

Tyler Star News

In our 139th year No. 23 Sistersville, WV 26175 December 30, 2015 One dollar 16 Pages 2 Sections

Welcoming in the New Year



Year In Sports

There were many good things happening during 2015 on the local sports scene./Page 9



Precious Little Angels

The inaugural Christmas Angel Pageant was held on Dec. 5, 2015 at the Lewis Wetzel Family Center/Page 8



Veterans Honored

Cadet Jackson Kibbey participated recently in the national event Wreaths Across at the Parkersburg City Park by the Veterans' Memorial/Page 7

In other news...

Page 2
Tyler County Commission had a light agenda leading into the Christmas holiday last week.

Page 7
A recent train derailment in New Martinsville underscored the planning that takes place by first responders.

Obituaries

Page 2
Billy Thomas
Hester Ferrell
Ralph Sweeney



Photo Provided
It looks like the excitement of the New Year was too much for little Ethan Bender. Bender is the son of Jeff and Marsha Bender of New Martinsville and grandson of Dale and Sheila Estep of New Martinsville.

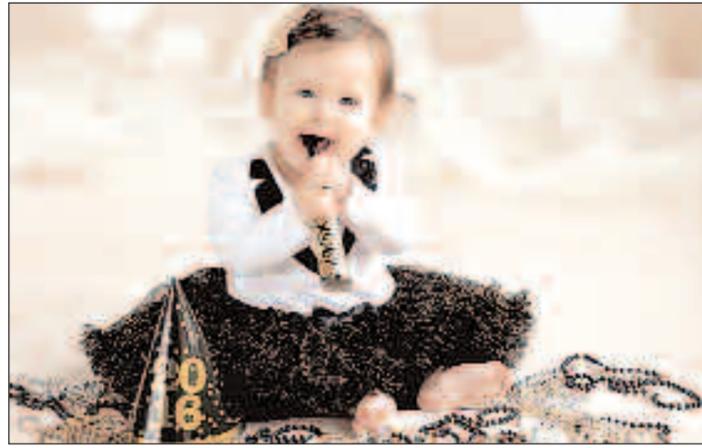


Photo By Cindy Baxter
Lola Jule Christen is dressed to impress as she prepares to ring in 2016. Seven-month-old Lola is the daughter of Rob and Natalie Christen of New Martinsville and little sister to Kingston and Drake. Lola's father, Dr. Rob Christen, has an optometry practice in Sistersville.



Photo by Miles Layton
Jim Phillips, right, is calling it a day after 58 years as a pharmacist — 51 of which was spent as owner of Phillips Pharmacy in Sistersville. Phillips works alongside Curtis Romine, who is attending the WVU School of Pharmacy, and his grandson, Drew Phillips, who will attend medical school next year. Phillips said he loved being a pharmacist because it gave him an opportunity to help people.

Longtime Pharmacist Looking to Retirement

Jim Phillips Loved Serving Others

By MILES LAYTON
Staff Writer

Longtime pharmacist Jim Phillips has a hand-held metal device in his office that harkens back to long ago days as a young man who provided prescriptions for decades to folks in Tyler County. "I don't think you'll find anybody, unless they are my age, who knows what this is. No one uses these things any more. Back then, you put a small piece of paper in between the clamps and then put the powder inside that paper and fold it over," said Phillips, 80, who has been owner and pharmacist for 51 years at Phillips Pharmacy in downtown Sistersville.

Phillips plans on retiring during the early part of next year. As with anyone who has spent a lifetime working and working hard to serve the community, Phillips said his future plans are uncertain.

"It's hard - I'm concerned about that too," Phillips said. "When you've been working almost 60 years, well, you have to figure that out."

Tacked to a wall near Phillips' desk, there

**"What kept me going?
I loved doing it."**

Jim Phillips

is a map with different colored pins sticking out of places across the globe where he has visited. Phillips said maybe he'll travel more and get more rest, maybe.

In another corner of Phillips' office, there are small glass medicine jars with cork-like lids - a far cry from the child-proof medicine bottles used today.

There is a Prohibition era prescription tacked to his wall that Phillips purchased long ago. He said the era when alcohol was prohibited was long before his time, but this particular note makes him smile because it is prescription for whiskey.

Please see **Pharmacist**, Page 5

Sistersville Moves Forward With Projects in 2015

Water System Is Poised for Upgrades

By MILES LAYTON
Staff Writer

Sistersville moved forward with many projects during 2015.

"In my opinion while we have accomplished so much there is still more to do. A two year term in terms of how much you achieve is very short," said Mayor Bill Rice of his term — so far — in office.

Rice listed a few things the City Hall pursued.

"We were able to get the children a new splash park finished. At the request of our citizens we were able to bring back the parallel parking. The city is running more on a budget now than when I became Mayor. All city bills are being paid on time. The city's bad debt is being collected as fast as we are able to collect it. But the biggest hurdle we have to get over is getting our water system updated. And with that it needs to be done in my opinion with no rate increases. People are having a hard enough time living day to day now. We also saw our tourist attraction the Ferry have a good year. We are also working with the junior sports in getting the James Willison family center in better condition. I feel that this has all been accomplished with our city council and all of our boards working as a team."

First and foremost, City Hall began the process of addressing what to do about the city's aging water distribution system. The goal is to move the city away from drawing water from the Ohio River. Sistersville is among the last cities in the state to rely on the river for its water supply.

Though the city's Water Board is studying various proposals, City Hall favors connecting the city's water system to the Tyler County Public Service District.

Rice said if the water board and city council endorse the proposal, City Hall would need to borrow up to \$3.5 million to connect to Tyler PSD and make some repairs to the city's aging water system. If the city pursued a new water plant, he said, rate hikes would be necessary to pay for the remaining \$3.7 million balance needed to build a new water plant.

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Paden City Makes Most of '15

By Miles Layton
Staff writer

Paden City had a banner year filled with notable events that ranged from babies to parking and police chiefs to water woes.

Among the year's highlights include how Patrolman Josh Helmick saved a baby's life in December.

PCPD Interim Police Chief Timothy Shreve reported that while Helmick was on patrol Dec. 10, he was flagged down by the mother of the child. The mother advised Helmick that her baby was choking and could not breathe. Helmick sprang into action by taking the baby into his arms and patting it on the back. The baby then began coughing up mucus and saliva. The baby then began to breathe normally and its coloring returned to normal. Helmick advised the mother to take her child to Sistersville General Hospital immediately. Helmick, who has been an officer with PCPD since August, is headed to state police academy in January.

Helmick was honored with the Life Savers Award for his quick thinking.

Paden City Mayor John "Hoppy" Hopkins said at the time that he is very proud of Helmick.

"He seems to be a natural at the job, and he's only been here a short time," Hopkins added. "He's the kind of officer we like to have."

Staffing the police department made headlines time and again.

Council hired Joey Richardson as police chief in July after Michael Kelly resigned for health reasons.

Richardson, a 10-year veteran of law enforcement, attended the state police academy and has additional skills and qualifications. He is a military veteran having served in Kuwait and received a medical discharge. He began his law enforcement career as an officer with the Sistersville Police Department and later went to work for the Tyler County Sheriff's office as a deputy. Richardson's time as police chief would be short.

Council suspended Richardson October 14 as he faces domestic battery charges. Richardson was arrested Oct. 12 by state police responding to a domestic disturbance at his residence in Friendly.

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High School Seniors Win EQT Scholarships

By MILES LAYTON
Staff Writer

Four area students have been awarded prestigious EQT Students of Excellence Scholarships.

Scholarship winners are high school seniors Julian Work, Jasmine Kyle and Jessica Kimble - all Tyler Consolidated High School - along with Matthew Durig of Magnolia.

EQT is an energy company with deep roots in Appalachian natural gas production, gathering, transmission and distribution. EQT offers \$1,000 scholarships for students in every county within the state as well as six four-year scholarships of up to \$18,000 per year to students interested in studying engineering, computer science, land management, geology, and environmental or safety science.

Kyle and Work were awarded full scholarships while Kimble and Durig will receive \$1,000 each.

According to the State Journal, Kyle has a 4.0 grade point average and participates in several extracurricular activities including National



Work



Kyle



Kimble



Durig

Honor Society, Silver Knights' Marching Band, Future Farmers of America and TCHS Hi-Y, which is part of the Ohio-West Virginia Youth Leadership Association program. She volunteers her time at the public library and works on clean-up projects.

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