

The Exponent Telegram



Bon Appetit! Inside Today!

75¢ The Independent Voice of North Central West Virginia 75¢

INSIDE

LOCAL



A Clarksburg Water Board public hearing on fluoridation drew a crowd.

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SPORTS



Bridgeport blanked Liberty, 10-0, in a Class AA baseball regional semifinal.

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ON THE WEB

ONLINE POLL

Five major banks pleaded guilty to currency and rate-fixing but have been granted exemptions to still operate in the currency and stock markets. No individuals have been charged. Is this right?

- a) Yes. Since the people involved were working at the direction of higher bank management, the banks should be the ones penalized. **3.4%**
- b) Yes. The federal government was right to penalize the banks. However, the fines should have been higher to further discourage illegal activity for the sole purpose of generating more revenue for big business. **7.6%**
- c) No. Bank personnel, including higher management who knew of the illegal activities, should be held accountable up to and including felony charges with additional fines and potential jail time. **89.1%**

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20-week abortion ban becomes state law

Constitutionality of statute could be challenged

by Jonathan Mattise THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHARLESTON — A law prohibiting abortions 20 weeks after conception took effect Tuesday in West Virginia, despite Gov. Earl Ray

Tomblin twice vetoing the ban over concerns that a court could strike it down. Amid the Democratic governor's worries over constitutionality, the state's Republican Attorney General Patrick Morrisey has vowed to defend the ban against potential legal action. It's unclear if, or when, that kind of challenge might surface. Jennifer Meinig, executive

director of the American Civil Liberties Union of West Virginia, said a lawsuit can be brought by an individual woman or a doctor on behalf of patients. In 2011, the last year with data available, there were only six abortions after 20 weeks in West Virginia, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The ACLU has called the

ban unconstitutional. But the group cannot discuss potential litigation, Meinig said Tuesday. The Republican Legislature passed the ban overwhelmingly this year. Democratic leadership cleared a similar bill last year. Both times, Tomblin used his veto pen, though he still reaffirmed his anti-abortion record after both decisions. In March, lawmakers eas-

ily overrode the governor's veto to cement the ban into law. The new law provides some exemptions for women in medical emergencies, but not in cases of rape or incest. Abortions would still be prohibited when women have psychological conditions that could lead them to hurt or kill themselves. See ABORTION, A6



Staff photo by Jeremiah Shelor

John Schmidt, left, and Wendi Weber of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service discuss plans to install fish/boat passage at the Hartland Dam during a visit to Clarksburg Tuesday.

Fish & Wildlife official visits West Fork River

Says removing Water Board dams would bring ecological and economic benefits

by Jeremiah Shelor STAFF WRITER

CLARKSBURG — In a visit to the West Fork River Tuesday, a high-ranking official with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service discussed the federal agency's experience with dam removal projects. Wendi Weber, who directs the U.S. Fish & Wildlife's Northeast Region from her office in Massachusetts, stopped by Hartland Dam in Clarksburg Tuesday as part of a multi-day trip to West Virginia. The Clarksburg Water Board has engaged with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to install fish/boat passage at the Hartland Dam and to remove the Highland, Two Lick and

West Milford dams, all on the West Fork River. For years, the Water Board had been in discussions to remove the dams it doesn't need due to concerns over safety and liability. Standing by the bank of the West Fork on Tuesday, Weber said the proposed dam removals would have "multi-faceted benefits" for the area, including both ecological and economic improvements. The Fish & Wildlife Service has completed a number of dam removal projects throughout the Northeast Region, Weber said. "Based on my experience, when we remove dams ... we have additional recreational opportunities — there's fish-

ing, boating, kayaking opportunities. There's fantastic wildlife opportunities," Weber said. "There are fantastic economic benefits, because now you've increased your eco-tourism and the number of folks wanting to come spend time there." U.S. Fish & Wildlife has provided the funding needed to remove the dams. Weber said the agency has an in-house team of experts that specialize in dam removal projects. "We assess the situation. We look at the sediment. We look at the structure up and down the river. We look at the communities. We look at the feasibility," Weber said. See RIVER, A10

Bowers trial gets underway

Defendant accused of rape, robbery, burglary in 2001 home invasion

by Matt Harvey ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR

CLARKSBURG — A Harrison County jury of 10 men and two women began hearing evidence Tuesday in the case of a defendant accused in a home invasion in which an elderly woman was raped and robbed in late 2001.

Adam Derek Bowers, 29, was 16 when the crimes were alleged to have occurred on Nov. 30, 2001. The state elected to prosecute Bowers as an adult. Bowers is charged with two counts of first-degree sexual assault, burglary and first-degree robbery in the case investigated by Clarksburg Police Lt. Jason Snider and Sgt. Mike Walsh, and prosecuted by James Armstrong. Bowers was connected to the crime after new DNA testing in the case in 2012. Bowers, who maintains his innocence, is represented by Fairmont attorneys Christopher M. Wilson and David DeMoss. The trial is expected to last throughout the week, with Harrison Chief Judge Thomas A. Bedell presiding. The alleged victim, the mother of a former Clarksburg police officer, is now about 97 years old and won't testify, Armstrong told jurors during opening statements.



Staff photo by Matt Harvey

Adam Bowers went on trial Tuesday on charges of sexual assault and robbery in an alleged attack of an elderly woman in late 2001.

Later Tuesday, her son testified that she had dementia and requires around-the-clock care from himself and his wife. The son also testified that his mother, in a frantic state, called his house between 6 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. on the day of the attack, and he went to her home not sure whether the woman — who was then age 83 — might have had a stroke or some other medical malady. But when he saw a side door ajar, "I knew something was wrong," said the man, a Clarksburg police lieutenant at the time. See TRIAL, A10

Chamber of Commerce recognizes 2015 award winners



Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., speaks at Tuesday's Harrison County Chamber of Commerce dinner at the Bridgeport Conference Center.

by Jeremiah Shelor STAFF WRITER

BRIDGEPORT — The Harrison County Chamber of Commerce recognized some of the area's most active and influential business and community members at its 96th annual awards dinner at the Bridgeport Conference Center Tuesday. The dining room at the conference center was packed with Chamber members, who chatted over dinner before being treated to a program that highlighted this year's award winners and featured a keynote speech from U.S. Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va. The program also recognized graduates of this year's Leadership Harri-

son academy, which runs from September through May. "It's an opportunity to recognize some of our members for the outstanding work that they do," Chamber of Commerce President Kathy Wagner said. "Our New Business of the Year this year has added 228 jobs that were never here before, and anytime you can bring that kind of business into Harrison County and the North Central region it has a tremen-

dous economic impact, and we want to recognize those kinds of things." After the awards were handed out, Capito spoke about Washington, D.C., politics and issues affecting West Virginia. Capito talked about her transition from the U.S. House of Representatives to the U.S. Senate and about the gradual improvement of the political gridlock that has stricken Capitol Hill in recent years. "We're not going to get everything done, but we're getting more done than we have in the past," Capito said. See CHAMBER, A10



INSIDE

Special section on Harrison Chamber of Commerce

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