

Hampshire Review

and The South Branch Intelligencer



Mighty MITES

Sports, Page 1C

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

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Romney, WV • \$1 PLUS TAX

Hello Hampshire! From Kloe Hock, Paw Paw



Leslie Crites, Fisher Thanks for subscribing!

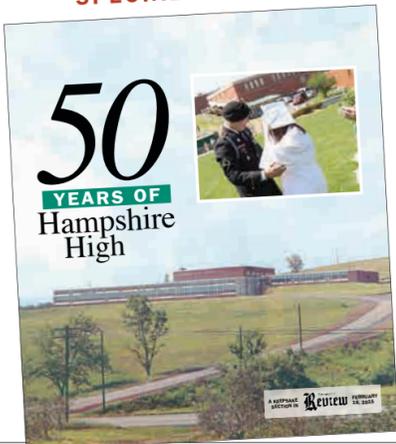
Commission calls Frontier to explain itself Details, Page 2A

SPECIAL SECTION

BONUS

- Picturing kids being students
- How the school came into being

Living, Page 1B



A look back, a look inside

JIM KING Review Staff
SUNRISE SUMMIT — It was a farm, the site of a dream that became a reality with such promise. Planning began in 1960 and on Aug. 31, 1964, Hampshire High School opened its doors to students for the first time. Principal Robert Calvert and 21 teachers greeted nearly 600 sophomores, juniors and seniors in a state-of-the-art facility perched on the eastern slope of the summit. Through the years, more than 11,000

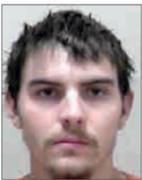
students have passed through its halls. The campus has grown again and again, now sprawling from an ag complex on the west to athletic facilities on the east. Eight years ago, the new Romney Middle School opened on the crest overlooking HHS. Now, in the middle of Hampshire High's 50th-anniversary school year, we look back through the years with our section "50 years of Hampshire High." Visit the halls once again. Remember the highlights. Connect with names and faces from your past. □



From 1985: Paul Roomsburg points out how potting soil is cultivated to Andrew Dorsey, Michael Davis, Sonny Lewis and Jeff Shell.

2nd man arrested in ATM robbery

JIM KING Review Staff
PAW PAW — Another suspect has been charged in the Jan. 9 theft of an ATM from The Bank of Romney branch in Paw Paw.



Brian Stotler II, 20, was arrested last week by Hampshire County Sheriff's deputies on a Morgan County warrant. He is being held without bond in the Potomac Highlands Regional Jail on a probation violation. Stotler was charged by a Hampshire County grand jury last September along with 2 other men in a string of robberies that authorities say netted them at least \$30,000 in property. Stotler is charged by Morgan County with grand larceny. Police aren't saying any more about the charges against him now, but had indicated earlier they believed a 2nd person was involved in the theft.

The ATM was found buried earlier this month in the yard of a Gore, Va., residence that Stotler rents.

While authorities recovered the machine, they have not located the thousands of dollars reportedly inside it.

After finding the machine on Feb. 3, Scott Randolph Heward, 24, of Cumberland, Md., was arrested by Allegany County Sheriff's police and charged with the theft.

Video surveillance at the Paw Paw branch showed a well-disguised man, about 5-foot-10 and 140 pounds at the ATM around 3 a.m. Jan. 9. Police said he made off with thousands of dollars.

"I don't know how hard it was for him to get the ATM out of there," Stapleton said at the time. The ATM was in an enclosed lobby, attached to the building.

Stotler was indicted last September on 16 felony charges, including 2 counts of grand larceny, 7 counts of conspiracy, 1 of transferring stolen property, 5 of break-

See ATM page 5A ■

Zero down



ED DEWITT Review Staff

Jack Bender plows snow at the Slanesville General Store Tuesday morning.

Another storm glances past

Frigid temperatures, high winds keep the county shivering

JIM KING Review Staff
 Winter 2015 is turning out to be more annoying than devastating, keeping emergency crews hopping and schools guessing.

A year ago storm after storm dropped snow on the region, shutting schools and generally wreaking havoc with travel and the economy.

This year? Forecasts keep popping up that look dire, but the storms seem to be delivering glancing blows.

Take Monday night's storm. Four to 8 inches of snow were forecast from supertime Monday through late morning Tuesday. Instead, about 3 inches fell and that was all done by 4 a.m. Tuesday.

"We got off with nothing," said Jerry Loudin, who runs the 911 call center on Jersey Mountain Road. "We had 1 car skid off the road into a ditch and that was the extent of it."

The threat of snow combined with bone-tlingling temperatures and wind chills led Hampshire County schools to call off Monday and Tuesday.

Forecasters are calling for another bout of cold to blast through Thursday, dropping lows that night to minus 4, followed by a 4-6 inch snowstorm Saturday.

But — keep your fingers crossed — Sunday's

See STORM page 5A ■



Submitted by ROMNEY FIRE COMPANY

Rescue workers extricate one of the victims of a head-on collision Sunday.

Kitchen arguing to sink conviction

Hearing today challenges 'errors' made in '09 trial

Review Staff

ROMNEY — The man convicted of murdering Romney Auction owner Willard Malcolm in 2008 is making one last try to overturn his conviction this afternoon.

Kilton Kitchen will be in the Circuit Courtroom here at 1:30 p.m. for a habeas hearing. He is contending a litany of errors occurred in his August 2009 trial that should lead to his conviction being overturned and him being granted a new trial.

"This one has 15 or 20 issues," said Prosecutor Dan James, who will be defending the conviction won by his predecessor, Steve Moreland.

A decision could take months, James said. Kitchen is represented by Joanie Nelson of Petersburg, who James described as Kitchen's "7th or 8th" lawyer in the case. She did not return a call

See KITCHEN page 5A ■



Kitchen

Options eyed as clock ticks on recycling

MICHAEL O'BRIEN Review Correspondent

ROMNEY — The clock is ticking as Hampshire County commissioners continue to look at various options in establishing a voter-mandated comprehensive recycling plan for the county.

Commissioners have about a year to put a plan together and it seems the path to get there is rather ambiguous.

Commission president Steve Slonaker last week said having a successful affordable program would be the optimum situation.

The big question is whether that optimum is even possible.

Two state officials with expertise in recycling met with commissioners at their invitation. They each painted a picture depicting a rather challenge-

See OPTIONS page 5A ■

Details, Page 4-5C

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P&G plant carries benefit here

Review Staff
CHARLESTON — A new Procter and Gamble plant being constructed in Berkeley County will bring approximately 700 jobs to the region, and while it will have a minimal direct impact on Hampshire County, the eventual benefits could be tangible.

The announcement came last Tuesday morning. P&G will build a \$500 million plant it calls "a multi-category manufacturing facility" in Berkeley County.

Construction is expected to begin later this year at Tabler Station Business Park. The facility will be more than 1 million square feet. Media sources reported Tuesday there could be as many as 700 permanent jobs.

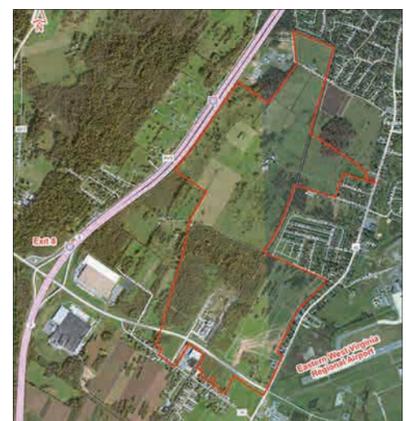
In a press release, Global Product Supply Officer Yannis Skoufalos said, "This new plant will leverage economies of scale and standardized manufacturing platforms to P&G's advantage by allowing us to produce multiple brands at one strategic

location. This will enable us to rapidly and efficiently serve retail customers and consumers throughout the eastern half of the United States, reaching 80% of them within one-day transit."

It will be one of the largest projects the state has ever seen, and only the 2nd new P&G United States plant built since 1971. Berkeley County reportedly beat out 40 other possible locations for the facility.

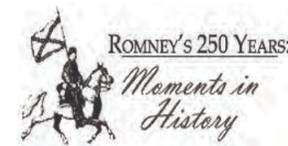
As far as the local impact, it

See P&G page 5A ■



Courtesy of BERKELEY COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The new Procter & Gamble plant will be located at the Tabler Station Business Park along I-81.



'Oh, so near and yet so far'

Feb. 21, 1865 — Operating in the midst of several thousand Federal troops in Cumberland, New Creek and Winchester, Captain Jesse McNeill continued his operation to pay a visit to his father's nemesis, General Benjamin Franklin Kelley. Traveling through the clear and bitterly cold night, McNeill and his men arrived at Cumberland without alerting the garrison. Capturing all pickets in their approach, McNeill and his Rangers arrive in the stillness of the predawn while the people of Cumberland were nestled under warm covers. Armed with the intelligence gathered by Fay, McNeill divided his men into 2 groups to capture the generals who were sleeping in separate buildings about 100 yards apart.

Both details quickly rousted and secured their prisoners with little resistance. The bottom now out of the tub, McNeill ordered Fay to lead the Rangers by the fastest route to Romney and Moorefield beyond. Fay led the party to the Frankfort Road (present-day Route 28) toward

Romney.

On their exit, the Rangers were mistaken for pickets for a Federal force leaving on a scout. To add insult to injury, McNeill disparaged Gen. Kelley as being on a scout for "Granny Kelley" to the Federal pickets; a comment which drew laughter from the duped pickets.

The Rangers were approaching Short Gap as wisps of dawn to the east began breaking to a bright clear morning. Just then, the silent majesty of the winter's morn was shattered by the boom of a cannon. McNeill instantly knew that the race for Moorefield had commenced.

To increase his odds of success, McNeill had had the telegraph wires at Cumberland cut. Experience taught both sides to build redundancies into their telegraph systems; McNeill knew it was only a matter of time before a message would be sent to all Federal garrisons in the region to converge on the South Branch Valley and intercept his command.

McNeill arrived in Romney about 8 a.m. to the bemused and startled looks of the few citizens on the street at the time. His men related their tale as quickly as possible as they passed, McNeill offered up the captured garrison flag of Cumberland as he passed. Generals Kelley and Crook plodded along, keeping their thoughts to themselves. Both knew of the murder of Captain Stump

near Romney earlier that month in a similar circumstance; the thought of being treated to the same hospitality surely crossed their minds.

The Rangers continued south on the South Branch River Road to the Trough Road and continued south. Near the Trough, the first sighting of pursuing Federals was made. Two Rangers were captured at the home of William B. Stump as the rest continued their escape. Within the Trough, McNeill posted a rear guard who checked the Federals, causing them to retreat.

As noon approached, the sun warmed the valley turning the roads to mud. This slowed both pursuer and pursued. As the Trough opened onto the Old Fields Valley, the Rangers were astonished to see their old rivals, the 22nd Ringgold Cavalry from New Creek on the Moorefield Pike a mile to their west, the South Branch being between. Realizing that his mission was in peril, McNeill feigned a rush to Moorefield causing the Federals to do likewise. Near William's Hollow, McNeill ordered his men to the woods and slipped away on another little known, seldom used trail that let him disappear from sight with his prize. As they left the main road, General Crook watched as the federals continued their rush to Moorefield and commented sadly, "Oh, so near and yet so far."

McNeill and his men managed to gain another seven miles before bivouacking for the evening. Their "guests" were afforded bedrolls and field accommodations as each man and animal slept the sleep of exhaustion. For the Rangers the thought of having won this hand of such a deadly game surely sent thoughts of justification and jubilation through every man. For Generals Kelley and Crook, becoming members of the exclusive "Captured Generals" club was surely among the unsettling thoughts considered that evening along with being prisoners to a people from whom you had won undying enmity.

(Ed. note: The above account is written by Rob Wolford, official historian for the City of Romney, and will be brought to Review readers throughout 2015 as a public service.) □

Eyes on potatoes

Ag commissioner wants to seed spuds sprout across state

GEORGE HOHMANN WVPA

State Agriculture Commissioner Walt Helmick is on a mission to create jobs by convincing West Virginian landowners to produce potatoes — lots of potatoes.

Helmick plans to help West Virginians with tillable land plant 5, 10 or 15 acres of potatoes at a time. He envisions an average of 60 acres planted in potatoes in 50 of the state's 55 counties this year.

That would top 3,000 acres. Compared to "the big guys" — the states of Idaho and Washington — "that is a pittance," Helmick said. "However, it's big for us."

The 2012 Census of Agriculture found that just 335 acres in West Virginia were devoted to potato production. Idaho harvested potatoes from 345,217 acres that year. Washington had 163,925 acres of potatoes.

"The big guys get 1,000 bushels an acre," Helmick said. "We think we can get 400 bushels to the acre."

Last year the state Agriculture Department contracted with Black Gold Farms of Grand Forks, N.D., to test grow 14 varieties of potatoes on department-owned land at Lakin and Huttonsville. Black Gold reported that the Atlantic and Snowden varieties produced particularly good yields at Lakin.

Atlantic and Snowden potatoes have white flesh. They are primarily processed into potato chips.

"We've learned a great deal but we also had our eyes opened to a number of issues we have to address, none of which we feel are insurmountable," Helmick said.

"The Black Gold analysis says the Lakin property — we like to call it our western property, on the Ohio River — is quality land. We know we can grow white potatoes, cabbage, corn and a number of products on land on the western side of

the state. That's what we've determined from the analytical work that Black Gold did.

"They also said that the land in Randolph County, our Huttonsville land, would be a challenge. They pointed out things we need to know as we move forward in north-central West Virginia and Randolph County and all of eastern West Virginia."

Black Gold said nitrogen needs to be added to the Huttonsville soil. The analysis "also opens our eyes to the fact we have to maintain the volume of water more closely than we had anticipated," Helmick said. "Obviously it's ideal if you can just plant the potatoes and the good Lord will give you enough water every day. That's not the way it's going to work. We know we're going to have to start looking at an irrigation system."

"This year we will do what Black Gold told us to do and we look to have a significant crop," he said. "We're going to plant some different varieties. But the work we do at the Department of Agriculture is now and will always be just a guide to private growers."

"As time moves on we want private growers throughout West Virginia growing the product. We want to help them learn how to grow different products."

Helmick envisions landowners interested in growing potatoes contacting his office and having an extension agent verify that the landowner has suitable property.

Because "you can't buy a tractor to plant 10 acres," Helmick wants to enlist farm-equipment dealers to provide tractors and other equipment needed to plant potatoes. He envisions the landowners paying a fee for the services.

A local conservation district supervisor would oversee the operation for the first 1, 2 or 3 summers, Helmick said.

"We'll also teach them (landowners) the financial end of it — not only how to grow it but how to grow it to where it's economically feasible to make a job of it and create a job that will see an improved lifestyle," Helmick said.

"We're not going to invent a wheel. What we're doing is go-

ing back and re-inventing something that was once there, using modern technology. The technology that was used when agriculture was abandoned in West Virginia in the 1930s and '40s and somewhat in the '50s was totally different. Modern technology will allow us to get more product per acre. It will also teach us to grow inside product. But right now, in this coming year, we're going to focus on the potato industry."

If Helmick succeeds in having potatoes grown on 3,000 acres and the average yield is 400 bushels per acre, the crop will total 1.2 million bushels of potatoes.

"We've never seen that many potatoes in West Virginia," he said. "We're going to have to figure out where we're going to sell all of these."

There is time to resolve that issue, said Helmick.

Americans consume 128 pounds of potatoes per capita annually. In West Virginia, that's 237 million pounds of potatoes.

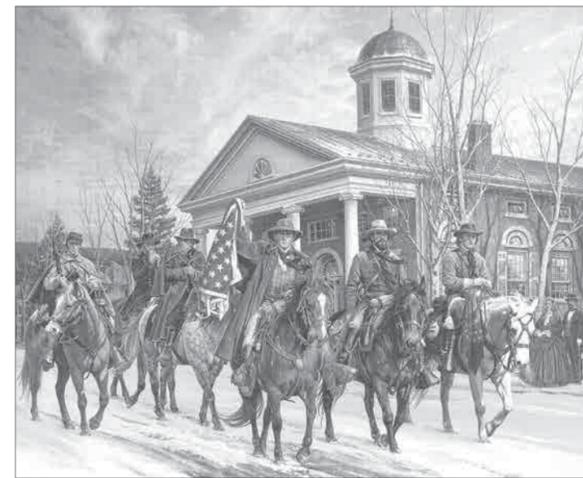
The Department of Agriculture has provided potatoes to correction facilities and other state agencies for many years. Helmick thinks West Virginia schools, colleges and universities are large potential markets.

The price state agencies pay Helmick's department for potatoes is based on the wholesale price determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Price could be a critical issue for growers who sell potatoes in the competitive open market. An article in the July 9, 2014, issue of the Idaho Falls Post Register noted that the market price at that time was below the cost of production.

Last year the state Agriculture Department bought a potato-processing machine and installed it at the department's Huttonsville farm. The machine washes and dries potatoes, sorts them in three sizes, and bags them. The department also bought a potato digger to help with harvests.

Helmick likes to call growing and selling produce in West Virginia a "\$6-billion-dollar opportunity."



"McNeill's Rangers" by John Paul Strain — Captain Jesse McNeill passes through Romney with his prisoners, Federal Generals Kelley and Crook and the Cumberland garrison flag.

Kitchen

■ From Page 1A

tion of habeus corpus relief, otherwise known as a Losh list.

Kitchen signed off on claims of 10 of the possible 54 separate instances of grounds of relief, though 2 claims — irregularities in arrest and the state's knowing use of perjured testimony — were withdrawn during the hearing.

Kitchen claimed: prejudicial pre-trial publicity, failure of counsel to take an appeal, consecutive sentences for the same transaction, ineffective assistance of counsel, excessiveness or denial of bail, claims of prejudicial statements by the prosecutor and an excessive sentence.

Soon after the hearing got underway, the only witness to take the stand, John Allen Boyce, 27, of Augusta, was brought by the petitioner.

After being sworn in, Boyce was questioned by Nelson regarding his cognitive ability and memory issues. Nelson wondered if Boyce has difficulty remembering the sequence of some events, as well as if he had problems remembering things more than 6 months in the past.

Boyce, a key witness for the prosecution in Kitchen's 2009 murder trial, admitted that he did.

Nelson's angle was to call into question Boyce's ability to clearly remember what happened the night of Malcolm's murder.

She raised inconsistencies with his story detailing his mother 1st alerting him to Malcom's death and also the conversation he had with Kitchen at his home where Kitchen confessed to using a baseball bat and steel-toed boots to kill Malcolm.

Hampshire County prosecuting attorney Dan James cross-examined Boyce, and Boyce said that despite having trouble remembering the entire conversation that took place at Kitchen's home, he did remember hearing Kitchen say he killed Malcolm.

Nelson also noted that the call to 911 about Malcolm's "injury or death" came in at 10:10 p.m., but Boyce testified hearing about the incident between 7 and 9 p.m. from his mother, again raising the notion of inconsistency in his testimony relating to his memory issues.

Since there were no other witnesses called, Judge Carl read over the other claims of the grounds of relief, and Nelson made points regarding each one.

One key point involved the excessive sentencing claim, when Nelson noted that Kitchen was sentenced to consecutive terms based on a lack of remorse and emotion, though he was told not to show any emotion during his trial.

Another point was made regarding the claim of the state's knowing use of perjured testimony, but Nelson acknowledged that there was no claim of intentional wrongdoing by the prosecutor and that this allegation would be covered under the prosecutorial misconduct allegation.

Nelson said that inconsistencies of Boyce's testimonies — both during the original trial and in Wednesday's hearing — and Boyce's involvement in a misdemeanor gun charge called into question the competency of then prosecutor Steve Moreland's case.

"I know it's a bit of a stretch," Nelson said, regarding the initial claim that Boyce was perhaps influenced on how to testify by a promise regarding his other legal trouble.

She also raised question in the claim about prejudicial statements by Moreland, due to language he used in his closing argument, where he said "I" instead of "we", and a statement he made where he said that he has tried murders without a body.

James responded, saying that calling into question inconsistencies and alleging use of perjured testimonies were 2 very different things.

At that point, after an explanation by Judge Carl, the claim was withdrawn.

James then went on to respond to the other claims, and said that the circumstantial case the state brought was argued fairly and well by Moreland.

"He put together a great case and the jury believed the state's version over the defense's," James said.

Nelson then drove the point home that Boyce's memory issues were "a cause for concern."

Those issues combined with the other claims led them to the hearing.

"You can look at each of these errors on their own and maybe they are not enough, but this was a 4 day trial and the errors are cumulative."

Judge Carl then noted that both the state and the defense had 30 calendar days to submit any additional pleadings or other information to him on the case and that the ruling would "take a little while and it will be thorough." □

Johnson

■ From Page 1A

the city of Romney until July 1.

The dual role will allow her to oversee 3 big city projects that Mayor Dan Hileman hopes wrap up between now and then — bringing the new sewer plant online at the end of May, construction of new sidewalks in the Safe Routes to School program this spring and expansion of the city's water storage tanks to comply with new state rules.

"I didn't want to give her up, but in this job if she's successful, it's going to benefit the city," Hileman said. "It's a win-win."

Johnson takes over from Shoemaker, whose latest contract ended Dec. 31. He stayed on to oversee the authority until a hiring selection was made. Shoemaker was 1 of 3 candidates interviewed for the job the 1st week in February.

But the authority's personnel committee decided a change was in order, bringing Johnson's name to the full board after a closed session last Wednesday.

Board President Jason Hicks reported the recommendation and Bob Hott, who sits on the board as the County Commission's representative, put her name into nomination.

"Eileen stood out far and above anybody else, in my opinion," Hott said.

He called her motivated and a self-starter.

"We need somebody

that's a visionary and wants to go out and be someone who brings businesses into our county instead of someone who is always reacting to conditions," Hott said.

Hicks praised Johnson's persistence and organizational skills.

"Being able to see projects through was the biggest thing," he said. "We've been able to see what she's done for the town."

Board members Len McMaster and Bob Cheeves voted against the change.

Hileman said the City Council will discuss Johnson's departure at next Monday night's meeting. He anticipated advertising the position quickly.

"I don't ever expect to find anybody of her caliber," he said, but noted, "She's not going to go very far."

Shoemaker was named interim director of the development authority in 2007, after he wrapped up a stint as county commissioner. He has served as executive director on a year-to-year contract since then.

Last summer the HCDA board voted to post the position and bring a full-time, permanent director on when Shoemaker's contract ran out.

During Shoemaker's tenure the HCDA opened a technology park in Capon Bridge. Two years ago, the authority rolled out a proposed \$22 million overhaul of the business park on Romney's north side to include a train station, retail shops and walking trails. □

"We do a lot of the weathering steel with low beams and structural plate," he noted.

Erected in 1936, the truss bridge requires repainting and higher maintenance than new bridges, Thorne said.

Two years ago the bridge was rated 4, in poor condition on a 0-9 scale used to evaluate every bridge in the state.

Engineer Gary Klavuhn noted then that bridge has a weight limit because of the poor condition. □

Bridge

■ From Page 1A

which parallels the river on the north, and Long Road, on the south.

"Better sight distances are going to make it much safer," Thorne said. "That's one of the reasons they decided to move it upstream."

The replacement bridge will probably look a lot like the U.S. 50 bridge, Thorne said, although a final design won't be decided until July.

Waxing

■ From Page 1A

The class chose from athletes, historical figures, politicians, musicians and other significant black Americans.

The project, held in conjunction with Black History

Pete

■ From Page 1A

"excruciating pain, burning sensations and the taste of blood." He had been hit once in the chest, back, lower abdomen and 3 or 4 times in the arm. His leg was "butchered." Only 3 of the 8 on his patrol survived.

For his efforts, Nixon received the Purple Heart, a medal he kept in a desk drawer.

Nixon spent a month in a Tokyo hospital and 7 more in the U.S. Naval Hospital in Portsmouth, Va. While there he married Gail Frye.

Nixon returned to college after he married, earning a bachelor's degree in education from Shepherd College and later his master's in counseling. He taught or served as a counselor in Hampshire, Pendleton and Mineral counties before his war injuries led him to retire in 2004.

Over the last 10 years, Nixon underwent 17 surgeries by

Month, gave the students a chance to spend time learning about African Americans, as well as work on their presentation skills.

"I am extremely proud of them," Massie said, adding, "they went above and beyond what I asked them to do and the results speak for themselves." □

Selena's count.

"He just was a loving, caring father," she says. "He was there for us when we needed him for anything. He was a jokester, loved his family, loved his grandkids, just everything. There's so much you can remember."

In 2004, he had this to say about the Vietnam War:

"I believe we were lied to about the situation, not only here in the United States, but after we arrived in Vietnam. And many still have hard feelings about it. I just hope we can all put it behind us, regardless of which side of the fence we're on, and go forward."

A documentary at the time on men who were injured in Iraq moved the Vietnam vet.

"I saw the same look of hope for a normal life in their eyes that I had. In fact, I saw myself in their place. The physical and mental toll is so great."

Review correspondent Nora Kimble contributed to this report. □

Attention Grassy Lick Road Runners!

We are looking for any interested alumni to help plan a School Reunion for the Grassy Lick Elementary School.

Any help, pictures, memorabilia or information will be greatly appreciated. A meeting is scheduled for March 5, at 6 p.m. at Kirby Assembly of God Church for anyone interested in helping make this event happen.

You can email butterfly19seven@yahoo.com or call/text 304-433-1406 for more information.

Op-Ed

ROB WOLFORD

‘Romney’ flag symbolizes history

What has become known as the Romney Flag rests in a quiet corner of the Stonewall Jackson’s Headquarters Museum in Winchester, Va.

A tattered remnant of a Union victory in a dusty little crossroads town in western Virginia over 150 years ago, the flag is likely the only tangible link to that sunny June day when Lew Wallace began Romney’s Civil War saga.

Among the first 10 engagement of America’s bloodiest war, the attack on Romney inaugurated the tradition of capturing opposing forces’ flags during the Civil War; an act that would cost many their lives and earn others the nation’s highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor.

It would be fair to say that the flag was one of the first captured by the Union Army, if not the first. The action known as the Romney Raid was an early Union victory amidst Union defeats seemingly everywhere else. No fewer than 7 lithographs were executed depicting stages of the raid in Harper’s Weekly and the New York Illustrated News, a rare phenomenon for a skirmish in which only one Union infantryman was wounded.

Colonel Lew Wallace, commander of the 11th Indiana Zouave Infantry arrived in Cumberland, Md., in the late afternoon of June 12, 1861. Anxious to get into the conflict before it ended, Wallace inquired whether there were any Confederate activities in the immediate area.

Finding that Confederate forces under the Command of Col. Arthur Cummins were training and organizing at Romney, just 30 miles southeast of Cumberland, Col. Wallace set off to disperse the rebels at Romney. He ordered his men to entrain and commenced at once to New Creek,

now Keyser. He arrived there that night and began his forced march to Romney by way of Headsville and over the Middle Ridge Road.

Col. Wallace and his men arrived in the environs of Romney in the early morning hours of June 13.

Sighting artillery in the Indian Mound Cemetery he had his men rush across the Romney Bridge and climb the embankment to the high-ground on the other side to flank the rebels. Having gained an advantage with his more disciplined troops, Col. Wallace wheeled his forces left to charge the flank of the Confederates in the cemetery.

By this point all Confederate forces had retreated east through Romney taking most of the civilian population with them. Wallace’s men found the town deserted but for the African-American population. Many homes had hot breakfasts awaiting them all over Romney.

Col. Wallace’s assessment of the geography surrounding Romney caused him to decide not to occupy the Appalachian hamlet any longer than needed. He ordered his men to confiscate all military material and to burn what could not be carried off.

Among the items that he lists in his official report is a rebel flag. Col. Wallace returned to Cumberland that afternoon. The Romney Flag eventually found its way to Indianapolis, where it was displayed as a trophy of war.

The Romney Flag is what is known as a First National pattern of the Confederacy. It was chosen from a wide range of designs and officially adopted on March 4, 1861. For this reason the Romney Flag can be dated to having been made sometime between March 4 and June 13, 1861. Little else is known about its origins.

The Romney Flag measures 40.5 by 112 inches or about 3 by 9 feet. Because of its rather large dimensions it is likely that it was a garrison flag for Romney.

A study in 1976 by H. Michael Madaus and Robert D. Needham of surviving Confederate flags found that most First National flags have a proportional ratio of 3-to-5 hoist-to-fly. The

Romney Flag has a ratio of 1-to-3 hoist-to-fly making it an unusually long flag.

The canton of the flag deserves special mention. It measures 27 by 36.5 inches and has 11 stars in a somewhat odd pattern. The star arrangement was originally an archetype circle of stars initially comprising 7 stars with 4 added within the circle at a later date.

Assuming that this is the case, the flag was likely made about March 2, 1861, with the addition of the 7th state, Texas, to the Confederacy, but before the addition of the 8th state, Virginia, on April 17, 1861. If this be the case, then it may be that the flag was manufactured outside of Virginia, as Virginia did not join the Confederacy until a month following the 7th star being added to Confederate flags.

Within the 7-star circle there are 4 additional stars, presumably for the states of Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina and Tennessee, added as each was added to the Confederacy. Because Tennessee joined the Confederacy on June 8, 1861, it is very likely that the last alteration to the flag was made just 5 days prior to its being captured and possibly altered in Romney.

The stars on the flag measure roughly 3.5 inches point-to-point. They are in pairs sewn onto opposing sides of the flag so that the stitching for each becomes the stitching for its twin on the other side of the flag as expected.

However, a couple of the stars have stitching that misaligned and leads one to ask if this flag was pieced together in a hurry or in some factory setting where quantity was prized above quality.

The canton of the flag is made of 3 pieces of indigo blue fabric; its hue is deep and rich. There is one large piece on which the stars are sewn and two smaller pieces used to fill in at the bottom. One star overlaps the seam on the canton pieces; piecing a flag together from remnants in the 1860s was more the norm than an exception. That the pieces seem cut from the same cloth and are not uniform indicates that the maker had many projects afoot and this was but one evidences the

possibility that the flag was made in a production line.

While purely conjecture, it is likely that Col. Arthur Cecil Cummins brought the Romney Flag to Romney from Harpers Ferry and that its origins are similar to that of other flags made in the Shenandoah Valley. The manufacture of Confederate Flags by the loving hands of “Loyal Ladies of the Sunny South” is a fact that Southerners treasure.

Sam Watkins remarked that his hairs stood on end while he listened to the dedication ceremony of his unit’s flag as the young volunteers of Tennessee swore that they would die to defend their colors and that no one would take the object of the affection from their hands.

To say that a flag is only a piece of cloth and that its existence is for utility only is to not grasp the meaning of national colors. It is more, much more, than the sum of its individual parts. In its furls are recorded the noble acts of the men who followed it to victory, defeat and, for 1 in 10, death on the battlefields of the Civil War.

That the Romney Flag was captured so early in the war speaks to the undisciplined and green nature of the early Southern recruits. In time these same men would lead charges across open fields a mile wide in the face of artillery and musketry and come within a whisper of winning Confederate independence.

In the 1960s, circa the Civil War’s Centennial, many of the Confederate Flags captured in the conflict were returned to their respective states. Among those returned was the Romney Flag.

While it is still a mystery why the flag was not returned to its place of capture, it does reside a short distance in a secure location and in the care of loving curators whose respect and affection for it is never in question. □

Rob Wolford is the historian for the city of Romney. He holds an M.A. in history.

Speed

■ From Page 1A

hiding behind trees and billboards. Hidden speed limit signs. Speed limits unreasonably low. Drivers cited for driving just a mile or two over the limit. Rural towns using speeding fines for revenue.

None of these meanings flatter the police, and all of them annoy Capon Bridge Police Chief Ralph Rice.

“They act like we’re hiding behind signs,” he says. People even say this when he or the town’s other full-time police officer, Paden Yonker, sits at the shale pit up the road from Jill’s Barber Shop, a favorite location for monitoring traffic.

“Nine times out of 10,” he says, “the cars we pull over for speeding are headed towards us,

and for a quarter of a mile we can see them and they can see us.”

Rice says the exchange that follows a stop is predictable.

“When we pull them over, they say ‘I didn’t see the sign,’” he continues. “Excuse me; we have a sign warning the speed limit is decreasing followed by a speed limit sign and a sign saying ‘radar enforced’ on Route 50 at both ends of Capon Bridge.”

Capon Bridge speed limits appear reasonable, judged by state standards. The West Virginia state driver’s manual recommends a speed limit of 25 in residential and business areas. The 35 mile per hour limit on U.S. 50 is generous compared to that, and the 25 mile per hour limit on Cold Stream and Christian Church Roads is exactly what the state recommends.

Whether you think them low or not, Officer Yonker points

out: “The speed limit is not a suggestion. It’s the law.”

Complaints about ticketing for speeds barely over the limit were made 2 years ago, when two local citizens spoke out at the May 2013 Capon Bridge City Council meeting. They charged that former police chief Amos Damron cited drivers for driving just a mile or 2 over the speed limit, and accused the town of depending on speeding ticket revenues for funding.

Council member Janet Baker responded, saying she had recently examined the town’s ticket files. She found no one ticketed for doing less than 7 miles over the limit, and agreed with Chief Damron’s statement that most ticketed drivers were at least 10 miles over the limit when he pulled them over.

Today, Chief Rice and Officer Yonker say that most speeders they pull over on Route 50 are

driving at least 50 miles per hour — 15 miles over the limit. They often charge faster drivers with speeds under 50 to reduce the penalty — “at our discretionary call,” says Officer Yonker. The fine is \$110 if the driver does not exceed 50 miles per hour.

While \$110 may sound like a lot of money, not that many drivers are cited per day. Chief Rice said the Capon Bridge police issue 20-30 speeding tickets in an average month. Every traffic stop does not result in a ticket for speeding. People pulled over may be getting warnings, or be cited for missing or expired tags or inspection stickers.

The town keeps less than half of a \$110 speeding fine; \$60 goes directly to the state. This includes \$40 for the regional jail, a \$10 criminal correction fee, \$8 to the crime victims compensation fund, and \$2 for law enforcement training. The

town’s share is \$50.

How much revenue does this generate? Calculating 30 speeding tickets a month at \$50 each would give the town \$1,500 a month or \$18,000 a year, a little over 7 percent of this year’s town budget. Speeding ticket revenues fall far short of paying the salary of even one full-time police officer.

Chief Rice is quick to point out all the other things his department does. Being visible is part of the job, and sitting in highly visible locations along Route 50 gives citizens an opportunity to stop and talk, as they frequently do.

On a typical day the police also make the rounds of town businesses at least once, and during the school year they direct bus traffic at the intersection of U.S. 50 and Cold Stream Road. They enforce town ordinances and deal with crime —

some of it minor, but still important, especially to the victims.

The chief has paperwork to do as well, to which Chief Rice has added work on grant proposals to bring in money for police equipment. Issuing speeding tickets is just one part of their work.

Speed trap or not, the Capon Bridge police will continue to enforce speed limits, Rice says, for several reasons.

Pedestrians in Capon Bridge walk along roads that lack sidewalks. Some try to cross U.S. 50. Cars pull out into traffic from parking lots and at intersections with no traffic lights.

Justified or not, Capon Bridge’s reputation as a speed trap may be a good thing. As Mayor Steve Sirbaugh pointed out during that City Council meeting back in 2013, traffic slows down when it goes through town. □

Fair

■ From Page 1A

Contracts with the companies supplying rides for county fairs are signed a year in advance. When the school makes its decision in late spring, fair dates cannot be changed.

The outcome was in doubt in the months preceding the vote. The discussion was dominated by those who opposed any change. Several committee members strongly supported what they saw as a 50-year tradition of holding the Hampshire County Fair in August.

Some doubted the Board of Education would ever set the beginning of the school year any earlier in August, or allow the school calendar to conflict with the fair. Representatives of one club announced that their club would refuse to participate in the fair if it were moved to July.

Those in favor of the move were quieter, many not entirely happy about the move, but thinking it necessary. Some privately favored allowing the Board of Education to base decisions on educational concerns, without worrying about

conflict with the fair. Some also worried that student exhibitors would find it difficult if the fair were held during a school week.

Many young people now spend the day at the fairgrounds tending to their animals. The conflict could also mean financial disaster for the fair, since parents might not allow their children to attend the fair on school nights.

Profits from the fair are divided among the Ruritan clubs that plan and staff it, and then used for scholarships and other forms of community service. These profits depend on young people and families purchasing food and tickets for rides throughout the evening.

In the end, the vote came Monday night without further discussion. Representatives of each Ruritan club were given a paper ballot allowing the club one vote, and the vote favored moving the fair to July, 6 clubs to 3.

Committee Chair Paul Lewis will check with the company supplying rides to make sure the last week in July is still available. So long as it is, the Hampshire County Fair will move to the last week in July in 2016. □

summer.

“Our corn crop is excellent,” he said.

The recent rain hasn’t been a problem for them, either. “That’s one thing that can take all the moisture you can give it,” he said. “Our corn grows on a hill, not in the low lying river areas. I’ve never seen it too wet for corn for us,” he said.

Like Arnold will do later this week, Cook said they have begun getting the corn out to the masses.

They started picking their sweet corn last Friday and it is now for sale at their Lynn’s Market location at Mountain Top.

“We have 30 acres of sweet corn that comes in about 2 acres a week. That puts corn for sale from now through the end of September,” he said. □

O’Hara

■ From Page 1A

tion from O’Hara’s defense attorney Jonathan Brill that James disclose any statements made by Shoemaker leading up to the trial. James agreed to do so before Judge Charlie Carl ruled on the motion.

Two issues remain outstanding for Carl to rule on before the trial. First, Brill has announced his intention to request a change of venue.

HHS

■ From Page 1A

One of her main goals is to follow the path set by Woofter to make Hampshire High a state School of Excellence.

“It’s a criteria set by the state,” she said. Things like stu-

Second, Carl ordered the 2 attorneys to negotiate over which crime scene photographs will be submitted in evidence. Brill has described some of the pictures as gruesome.

Shoemaker’s plea agreement stipulates that his sentencing will occur after Mandy O’Hara’s trial. He faces a sentence of up to 20 years in prison, although he is permitted in the agreement to argue at his sentence hearing for a 10-year term.

Brill said Monday that Shoemaker’s guilty plea and impending testimony came as no

surprise. He characterized the change as simply another development that any attorney would have to deal with.

“Anything and everything changes everything,” he said. “It can be something happening in a trial and you just deal with it.”

Mandy O’Hara was dating Shoemaker’s father, John Steven Shoemaker II, at the time of the murder. She was living with Shoemaker III and his pregnant girlfriend, Gabriella Clutter in Capon Bridge.

Both O’Hara and Shoemaker were indicted last September.

Those charges were dropped and the pair was re-indicted together in May, allowing James to pursue trying them jointly in August. Shoemaker’s plea agreement meant Judge Carl didn’t have to rule on motions from both defendants to sever the trials.

In addition to 1st-degree murder, O’Hara faces charges of conspiracy to commit murder, concealment of a human body, conspiracy to conceal a deceased human body, burglary and conspiracy to commit burglary. □

for college and beyond.”

Hardinger resides in Augusta with her husband Ed who doubles as both the physical education teacher at Romney Elementary School and the wrestling coach at HHS. They have 2 daughters, Brianna, a nurse in Morgantown, and Janna who is studying elementary education at Fairmont. □

Standards for those responsible for educating the students at HHS are also going to be a top priority in the new administration.

“I want to make sure we have the best teachers that are teaching up to their potential,” Hardinger said. “As we hire I want to get the most highly qualified people to prepare our kids

Flag

■ From Page 1A

Only a few weeks removed from Confederate Memorial Day celebrations here, the flag and the cause are back in the spotlight.

Romney Mayor Dan Hileman says it is the duty of both the town and its residents to remember those — on both sides of the war — that fought and died.

“We recognize those that served on both sides and I think that’s the right thing to do. That was a very important point in our community history,” he said.

“What we do is honor both sides. We don’t show any partiality and even though we have Confederate re-enactors we have had Union ones in the past as well.

“I feel personally it’s important to recognize everyone. The Civil War was so devastating to the country.”

Another cause for pause is the fact that the badge worn by Romney’s police force contains the confederate flag that has caused so much controversy over the last few weeks.

Hileman says so far he has not heard any call to remove or change it.

“If it’s offensive I would certainly consider changing it, but I haven’t heard any comments at all from the local public,” he said.

“It’s been there for years and years, way before my time. I have never even thought about it, honestly,” he said.

Another group feeling the wrath of the rebirth of the controversy is the Sons of the Confederate Veterans.

“I feel that is an attack on our heritage,” said Matt Arnott, Camp Commander of the Mountaineer Partisan Rangers Camp 2249.

“The Sons of Confederate Veterans is there to preserve South-

ern history, it is not about hate. I feel that it has become a major issue and the people with strong Southern heritage will not let it be tolerated.

“There are many things in this world that offend people. We see it everyday, but it does not mean that we banish or get rid of it because it might upset or offend someone.

“When will it end? Are we going to keep removing things because it offends others? I hope not. There will be nothing left in this world.”

Arnott says that the backlash has his group protecting their cause more than ever, but it also has drawn up new interest in those interested in joining the group, which is a good thing in the middle of all the controversy.

“With our heritage under attack and others trying to erase what has happened in the past, people are now interested in what is happening and taking in-

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2 in a row

Sports, Page 1C

Wednesday, November 4, 2015

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Hello Hampshire! From Mason Roach, Augusta



Roy Wolford, Amherst, Va. Thanks for subscribing!

First of 2 ATM thieves sentenced to prison Details, Page 3A

HEROIN HITS HOME



'It's come around full circle'

Pill-popping gives way to cheaper cousin heroin

JIM KING Review Staff

First in a series

Heroin usage in Hampshire County is spiking in 2015, mirroring a statewide surge that brought President Obama to Charleston 2 weeks ago, but lagging behind trends seen in Martinsburg and Winchester, Va.

Numbers — of arrests, of overdose calls to 911, of deaths — only tell part of the story.

Chief Deputy Nathan Sions says 80 percent of the crime the Hampshire County Sheriff's Office deals with tracks back to drugs. Prosecutor Dan James puts the percentage higher.

"Ninety percent of my cases are drug-related.

The breaking-and-enterings, the burglaries — they're drug-related and people are getting sick of it," he said.

Sheriff John Alkire explains: "When it comes down to it, people are stealing property and pawning it for anything to get a little bit of cash."

Increasingly, that's to buy heroin as access has gotten easier and the cost of related prescription drugs has risen.

Heroin is an opiate, extracted from the opium poppy. Prescription painkillers like oxycodone and hydrocodone are opioids, man-made drugs that mimic the effects of heroin. The way they work is similar too.

"It changes the brain," says Cindy Corbin, executive director of Pathways, a recovery program based in Romney. "Somebody who is trying to get clean and sober from that, it's almost impossible, it's highly, highly, highly unlikely you can do it without going into a long treatment program and then a long-term recovery program."

Four or 5 years ago, pills were the biggest concern for law enforcement here. Before that, in the early 2000s, heroin was king, Alkire says.

"Now the last couple 3 years it's gone back more so to heroin," he says. "It's come around full circle."

After a few years without any heroin deaths, 2 were recorded here in 2014.

See HEROIN page 5A

OVERDOSE CALLS

To Hampshire 911 center

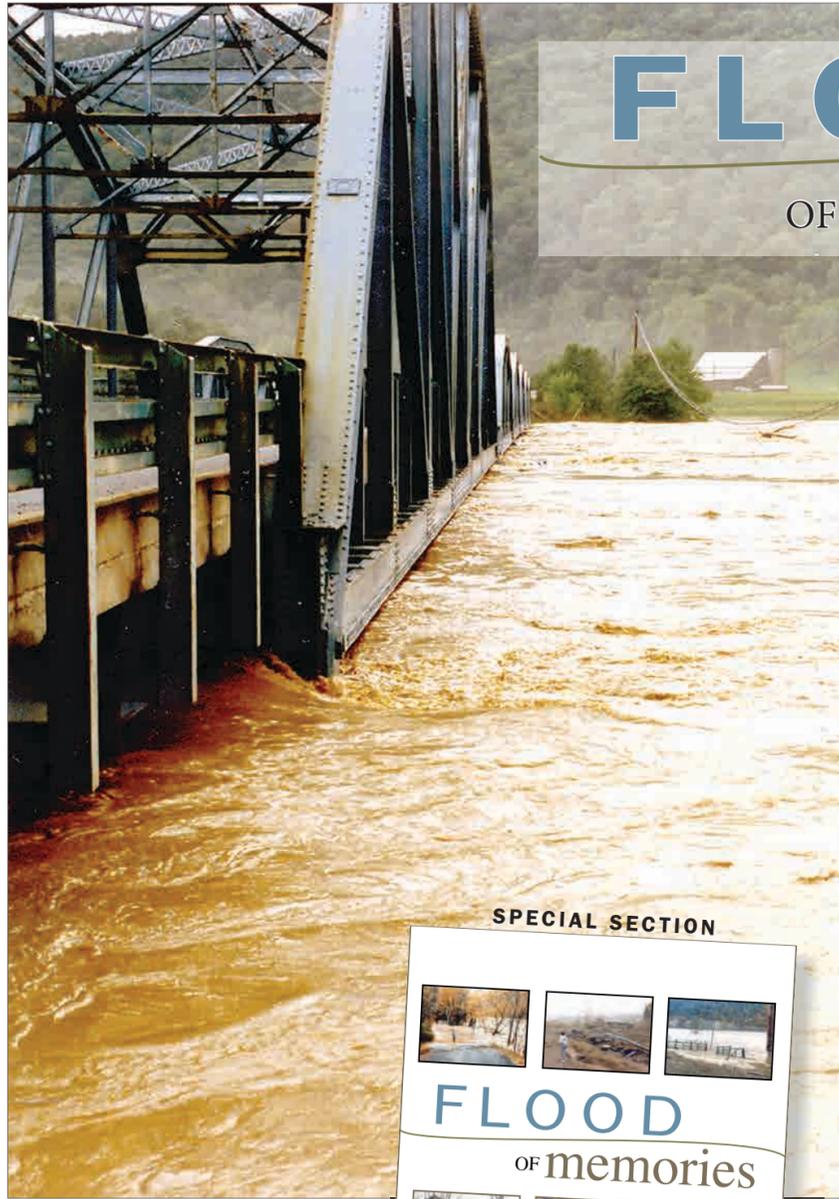
YEAR	CALLS	POLICE HELP
2012	30	19
2013	28	18
2014	29	17
2015*	40	26

*As of Oct. 26

DRUG TALK

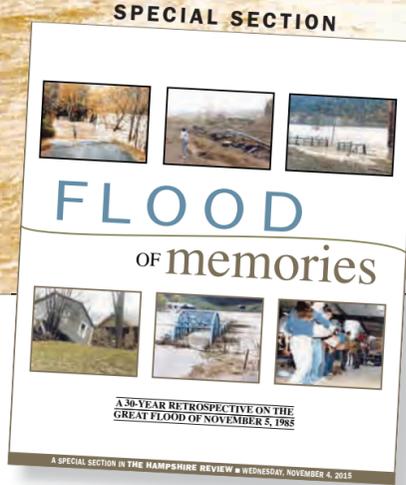
Opiates
Drugs derived from the opium poppy.
Morphine
Codeine
Heroin
Opium

Opioids
Synthetic or partly-synthetic drugs that mimic opiates
Methadone
Oxycodone (sold as Percocet, Percodan or OxyContin)
Hydrocodone (sold as Vicodin, Lorcet, Lortab)
Demerol
Dilaudid
Duragesic



Water recedes from the Romney Bridge, where U.S. 50 crosses the South Branch, the day after the 1985 flood crested.

Review Files



FLOOD OF memories

30 years of lessons

What if it happens again?

ED DEWITT Review Staff

ROMNEY — Thirty years ago at this very moment life changed forever in Hampshire County.

Record rainfall upstream made the South Branch of the Potomac River flood to never-before-seen levels — it crested at 44.22 feet in Springfield — and created a disaster in West Virginia that made national headlines.

Homes, camps, roads and bridges that marked hundreds of years of family legacies and progress were washed away in almost an instant.

We still experience the flood of 1985 every day. We pass by the ruins of homes. We drive over new bridges. We see river bedrock where once there were lush banks covered in towering trees.

Three decades later, are we any better prepared to combat the rising river if —or when — it happens again?

"We really should be better off for the next time," Charlie Baker, Hampshire County Floodplain Administrator and chair of the West Virginia Floodplain Association, said.

Among the many hats he wears in his line of work, Baker manages the county effort to make sure all structures built in the floodplain are up to code and were constructed with all the proper permits.

"Hopefully I am doing my job and getting the message out there," he said of the proper way to build and manage structures in the floodplain.

"We publish articles, we send letters and we regulate the special flood hazard better now than we did in 1985," he said. "We have a permitting process and make sure any construction in the flood hazard area meets minimum standards for the national flood insurance program."

See FLOOD page 5A

Recycling begins Saturday

HOW IT WORKS

What's recyclable: Cardboard, newspaper, magazines and catalogs
When: 8-noon Saturdays and Wednesdays
Where: Old Hampshire Memorial Hospital, Romney

JIM KING Review Staff

ROMNEY — Hampshire County's new era of recycling slides quietly into place Saturday morning at a temporary location for a single type of material.

From 8 a.m. to noon, cardboard and other paper products like newspapers, catalogs and magazines can be dropped off in bins on the west side of the Old Hampshire Memorial Hos-

pital on Depot Street.

To start the program off, a truck from United Disposal will be on hand to handle any pent-up supply, said County Clerk Eric Strite.

The bins will be open for paper recycling every Saturday from 8 to noon and starting on Nov. 18 for the same hours on Wednesdays.

"Wednesday the 11th is a holiday," Strite noted, "so we



Review Staff

The temporary recycling station is set up on the west side of old Hampshire Memorial Hospital in Romney.

probably won't be open that day."

The program is a far cry from what the Hampshire Recycling Cooperative envisioned when

it undertook the petition drive last year that forced the County Commission into creating the effort that begins Saturday.

See RECYCLING page 5A



ED DEWITT Review Staff

Board Secretary Shirley O'Dell swears in Jeffrey Crook as interim superintendent of Hampshire County Schools

Board unanimously rejects CBMS audit

ED DEWITT Review Staff

ROMNEY — There will not be an outside audit for funds associated with Capon Bridge Middle School.

After Superintendent Skip Hackworth presented the Hampshire County School

Board with 2 price options — for both a 1-year and 5-year audit — the board voted 5-0 in favor of not spending the money it would cost to do so.

A 1-year audit for the last fiscal year would have cost

See AUDIT page 5A

Giant rainbow entralls entire county

ED DEWITT Review Staff

THE POT OF GOLD — The morning commute for thousands of Hampshire County residents was a lot brighter than normal last Thursday, thanks to a massive double rainbow that gave new meaning to "Almost Heaven."



SEE ALL 107 PICS

The show began at about 7:35 a.m. as dark black and maroon clouds gave way to a spectacular light show that was visible as far away as Berkeley County.

More than 100 visitors to the Review's Facebook page posted photos of the rainbow, and speculation as to where it ended ranged from the field next to Dollar General in Capon Bridge, to the Bank of Romney at Sunrise Summit.

"It was just glorious," Leana Timbrook said in a post. "I heard the rain and wind and stepped out to the most beautiful sight. I was rushing out the

See RAINBOW page 5A



ED DEWITT Review Staff

Thursday morning's rainbow breaks through the clouds as seen from across from Augusta Elementary School.

VETERANS DAY 2015



Boyce's WARS

Living, Page 1B

comfort.love.respect.

Celebrating Hospice

Pages 6B-7B

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WE'RE WITH YOU

Greenlight a vet campaign takes off

Review Staff

The nation's largest retailer is pushing a nationwide effort to honor veterans in a new way as it works on its own commitment to hire 250,000 vets by 2020.

"Greenlight a Vet" is Wal-Mart's campaign of honor and help for America's veterans.

The honor part is simple enough to join.

Greenlightavet.com asks everyone to turn one light at home — on your porch or in your house — green and leave it on "as a symbol of appreciation and support for our veterans."

The page urges participants to share their support by taking a picture of the green light and posting it using the hashtag #greenlightavet.

The webpage also has a place to click to show support — support it says will be highlighted during the nation's largest Veterans Day parade Nov. 11 in New York City.

The help comes from Wal-Mart's hiring pledge. The discount giant recently hired its 100,000th veteran.

Empowering organizations including the Institute for Veterans and Military Families, Team Red, White and Blue, Team Rubicon, Hire Heroes USA and Blue Star Families have joined Wal-Mart in the campaign, which launched Oct. 26.



actionable national support for America's veterans and their families," a Wal-Mart press release said. "You interact with them every day at work, at school and in the neighborhood. However, it's hard to show them support or recognize their contributions when, back home and out of uniform, they're more camouflaged than ever."

The company said it chose green for the light's color because a green light means go, "and that's what veterans are known for — their ability to take action quickly no matter the challenge."

Wal-Mart and the Wal-Mart Foundation have committed \$20 million in grants to organizations that provide veteran job training, education and community-based collaboration.

Two donations include: • A \$500,000 grant to Hire Heroes USA (Hire Heroes) to help increase their capacity. Hire Heroes has built a national reputation of excellence for their success at helping unemployed veterans find jobs.

• A \$190,000 grant to Blue Star Families for a tech-train-to-hire project that will train military spouses for high demand and high growth careers in technology. This program speaks to the heart of one of the greatest challenges to military life, which is 58 percent unemployment and underemployment among military families. □

Heroin

■ From Page 1A

So far this year, heroin has not been listed on any death certificates, but 3 point to the problem.

• On Jan. 4, Lorranna Mae Ginevan, a 59-year-old married homemaker in Augusta, died of intoxication of opiates that were not prescribed.

• On April 28, 20-year-old Brandon Riggleman, a laborer from Purgitsville, died of "non-prescribed" morphine intoxication.

• And on June 24, David Matthew Downham, 49, a construction supervisor from High View, died of "a combined drug intoxication" at his home.

A 4th death, 33-year-old Jennifer Williamson's on June 2, involved the opioids oxycodone and hydrocodone.

The 911 center has taken 40 calls for drug overdoses so far this year. The total for all of 2014 was 30. Law enforcement responds to about 75 percent of those calls; the rest are emergency medical service alone.

Ongoing undercover investigations have resulted in drug sweeps coming out of 2 of the 3 grand jury sessions this year.

In January, Operation Frostbite rounded up 22 suspects indicted on delivery with intent to distribute. Three were for hero-

in, 7 for opioids and the rest for marijuana.

By September, Operation Catharsis hauled in 19 more people, 8 on charges involving heroin and 11 for opioids.

"These were some serious drugs," James said in September.

He said heroin is making a rebound because the previous drug of choice — prescription pain pills — has gone up in price.

"Whatever the milligram of the pill was, it was a dollar a milligram," James said. "Now it's more like \$1.50 or \$2 per milligram. Prices have gone up tremendously and heroin is cheaper to buy."

Congressman Alex Mooney (R-Shepherdstown) put it this way when he held a town hall meeting here with area police in early September: "Law enforcement is doing what they can to crack down on the pill mills, and heroin has been increasing in popularity. One prescription pain-killer can cost \$20 while a bag of heroin costs \$8."

The supply is steady from the east, specifically Baltimore.

"Some people make trips quite often to Baltimore," Alkire says. "They're not purchasing in large quantities; they're purchasing with what cash they have to support their habit for a couple days and make enough selling for them

to go back — multiple trips a week."

The Baltimore-to-Martinsburg connection is well documented. Berkeley County was designated as part of the Washington-Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area in September 2014. The HIDTA designation sends more federal resources there to reduce drug abuse.

A HIDTA report this summer noted that Berkeley County's 24 heroin deaths in 2014 puts it per capita in worse shape than Baltimore.

Across the Virginia line, Winchester and the Northern Shenandoah Valley are facing similar issues. As of July 23, 12 overdose deaths had been recovered in the region.

"Thank goodness, we don't have the population," Alkire says. "Luckily we're a more rural setting with fewer people, so we're going to have less of a problem."

Keeping the problems of those cities to the east there is paramount for the county's drug court program.

"A couple of counties are really, really struggling and have huge amounts of overdoses," says Drug Court Supervisor Sarah Royal. "Our whole goal is not getting us to that point."

Coming: Challenges in stopping the drugs □

Flood

■ From Page 1A

That is important because should a disaster like the 1985 flood happen again, it means the county would be eligible for federal disaster assistance instead of grants. "Grants you have to pay back," Baker said, "the federal assistance you don't."

That is probably the biggest difference in how things were handled in 1985.

"We were in the program but did not have the permit process in place," Baker said. "That really started taking effect in 1986. That disaster led to us doing things properly with more stringent regulations."

Baker's team communicates with builders, homeowners, realtors and insurance agents. "We also talk to our congressmen," he said.

In return, Baker can sleep at night knowing he is doing everything in his power to be prepared for the next big flood, whether it happens or not.

"People don't like regulations," he said, "but my job is trying to help them preserve their investment. That's the whole reason for this. We want them to be able to pass that event and still have a home."

That should offer a peace of mind when it comes to property and livelihood, but what about the logistics involved with emergency management?

First responders and EMS workers in 1985 indicated that a powerless feeling loomed over the whole South Branch River valley as there was little that could be done to help those in need until the water receded.

Part of that was because communication was completely cut off thanks to massive power outages as the floodwaters rose. Thankfully, 30 years of technological advancements should be an asset if the unthinkable happens again.

"We now have the luxury of having a mass notification system," said Brian Malcom, Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in Hampshire County.

"Within seconds we can call everyone in the flood plain with the push of a button. They can link it up to their cellphones, too, and it documents that we spoke to someone or we know if a message was left. Then, we can send someone out to help if

an actual person isn't spoken to. It's the Cadillac of systems."

That system is an example of the interoperability radio and communication upgrades that have been made through the valley over the last 30 years. "The speed of information is disseminated faster," Malcom said.

In addition, the county now has satellite telephone and Internet that can be used if power and phone lines are down.

Malcom also noted that since 1985, the city of Romney has relocated their water plant, and generators were installed at critical infrastructure sites across the county.

"We are continuously upgrading our 'what if' scenarios," he said. "We constantly identify what we need to upgrade."

Another major improvement in the wake of the '85 flood is the fact that the county now has 3 American Red Cross designated shelters should residents be displaced. There was not a single one in 1985.

Those shelters are at the Augusta Assembly of God, Springfield Valley Fire Department and the Capon Springs Volunteer Fire Department.

Generators have either been installed, or are ready to be installed in those locations so that power can remain on for the victims in need.

Again, that is a little bit less to worry about should the skies darken for days and cause the South Branch to erupt again.

And, it can and likely will happen again, at some point.

"The amount of rain that fell in Hampshire County during the Flood of 1985 was far from unprecedented," said Jason Elliott, Senior Service Hydrologist at the National Weather Service in Baltimore and Washington.

"It's estimated 3 to 5 inches of rain fell in the Romney area in one day, which is something that happens at least once a decade. What made this event historic was the amount of rain that fell upstream."

Franklin, in Pendleton County, recorded 7.55 inches of during that same time period. Similar heavy rain also occurred in Petersburg.

"Statistically, that much rain in a single day has less than 1 percent chance of happening in any given year," Elliott said, "so that tells you it was an extreme event, but it also tells you that there's always a chance it could happen again."

When, though?

"It's almost impossible to say," Elliott said. "Petersburg actually had a more severe flood in 1996, but the South Fork of the South Branch had less extreme flooding, so the impact wasn't as great downstream."

According to Elliot it would take — forgive the pun — a perfect storm of conditions.

"To get an event like 1985 again in Hampshire County, it would likely require a widespread very heavy rain in both the South Branch and South Fork South Branch river basins combining and moving downstream," he said.

"We've seen that it happened before, so of course it's possible in the future. We have to remember what happened then and always be ready if it comes our way again."

Thanks to the diligent work of people like Baker and Malcom, Hampshire County has done just that, gotten ready.

"We participate in the community rating system and that shows that the county goes above and beyond the minimum standards," Baker said.

He also warns about the trendy terminology of calling the flood of 1985 a 100-year flood.

"Everyone calls it a 100-year flood," he said. "When you call it that, everyone assumes we won't have another one for another 100 years. You could actually have 2 or 3 of that magnitude in 1 year, so calling it a 1 percent flood is the direction we are going."

"What that means is that in any given rain event there is a 1 percent chance that levels could exceed a hypothetical magnitude."

As time passes and those affected most by the disaster of 1985 continue to pass on and be lost to the ages, Baker worries that complacency could set in among those wanting to live near the river.

It's his job to always remind them of the danger they face and the best way to be prepared for it, and even with the threat of flooding looming over the decision making process, people are still building around the river as much as ever.

"I think with the passing of time people forget," Baker said. "It's been 30 years. Even I was just a kid then. People who come in from out of state to build and didn't live it don't understand that from mountain to mountain it was nothing but water." □

Rainbow

■ From Page 1A

door, but I had to just stop and breathe in the fall rain shower and gaze at God's promise."

It was also a welcome sight for Tennessee resident Kathy

Heare Watts.

"Let me say this, wow! Every single picture shared is just beautiful. I love keeping up with Hampshire County news because that is where my father is from and I have relatives there. Every person who shared their beautiful rainbow pictures has blessed my heart.

Recycling

■ From Page 1A

And it's a ways away from the commission's own plan to have a facility in Augusta next to the Potomac Highlands Regional Jail.

That site requires preparation — excavation, fencing, other security measures, parking spaces — that costs money the commission hopes a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection will pay. But the grants won't be announced until next week or be available until January.

"The commission would have just gone ahead and paid the costs up front, but the grant won't pay for reimbursements," Strite said.

So, Plan B was hatched to recycle paper products at old HMH until then.

The new program replaces United Disposal's monthly trips to Hampshire High School to pick up paper and cardboard. A bin with narrow access is for cardboard. A 2nd bin for other paper sits inside a locked chain link fence.

Strite said security is a concern, both at HMH and when the program moves to Augusta.

RECYCLING TIP

In order to make recycling easy at home, start with a system as easy as 1-2-3. Just have 1 small container for each material that's being recycled, 1 for cans 1 for glass and 1 for plastics. A small kitchen-size trashcan works well as do 5-gallon buckets for smaller homes and individuals.

— RANDY DAVIS, Delray

"We'll have an attendant on duty," he said. "We really want to avoid people putting trash in."

United Disposal is providing 1 bin and the county is renting the 2nd. United is the main trash hauler in the county and under West Virginia Public Service Commission rules had to be given the 1st opportunity to participate in the county's recycling program.

As part of the Region 8 Solid Waste Authority, the transfer station on Route 28 north of Romney already accepts tires (for a small fee), TVs, computers and some metals for recycling

Petitions presented to place

Thank you. They are breathtaking pictures of beauty."

The original post has amassed 568 likes and 134 shares and has reached nearly 18,000 people. It is still up on the Review's wall and all the photos shared by readers can be scrolled through and enjoyed in comments section. □

recycling on the May 2014 primary ballot fell short of confirmable signatures, but a new effort over the summer put the issue on the November ballot last year.

Voters approved the state-mandated wording by more than a 2-to-1 margin, starting the clock ticking toward Saturday's 1st collection. State law gave the commission 180 days from when the election was certified to establish a "comprehensive" recycling program for the county and then another 180 days to begin implementing the program.

When the commission adopted its 3-page plan in May, Robin Mills of the recycling co-op gave the proposed start his support.

"I understand you have budget concerns. We are a small county with a very tight budget. And, I think we need to go slow," Mills told commissioners.

The commission's plan includes an open-ended approach to expanding, taking into account changes in the market for recyclables.

"This plan gives us plenty of leeway for expanding," commissioner Bob Hott said in May. □

Audit

■ From Page 1A

\$4,000 and a 5-year audit — as requested by board member John Ward — would have set the county back nearly \$20,000. The vote came after Finance Director Denise Hott presented the results of her own internal audit to the board. Hott indicated that the only information she did not yet have involved purchases for the concession stand during athletic events.

The vote brought the tension involving the athletic funds at the school to a head, and confusion regarding the start time of the board meeting had one parent, Micah Moreland, up in arms that he was unable to address the board during the appearances

portion of the meeting.

Moreland arrived shortly after 6 p.m. for what he thought was a 6:30 meeting and was therefore not allowed to make his appearance. The meeting included an expulsion hearing set for 5:30 p.m. that ended up being canceled, and the appearances portion took place then instead of at the usual time of 6:30.

Hackworth called Moreland speaking a "moot point," since the vote for the audit had already been shot down by the board minutes before. Therefore, Hackworth said, Moreland would not be allowed to make his appearance.

Other highlights of Monday's meeting included:

• Gayle Allen addressed her concerns of "being bullied" by the central office during a phone conversation. She was trying to

get information as to why a representative of the WVEA was not invited to the superintendent interview. "He took a hostile tone and hung up on me," Allen said of Hackworth. "This is not conducive to shared progress."

• New superintendent Jeffrey Crook was sworn in by board secretary Shirley O'Dell. Crook began his tenure at midnight on Nov. 3.

• Thanks were directed to Hackworth from the board members for his time and dedication as superintendent.

• Realignment of some responsibilities across the school system and the elimination of the position of Director of Middle/High School Curriculum. It had been vacant and not in the budget for the last 2 years. □

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FLOOD

OF memories



A 30-YEAR RETROSPECTIVE ON THE
GREAT FLOOD OF NOVEMBER 5, 1985

Similar stories from different points of view

Review Staff

From every angle, the stories were different, yet at the same time similar. And, as we found out, there were a lot of angles to cover.

Condensing interviews and the submitted experiences of more than 2 dozen people into 12 pages was a tall task, to be sure, but we hope you'll find this supplement valuable on a few levels.

First, the age group of people most af-

ected by the flood of 1985 is gradually disappearing. Three decades have come and gone, and with them so have many of the stories, emotions and memories of the flood. Those of us who remain have a responsibility not to forget and to preserve as much as we can for future generations.

Second, we wanted to give you, the residents of Hampshire County who lived through what was one of the worst natural disasters in state history, a chance to talk to us.

As you'll read, we seemed to find at least one person willing to speak from many walks of life.

As the interviews took place and the comments and stories poured in via mail, email and social media, one binding factor joined all the stories that we recorded. We are a resilient, conscientious people, and even Mother Nature's worst won't hold us down for long.

Comments ranging from "There was

nothing we could do" to "We did what we had to do to get through it" filled the pages of text we received.

The stories contained within these pages come right from the mouths of people who lived them, and though we won't be doing another supplement like this for a few more years at least, anyone reading this is welcome to give the Review a call or send us a note with your experience so it isn't forgotten. □

A storm collided with a mountain

Review Staff

The storm that became the Flood of 1985 started as a tropical blip nearly a month earlier off the African coast.

By Oct. 31, the remnants of Hurricane Juan pushed out of the Gulf of Mexico north across the southeastern states. On Nov. 3, a Sunday, another storm formed over Georgia and tapped the moisture left in the atmosphere by Juan as it too drifted north.

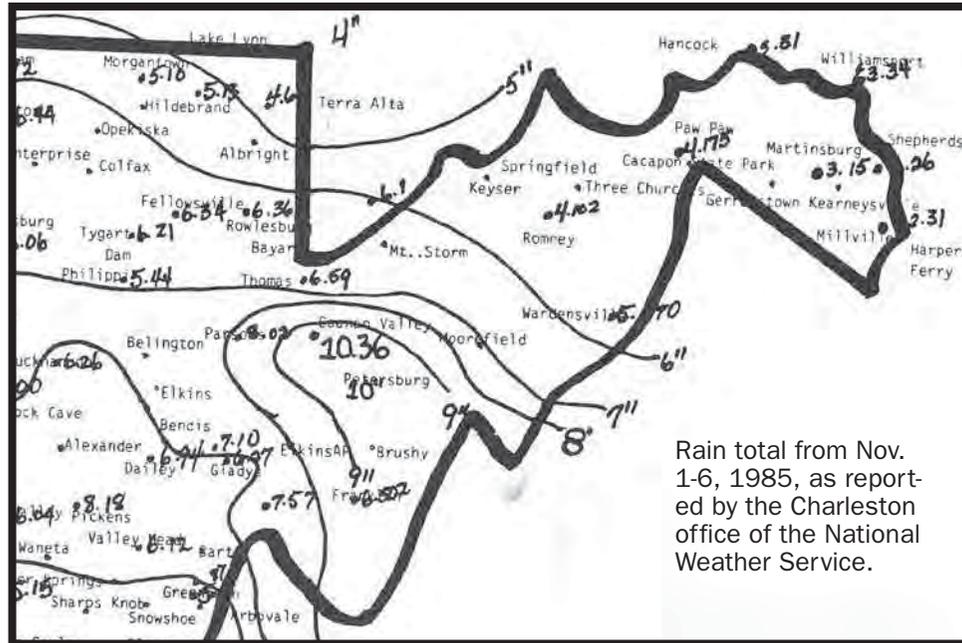
By dawn on Nov. 4, the storm was drenching southern West Virginia and strengthening as it moved north. By nightfall, the center of the storm sat over Lynchburg, Va., and its clockwise motion pulled Atlantic moisture that ran smack into the eastern edge of the Allegheny Mountains.

Within 24 hours, the deluge had hit hardest at the headwaters of some of West Virginia's great rivers like the Cheat, the Greenbrier and the South Branch, setting off historic levels of flooding that rolled through the communities and farms downstream.

Petersburg was hit hardest with more than 10 inches. The Weather Service office in Charleston reported just over 4 inches for Romney.

NOAA reported that the Cheat and Greenbrier rivers crested at record levels. Record water heights were also seen on portions of the Tygart Valley, Little Kanawha, and West Fork rivers, and on the north and south Branches of the Potomac.

At Parsons, the Cheat River crested 10



Rain total from Nov. 1-6, 1985, as reported by the Charleston office of the National Weather Service.

HAMPSHIRE'S LOSS

- 3 People dead
- 1 Bridge washed out
- 529 Homes destroyed
- 55 Homes condemned
- 39 Homes with major damage
- 8 Homes with minor damage
- 40 Households displaced
- 28 Private businesses destroyed

Source: **KILLING WATERS: THE GREAT WEST VIRGINIA FLOOD OF 1985**

Those proved to be fatalities as well. Schools, which closed Nov. 5, reopened the following Tuesday except for students at Romney and Hampshire who lived west of the South Branch.

With the roadbed of the South Branch bridge washed out west of Romney the only way across was by foot.

Statewide the numbers were staggering. At the time the death toll was thought to be 38, but it rose to 47.

The hardest hit were Grant and Preston counties.

The loss is estimated between \$570 million and nearly \$700 million. More than 3,500 homes and 180 businesses were destroyed. Rich, valuable farmland was simply swept away.

The South Branch bridge was rebuilt and then replaced in 2010. The Flood of 1985 passed from headlines to history. □

feet above flood stage and 4 feet higher than the previous record from July 1888.

At Glenville, the Little Kanawha River crested 13 feet above flood stage and about 2 feet higher than the March 1967 flood. At Philippi, the Tygart Valley River crested nearly 15 feet above flood stage, around 4 feet higher than the previous record stage.

At Moorefield, the South Branch of the Potomac River crested about 10 feet above flood stage and nearly 4 feet higher than June 1949, the previous record.

First reports here were sketchy.

The Hampshire Review of Nov. 6, 1985, included a statement from Romney Mayor Larry Miller.

He said the filtration plant on the city's west edge had operated all night to provide water reserves until rising water forced it to close at 4 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 5.

A week later the Review reported that an unidentified hunter from Brunswick, Md., had died in a camp and 2 of his companions were missing.

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THANKS

We thank those willing to be interviewed for this section, along with the following people who provided the bulk of the photographs: Rob-in Pancake, Splinter and Nancy Arnold, Mike and Linda Smith and Linda Cunningham.

FLOOD OF memories

1985 Flood

The devastation

There are not many people in Hampshire County who were not impacted by the

flood of 1985. Our family was no exception. My Aunt, Mary Susan Williams, had “back water” from the Rt. 50 bridge, 5 or 6 feet on the main level of her pre-Civil War home. Much was saved, much was destroyed. I recall my cousin from Mt. Lake Park, Md., commenting; “at least

we have a place to clean up.” Many lost everything. My cousin, Carl Pownell from Springfield had a cottage at the foot of the Trough in Sector, W.Va. Many wonderful family memories were made there and the whole thing, land and all, washed down the river. These photos give one a really good idea of what changed.



► **Before** — My friends at the cottage standing in front of the garage the summer prior to the flood. The white truck in the background is pointed toward the foot of the Trough.



▼ **After** — Just over the head of the man wearing the cap (my cousin Carl) is the end of the Trough. The concrete slab behind Carl and my dad, Loy, was all that remained of the garage. Note how the flood carved out and took the earth.

▲ **Before** — Looking southeast, toward the river prior to the flood. Note corner of the cinder block cottage on left side of photo.



► **After** — Looking southeast, after the flood. Note light color block of cement on left side of photo — the remains of the cottage’s concrete floor. The buildings off in the distance are the Trough General Store on the other side of the river. The flood took the trees, the earth and the cottage.



The power of Mother Nature was demonstrated beyond my imagination when this occurred. Prior to this, I would have never believed the magnitude of change that occurred in Sector, West Virginia.

Carter Wagoner, Romney, W.Va.

Jan Kesner

I spent 2 nights at Capon Bridge Rescue Squad due to Cold Stream being flooded. I remember waking up early to the sound of a helicopter landing behind the fire company and being greeted by the RESA 8/9 Executive Director. He was flying to Bloomington Dam to “babysit” it. There were concerns it could be failing and if it did we wouldn’t have much notice. He told me if it didn’t hold, the Johnstown flood in Pennsylvania would look like a walk in the creek compared to what this could do.

Barbara Shingleton

I remember the cow that was stuck up under the bridge.

Christine Seeders

My brother, Thomas Seeders, lived past the bridge. We had to go around to the other side of the mountain to get to him and his family. My sister-in-law said that the water came up in their living room and kitchen; they had one big mess. Water was everywhere. It just messed up everything. So, my mother told them to get some things together and they went to my mother’s house for a couple of days until the water went down. It was awful. What a mess, but everyone made it. □



Left, The Romney filtration plant sits nearly completely submerged. Johnny Lewis, the plant supervisor at the time, said he believes the water covered the building at 1 foot every six minutes. Top, a sign notes the high water mark of the flood.

Round-the-clock work

Romney’s filtration plant was swamped, but heroics restored service

ED DEWITT Review Staff

ROMNEY — The floodwaters of 1985 wreaked havoc on homes, business and families. Those stories are told frequently. What people tend to skip over is the logistical nightmare it also caused for public utilities such as electric and water.

Johnny Lewis, the former supervisor at the Romney filtration plant, has been retired now for 9 years, but like so many others in this area, he vividly remembers the days surrounding Nov. 4, 1985.

“We were told the evening before that there could be some major flooding,” Lewis said. “That night about 8 p.m. the Mayor called me and told me maybe I should go down and get the work van away from the plant.”

Lewis had his wife drive him in so he could retrieve the van, and upon arrival it was already pretty bad, as the river was lapping up against the side of the building.

“While I was inside trying to latch some doors shut, I heard her blow the horn,” Lewis said. “The water was coming up on the wheels of the van at that point. The mayor had also arrived and we both agreed there wasn’t anything else we could do, so we decided to meet again in the morning to see how things were.”

As could be expected, Lewis slept little that night, worrying about what awaited him the next morning.

“When I came back through town I could

see state police lights flashing,” he said. “They asked me where I was heading and I told them that I ran the water plant. A policeman told me the plant was under water.”

Unable to get closer and assess the damage, Lewis headed for the high ground.

“I went up on Indian Heights and I walked down and stood on the bank and the water was already all around the plant,” he said. “At one time the river was rising a foot every 6 minutes. That’s a lot of water. It finally crested at the rain gutters of the plant.”

At that point, a meeting was called. “We discussed what we could do,” Lewis said. “We decided that everyone needed to go and get some rest and we’d meet down there the next morning.”

Upon arrival at the plant the following day, the river was down into the field nearby.

“Our pump house was gone,” Lewis said. “It had been washed away completely, and that was going to be a major problem.”

After clearing debris from in front of the doors of the main building at the plant, the crew was finally able to get inside.

“There was 6 inches of mud and silt on the inside,” Lewis said. “We had to shovel and hose it out. Our filters had over a foot of mud on them. We worked 22 hours straight before the mayor made us go home.”

During that marathon work shift, the pumps were removed from the remnants of the pump

house and sent to Winchester to be cleaned.

The next few days were taken little by little as the building was brought back to working condition.

“We worked in there cleaning everything and the power company replaced the wires, but all they could do at that time was just lay them on the ground going down to where the pump-house was,” Lewis said. “We finally got to where we were ready to start and all we needed was the pumps and the motors.”

Somehow, even after all the work that needed to be accomplished and the odds stacked against them, the pumps were back and running on the 3rd day.

“No, it wasn’t potable at that point,” Lewis made clear. “The health regulations said that we had to have 3 consecutive samples good to drink before we could sound the all clear.”

Once that happened, there was still much work to be done. The old plant’s basement was still full of water and crews worked round the clock, but it was still a month until it was up and running.

Looking back 30 years later, Lewis remembers the teamwork and the long hours. When asked what you learn going through something like that, he noted that the ’85 flood made them more prepared for the floods that came in 1996.

“You just never know what’s gonna happen,” he said. “It was unreal.” □

FLOOD OF memories

‘There wasn’t anything you could do’

EMS and fire crews faced an unheard-of kind of emergency

ED DEWITT Review Staff

ROMNEY — The scariest part of the 1985 flood for emergency medical services and local fire companies wasn’t the dangerous river that caused the most alarm. It was the quiet.

“Emergency call wise there wasn’t anything you could do,” said current Augusta Fire Chief George Weaver. “I was just a young kid back then and the memories are a little sketchy, but emergency wise there wasn’t much we could do because no one could call in or call out due to the power.”

The worry for local fire and EMS started at the same time it began for everyone in the South Branch Valley, the night before.

“I was at home listening to the scanner as the flood came down through Petersburg,” Weaver said. “I listened to the Petersburg and Moorefield fire companies talking back and forth, and then Petersburg went silent when they lost power. Then Moorefield went out.”

With nothing else left to listen to on the scanner, Weaver — like so many others — went to bed.

“I came to work that next day not thinking anything of it, honestly, and I was told I couldn’t work because there was no power or no water. My boss told me to go on up to the fire house because they were going to need me up there.”

By that point, the floodwaters had risen drastically.

“It was across the road numerous places on Rt. 28 before you get to the train station,” Weaver said. “I went down to the state roads garage and it was already coming up Rt. 50 a little bit and the filtration plant was covered at that point.”

Like so many others who experienced the awe of the raging river with their own 2 eyes, Weaver noticed a similar development that has been retold countless times. “Everything imaginable was washing down the river,” he said.

A powerless feeling was shared by many of the 1st responders and those working so hard at the firehouse.

“There wasn’t anything you could do,” Weaver said. “No one had any power. The town of Romney was just kind of sitting there cut off.”

In the days that followed the real work began.

“We had refugees come to the firehouse,” Weaver said. “I know in the later days people were bringing in relief supplies and we helped distribute those.”

Water, or lack thereof, was another huge problem.

“They got drinking water from a spring somewhere on Jersey Mountain,” Weaver said. “They hauled it down to the hospital and there was a filtration system set up. In the days that followed, water was hauled by the fire trucks to Petersburg.”

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the relief effort in Weaver’s opinion was the fact that it was done without any real help.

“This was all before there were regional and federal responses,” he said. “Everyone just did what needed done. We coordinated the whole thing. When I say we, I mean all of us up and down the South Branch Valley. We did the best we could.”

The hard work paid off, of course, as people gradually rebuilt their lives the best that they could. There was also some perspective to be had, according to Weaver, regarding the minimal loss of life.

“Only 3 died,” he said. “There was no warning. No one expected it. It was such a rare flood. Had it happened 2 weeks later during Thanksgiving weekend the valley would have been full of hunters. It was catastrophic as it was, but had it been hunting season the loss of life would have been an astronomical total.” □



A helicopter delivers supplies to be dispersed.

CHERI BEVERAGE REMEMBERS

First the phones went, then the electric

We lived 12 miles up River Road. I was taking graduate classes and was supposed to go back to Romney that evening for class. The creek had already come over the road below St. Luke’s church and I couldn’t go to class.

My husband Jay was working in Petersburg and just got across the bridge before they closed it. He parked his line truck on this side of the bridge and it was destroyed by the flood.

I was emergency services director for the county (just appointed in June of that year). Greg Kesner was on the rescue squad with me and called about 1 a.m. to say they were doing water rescues on Rt. 28 (pulling people out of cars that were stranded).

While he was telling me what was going on, the phone went dead. That was the last phone service we had for three to four weeks. Electric went out as well.

The next morning we rode over a logging road to get to a spot we could see the river. It was an amazing sight. Mobile homes, cars, propane tanks, livestock, parts of barns and buildings were all floating down the river.

The telephone poles were only out of the water by about a foot. Nothing looked familiar. It was three days before the water went down enough to get a car to town. My dad, Bob Shilling, was my assistant director and had everything set up at the fire hall. Water, pallets of food, National Guard cooks, cots and shelter supplies were all in place and still coming in.

We ran out of tetanus vaccine and I called Senator Byrd’s office. He had the military fly more in with some other medical supplies we needed. Jerry Mezzatesta was in Charleston and between him and the Office of Emergency Services in Charleston we got kerosene heaters, cleaning supplies, bedding, personal care items. It was amazing how much and how fast the help rolled in.

I was at the fire hall nonstop for several days.

We had Hampshire County people in the military overseas calling to check on family, families from out of the area trying to find family members and get word about their safety.

It was chaotic and challenging but you didn’t have time to think about being tired. The funniest call was about a cow in a tree. Nobody does cows in trees — not DNR, not DOH, not even the fire company.

We just had to find someone to cut the tree down. The cow was dead but it was near the top of a pretty big tree! Like I said it was challenging!!

We went out on a body recovery in Springfield. Three hunters died and were under several feet of mud. There wasn’t too much that we didn’t get to do or see. I remember that first day I came to Romney after the flood; I cried all the way to town.

All that beautiful area was devastated. Trees and buildings and barns were gone. Debris and mud everywhere along with dead livestock and other animals. It wasn’t the beautiful River Road of a few days before.

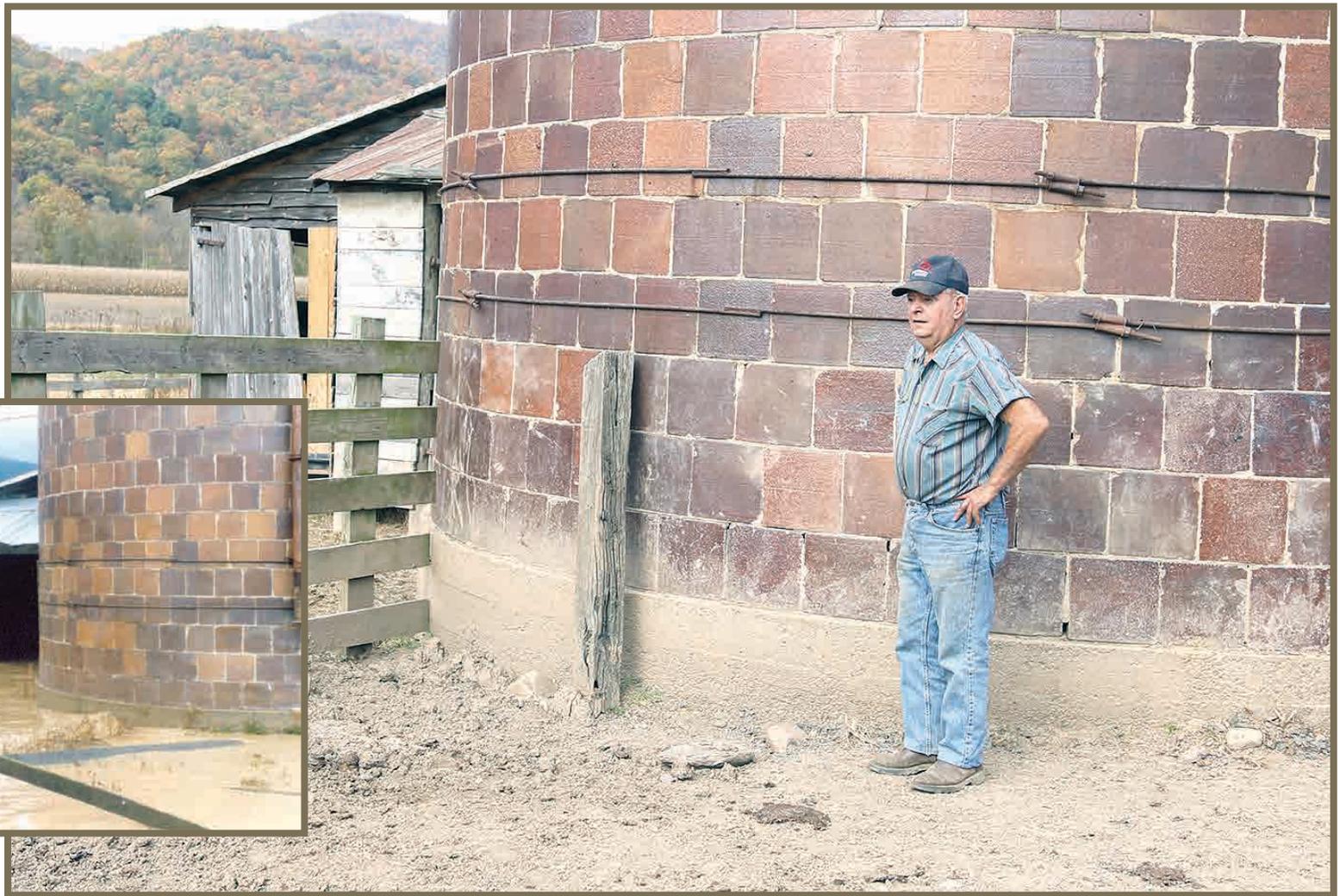
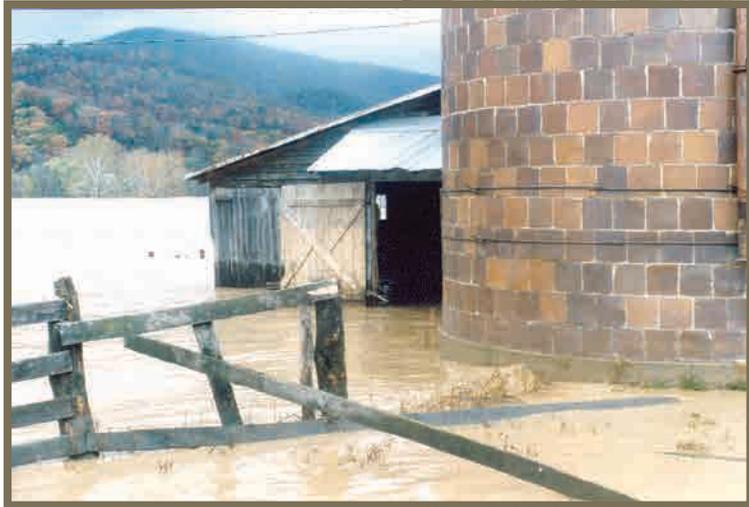
It was months before things even got back to close to normal. The railroad was destroyed and track had to be rebuilt. Homes were destroyed or badly damaged and many were condemned and had to be torn down. River camps were mostly all washed away. It devastated the county.

No one remembered flooding that severe. The 1930s was the last time we had a flood that destructive at the time. Of course we have had another 100-year flood in 1996. We had enough experience in ’96 that we were much better prepared even though we had two floods that year. Hampshire County has been tested and I think we proved we can survive.

I pray we never suffer another flood like ’85 but I know we will be able to handle it if Mother Nature brings it on. □

FLOOD OF memories

Right: Splinter Arnold stands by a silo on his property along River Road where (below) 30 years ago the raging waters of the South Branch reached during the great flood of 1985.



30 years later a farm still feels the effects

ED DEWITT Review Staff

ROMNEY — The devastation of the flood of 1985 is still clear today. Shorelines along the river are forever changed, homes that once held countless memories are gone and the memories of those who lived it are still strong even 30 years later.

One of the families and businesses impacted the most by the great flood was the farm operated by John and Nancy Arnold.

The Arnold Farm is about 8 or so miles up River Road, nestled along the banks of the South Branch. High water sometimes filled the fields, leaving behind sediment that would make the soil so bountiful that Splinter Arnold says they call the area Sugar Bottom.

"It's where we've grown sweet corn in the past," he said. "That river has been up there several times before and after '85 and it's one of those fields you don't

have to turn over or rotate. You can just plant year after year."

That's the benefit of being near the river. The down side of that is a whole other ballgame.

"We are still living with it," Arnold said, now 30 years removed from the greatest challenge his farm has ever faced.

Like other families and farmers along the South Branch, Arnold knew he would be dealing with some level of flooding that early November day.

What ended up happening was more than he ever expected.

"We were worried," Arnold admitted.

"You knew that morning it would be bad. Nancy (his wife) woke me up at 5 a.m. and said she heard a noise. We went down and realized it was the river, and when the sun came up the river was in my backyard."

What he saw he could not wrap his head around.

.....
"When the sun came up the river was in my backyard."

"You could see everything floating," Arnold said. "Hundreds and hundreds of propane tanks were bobbing up and down and washing away."

Unlike some other area families, Arnold's thoughts were about safety, but like a true farmer, he was concerned about what this would mean for his livelihood.

"I knew what was happening," he said. "The dyke was gone and all of the fencing was gone. I was just looking ahead. There was going to be a lot of work once it was over."

In the meantime, Arnold headed to a neighbor's house where his corn combine was kept. "Of course I couldn't get it to start," he said with a laugh.

"At that point we figured it would be safe, but about an hour later they called me back and said we needed to move it. So I waded out and wrapped a chain around it and we drug it out with a tractor."

Somewhat miraculously, despite all the water invading his property, Arnold only had one tractor that was lost at the time.

Once the water receded and the clean-up effort began, part of the effort went to the tractor. "I totally rebuilt it," he said.

"Every bearing and every seal was replaced. I had the engine rebuilt and put it back together and ran it for about 10 years. The amazing thing was there was no cosmetic damage to that tractor. It was laying with the windshield up and you'd have thought a log or something would have gotten it."

At the same time he was working on his tractor, he was also laying new fence and dealing with a lost corn crop.

"Sixty acres were buried under all that sand," Arnold said. "They don't reimburse you for your harvest, either, only what you paid to plant it."

The work required to get back to normal was great. "There was about 3,000 feet of fencing that needed to be replaced," he added.

Now 30 years beyond the flood, Arnold still deals with the destruction it brought to his farm.

"It's nothing really severe," he said,

See **FARM** page 11 ■

FLOOD OF memories

A home in the crosshairs of disaster



Top: Robin Pancake on her porch today. Right: a table is stuck on the shutters inside the home, showing how high the water was inside. Below: belongings drying outside.



ED DEWITT Review Staff

VANDERLIP — Robin Pancake's home has seen its fair share of drama in its 235-year history, however, nothing before or since has compared to what the home endured during the 1985 flood.

The original home was built in about 1780, and that structure serves presently as the Pancakes' dining room.

Since the 1st log was laid nearly 2 and one half centuries ago, the structure has been built onto at least 8 more times and has survived countless brushes with the South Branch of the Potomac.

The house is about 1 mile west of Romney on U.S. 50 in Vanderlip, on the 1st left turn after crossing the railroad tracks. It sits down in the field between Mill Creek and the river.

"I remember a lot," Robin said about the challenges her family faced during the early morning hours of Nov. 4, 1985.

"Our front road flooded a lot. When we knew that was going to happen we would park in Vanderlip and walk down the railroad tracks.

"My husband would always get information from his brother in Moorefield when it would get bad. We learned over the years that it's about 6-8 hours after it peaks in Moorefield that it would peak at our house."

With the impending flooding all but certain, the family went to bed as normal the night before, not quite certain what they would find when they woke up the next day.

"My husband set the alarm for 4 a.m.," Robin said. "When he woke up he went downstairs and opened the front door and he said the water was coming up into the front yard like it had legs.

Mr. Pancake then woke Robin and said she needed to start carrying things upstairs. She then woke her 3 children to begin helping her.

"We had 3 kids at home and 3 away at college," Robin said. "They were 13, 14 and 16. They were a big help. Of course, my husband made sure to tell me to tell the boys to save the guns," she said with a laugh.

"At one point during that time I opened our back door and our beagle swam in. Then, my husband came across the backyard in a canoe.

"My daughter and I got all the photo albums. We were trying to think of the things we knew we wouldn't be able to replace. We spent about an hour running stuff up and down the stairs, piling it upstairs wherever we could find a place."

As the water came up into the house, the Pancake's beagle kept climbing on to the highest furniture. "After he got to the top of the back of one of the couches he went upstairs and got on the tallest bed," Robin said. "From there he would not budge."

The water kept rising. It wasn't until it got waist high in the 1st floor of the home that Robin and the kids stopped.

"The water was making all the rugs float," she said. "We had no electricity, of course, so we were using candles. But there was just a funny

glow all around, too."

Robin estimates that the river rose about 9 feet in 40 minutes. Once it was no longer safe to move any more belongings, the Pancakes had to climb onto a windowsill in order to board the canoe.

"Our plan was to walk down the tracks to the car and come into Romney to my husband's mother's house. As that worked out, the bridge was closed. We had no idea how bad it was."

It was so dark at the time it was impossible to see all the devastation around them.

"We weren't panicked or anything," Robin said. "We just thought we'd walk down the tracks and get to our car and go to town."

The walk down the tracks provided a sensory experience Pancake had never had before and will never forget. "The thing I remember the most is the trees going out. It sounded like big guns going off. It was like when you see a war movie."

Once they walked down the tracks to Vanderlip, there was a ton of activity. People were helping people. The authorities were on the scene trying to help and keep people away from the railroad and the bridge.

"We got in our car and realized we couldn't get to town," Pancake said. "This was before 6 a.m. It

.....

"The water was coming up into the front yard like it had legs."

was still dark. The state road man was stopping traffic and he told us it likely wouldn't crest until after 9 a.m. That meant about 4 more hours of it rising."

All of that time meant a lot more water. More, in fact, than Pancake had ever seen or even heard about.

"In the 1930s flood our house did get water in it," she said, "but not this much, and in 1947 the

water got up and around the house, but not in it."

Once it was clear they would not be going anywhere, there was little they could do.

"We moved the car and sat on the front steps of someone's house and just watched it come up," Robin said.

At one point, Mr. Pancake went back to check on the property. He said the water was going into their bedroom door, meaning it was cresting in the 2nd floor of the home.

When the water finally receded and the Pancake's went back the next morning, things were very different than they left it, yet some things were similar.

"Our beagle was sitting right where we left him," Robin said. "He even went outside to use the bathroom."

In addition, another dog, horse and lots of cats were still around. "They all were there waiting to eat," Robin said.

The next several days and subsequent weeks saw a lot of cleaning and teamwork for the few families near the Pancakes.

"It was complicated because the bridge was closed," Robin said. "People came to help us and we helped the other people."

The 1st step in the recovery process at the Pan-

See **HOME** page 11 ■

William Donald

I was in Dover Hollow spending time with family just before the flood. We always enjoyed food at the Wag-on-Wheel in Moorefield. I remember it rained for a week. After the flood we had to clean up and it was crazy. Cows were in trees and it wasn't a good sight. However, life went on helping others. How could you forget the flood of 1985?

Miranda Nicol Miller

I wasn't born yet, but when I was 16 I lived in a house that had survived the flood. After the flood, they rewired the bedroom that I had, which ended up having outlets about 6 feet up the wall. It also had a marker line on the wall that showed where the water had reached. It was a real eye opener because I wasn't there but I could only imagine the destruction.

Lori Keplinger Carr

Such a sad time! My grandparents and an uncle lost everything on the North Fork River. My sister and I were attending WVU, we couldn't contact anyone, but came home to find everything gone. I'll never forget the stench or my grandma's strength at that time. □

JUDY JUDY REMEMBERS

Family move was delayed as everyone pitched in to help

I was a senior in high school. I remember being in Mrs. Robin Pancake's art class at HHS. We were wondering if it would stop raining. Mrs. Pancake was concerned about the rain since the South Branch goes by her home. I could tell it worried her because she kept looking out the windows. I just figured her driveway may have some flooding. I found out later the whole first floor was full of water.

Some of the kids were joking about not having school the next day. My parents and I were in the process of moving from Slanesville to my father's family farm along Beaver Run Road at the Hampshire and Mineral county line.

The next day we found out the Romney Bridge was out. We had no phone service because of the flooding. I missed 2 or more weeks of school because of the bridge being

out. My dad, Robert Riffle, worked for GTE.

He left at 5 a.m. and didn't get home until 9 p.m. or later. They worked endlessly rebuilding all the phone lines especially in Petersburg and Moorefield.

My mom and I decided we needed to help the flood victims. We drove Route 50 east just before the Romney Bridge and helped Mr. and Mrs. Sitar.

The floodwaters had been to the first story. We cleaned mud out of everything. At 17 years old I had never seen such disaster. It stunk and made you sick to see all the damage. It was such a sad sight to witness.

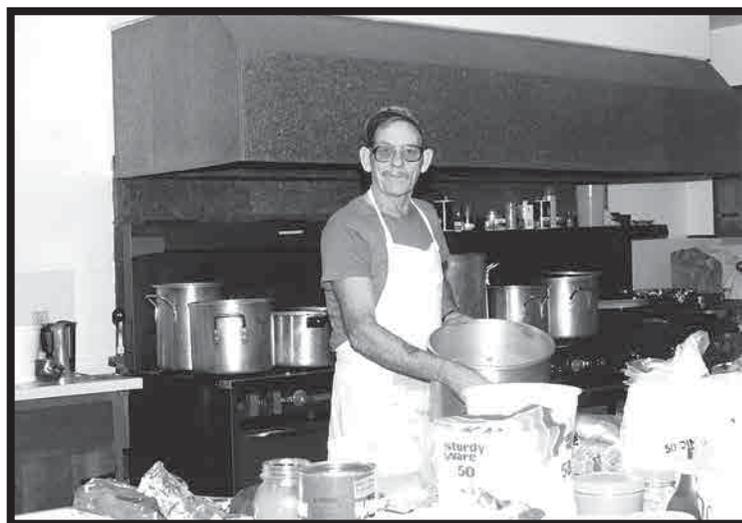
There were several people helping. Linda Richman Corbin was there. We all worked together well. It felt good to help the victims. I hadn't heard or seen from my boyfriend at the time. Remember, there was no way to call and

no texting or Internet.

He walked over the bridge and also helped the Sitars and the Slocums hosing all their furniture off. My mother, Brenda Riffle, Billy and I ended up moving all the furniture from Slanesville (the house was sold) hauling it down Route 28 to Fort Ashby to Route 46 to Fountain all around back to Beaver Run Road because the Romney bridge was out.

My dad was always working. At Blue Beach bridge it was one lane because of the flood damage. I remember seeing spray paint on buildings with numbers like B-22. Those were to be demolished. I went to Moorefield months later and the whole town still looked terrible.

It's still hard to imagine all the damage the 1985 flood caused to West Virginia and the families. I'll never forget it. □



Volunteers worked tirelessly at local firehalls to meet the needs of the hundreds of displaced county families.



FLOOD OF memories

LARY GARRETT
REMEMBERS

Trek across state stayed a step ahead of worst

On Nov. 4, 1985, I drove from home in Mathias to Franklin for Court at 9 a.m. The case was settled around noon and at about 1 p.m., William Moomau and I left for Charleston. We went through Judy Gap to the North Fork and then to Seneca Rocks and Elkins.

The water over low spots on the North Fork was already brown and nasty. We followed a tractor-trailer close enough that when he made a path through the water we quickly drove through before the water could return.

On the way up the mountain, water coming down the hollows was so high that it was hard to believe it all went into the culvert. I kept thinking that at any second we would see a wall of water coming down a hollow or even the road that it would wash us off the mountain.

I had to file a civil suit in Elkins. Some areas were impassible because leaves had clogged the storm drains making for a lot of surface water. I had to wade through water to get to the courthouse to file our civil suit.

We got to Buckhannon right before dark and just before they were to close the bridge as the water was running fast. We arrived at the West Fork on I-79 near Weston just before the water crossed the highway at a low spot making the interstate impassable.

When we arrived in Charleston and turned on the TV to the news to see how bad things were getting, the weather man reported that our area was getting some much needed rain and seemed completely oblivious to the building disaster that I had just witnessed.

I appeared before the West Virginia Supreme Court the next day, but was not able to return for another day and then had to go on Route 60 through Rainelle where I witnessed the horrific aftermath of the flooding of the Jackson River.

My wife and law partner, Karen Garrett, was also in Franklin on Nov. 4; she didn't try to leave for another hour or so and could not get home until after I got home from Charleston and that was only by going to Harrisonburg. □



2 days, 2 views

Above: The bridge over the South Branch just west of Romney just west of Romney as flood waters were receding on Nov. 6, 1985. Right: The next day. The onslaught of water washed out the roadway at each end of the bridge.



RICK HARSHBERGER REMEMBERS

Delivering employees and a 1st baby as well

I was working at the Potomac Center the week of the '85 flood as I still do. The Romney bridge was out and we were living in the Burlington area at the time so the only way to get to Romney was through Fort Ashby using the Blue Beach bridge which was damaged and only had one lane open at the time.

The center itself, being up on a hill, was fine except we had no drinking water just like the rest of Romney due to the water plant being under floodwater. The National Guard brought us a tanker truck full of water and we used pitchers and buck-

ets to draw from it.

I had some very good looks at some of the badly flooded areas around here when I repeatedly took our 4WD vehicle out into the rural areas picking up and dropping off staff at shift changes that didn't have a 4WD.

My wife was 9 months pregnant with our first child and she called late one afternoon the day after the waters receded from most areas, Nov. 8. She said it was time she thought, so I left Romney trying to hurry home.

That wasn't possible, however, because I hit the line of traffic waiting to cross the one lane

Blue Beach Bridge at Poland Hollow Road. It took forever to get across and then through Fort Ashby and across Mineral County to my house.

When I got there she was more than ready to go but our dog had gotten out and was out in the woods barking at something so I had to go way down in the woods to get her.

We arrived at Memorial Hospital in Cumberland safe and sound however and pretty soon after that we were the proud parents of Candice Leigh Harshberger who today is pregnant with our first grandchild. □

FACE TIME
Your
memories

Josh Keiter:

I was 5 years old and I remember my parents driving around to different places in the area showing me and my little brother, Caleb, the high water. Some of those images are still with me today.

Rob Wolford

I was in the army at the time. I came home from Aberdeen Proving Grounds to a very different world the weekend following the flood. I helped my aunt salvage her belongings in Paw Paw. Everywhere you looked the valley was monochromatic; the same muddy brown color.

Linda Cale

Capon Bridge Rescue Squad had the only 4-wheel drive ambulance in the area. We worked in the Moorefield area. The bridge was out so we couldn't get to Petersburg.

Cindy Michael

I was in Petersburg on the Sunday this happened. We just got home and that evening the water hit and my aunt and uncle had just went to bed around 9 p.m. that Sunday night. The fire company knocked on their door telling them to get out, that the water was rising. Thanks to the firefighters. They saved my aunt and uncle's life that night. I have many, many memories of the flood and it makes me cry when I look back on all of it. □

FLOOD OF memories



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Farm

■ From Page 6

but the big holes they dug to put the stumps in are starting to sink. The stumps are starting to rot. There are about 4 places in our fields. We are living with it. Things like that come up, and now whenever we are hauling dirt and don't know where to put it we have a place we can take it."

The change of the land is one of the challenges the Arnolds face.

"The worst problem from the farming aspect was all the sand. You couldn't get through it with a truck, a tractor or anything else. It took 4 or 5 years to get some organic matter and vegetation back on the soil. There were areas that were worse than others, but by now it's recovered pretty well.

Though the extra work required to get the farm back to as normal as possible was great, Arnold

said there was never any thought of doing anything else. His family has been working the farm since 1892, and has owned it since 1938.

"My dad and granddad were gone at that point," Arnold said of the flood. "It was just me. My son was still in college. I was selling corn. Local farmers were buying a lot and I was taking a lot to Pilgrim's Pride. It was working for me. I never thought about changing the operation."

Today, as the river peacefully runs through the property and lots are leased to weekend campers, Arnold is a realist when it comes to what could happen again.

"It will happen again," he said. "When though? That's the question. Tomorrow? Next week? 2050? It's going to happen again. The way these weather systems hang up. You saw what recently happened in the Carolinas. If that happens in Elkins? Water runs downhill." □

Home

■ From Page 7

cake home was moving everything outside into the yard. "Fortunately the weather was sunny and mild," Robin said.

After that, the Burlington Fire Company came and power washed the entire downstairs of the house.

"I am an expert on flood cleaning now," Pancake joked, relaying that she had to do the same thing during the 1996 flood as well.

"We needed to throw away anything with upholstery. Anything related to food had to be tossed out too. Most of our wooden furniture we are still using though, and while most of the appliances were lost, some came back on." After the initial cleanup was over, it was still a long while before the Pancakes returned to a normal life in their riverside home.

We weren't back in the house until right after Thanksgiving," Robin said. "It wasn't like it was. The dining room (the original 1780 cabin portion of the home) dried out 1st. That's what we used as our living room."

Robin also says that the freak nature of the flood was something she understands and because of that she doesn't worry.

"The railroad protects us now.

It's built up some. We understand that the original residents who didn't have that protection had a 2nd home up on the mountain that they used when the river flooded. We've never been able to find a sign of it, though," she said.

Now 30 years removed from the experience, Robin can think back on it and remember it vividly. Watching the rising waters from her neighbor's house particularly stands out in her memory.

"It was just happening," she said. "I just expected the house to lift up and go, honestly. It's an old house."

Even if that happened, Robin feels that it wouldn't have been the end of the world.

"My thought was I knew there was nothing in that house I couldn't do without, though I really would have hated to lose our pictures. My 3 older kids were in Morgantown and Fairmont and everyone was safe."

She also made it clear her family never had a thought of moving, even after it happened again in 1996. "This was my husband's home," she said. "He moved in when he was 13. There was never a thought of leaving."

These days Robin still lives in the home and has no plans on leaving, even if the waters rise again.

"Oh I'll never leave. I imagine my next stop will be Indian Mound," she said with a smile. □



Above, the wheel of the tractor Splinter Arnold would later restore sticks out of the river. Splinter would get it running again and use it for 10 more years. Below, the Arnold hog pen submerged by the rising waters of the South Branch.



The Pancake home as it appeared during the flood of 1985. Waters reached the 2nd floor of the family home, which dates from 1790. Robin Pancake said the railroad tracks, as seen in the top center of the photo, provide more protection from the river than the original owners were afforded. The home flooded again in 1996.

FLOOD OF memories

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