:

Below is an example of a warning from a rogue security program known as AntivirusXP.



LEGITIMATE:

Below is the legitimate Microsoft Windows Security Center.



Graphics above courtesy of the Office of Technology.

Reprint courtesy of the Office of Technology Security Office.

Tips for Grilling and Fire Pit Season Safety

This information is provided by the United States Fire Administration (USFA).

It's the beginning of grilling season. Below are some instructions regarding checking your propane gas grill before using.

In addition, fire pit safety tips are also being offered. In recent years, there has been a new concern for the fire service – fire pits. Fire pits are known to be a great source of warmth and ambience; however, with the popularity of fire pits increasing, fire safety has become even more important. There are many things you should consider when setting up and using a fire pit.

The State Fire Marshal's Office has an extensive set of tips and instructions for grill and fire pit safety available at: www.firemarshal.wv.gov. Click on the "News" tab (top right corner of the page) and scroll down to the article.



Preparing Your Propane Grill

- Check the propane cylinder hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. A light soap and water solution applied to the hose will reveal escaping propane quickly by releasing bubbles.
- If you determined your grill has a gas leak by smell or the "soapy bubble test" and there is no flame:
 - Turn off the propane tank and grill.
 - **If the leak doesn't stop, call the fire department.**
 - If the leak stops, have the grill serviced by a professional before using it again.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not attempt to move the grill.
- Use only equipment bearing the mark of an independent testing laboratory. Follow manufacturers' instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.
- Never store propane cylinders in buildings or garages. If you store a gas grill inside during the winter, disconnect the cylinder and leave it outside.

Fire Pits – A New Popular Trend

- Keep away from flammable material and fluids such as gasoline, diesel fuel, kerosene, and charcoal lighter fluid or vehicles while in use. Do not use flammable fluids such as gasoline, alcohol, diesel fuel, kerosene, and charcoal lighter fluid to light or relight fires.
- Exercise the same precautions as with any open fire.
- **Do not allow children to use the fire pit.** Keep children and pets away, and do not wear flammable or loose-fitting clothing such as nylon.
- Do not burn trash, leaves, paper, cardboard, or plywood. Avoid using soft wood such as pine or cedar that likely pop and throw sparks. Use of seasoned hardwood is suggested.
- Before starting the fire, make sure that the lid will still close to extinguish the fire in case of emergency. Do not overload.
- Before you light the fire, check the wind direction, and keep a fire extinguisher or garden hose nearby.

Have a safe and happy grilling and fire pit season! Below are more websites you can visit for information:

www.usfa.fema.gov

www.nfpa.org

www.safekids.org

Excerpt courtesy of the State Fire Marshal's Office.

If a newer vehicle is in your future, check out The State Credit Union for your auto loan.

THE STATE CREDIT UNION HAS AUTO RATES AS LOW AS 1.99 % APR!

And ... It's the Same Rate for New or Pre-Owned Vehicles

- New and pre-owned – model years 2007 to present
- Whether buying or re financing
- Special rates for limited time only – get preapproved with our easy website loan application
- Payroll deduction for payments saves time and money



www.wvpecu.com

contact@scuwv.com

304-558-0566

Does not apply to existing SCU loans. Must qualify. Other rates and terms available upon request.

Even Without a 'Green Thumb,' Growing Kitchen Herbs is Easy!



Growing herbs indoors is simple and will provide you with fresh flavoring at your fingertips all year long.

Would you like to try your hand at growing something, but can't because of lack of time, space, or even a green thumb? Try starting with kitchen herbs. They're easy to grow and do well in flower pots indoors.

Fresh herbs not only look great in your home, they smell and taste fantastic in food. They even pretty it up with color, and with all their health benefits, using them provides a great way to move toward healthy eating.

BASIL

Basil is one of the easiest herbs to grow. When grown outdoors, it's a bushy, leafy annual plant that only grows in the summer and requires full sun, but it also grows well indoors. There are several types, but sweet basil is the most common. Pinch off the flower heads as soon as they appear to continue leaf production (it's the leaves you use in cooking). Also, when you clip the leaves to use, cut right above a pair of leaves. Basil works well in Italian foods. Outside, it grows well beside tomatoes.

ROSEMARY

Rosemary is easy to dry and holds its flavor well. It's actually a perennial shrub that can be grown indoors in the winter, too. Trim the plant after it flowers, and prune it so it doesn't get spindly. Outdoors, plant rosemary in full sun by beans, carrots, cabbage, or sage. Rosemary is an excellent flavoring for poultry, lamb, stews, and soups.

MINT

Mint is a perfect plant to grow in pots because it can easily grow out of control, taking over an outdoor garden. It's low maintenance; just keep the soil moist but not soaked. Spearmint and peppermint are the two most common, and they can be planted outside along side cabbage and tomatoes (just remember to keep it thinned out). Use mint to flavor desserts, drinks, fruit, or salads. You can even use it as a room freshener.

Other popular herbs include parsley (great source for iron and Vitamins A and C), sage and thyme (both contain a variety of antioxidants), chives and tarragon (good sources of potassium and other nutrients), oregano (rich in vitamins and nutrients), and dill (high in calcium).

To learn more about growing herbs, simply do a search in your internet browser. There are many sites available to help you get started. You can also purchase kits online or at local retain stores.

DIVISION OF PERSONNEL TO HOLD OUTREACH SESSIONS

The Division of Personnel's Employee Relations staff will be conducting two half-day outreach sessions this summer. Sessions will begin at 9 A.M. and are geared toward managers and supervisors; however, all employees are welcome to attend. Topics will be defined by the questions brought to the DOP staff by the participants. Examples include questions about policies, leave, FMLA, FSLA, attendance management, progressive discipline, ADA issues, or the grievance procedure.

Friday, June 7, 2013
State Office Building
100 Municipal Plaza
Weirton, WV



Friday, July 12, 2013
State Office Building
5th Avenue and Avery
Parkersburg, WV

Registration is necessary – please email steve.c.forsythe@wv.gov

TELL US ABOUT YOUR HERO

The Department of Veterans Assistance has provided an opportunity for friends and family of West Virginia veterans who have served in the United States military to honor and pay tribute to their heroes.

A new area on the agency's webpage called *Tell Us About Your Hero* provides a place to share stories and otherwise write about veterans who hold special places in the hearts of those who know ... or knew ... them. There's even a feature that allows uploading photographs.

Anyone can contribute, no matter where you reside. Your hero can be any West Virginia veteran who served in any military branch at any time throughout West Virginia history. Stories don't have to focus on the individual's military career. Whoever your hero is, you can write a bit of background information and tell why the person is special to you.

Do you know a West Virginia veteran who you'd like to recognize? Head over to the website (www.veterans.wv.gov/pages/tellusyourhero.aspx) and tell us about your hero. Submissions can take up to 48 hours to appear on the website.



DNR Advises: Leave Young Wildlife Alone

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources advises people to leave all young wildlife alone. “The spring season is the time of year when the woods and fields of West Virginia are full of new life,” said Gene Thorn, wildlife biologist at the West Virginia State Wildlife Center in French Creek. “People have a great opportunity to view and enjoy young wildlife during this season, but it is especially important for the public to understand the need to avoid touching or disturbing these wild animals.”

Attempts to rescue or rehabilitate young wildlife are often counter-productive, according to Thorn. Picking up or getting too close to wildlife greatly increases the chance of harm to the animal and/or the persons involved in this unwise practice. By touching young animals, humans leave a scent that may attract a predator. Wildlife viewing is an enjoyable and perfectly acceptable activity; however, Wildlife Resources Section personnel recommend that this pastime be conducted from a safe distance and with the aid of binoculars.



She's a cutie, but she's still a wild animal, best left to stay wild.

“In addition to being detrimental to the welfare of young animals, handling wildlife potentially may expose humans to various wildlife-associated diseases, parasites and other health-related risks,” said Thorn. “Rabies, roundworms and other parasites such as lice and ticks can be transmitted to humans through the improper handling of wildlife.”

DNR offices statewide receive numerous calls each year concerning young wildlife, especially fawn deer that have been picked up by well-meaning residents. In almost every case these young animals have not been abandoned. The offspring are often hidden as the adult searches for food, and this separation can last for a few hours or all day.

Humans are poor substitute parents for wild animals, because young wildlife require special diets and learn survival skills from their parents. Removing young wildlife from its natural environment almost certainly leads to the death of the animal.

Many people often mistake a bedded fawn, with no mother in sight, as abandoned, but that is usually not the case. Hiding the fawn and leaving it while the doe searches for food is an important survival tactic. The spotted pattern and coloration of fawns and their lack of scent afford protection to these young animals and make them difficult for predators to detect.

If a predator happens to approach close to a fawn, the young deer will normally hold very still until the threat passes. If discovered by a predator, the fawn will wait until the very last moment before fleeing to safety. The doe will come back to check on her fawn at feeding time.

As a final caution, remember that State laws and regulations prohibit the possession of wildlife without a permit. Under any circumstances, when you pick up a young animal in the wild, you have taken it into your possession. The fines for illegal possession of a fawn deer, black bear cub, baby raccoon, squirrel, or any other species taken or possessed during the closed season range from \$20 up to a maximum of \$1,000 and/or up to 100 days in jail.

“We want everyone to enjoy wildlife in West Virginia,” said Thorn. “For your own health and safety and to protect the State’s wildlife, remember these wild animals should be left alone and allowed to stay wild.”

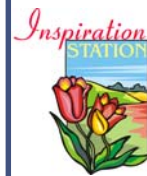
Reprint courtesy of the Division of Natural Resources.

Pencil In ...



From the Selective Service System: Even though the Secretary of Defense has decided to allow women in combat jobs, the law remains unchanged; therefore, **only men between the ages of 18 and 25 are required to register with Selective Service.** For more information, go to www.sss.gov.

The Division of Personnel has **updated its smoking prohibited posters.** If you currently have our older versions posted, please download the new posters as replacements. They're found on our website: www.personnel.wv.gov/rules/policies/Pages/default.aspx.



Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will spend its whole life believing that it is stupid.

Albert Einstein



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