



THE FUTURE

OF

ENERGY & INDUSTRY

'Energy renaissance'



PHOTO BY SEAN McNAMARA

Pierpont Community & Technical College President Dr. Doreen Larson (front left) and Alderson Broaddus University President Richard Creehan (front right) sign papers creating a new joint petroleum technology management degree program as officials from both schools and state politicians and representatives observe.

Natural gas is a 'game-changer' for West Virginia

BY CLIFF NICHOLS • TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Natural gas from the Marcellus shale region presents a huge opportunity for West Virginia and the United States as a whole.

"The word game-changer is bandied about over and over again," said Dr. Paul Schreffler, the Pierpont Community & Technical College vice president and dean of the School of Workforce Development.

"It truly is a major field and a major discovery here. Most people aren't aware this is the second-largest gas field in the world. Every time I look at a projection, it seems like the number is higher in the amount of natural gas that is under our feet here."

Corky DeMarco, the director of the West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association, has talked about an "energy renaissance" in the United States and has noted that "West Virginia, with its long and storied history as a producing state, plays a key role in the transformation through the development of the Marcellus shale, which is estimated to contain more than 50 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas."

DeMarco noted that in the final analysis the Appalachian Basin "will have been the largest producer of natural resources in the energy field that the world has ever known. We know now that we can unleash those trapped gases in the shales."

Technology, including horizontal drilling and fracking, successfully developed in Texas with the Barnett shale, has tremendously boosted the industry.

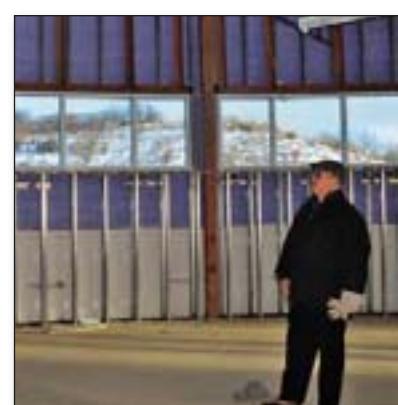
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Keeping lights on

Power generation in West Virginia is and will likely remain coal based for some time.

"There are some issues in the energy market, so we are working to drive some changes in how those markets work, but we are continuing to make investments in our coal power plants, including those in West Virginia," FirstEnergy Spokeswoman Stephanie Walton explained. "We remain committed to that part of our business."



Flexibility in mind

As industry and technology continue to transform and grow, a local higher education entity is growing right along with them.

The North Central Advanced Technology Center (ATC), located at the I-79 Technology Park in Fairmont, will provide Pierpont Community & Technical College students with a state-of-the-art facility.

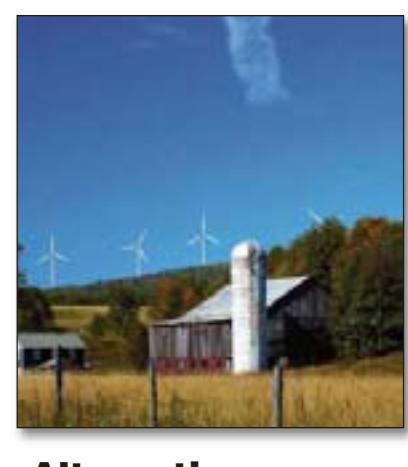


Safety advances

Over the years coal mine safety has evolved as the technology has allowed.

With technology playing a role in the future of mining safety, one United Mine Workers of America (UMW) official thinks legislation will also impact mine safety in the next couple of years.

Dennis O'Dell, the safety and health director with UMW, said legislation is one of the focuses mine safety in West Virginia is relying on.



Alternative energy

While coal is the principal energy resource for West Virginia, alternative energy sources like hydropower, wind and solar energy are becoming increasingly popular in the state.

Wind energy operates on a simple principle. Wind turbines, which look like airplane propeller blades, turn in the air and provide power to an electric generator and make electricity.

Natural gas

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A



DeMarco **Schreffler**

not going away. That market demand drives extraction of those resources, whether it's here or somewhere else in the world."

It's no secret that energy prices can have significant swings, and gas prices have trended lower. Baker Hughes tracks active rig counts and shows that West Virginia's count, as of February, dropped from 29 to 17 over the past year. Ohio lost just three rigs, from 40 to 37. Pennsylvania went from 53 to 54, although its total is far less than the 110 rigs in 2012.

Nationally, there are 502 fewer rigs drilling now compared to this time last year, Baker Hughes reports.

Last year, weather in the Northeast caused record natural gas price spikes and forced some power plants to shut for lack of fuel.

"In the future, I certainly don't have a crystal ball, but I don't see the demand going away. I think right now, as you can see, pipelines that used to haul products from the Gulf, they're reversing some of those right now. Now we're shipping products that way. There are proposed major gas pipelines and there are gas pipelines that have recently been completed up into New York City and other places, the big market places."

"Certainly, it requires legislation, but the export of natural gas is a factor as well."

Prices will fluctuate, but Schreffler is confident natural gas will be a major factor in the energy industry.

"The price is an anomaly right now," he said. "It went down quickly, but it's also back up again fairly quickly. That curve is going to fluctuate, but I see it going up over time."

The United States, with West Virginia a major factor, is well-positioned when it comes to energy, DeMarco stressed.

"We are in a position where we can change the geopolitical landscape of the entire world," he said. "We will supply our friends in the Far East, Japan and southern Korea with natural resources because they have none."

"I would venture to say, and this is speculation on my part and nothing that I can prove, but I

spade of dirt."

There has been a push for American energy independence for decades.

"A lot of people say this has allowed us to be energy independent," Schreffler said. "Truly, that potential exists, but we're not independent of the market forces of the rest of the world and the politics and geopolitics and the worldwide marketplace and the worldwide demand."

"Supply and demand drives those prices. When there is a great deal of that resource discovered like it is here and being produced here, that can tend to drop the price because of supply and demand."

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"I would venture to say, and this is speculation on my part and nothing that I can prove, but I

would suggest to you that people in western Europe would rather do business with us for natural resources than they would with Russia.

"We can do all the things that we've suggested we need to do over the years, and that's have a revival of our manufacturing, provide jobs, provide national security and be energy independent and help our friends around the world."

"That's what we all talked about but heretofore didn't know how we would be able to get there. We can get there today. We know we can get there today."

There is cooperation among business groups.

As an example, in an effort to support northern West Virginia's expanding Marcellus shale gas industry, FirstEnergy Corp.

announced last December that it is working on about \$100 million in new transmission projects, in addition to evaluating system upgrades on existing equipment.

The new facilities include high-voltage substations and transmission lines to accommodate expanding natural gas processing facilities and other energy-intensive operations in West Virginia's Marcellus shale region, FirstEnergy said in a news release.

FirstEnergy anticipates the new transmission facilities will also enhance service reliability for Mon Power's customers. The new gas customer facilities account for a projected load growth of about 400 megawatts through 2019, or the equivalent of about 200,000 new homes in Mon Power's system.

"FirstEnergy's infrastructure enhancements continue to help support the fast-growing Marcellus gas activity in West Virginia," said Holly Kauffman, FirstEnergy's president of West Virginia Operations. "This industry is bringing new jobs and economic prosperity to West Virginia, and we are working

quickly to keep pace to upgrade our system to provide our gas industry customers access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power."

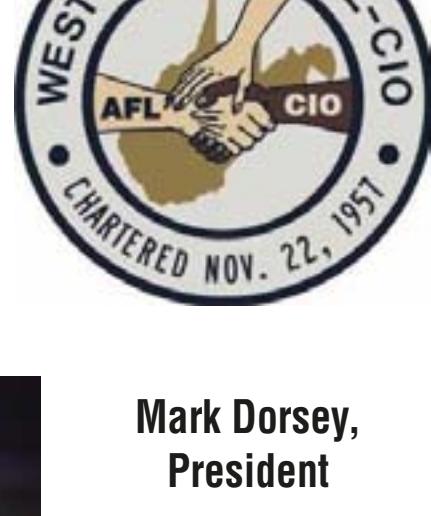
Projects include the new Waldo Run transmission substation and a short 138-kilovolt transmission line in Doddridge County near Sherwood. The \$52 million project is expected to support industrial users and enhance electric service to more than 6,000 customers in Doddridge, Harrison and Ritchie counties. The substation will accommodate additional load growth at a new natural gas processing facility, which consumes large amounts of electricity separating natural gas into dry and liquid components.

FirstEnergy is also working on a 138-kilovolt transmission line that will support the natural gas industry, as well as enhance service reliability for nearly 13,000 customers in the Clarksburg and

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Natural gas industry's future looks bright

BY SEAN McNAMARA
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — The future of the energy industry in North Central West Virginia has the possibility to be very bright.

With opportunities surrounding the shale the region sits atop, drilling into this shale could produce large amounts of natural gas, both dry and liquid.

"Liquids" refer to all heavier-chain hydrocarbons produced and may include oil as well as the natural gas liquids ethane, pentane, butane, hexane, etc., according to a 2013 Geological & Economic Survey report produced by the West Virginia Department of Commerce.

According to Jessica Moore, a senior geologist for the West Virginia Geological Survey, 2013 is the most recent year that numbers have been published for, and last year's total should become public in April.

Locally, Marion and Monongalia counties sit above dry gas, and activity as far as tapping into this shale is increasing, as Moore explained.

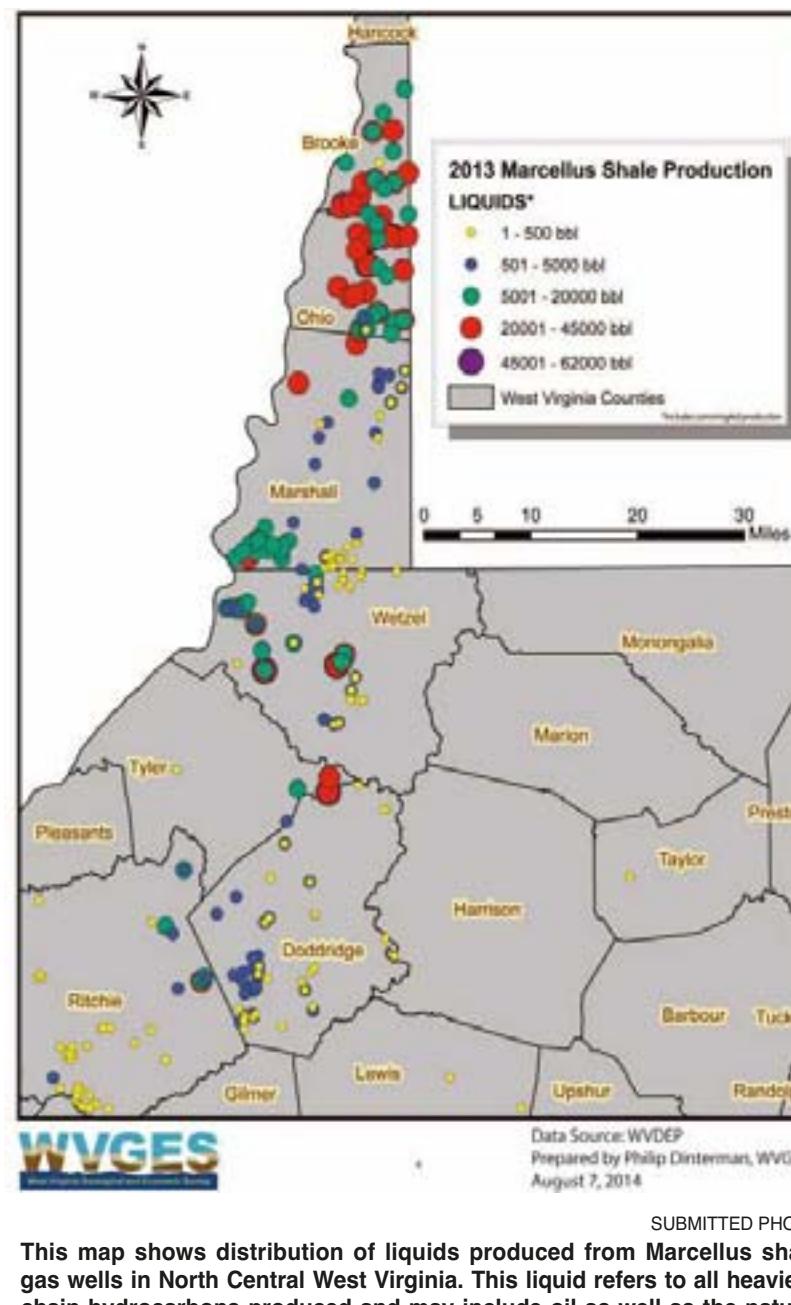
"It's mostly dry gas in Marion, Monongalia counties and Harrison County as well," Moore said. "The wet-dry line, at least from what we've seen from completed wells, is somewhere around the Harrison and Doddridge County border."

"We're seeing a push in permitting into Marion County. Before, it was a steady march westward we were seeing — Doddridge, Ritchie, Tyler. There's also a lot of activity north in Wetzel and Marshall counties."

Previously, activity in Marion County had been low in comparison to counties west, but, as Moore explained, that is expected to change.

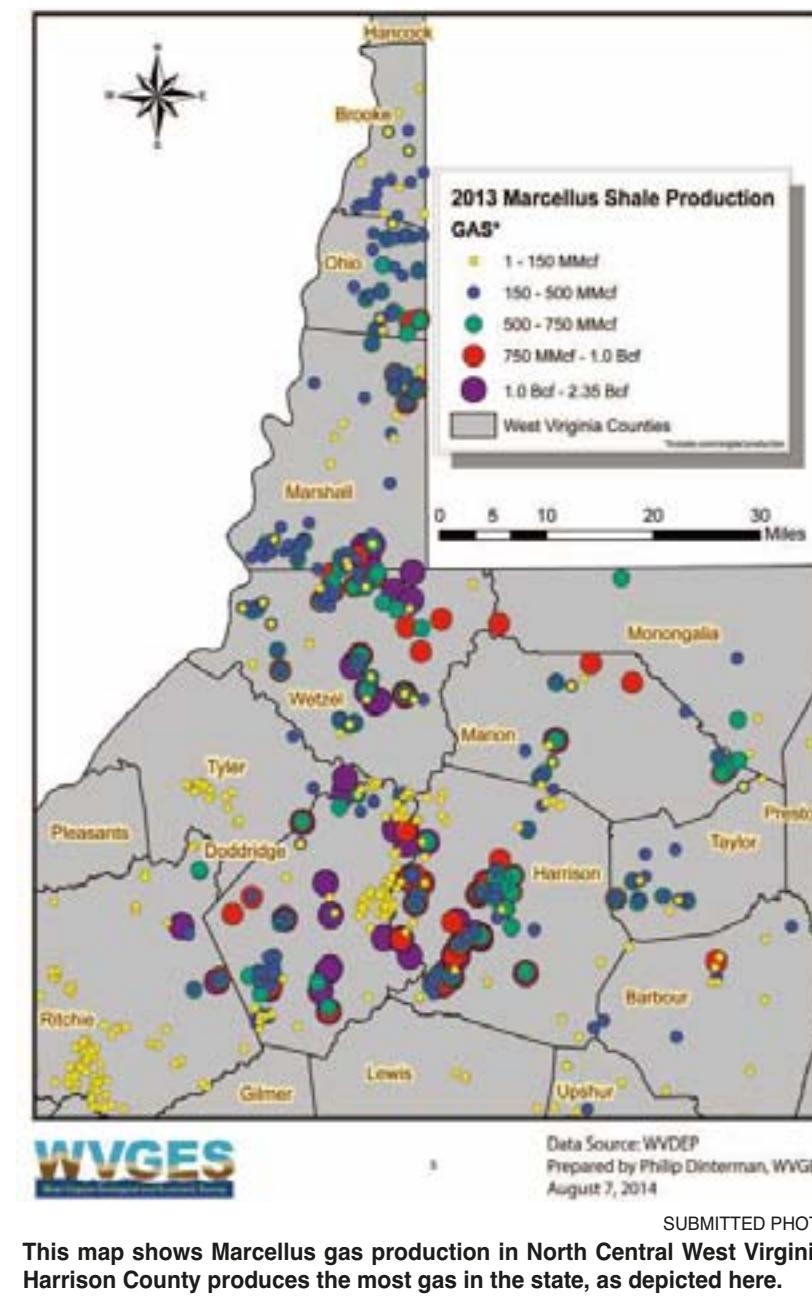
"We weren't really seeing a whole lot of activity in Marion and Mon," she said. "That is starting to change. More permits are coming through and there are a few operators who are actively leasing in the county."

According to the 2013 report,



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This map shows distribution of liquids produced from Marcellus shale gas wells in North Central West Virginia. This liquid refers to all heavier-chain hydrocarbons produced and may include oil as well as the natural gas liquids ethane, pentane, butane and hexane.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This map shows Marcellus gas production in North Central West Virginia. Harrison County produces the most gas in the state, as depicted here.

there were 947 horizontal wells producing gas from the Marcellus shale, and 1,192 vertical wells. The top gas-producing counties in West Virginia were Harrison and Wetzel, with Marion County ranking sixth.

But the future of gas production, according to Moore, may lie within another layer of shale altogether.

"There has been some very positive tests in western Pennsylvania about a very large Utica well," Moore said.

This Utica shale will be more difficult to access as it lies much deeper in the earth and would cost much more to access.

"I don't think we're going to see much until the economy improves," Moore explained.

"Once that happens there's definitely the possibility for the Utica in North Central West Virginia and potentially farther in Marion and Mon County. Eventually when the economy rebounds, because right now the price of oil and gas is really low and it's cost

prohibitive to drill an expensive well. A Utica shale well would be more expensive than a Marcellus well because it's at least 2,000 feet deeper."

According to the 2013 report, there are only three wells accessing Utica shale in the region, with additional permits issued and two in progress.

Moore said there is another opportunity that could exist as well.

"There is potential for a third shale gas play in North Central

West Virginia," she said. "This play includes several organic-rich shale units above the Marcellus, collectively known as the 'Upper Devonian.' The age, stratigraphic position and distribution of the individual units vary throughout our region, and right now we are seeing only scattered activity. The possibility does exist, however, for the three shale plays to be stacked atop each other and for one well pad to extract gas from all three."

With the future of gas produc-

tion providing new opportunities, the byproducts of this gas produced could yield an even brighter future for the economy of North Central West Virginia.

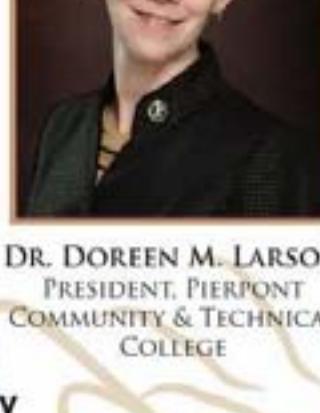
This opportunity lies in the proposed cracker plant in Parkersburg.

This cracker plant would take one of the five byproducts from fracking, ethane, turn it into ethylene and use it to create plastics. The company responsible for this

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Gas

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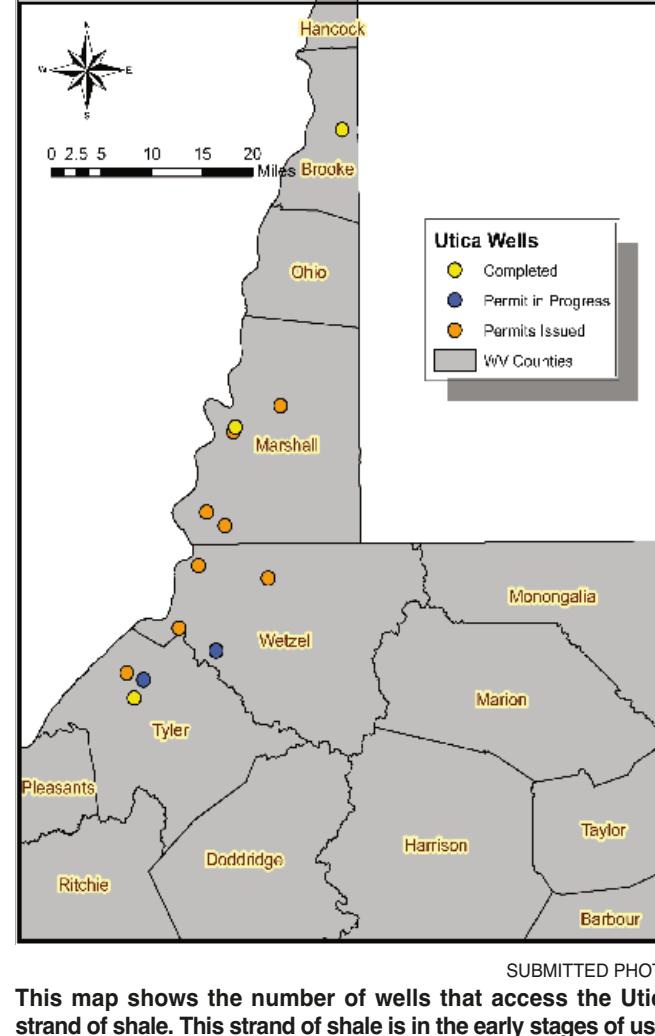
project is Brazilian-based Odebrecht and Braskem, but a *Charleston Gazette* report stated that the project may be in a stage of rethinking.

This rethinking, according to reports, is based on the recent drop in gas prices across the state and nation.

"Throughout this process, Odebrecht has been thoughtful and strategic," explained an official from the West Virginia Department of Commerce. "As the energy market continues to change, rethinking the best path forward for the Wood County cracker is understandable. Our ongoing conversations with the company continue to be positive, and we remain optimistic the project will be completed."

If the project does go through, the local economic impact could be great, according to Tom Witt, a professor emeritus and former director of West Virginia University's Bureau of Business and Economic Research in a study concerning the impact the cracker could have.

"The conditions are right for Appalachia to redevelop a regional petrochemicals industry that uses locally available, high-value raw materials from the Marcellus shale formation, which is the most prolific natural gas shale in the United States," Witt wrote in his report. "We need to keep our



SUBMITTED PHOTO

This map shows the number of wells that access the Utica strand of shale. This strand of shale is in the early stages of use.

eyes on the prize, and that's long term."

According to an official from Braskem, citing Witt's report, this Wood County cracker would produce 18,156 temporary jobs and 2,000 permanent jobs.

The cracker would reportedly pay \$110 million a year to employees as well as drawing new businesses to the area.

While the opportunities for these supportive industry projects are available, officials from both Braskem and the Geologic and Economic Survey cite the changes to the economy as potential roadblocks for these projects moving forward.

Email Sean McNamara at smcnamara@timeswv.com or follow him on Twitter @SMcNamaraTWV.

Salem areas. The 18-mile, \$55 million Oak Mound-Waldo Run transmission project is expected to be placed into service by December.

The company is also evaluating additional transmission upgrades as new service requests from shale gas developers continue throughout the Mon Power territory. FirstEnergy is currently evaluating new transmission facilities in Wetzel County to support a midstream gas processing plant

that continues to expand.

Pierpont has responded to the need to have people available to fill needs of the natural gas industry.

"The community colleges are the means by which a lot of people, especially in those blue-collar technical jobs, get the knowledge they need to get those jobs," Schreffler said. "That's the role of community colleges, to be part of the community."

"My role here as VP for work-

force and economic development is to be the business-higher ed liaison. I've got to be the one out there understanding what the market forces are and understanding where the jobs are and what jobs are here now and what jobs are coming down the pike, so to speak."

Back in 2006, at the beginning of the Marcellus shale surge, the natural gas industry indicated its biggest needs were personnel for the rigs in North Central West Virginia.

Will offshore drilling affect Virginia tourism?

BY AARON APPLEGATE
THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

VIRGINIA BEACH (TNS)

— The city officially supports exploring the sea bed off the coast here for oil and natural gas. But some who make their living from tourism - the city's golden goose - aren't so sure.

From pizza shop owners to hotel magnates, business owners are wondering if any amount of oil and gas is worth risking a catastrophe that could damage one of the most popular beaches on the East Coast.

"It worries me!" Oceanfront hotelier Bruce Thompson wrote in an email. "We have a fragile ecosystem and our economy is dependent upon our tourism industry. I have yet to be satisfied that there are adequate safeguards to protect us from an event that might jeopardize our marine environment and tourism industry."

Earlier this year, the Obama administration announced a plan to allow drilling for oil and gas in federal waters in an undetermined area somewhere off Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

The site would be at least 50 miles offshore, according to the proposal.

Most of Virginia's political leaders have embraced drilling,

which environmentalists are opposing.

The Virginia Beach City Council voted five years ago to support offshore drilling efforts.

Mayor Will Sessoms is an enthusiastic supporter, but the excitement hasn't seemed to trickle down to Atlantic Avenue.

"Do we really need oil rigs out there?" said George Kotarides, the owner of three pizza restaurants in the resort area. "I just don't want globs of oil washing up on the beach."

He has been an outspoken critic of drilling, armed with marked-up copies of polling data that he says show younger Americans favor protecting the environment over energy development.

Kotarides has allies.

"The risks seem to far outweigh the benefits of this short-sighted fantasy by jeopardizing our existing jobs and their economic impact to our local coastal economy, environment and quality of life," Laura Habr, co-owner of Croc's 19th St. Bistro, wrote in an email.

The city's restaurant and hotel-motel associations have yet to take an official position.

Joe DaBiero, president of the hotel-motel association, said his group is gathering information and will likely take a stance in

the future. Bill Gambrell, president of the restaurant association and owner of Tautog's and Doc Taylor's restaurants, said he has a lot of questions about drilling.

"I just don't see a lot of people jumping up and down excited by it," he said.

Not all resort area business people are worried.

Thomas Brown, owner of 17th Street Surf Shop, and several others along the East Coast, said he hasn't thought about offshore drilling. He said that in Huntington Beach, Calif., a surf spot where oil rigs are visible from the beach, drilling hasn't had any effect that he can tell on the surf scene.

"I would like to tell you how I feel, but it hasn't even crossed my radar," he said.

The Virginia Beach chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, an environmental group that works to protect the ocean and surfing, is opposed to drilling.

Oceanfront developer and property owner Whitt Sessoms said he views offshore drilling as a positive economic force that would create new jobs and would help diversify the region's economy. (He is the mayor's cousin.)

The Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce has made a similar argument.

Natural gas

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2A

force and economic development is to be the business-higher ed liaison. I've got to be the one out there understanding what the market forces are and understanding where the jobs are and what jobs are here now and what jobs are coming down the pike, so to speak."

Back in 2006, at the beginning of the Marcellus shale surge, the natural gas industry indicated its biggest needs were personnel for the rigs in North Central West Virginia.

"That's what drove the development of our program initially," Schreffler said.

"I went out to Oklahoma and other places and found out what they were doing. Training-wise, we brought those programs here on a non-credit basis, basic orientation and safety and training for how to do that job on the rig."

"We trained 400-500 people through 2008-09. As the play proved out and the volume started to be recognized and the volume

activity rose, as the community college we continued to ask the questions of those companies."

Partnerships with the companies is the goal.

"We're really the supply chain for their talent, for their workforce," Schreffler said.

Pierpont put together one-year and two-year degree programs "driven by what they were telling us. Those partnerships are critical when we're doing the work of a community college, making sure

we're with those companies and anticipating and aligning our output with their needs."

The result, Schreffler said, is people trained for "good-paying jobs, family-sustaining jobs. That's where we want to be. We want to be in that space where many of those programs at community colleges, especially here at Pierpont, are driven by what we call the middle-skilled jobs."

Email Cliff Nichols at cni@timeswv.com.

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Coal industry impacted by many factors

BY CLIFF NICHOLS
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Forecasting coal's future, at best, is a complex enterprise.

The words of President Barack Obama, as he ran for his first term in office in 2008, have so often been repeated by those who accuse him of waging a "War on Coal."

"So if somebody wants to build a coal power plant, they can," Obama said. "It's just that it will bankrupt them because they are going to be charged a huge sum for all that greenhouse gas that's being emitted."

Before that statement, though, Obama said, "This notion of no coal, I think, is an illusion, because the fact of the matter is that right now, we are getting a lot of our energy from coal, and China is building a coal-fired plant once a week. So what we have to do then is we have to figure out how can we use coal without emitting greenhouse gases and carbon. And how can we sequester that carbon and capture it? If we can't, then we're going to still be working on alternatives."

Then Obama went on to describe his version of a cap-and-trade system, which he was not able to get passed during his administration.

Coal, obviously, is not disappearing as an important energy factor in the United States and around the world.

How healthy, though, can the industry be?

West Virginia's coal output was 116 million tons in 2013, down 27 percent from five years earlier, according to the Energy Information Administration, a government agency. The number of miners in the state has fallen 21 percent to 16,500 over that period, according to the West Virginia Coal Association.

Richard A. Bajura, a professor in the mechanical and aerospace engineering department, is director of the National Research Center for Coal and Energy at West Virginia University.

He came to WVU in 1969 and moved into research and administration in 1984.

He has been "focusing a lot of our activities in the fossil energy area, primarily coal."

In recent years, WVU developed a multipronged plan to deal with energy.

"We're doing a lot of things with fossil energy," Bajura said. "We need to do more work in what we call sustainable energy, energy efficiency, renewable energy, things of that sort. We need to do some work in energy policy as well."

This academic year, in an effort to get organized more broadly across the university, the concepts are under a structure called the Energy Institute under Brian Anderson.

"Access to affordable, clean energy is one of the most complex and far-reaching issues of our time. Energy is a key driver of our state's economy and economies around the world. It affects the health and quality of life of the world's citizens," said WVU President Gordon Gee.

Bajura said there is a "conundrum" in looking at coal's future.

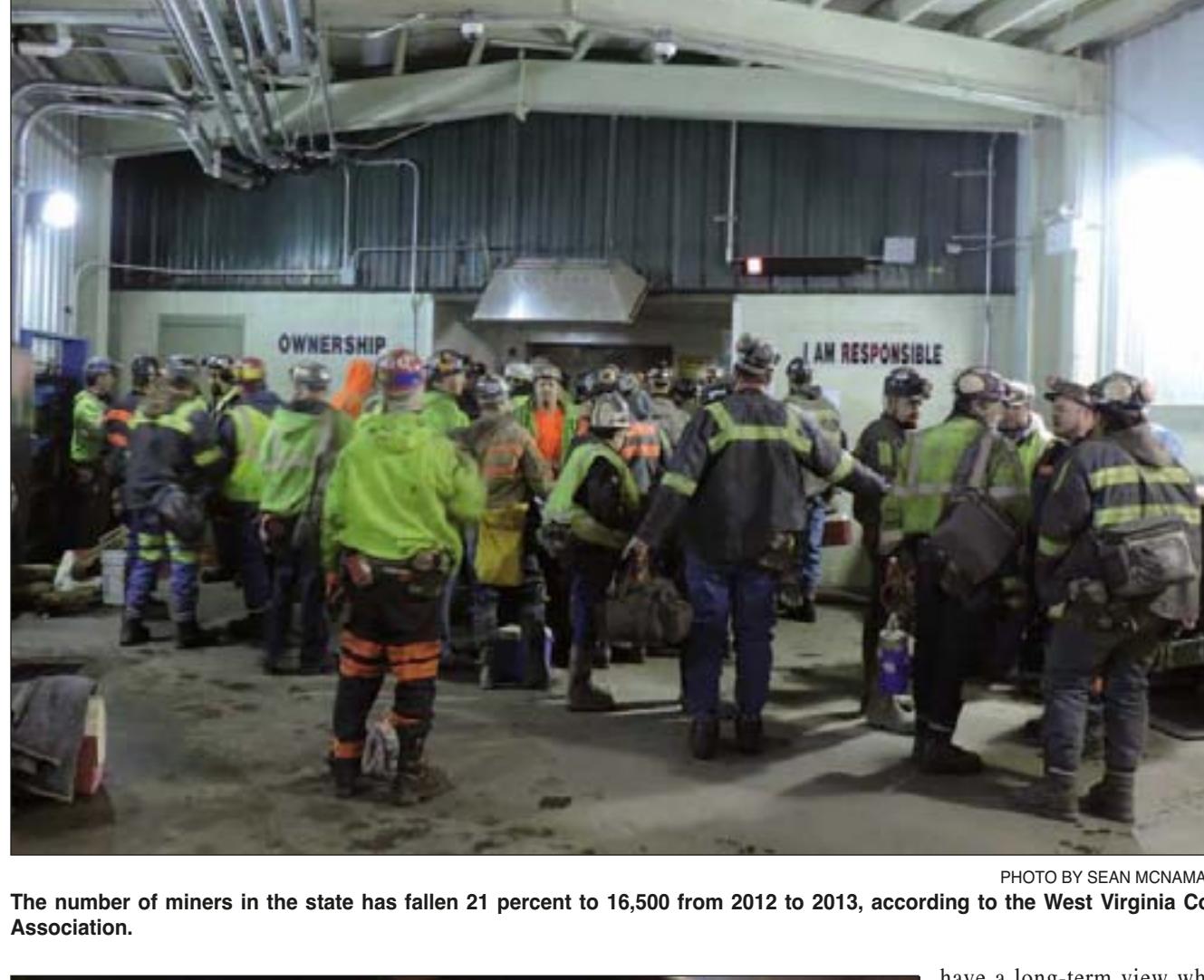
"We have issues of how do we address what we call short-term solutions to look at coal and its role in the energy future and what can we think about in terms of the long-term solutions?" he said. "Coal and just about all technology is governed by deployment."

"If you have an idea right now about what's a great thing to do — let's say you have a great idea on how we're going to help coal and make it really good — by the time you took that idea and you went to the laboratory and you tested it out and then you asked yourself, 'How do I distribute electricity?' for example."

"You realize you distribute it in a large power plant. We have to take your idea that works well on a small scale and make it work on a big scale. You're talking 20-30 years."

Bajura said there is a "lot of promise" in new ideas regarding coal, such as making its use more environmentally friendly.

"Those ideas take a long time to maturity," he said. "In the meantime, we have to address



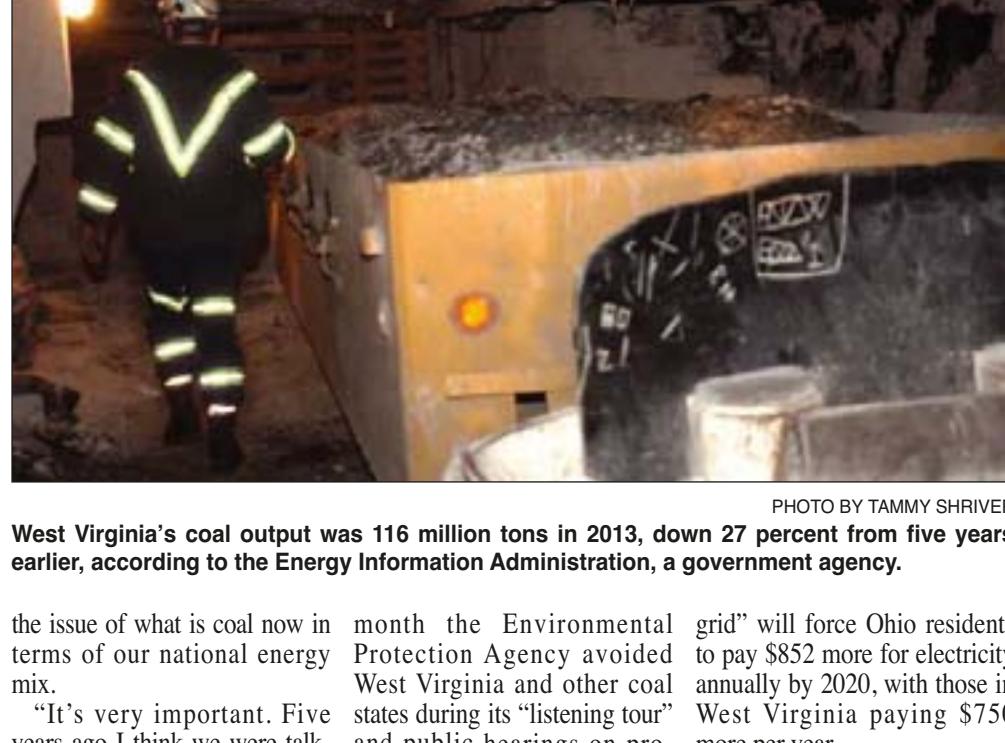
The number of miners in the state has fallen 21 percent to 16,500 from 2012 to 2013, according to the West Virginia Coal Association.

PHOTO BY SEAN McNAMARA



Richard A. Bajura, the director of the National Research Center for Coal and Energy at West Virginia University, said that "if you look at projections globally or United States energy projections, they show that there is a role for coal in the future. What we have to do is make it possible for us to fulfill that role by making appropriate investments."

PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER



West Virginia's coal output was 116 million tons in 2013, down 27 percent from five years earlier, according to the Energy Information Administration, a government agency.

PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

the issue of what is coal now in terms of our national energy mix.

"It's very important. Five years ago I think we were talking about 50 percent of the electricity in the United States being provided by coal. I think minimum whatever you look at, 25 percent is going to be generated by coal."

"If you look globally, that number is higher. We cannot say, 'Well, let's turn off coal today, and we'll fill it with something else, and we'll go to the wall and plug it in and we'll get electricity.'

"We have a short-term situation we have to look at, which is the pressure to make some decisions now. We also have the understanding that we can't solve these problems by a step change. It's gradual. It takes time for technology to develop."

Impact on Environment

Coal's impact on the environment, an issue for decades, has received even more attention in recent years due to proposed regulation of carbon dioxide, which many in the science community say contributes to climate change.

The *Intelligencer/Wheeling News-Register* reported last

month the Environmental Protection Agency avoided West Virginia and other coal states during its "listening tour" and public hearings on proposed new rules.

EPA official Janet McCabe told U.S. Sen. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., that West Virginia was skipped because "we wanted to have (hearings) in locations where people were comfortable coming."

Capito told McCabe her explanation was "not really a great answer. ... You can get to West Virginia. We're not that isolated."

Capito added, "Regardless of whether or not EPA officials feel 'comfortable' facing the thousands of West Virginia coal miners whose livelihoods are threatened by these proposed rules, West Virginians deserve the opportunity to make their voices heard."

The newspaper also reported mercury emissions standards could force 60 gigawatts of coal-fired electricity offline by the year 2020.

Robert Murray, the president, founder and CEO of Murray Energy, which operates the former Loveridge mine in Marion County, said Obama's "political power grab of America's power

grid" will force Ohio residents to pay \$852 more for electricity annually by 2020, with those in West Virginia paying \$750 more per year.

EPA officials emphasize the health benefits of Mercury and Air Toxics Standards. They say the measure will ultimately prevent 656 "premature deaths" in Ohio and West Virginia, while promoting more than \$5 billion worth of "health benefits" for the two states in 2016.

It Takes Time

Bajura continually stresses the time needed for the coal industry to make effective changes to fill the role it must in the energy mix.

"I just believe it takes 20 years to put new technology in place," he said. "Fuel cells were invented in the 1800s. This is the 2000s. Fuel cells are used in certain places. Astronauts going to the moon use fuel cells for electricity generation, for example. But they're still not widely employed. But that's a good technology."

Nuclear energy was developed back in the '40s. I know we have nuclear energy systems employed right now, but it's time for a new technology in nuclear energy. We've got to

Different types of coal, he noted, require different technologies.

"When you're dealing with something like electricity generation, you have to calculate how your system is going to work, because your selling price for electricity is going to depend on how you get the biggest bang for your buck out of the coal," he said.

Demonstrating efficiency and offering guarantees on a large scale, he noted, is terribly expensive.

The goal is to find solutions that work and are economical.

"Fuel cells work. They work great when you're going to the moon," Bajura said. "There is nothing else that you can use to get to the moon. It's one of the few options. If I want to get to the moon, I'm going to be willing to pay the price to get me there. If it takes a fuel cell that costs a lot of money, that's fine."

"If we ask what about here, do I want to go out and pay 50 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity when I can get it for 10 cents from Mon Power? I get it for 10 cents from Mon Power."

Choosing and developing the appropriate technology is the key.

"We have to be realistic. We have to be holistic," Bajura said. "What we need is somebody who can say, 'Look, I understand the entire picture. Here's how I think we can go forward.'

"That's very difficult to do. What I think you'll have is people that are advocating for their technologies. You have to have people advocating for technology; otherwise, we don't move forward."

"If we stay in stovepipe mentality and don't look at the total picture and here's how we want to put it together, then we're going to have these continual discussions. It's very difficult to get to this holistic picture. The United States is not alone. Every other country has the same kind of situation."

France, he explained, may want to proceed with nuclear energy, but if the fuel is not available, it must look at something else.

"It's very difficult to develop that 'one size fits all,'" Bajura said. "We like to think, 'I solved it. Nothing is going to need to be changed.' We continually change."

"We're mining coal. Coal is disappearing in southern West Virginia. It's getting more difficult to mine the coal. Do we want to keep the coal program going? Yes we do. If we can't come up with new technology to mine the coal more efficiently, then the power companies are going to buy it elsewhere."

"Power companies aren't interested in burning coal. They're interested in making money. They make electricity the cheapest way they can. If you look at companies that used coal in the past, they're now using natural gas. Why? Because it's cheaper."

"We look at coal. Does it have a role? Yes. We have to come up with newer ways to mine the coal to be cost-competitive. When we get to a situation where we need everything badly, then we're going to use everything, but we're still going to be conscious about cost. The better performance we get in helping our economy."

Coal, he concluded, continues to be a needed energy source.

"If you look at projections globally or United States energy projections, they show that there is a role for coal in the future," he said. "What we have to do is make it possible for us to fulfill that role by making appropriate investments."

"Unless you provide the research funding, nobody's going to be able to take it that 20 years to go from idea to deployment. Unless we start now, we won't have it in 2035 when we need it."

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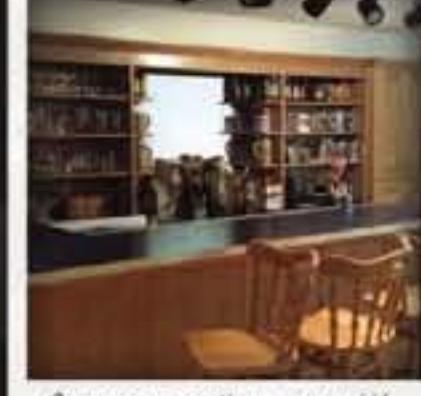
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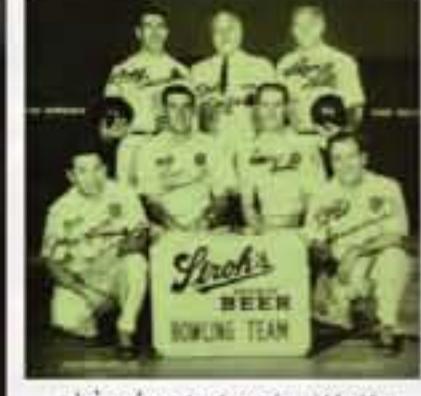
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THE FUTURE

OF

TECHNOLOGY

Expanding sector



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

The idea for the I-79 Technology Park came about in 2001. During the past 10 years, the park has continued to grow, and Jim Estep's goal is to bring in at least one more anchor in the next 10 years.

'Knowledge economy' needed in West Virginia

BY ANGELEE WILEY • TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Jim Estep, the president and CEO of the West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation, sees room for improvement at the I-79 Technology Park.

In 2001 the decision was made to build the high-tech park, and since then the park has continued to develop.

"The big anchor activities that we have going on at the park include, of course, the NASA Independent Verification & Validation program. They've been operating in the park since the mid-'90s," Estep said. "Ten years ago we recruited FirstEnergy to put their Mon Power headquarters facility in the park. In the last five to six years we've recruited NOAA to come to the park."

He said a lot of the work done at the park is centered

around research and development opportunities across the country. But one thing he has noticed over the years is the need to grow what he refers to as the "knowledge economy."

For many years coal mining has been the bread winner in West Virginia.

However, for the past 20 to 30 years, there has been a decline in the number of people needed to mine coal.

Estep said he would like to see more diversification in West Virginia because that seems to be one area that is lacking.

"No state should be dependent on one, two or even three main sectors. They should endeavor to have four or five economic sectors that contribute as evenly as possible so that they're not subject to the ups and downs of an industry," he said.

Because of the lack of diversification in the state, the I-79 Technology Park has set out to expand the economy.

"This organization decided 20 years ago that we wanted to contribute to creating a new economic sector, and we want it to be what a lot of people refer to as the knowledge economy," Estep said.

The knowledge economy refers to people who are educated and their product is some form of knowledge. To go along with this, Estep said there needs to be more emphasis on STEM-related (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) programs.

But acting on these goals has proved to be tougher than expected.

SEE KNOWLEDGE, PAGE 2A



Federal anchors

The success of federal high-tech entities in North Central West Virginia has helped the area's economy in a big way.

But in order to be so successful, anchors such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NASA IV&V and the FBI need the help of the small businesses that support their contracts.

— Page 3A



STEM lessons

What our young people are learning in the classroom will ultimately have a great effect on the outcome of our society as they grow up and become members of the working world. When looking at science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) professions, getting young students involved early is the key to successfully planning for the future in the scientific world, many believe.

— Page 4A



Soaring field

Technology is constantly evolving. And Thomas Stose, the director of the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center, sees those changes happening every day with high-tech equipment, new materials and methods of training.

The center, located in Bridgeport, is advancing the training and innovation in aeronautics happening in West Virginia.



Developing ideas

With more and more advances in technology, one organization is working to help those who are interested in a career of their own.

TechConnect West Virginia promotes a technology-based economic development strategy. The idea is to promote knowledge, entrepreneurship, innovation and technology in a collaborative effort to fuel economic growth in the state.

— Page 3B

Knowledge

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

"We have a workforce that is disproportionately blue collar, and that's fine. That's what those people want to do. But they're not going to switch over and be software engineers," he said. "It's a real dilemma, so we've been trying to take advantage of the fact that you have the FBI in Clarksburg, you have the NASA IV&V here in Fairmont, you have the energy lab in Morgantown; you also have NIOSH in Morgantown. You have all of these federal organizations, which do a lot of contracting, which attracts the knowledge economy."

He said it's important to develop new anchors moving forward. The more anchors the technology park can attract, the more likely the knowledge economy is to expand.

Mike Green, a board member of the WVHTC Foundation, said the high-tech park provides an opportunity to help the economy thrive.

"Going forward, the tech park is a perfect place where entrepreneurs could come work with our federal anchors and contractors; where the business community can work together in an effort to improve the economy of our state," Green said.

But Estep doesn't want to overlook the success the park has already had. The park consists of a total of 375 acres, and Estep said there has been a steady increase of revenue.

"The High Tech Foundation has increased its research and development revenues on an annual basis from \$3 or \$4 million in 2000 to \$15 to \$20 million," he said. "There has been a steady growth, but I would like to see a lot faster."

Estep has dedicated much of his life to developing the I-79 Technology Park. Each day he strives to make things even bigger and better.

"Our ultimate plan for the last decade has been acquiring the land and planning how we want to lay it out. We built an electrical substation that would allow

any tenant in the park to get whatever power they would need," he said.

In the coming years, Estep thinks the addition of more anchors in North Central West Virginia could make all the difference when it comes to growing the knowledge economy.

"Our goal going forward is to continue to try and identify these federal anchors, much like NOAA or the FBI, and get them in the park as best as we can," he said. "If we can bring in three or four more anchors, that's going to drive demand for office space, it's going to create a lot more jobs and it's going to help facilitate what we're trying to achieve in terms of economic diversification."

In the next 10 years, the No. 1 objective of the foundation is to attract more anchors. The second objective is to build the infrastructure, and the third would be to accommodate the business community that surrounds the anchors.

Estep and Green said the biggest challenge the foundation will face in the future is finding the funding to help continue to grow the park.

"I would like to see the state provide more funding for research and development, commercialization and supporting entrepreneurship," Green said.

Estep said as far as land goes, there is room for growth. The I-79 Technology Park is a total of 375 acres, and two-thirds of that is available. There are 1,400 people involved with the park, so he said if the park reaches its full potential there could be about 10,000 workers involved.

Estep already has a goal for what he would like the park to look like in 10 years.

"My goal would be that we've recruited at least one more big anchor," he said. "I would love to have a program from the Department of Defense here, because they do so much contracting. Contracting drives the growth."

In addition to bringing in new

anchors, Estep has a plan for the anchors that already exist, such as NOAA and NASA.

"I would also like to see our existing anchors expand, and I would like to see a group of new companies occupying the park," Estep said.

In terms of the foundation's master plan, Green said it would be nice to see companies work together because that would help generate more ideas.

"I would like to see an active combination of federal and private organizations work together, where new ideas are created and where exciting, innovative research and development and entrepreneurship occurs every single day," Green said.

It's easy for Estep to imagine what the I-79 Technology Park could look like in 10 years. It's more difficult to make those dreams a reality.

But no matter how tough it is, he sees potential.

"I feel like there is so much more that needs to be done and can be done and should be done. I almost feel a sense of urgency and frustration that we're not pooling all of our resources together," Estep said.

Both Green and Estep would like to use the high-tech park as a tool. It's a tool that can not only bring more people together, but expand the economy in Marion County they explained.

"I think it's very important that we do everything we can to expand opportunities for business and employees in Marion County, primarily to create more high-paying jobs," Green said.

Each day when Estep arrives at the park, he notices the success. He also envisions what's to come and what that could mean for North Central West Virginia.

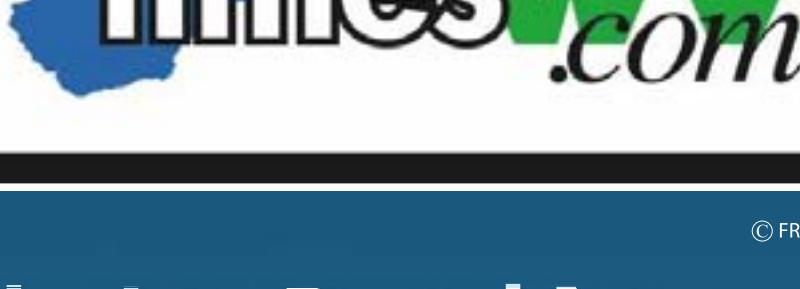
"When I pull into the park and I see the facilities and satellite dishes, it fills me with pride," he said.

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Federal high-tech anchors lend to success of sector

BY ANGELEE WILEY
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — The success of federal high-tech entities in North Central West Virginia has helped the area's economy in a big way.

But in order to be so successful, anchors such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NASA IV&V and the FBI need the help of the small businesses that support their contracts.

These federal entities issue contracts for both small and large businesses in the area. Some local businesses have started out by doing contract work for one of these anchors, and then were able to grow into a large corporation themselves.

Laura Freeman, a contracting officer for NASA IV&V, said Allegheny Science & Technology started its business by doing contract work for NASA, and now it is a company of its own.

Allegheny Science & Technology still does contract work with NASA, but it has also turned into its own success story.

Contract years with each federal anchor vary from project to project.

"As a whole, most of our contracts ultimately run a term of about five years," said Jennifer Neptune, a NASA IV&V program analyst. "It depends on the direction of the program, but we constantly review our needs."

These anchors provide opportunities that would never exist if it weren't for the contracts they offer. Jim Estep, the president and CEO of the West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation, said that without these federal anchors, some local companies may not even exist.

"If you're one of those busi-

nesses, you're in business because you want to make money, and you want to make money doing something you like doing," Estep said.

"Therefore, the most important



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

NASA IV&V is a federal anchor that has thrived in Marion County. NASA contracts to other companies, creating more opportunity for small businesses in the area.

thing for you is to find a customer that will pay you to do what you like doing. Without these anchors, we would not have any reason for any of these companies to be here, because who would they work for?"

The opportunity the federal anchors provide is a trickle-down effect. Not only do certain businesses have contracts with the anchors, but there are even smaller businesses that subcontract with those businesses.

For example, Lockheed Martin has a contract with the FBI, then Lockheed Martin subcontracts to other small businesses, providing even more opportunity.

"You cannot overstate the critical value of these federal anchor programs in our community," Estep said. "They are the lifeblood and the whole reason we have these companies even



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

NASA and NOAA both have locations at the I-79 Technology Park. The contracts they provide range to about five years, and many businesses that started working under contract have now turned into larger corporations.

participating in any way, shape or form in our community. That's why we put such an emphasis on recruiting and maintaining."

Local companies that have benefited from the contracts

offered by the federal anchors include Lockheed Martin, TASC Inc., Galaxy Global and Allegheny Science & Technology.

Freeman said when companies subcontract, it's just as

important. For instance, TASC Inc. completes contract work for NASA IV&V, and then it subcontracts to companies such as Key Logic, Azimuth and MPC Corp.

She said being a subcontractor is important, because it could eventually lead to bigger opportunities.

"A lot of small businesses start as subcontractors, and they gain knowledge, which gives them the ability to bid on larger contracts," Freeman said.

The federal anchors have created a successful partnership with many local small businesses. Neptune said these contracts not only help the anchor complete tasks, but it also helps grow local business, which is a vital step.

"It's important for us to get the work we need done, but also develop an opportunity for

local businesses to advance themselves," Neptune said.

These federal anchors in North Central West Virginia mean a lot to small businesses. Without the anchors, some businesses may not have had an opportunity to get started.

Freeman said the ultimate goal is to help small businesses grow until they reach the point of being a large corporation. She said she loves these contracts, because it feels good to help others succeed.

"It's great. It makes you feel like you've contributed to the success of the program, and that is the goal ... to turn small businesses into large businesses and bring more to the state," Freeman said.

Freeman also likes to offer contracts to local companies, because they seem to take pride in the work they do.

Being a West Virginia native herself, she hopes to do whatever she can to help businesses through these contracts that NASA IV&V offers.

"I have a lot of pride because I've lived here my whole life, and I try to put as much back into the state as I possibly can," Freeman said.

Estep said each anchor creates its own ecosystem. Without these anchors and their contracts, there would be no outlet for some of the local businesses that are now very successful.

Moving forward, Estep said it is important to encourage growth and encourage people to step outside the box and take a chance.

Freeman said that in the future she would like to provide even more opportunities for local small and large businesses.

"I think that we need to just continue to put as many opportunities out there as we can for small businesses," Freeman said. "We are doing the best that we can right now."

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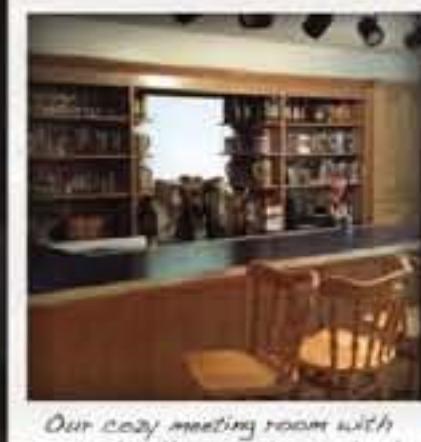
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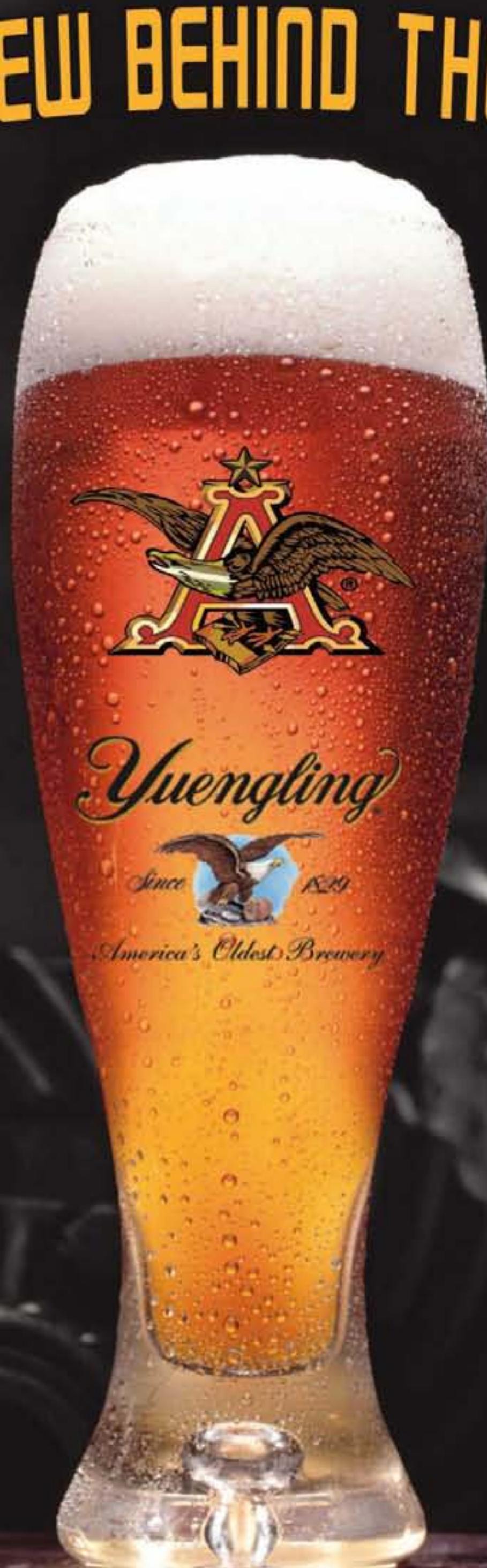
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HEALTH CARE

Culture change needed



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

In 2013, West Virginia tied with Mississippi for the highest obesity rate in the nation at 35.1 percent, according to The State of Obesity report from the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Obesity is the No. 1 problem affecting health

BY SHAWNEE MORAN • TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — West Virginia is known for many wonderful things — rolling hills, abundant wildlife and, of course, it's good-natured residents.

Anyone can tell it's the people who make the state.

But it's the people who have created a health epidemic in the state. Obesity is a disease that affects almost one in three people in West Virginia.

In 2013, West Virginia tied with Mississippi for the highest obesity rate in the nation at 35.1 percent, according to The State of Obesity report from the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Dr. Rahul Gupta, the commissioner and state health offi-

cer for the Bureau for Public Health, said obesity has increased in West Virginian adults and kids in recent years.

In fact, he said this is the first generation in the nation's history where kids may not outlive their parents.

"It's unfortunate, but it's also true — and this holds nowhere more true than in Appalachia," he said. "Appalachia stands itself out to be, unfortunately, the leader in both chronic illnesses and the complications and problems of chronic illnesses. Because of that, it is expected that our current children will actually live shorter lives than their parents for the first time in the history of the nation."

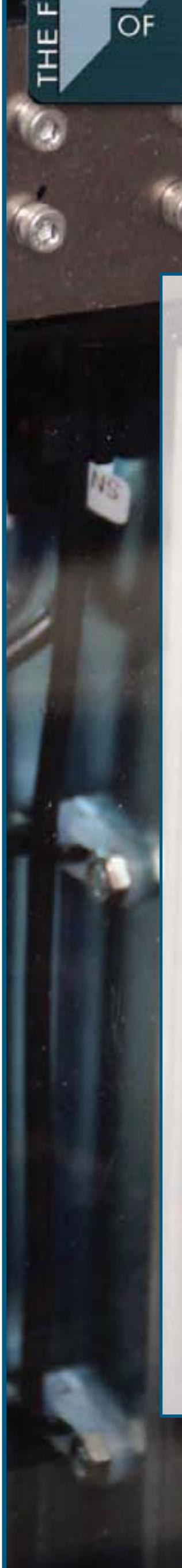
Obesity, by definition, has traditionally been considered as a person with a BMI of 30 or higher, or a person who is more than 20 percent of his ideal weight. This is calculated by taking a person's sex, age, height and build into account.

Gupta said risk factors for obesity are amongst the highest in Appalachia. These factors include smoking, not getting enough physical activity and not consuming the appropriate amount of fruits and vegetables.

SEE OBESITY, PAGE 2A



Gupta



Evolving care

Everyone has been hearing about "The Greatest Generation" for years. These are the people who grew up in the United States during the Great Depression and went on to serve in World War II.

But these veterans are quickly passing away. A new generation is taking their place. There are also a large number of female veterans, much larger than before.

And all these veterans are getting older.



Healthier kids

Stephen Smith, the director of the West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition, said sometimes people don't dig deep into what the problems really are, especially when it comes to issues like childhood obesity.

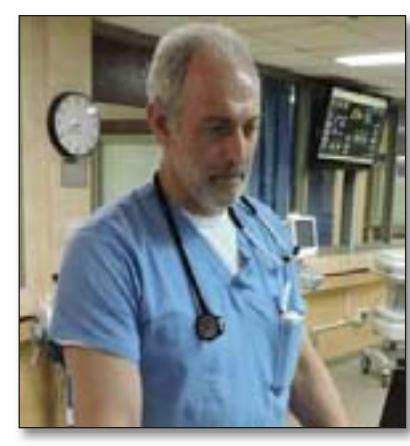
"People talk a lot about obesity, but they miss what it's related to," he said. "The problems that have led us to obesity are much scarier than just being overweight."



Investment in care

According to Fairmont Regional Medical Center CEO Peggy Coster, one key focus Alesto had when purchasing the hospital was upgrading the building itself. Along with upgrading the structure, medical equipment upgrades were a focus.

"They wanted it to look more modern," she said. "But some of the renovations started before the purchase."



Baby boomers age

There is a significant challenge underway with health care.

Baby boomers, those born between 1946 and 1964, are reaching the age where many are in need of increased medical care.

It's also, in general, an educated group that largely comprehends what they need to do to be as healthy as possible.

Obesity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

He said obesity is a chronic disease. It can cause heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis, breathing problems (sleep apnea), gallbladder diseases, gout and cancers.

"Obesity is amongst the, tobacco being the other, two preventable diseases that cause a majority burden amongst chronic illnesses," Gupta said. "When we talk about chronic illnesses — heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancers — that is a burden, just from a financial or fiscal standpoint. It is going to add the potential to bring our state and our nation to its knees. These are major contributors to health care expenditures nationally, as well as West Virginia. Obesity is a big contributor to spending health care dollars."

He said there isn't just one factor that plays into obesity — there are many.

But one of the most important factors, he said, deals with our culture, or our behaviors and beliefs.

Gupta said people have done studies across the nations and seen different contributing factors to obesity. He said in nations where the culture is more home cooking and having a meal at the table, there tends to be less of an obesity problem.

Our culture revolves around convenience, where fast food and drive-throughs are a normal occurrence. He said fast food is perhaps more expensive than being able to cook a healthy, home-cooked meal. The same money spent on a burger and fries combo could be used to buy ingredients for two or more meals.

Gupta also said that the way children see important family members in their lives — like their mother or grandfather — impacts their future. It sets an idea of what they should look like and it also reflects the way they treat food and exercise.

He said our social environment and built environment is another challenge that contributes to obesity.

"Social environment is a situ-



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

Our culture revolves around convenience, where fast food and drive-throughs are a normal occurrence.

tion where we eat a lot of calories while not getting a lot of physical activity. It's just a matter of fact that we have trouble," Gupta said. "The other part of it is built environment, in addition to social environment. That means we are so blessed to have so many outdoor activities in West Virginia, yet there are fewer opportunities to go on a walking trail closer to your home ... So whether it's your home, your work, your school or in your community, we obviously have areas to (work on to) adapting an active, healthy lifestyle."

He said economics and education also contribute to obesity.

Gupta said from a per capita family income standpoint, West Virginia is amongst one of the lower family income states in the country. And from an educational standpoint, he said higher education (like college) is proportional to developing some of these lifestyle behavior diseases. When combined with a social environment and the drinking college culture, the amount of calories consumed begins to add up.

Gupta said another contributor to obesity is something people can't easily change — genetics.

He said some people aren't

able to burn calories as quickly as others due to their basal metabolic rate (BSR). This is the minimum number of calories you'd burn if you did little to no exercise.

He said sometimes people have conditions, like hypothyroidism, that may slow down the BSR and, when left untreated, would actually make people gain weight.

But Gupta said for the most part, people have the ability to maintain a good body weight, eat right and exercise.

"People do not have to be the model-walking-down-the-runway size in order to be healthy. It's very important to understand that if you lose just a little weight, it provides a lot of benefit to your body," he said, adding if people lost 5 percent of their body weight, it would help prevent and delay chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

"We don't all have to lose 50, 80 pounds like you see in commercials in order to be healthy. So how do we become healthy? We start to make healthy choice the easy choice."

He said when it comes to food to think about portion size and consumption of fruits and vegetables in daily meals. Eating break-

fast and eating several times a day instead of a big meal will also help. Gupta said to make simple changes to your diet — instead of drinking soda or juice, drink a glass of water.

The other part is physical exercise.

"That's another one of those things — people think they need to be running for an hour every day at the gym. People need to understand that they may have to do as little as taking a brisk walk after every meal. That's been known to positively impact body functions. It's the simple things that count in life," he said.

"People do have the ability to take command of their lives. I think the most important thing people have to understand and know is that they can prevent this from happening. Obesity doesn't control you — you can control obesity."

He said small but significant lifestyle changes will make a difference. He said the lesson is that it's not the diet, but the lifestyle that needs to be altered.

"What we tend to forget is that when we start to make sustainable lifestyle changes, it will also influence a culture change," he said, adding children watch adults make these choices and want to do it, too.

"We're actually embarking upon a culture and societal change. And that's what's going to make a difference in the long run. It's a marathon, not a sprint, and it's very important to understand that. It's important to know what to do and how easy it is to do that."

Brandon Williams, the West Virginia state coordinator for Action for Healthy Kids, said

studies show healthy preferences start early in life so it's important to encourage kids to eat right and to be active from an early age.

He said children look to adults in their lives as role models. As a result, the current childhood obesity rate for 2- to 4-year-olds in West Virginia is 14 percent and 10- to 17-year-olds is 18.5 percent.

"We need to be looking at schools and homes and really

partner together and get on the same board when it comes to our lifestyles in general and the ways that we teach children," he said. "It seems like there are less and less opportunities for kids to be active throughout the day.

There's a lot of other choices children have to take up their free time, and a lot of those choices are entertaining, yet sedentary."

Action for Healthy Kids aims to help fight childhood obesity by partnering with schools, families and the communities to improve nutrition and physical activity. This national organization's goal is to help kids learn to eat healthy and exercise every day.

CSX, a supplier of rail-based freight transportation, is their main funder for West Virginia and several other states. He said without them they wouldn't be able to do the work that they do.

Williams said he is also involved in early education consulting helping to teach preschool teachers. He was involved in a national training team initiative "I am Moving, I am Learning," an approach to get kids to be more active. He said one thing they emphasized was helping children gain a foundation of skills. Young children have to learn and master how to skip, climb, gallop, throw and play catch if they want to participate in harder activities once they are in middle school.

He said there are numerous reasons this might be the first generation in the history of the nation where kids may not outlive their parents.

"It's a combination of varying life choices, and our lifestyles

have changed drastically in that short amount of time. We don't always make a health-conscious choice on a day-to-day basis. A lot of times everyone is busy. We are making choices around what we consume and what we do with our bodies based a lot of times on convenience, whether it be, 'I'm

busy and don't have time to cook dinner, so I'm going to stop and grab something,'" he said. "You can't really point the finger at any one culprit. It's a combination of our daily choices and routines."

As for getting kids to eat healthier, Williams said there are numerous ways to make fruit and vegetables more kid-friendly and appealing. He said parents can try serving the food they think they don't like with the food they do like. He also said parents could hide certain foods within other foods. For example, boil cauliflower, mash it up and put it in mashed potatoes.

Another way, he said, is to rename food kids don't like with another "cool" name so they will try it. For example, instead of saying carrots, call them X-ray carrots. By saying it will help their eyes and give them X-ray vision, kids will be more eager to try it.

He said grocery stores and the food industry isn't completely blameless when it comes to obesity. He said it is easy to find unhealthy foods in a store, especially in the checkout lane with various candies and chocolate bars.

Regardless, he said parents need to be that role model for kids.

"Kids can be change agents in families," he said. "Kids make a big impact on a family, but when it comes to eating, kids can only eat what parents bring in the house. Kids can only do so much."

Another thing Action for Healthy Kids does is provide grant applications for West Virginia schools. He said they are now accepting applications for the 2015-16 school year, with breakfast grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500 and Every Kid Healthy grants ranging from \$500 to \$2,500.

Applications are due by May 1. To apply for the grants, visit <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/tools-for-schools/apply-for-grants>. Email Shawnee Moran at smoran@timeswv.com or follow her on Twitter @smoranTWV.

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VA evolving as needs of veterans change

BY JOHN VEASEY
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Everyone has been hearing about "The Greatest Generation" for years.

These are the people who grew up in the United States during the Great Depression and went on to serve in World War II.

But these veterans are quickly passing away. A new generation is taking their place.

There are also a large number of female veterans, much larger than before.

And all these veterans are getting older.

The new generation that is taking over will have some of the same needs. But some needs will be different.

The Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center in Clarksburg is preparing for the new wave of veterans it will be treating.

Beth M. Brown is the medical center director in Clarksburg, while Dr. Glenn R. Snider is chief of staff.

Brown explained that the VA Medical Center serves about 22,000 veterans in the immediate area besides the 74,000 in a 22-county area. Also included in this region are some counties from the surrounding states of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Ohio. She said 2,300 of these veterans are returning from combat.

"We would normally describe these veterans as younger, but we do have people who have been deployed who are in their 50s," she explained.

"We are serving approximately 1,000 women who make up about 5 percent of our veterans. This is one area where the VA Hospital has made many improvements to better serve these women. For instance, our hospital provides comprehensive women's health care as well as a woman's health clinic," Brown said. "We have a full spectrum here — their mammography, bone density and their annual physical. And we can do all these things on the same day. The women don't have to come back."

Snider said the configuration was based on feedback from female veterans.

"We learned in response from the woman's clinic that things were somewhat fragmented," he said. "We designed this so women could get everything they needed. We offered the women a plan where they could get all the care in one day if they should desire it. We do offer them one-stop shopping with our specially trained nurse practitioners. They can also get standard gynecological care or specialized gynecological care. We do have a full-time gynecologist on hand five days a week."

"We wanted to make it as user-friendly as possible. They can get everything done with one visit."

The medical center can host on-site mammography from a full-field digital mammography machine. This state-of-the-art machine allows for enhanced breast images with minimal radiation exposure, and it continues to meet or exceed its performance goals for breast and cervical cancer screening.

"Our facility has obtained full accreditation through the American College of Radiology to perform mammography," Snider said.

He explained that in past years, the VA Hospital didn't have as many women to treat. But the number is growing.

"We see an ever-increasing number of females coming back from active duty. Our plan is to meet their needs in a setting that is female-friendly," Snider said.

He noted that some of these women are of reproductive age and some will get pregnant, "but we have a program that allows the women to choose the obstetrician of her choice, and we will pay the bill."

Brown mentioned some other things being done for women.

"With our female veterans, what we can do is promote comprehensive health," she said. "If we can't provide the care, we can send the patient to the community health doctor."

Brown pointed out there are four community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) the VA uses — the Braxton County CBOC in Sutton, the Monongalia County CBOC in



Veteran Heather Zannino has her blood pressure taken by nurse practitioner Heidi Seti at the woman's clinic at the Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center.



Mammography technician Brenda Ware sets up for a digital mammogram.



The hospital has upgraded from the old 64-slice CT scan to this new 128-slice CT scan.

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He said the Homeless Program has been expanded.

"We want to make sure veterans are taken care of so they don't have to become homeless. (Homeless Program manager) Amber Brunetti stresses that we are more than just a hospital. We care about our veterans and recognize the significant challenges that our veterans face each and every day on the streets or in homeless shelters."

"We can add staff," Snider said. "We have just expanded with a clinic in Tucker County in Parsons to twice the volume of the original. This new clinic will serve more than 1,200 veterans from seven counties. And we are now expanding our Braxton facility, which will give us even more room."

"We're always looking to how we can improve access."

Snider also noted the substance abuse problem, which he said is a problem for the general public as well as veterans.

"We have a program that deals with alcohol and drug abuse," he said. "Any time we deal with suicide with a veteran, we review any kind of problems to see if there was anything that we missed ... and what could have been different. The problem with suicide is it crosses all age groups. It's not just combat veterans or just veterans. We need to get those people in treatment before they get the opportunity to complete the act."

The Clarksburg VA Hospital also offers a compensated work therapy program to veterans to enhance their social, vocational and community-integration skills, improving their overall quality of life. Vocational rehabilitation services are provided in an effort to assist veterans in achieving their personal psychosocial and/or vocational goals.

Kara Tustin, a CWT coordinator, said the CWT staff believes the services provided through the CWT program help make the VA more than just a hospital.

"We view the veteran as a whole person, looking beyond their medical and mental health conditions to help improve their quality of life," Tustin said. "We specialize in supporting the new role employment plays in the veteran's overall life satisfaction by bridging the gap from hospital to home and community."

Email John Veasey at jveasey@timeswv.com.

Technology important in training future doctors

BY RICHARD BABICH
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Training the doctors of tomorrow involves the use of different technologies at the West Virginia University School of Medicine.

Dr. Norman D. Ferrari, the vice dean for education and academic affairs, explained that different technologies are used in training WVU medical students.

"I would say that the way things are moving, for example, bedside ultrasound, they are becoming more widely available and used by physicians for ... procedures such as the placement of central intravenous lines."

"A lot of those are done under ultrasound guidance," he said. "So our students are learning how to do the ultrasound right from the beginning. It is much like teaching them to use a stethoscope or a pressure cuff — it is now part of the modern-day equipment a physician should know how to use, and because it can be done at the bedside it is sort of instant feedback. It is not like taking an X-ray where you have to send (a patient) down to the radiology department and wait for somebody else to look at it and give you an interpretation of the film. It is pretty instantaneous."

The use of ultrasounds in a medical environment may evolve to help rural doctors.

"What I see happening in the future, it can help them make a decision ... 'Can the patient stay in our local community or have I seen something (or) found something on this ultrasound that would indicate that they need to be referred to a tertiary care center?'" Ferrari said. "That is where I see it evolving over time."

WVU medical students have technology infused into their curriculum beginning in their first semester.

"The biggest thing is when

you start learning it early in your

training, it is just sort of second

nature. It is what you have



SUBMITTED PHOTO

West Virginia University School of Medicine students observe a medical procedure being completed on a mannequin.

always done. It is not like trying to teach a new skill after you have learned to do it a different way. It has just always been there and a part of it, so you have become very comfortable," he said.

Ferrari also explained that students take tests electronically, which allows test questions to be specific and provide an audible or visual example of what a question is asking.

Dan Summers, the director of clinical simulation at the WVU School of Medicine, said full-scale mannequins, simulated sections of human anatomy and standardized patients are used to train students. The center where the education is held was opened in 2009.

"Simulation in this manner, to some degree, has been around 20-plus years, but it is becoming more and more prevalent as we



SUBMITTED PHOTO

West Virginia University students practice procedures on a mannequin.

move into the future," he said.

Simulation in medical school creates a number of advantages for future doctors and also helps with patient safety.

"What used to happen, they

would have classroom didactic information provided to them, and then they would go into the clinical setting and they would learn and practice on patients, live patients, and then gain pro-

ficiency that way," Summers said. "Simulation allows them to practice procedures, to learn how to communicate in a simulated environment where there is no risks to the patients. Once they have sat in the simulation setting, then students go into the clinical setting to put their training to use on patients."

The life-size mannequins are machines that are programmable and provide different human-like features, Summers explained. The mannequins have heart and lung sounds, pulses, dilating pupils, blinking and can even speak.

"We can program them any level of illness. They can have very basic problems like a stomachache all the way up to being a critically ill ICU (patient) on a ventilator with multiple drips and lines and all of those kinds of things," he said.

According to Summers, simulation centers are not unique to the WVU School of Medicine, though it is more advanced than many other programs.

"The other nice thing about simulation is we can create any type of scenario that they would encounter. For instance, during medical school or residency, they may be expected to perform a life-saving procedure — for instance, a surgical airway," Summers said. "They may never see that or see it only during their training. But we can recreate that at simulation and they can practice that over and over and over so that when the time does come for them to do that emergent procedure, they are very familiar with it."

Email Richard Babich at

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PHOTO COURTESY OF KATE LONG

About 90 kids and their families attended an event to help the Hamlin PK-8 school construct a running and walking trail. This is part of an initiative to keep kids active.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATE LONG

A group of young adults practices hula hooping at a Try This conference. Try This is dedicated to helping kids get up and get active.

Steps need to be taken to improve kids' health

BY ANGELEE WILEY
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Kids used to be excited to go outside and spend hours riding bikes, going to the park or hanging out with friends.

Now it seems they would rather spend time inside playing video games or keeping up with social media.

These shifts bring up the idea of what's going on in the world of children's health.

Stephen Smith, the director of the West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition, said sometimes people don't dig deep into what the problems really are, especially when it comes to issues like childhood obesity.

"People talk a lot about obesity, but they miss what it's related to," he said. "The problems that have led us to obesity are much scarier than just being overweight."

Twenty to 40 years ago, childhood diabetes was a rare thing. But now, more children are being diagnosed with the disease.

Smith believes one factor is the way the food economy is set up.

The cost of healthy foods has gone up, while the cost of processed foods has gone down.

He also believes the amount of physical activity in schools has decreased.

The coalition has done research for different projects, and during that time it found that one of two kids don't have recess, meaning half the students in West Virginia do not get recess at school.

"You add all those things together, and you have a crisis not only of childhood obesity, but you have a whole generation of kids who will face a health crisis over their life," Smith said.

Other dangers that come with Type 2 diabetes and obesity are the risks that can occur later in life, like heart disease and the potential of a stroke.

Smith said preventative health care is important, but one issue that is often forgotten is the cost.

"Another part that is left out is the economic impact of all this," Smith said. "The West Virginia

Center on Budget & Policy estimated the cost annually for treating preventable disease in West Virginia is about \$4 billion a year."

Sharon Carte, the executive director of West Virginia Children's Health Insurance Program (WVCHIP), agrees that preventable health care is one of the most important steps in children and adult health.

"I think we want to make sure kids get good preventive coverage, whether it be regular checkups or immunizations," Carte said.

WVCHIP is a public children's health insurance program that covers higher-level incomes than Medicaid. Carte said it was created as a way to help working families.

Not only is childhood obesity an issue kids are fighting, but Carte said she also has seen issues when it comes to immunizations.

"The one that stands out to me from looking at our quality measures, I see that teenagers aren't getting their shots as often as they

should. There are some very important vaccinations that are now given," Carte said.

To help parents keep track of when their child is due for an immunization, Carte said every time a family signs up for WVCHIP, they give the family a link where they can check the schedule.

Another issue Carte frequently notices when it comes to children's health is dental problems.

"Good oral health is a matter of really good prevention practice, but also getting to the dentist," Carte said. "Sometimes dental care gets the last priority. We now know that kids really suffer from dental decay, which is one of the more frequent problems in childhood health."

But WVCHIP is working to make conditions better. One issue is that parents sometimes put so much of an emphasis on medical care that they push dental care back on the list of priorities. Or if a family can only afford one, they tend to choose medical care.

Carte said WVCHIP works

with an oral health coalition to make dental service more available in school settings.

Looking toward the future, Carte would like to see a day when people can get the best health care possible and take charge of preventative care.

"I would like to see more children getting their health care from primary care," Carte said. "One thing that concerns me is that we still have a lot of families going to emergency health care."

Some of the issues kids face are diabetes, obesity and issues with immunizations and dental care. But what groups are working to combat these issues?

Carte said groups like the West Virginia Oral Health Coalition, the West Virginia Healthy Kids and Family Coalition as well as the local chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) are working hard to do what they can for children's health.

Smith said one group that has stepped up is KEYS 4 HealthyKids. This group worked with Smith and the West Virginia

Healthy Kids and Families Coalition on a bill that requires 30 minutes of physical activity in schools. Smith said they are in the process of getting this bill implemented this year.

Moving forward, those at the West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition want to do what they can to help children improve their health.

"The main project we have related to health is Try This," Smith said. "The purpose of Try This is to help knock West Virginia off the worst health lists, community by community."

Smith believes to make positive changes, everyone must work together. This is something that is going to have to be a group effort.

"We need parents, kids, doctors to help get their schools to make changes and start youth sports leagues, a walking trail or community garden," Smith said. "We need those everyday people to work together at a local level."

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Mona Hemingway, Gretchen Hennigan, Director of Cancer Services Linda Carte and Peggy Johnson pose with charts explaining the different types of cancer.

PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

Advancements in cancer treatment are being made

BY JOHN VEASEY
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Cancer is an illness that was diagnosed in more than 1.6 million Americans in 2013.

But there have been many advancements in cancer treatments in the past few years, and other treatments are ongoing. The diagnosis of cancer is no longer the death sentence it once was.

Dr. Yaser Homsi, a medical oncologist, has been at United Hospital Center for three years. He is pleased with the advancements in cancer treatment, and his pleasure about these improvements is obvious.

One major advancement is for the cancer named CLL, or chronic lymphocytic leukemia.

"There are actually four new drugs for this disease approved in 2014 — two new immunotherapy drugs (ofatumumab and obinutuzumab) and two new targeted therapy (Idelalisib and Idelalisib)," Homsi said.

The latter has transformed the way CLL is being treated.

"They are more effective treatments than the available chemotherapy, and they also have less side effects," he said. "Another positive attribute of these therapies is that it may delay the need for chemotherapy when given as a second approach. This is significant, as many patients with CLL are older, which can make chemotherapy treatments harder to tolerate."

In fact, the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) named CLL therapies the "cancer advance of the year."

The second notable advancement was in prostate cancer. It was determined through clinical research that treatment started earlier for prostate cancer may produce a better outcome.

"We're not changing the treatment but are changing the timing



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER

Dr. Yaser Homsi, an oncologist, looks at a slide under the microscope.

of the treatment, and making it sooner is shown to improve the outcome. We are now better at treatment because we know a better timing strategy," Homsi said.

"The third notable achievement is that Medicare has approved payment for the screening for lung cancer," he continued.

"Generally, people who develop lung cancers often are found at a later stage. Now Medicare is paying for a low-dose CAT scan for people at high risk for the development of lung cancer, which can hold the promise of finding lung cancer at a much earlier stage."

Screening guidelines include anyone between 55 and 74 who smoked a pack a day for 30 years or two packs a day for 15 years are eligible to have a CT scan of their chest once a year.

"For lung cancer, we have not had any advancement in the last 15 years, and now we have two new treatment options," Homsi said.

The first treatment is called ramucirumab. It is a targeted therapy against the blood vessels. It

needs to be given with chemotherapy, and it has increased its effectiveness. The second treatment is a new immunotherapy called nivolumab. This actually stimulates the immune system.

"They are new options," he said. "While I can't say they are helpful in all lung cancers, some people can benefit from these options."

These treatments have been studied in national clinical trials and most patients are willing to use them to see if they benefit from the treatment, he said.

"All of these advancements have given us more options, and any time you have more options, it's always positive," he added.

Linda Carte has been a member of the UHC staff for 18 years. A native of Pennsylvania, she received her nursing degree at Alderson Broaddus University in Philippi.

Carte, who now serves as the director of cancer care at United Hospital Center, said when she thinks of things on the horizon,

she thinks in terms of support services and the Patient Navigation Program.

"At UHC, we have added a new program to the hospital," she said. "It's the Patient Navigation Program for patients who are diagnosed with cancer. It's a guide to assist people with the large number of physicians they will be working with and the new terminology that will be discussed ... as well as their physical, psychological and spiritual needs. Navigating the health care system can be intimidating."

Patients are partnered with a navigator after a suspicious finding and throughout their individual course of diagnosis and care.

"We want them to have someone to help them know why things are being done and where to get the information and support necessary," Carte said.

She said that all of a sudden after being diagnosed, surgeons, radiologists, pathologists and radiation oncologists come into a patient's life.

"It's overwhelming to some patients," she said. "So having the patients' questions answered and getting the support needed, we feel, was a very important program for us to have."

"That's the newest program for us here at UHC. We make a big deal out of the key things that define our program. We want patients and families to know they are not alone after a diagnosis of cancer and that we are only a phone call away. We have a system in place for them with our navigation program. This program came to UHC thanks to the generosity of the Cecil B. Highland Jr. and Barbara B. Highland estate. And beginning this year, two additional professionals — patient navigators — have been added to the staff."

Cancer navigators are individuals who assist cancer patients in finding their way through the



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER
The Rev. James Morley blesses navigator Peggy Johnson's hands in the chapel at United Hospital Center.



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER
Linda Carte, the director of cancer services, and patient navigator Gretchen Hennigan look at one of the charts.



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER
Mona Hemingway goes over options with a patient.

diagnosis, treatments, side effects and fear. One of the two new navigators, Mona Hemingway, RN, will be working with lung and colon cancer patients, as the other navigator, Gretchen Hennigan, a registered nurse, will assist patients with urological, hematologic, and head and neck cancers.

Both of the new navigators will work with other cancer patients as assigned.

"We take pride in the key elements that define our cancer program, two of which are: We want patients and families to know they are not alone at UHC after the diagnosis of cancer, and the navigation program is another way we work hard to keep the concept of 'care' in 'cancer care,'" Carte said.

With the navigator for breast health already in place, the addition of two more navigators

assures all patients who receive cancer care at UHC will have a personal guide throughout the process of diagnosis, treatment and survivorship. Patient navigation is a proactive approach that has been proven to eliminate barriers to assure timely diagnosis and treatment and keep patients from falling through the cracks. Navigator programs are common and exist across America and in Canada.

A navigator has been available at UHC since March 2012 from a grant provided by the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

"After the diagnosis," Carte emphasized, "it's very important to have people answer your questions and to have the resources that you need."

Email John Veasey at jcveasey@timeswv.com.

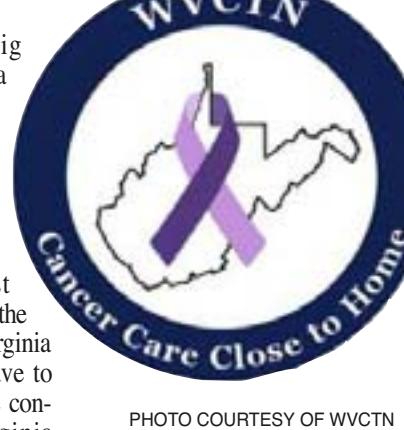


PHOTO COURTESY OF WVCTN

The logo for the West Virginia Cancer Clinical Trials Network shows a ribbon surrounding the state.

together to bring these trials to the state," Keresztry said. "Collectively, we can attract more cutting-edge trials if we work together as a group. The idea is that you have a network and someone wants to open a trial in West Virginia. Instead of them going to the hospitals or centers individually, they could come to these networks and it would be open throughout the state."

In addition to allowing patients easier access to better care, opening the centers expects to have a great economic impact on the Mountain State.

According to a study completed by the WVU School of Business and Economics, new clinical trials could generate \$11 million in the first year alone. By year six, the report said, 20 percent of out-of-state trial participants would increase the economic activity in West Virginia by almost \$10 million.

Keresztry noted that "the economic report summarizes the value of keeping West Virginians at home to receive their health care as opposed to having them go out of state."

Modeled after a network in New Mexico, Remick said the statewide network will take a few years to fully evolve but that it is constantly working on putting the pieces together to "provide access to state-of-the-art care throughout the state."

Email Matt Welch at mwelch@timeswv.com or follow him on Twitter @MattWelch_TWV.

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improved ways to treat, find, diagnose, prevent and manage cancer.

Overall, the network intends to

increase access to cancer clinical trials throughout the state to provide all West Virginians the opportunity to remain in state for their cancer care rather than traveling outside of West Virginia.

Studies have shown that more than

10,000 state

residents are diagnosed each year,

and nearly 20 percent of those

patients go outside the state lines

for their care in states like Ohio,

Virginia and North Carolina.

"We know that most West

Virginians want to receive their

care close to home," said Dr. Scott

Remick, the co-chairman of

WVCTN and head of the Mary

Babb Randolph Cancer Center in

Morgantown. "The WVCTN will

provide them with that opportuni-

ty."

Steve Douglas, the director of

the WVU Alumni Center, is one

of those patients, and he would

like to see more care offered to

the state's residents.

Douglas was diagnosed with

brain cancer in late 2014 and cur-

rently receives his treatment

locally in Morgantown. But

through his battle with cancer,

he's seen the necessity to provide

better options for those who join



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Common Core

PHOTO BY SEAN McNAMARA

Allison Gay, a junior art education major at Fairmont State University, reads "Stand Tall Molly Lou Melon" to a group of students as part of the FSU Reads program. Common Core standards are intended to start when young children enter school and help them build upon each lesson learned, grade by grade, until graduation when they should be career- or college-ready.

Standards in place to ensure college- and career-ready students

BY MISTY POE • TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — A child who entered the West Virginia public school system as a kindergartener this year may not yet know what she wants to be when she grows up, but the school system has to prepare her for that next step after graduation.

And they have 13 years to do just that — make sure the girl is ready to either enter college as a freshman, start an entry-level job or begin workforce training.

"Students are preparing for jobs that haven't been invented yet," said Randy Farley, the chief instructional leader for the Marion County Board of Education. "This makes the work in K-12 schools harder to prepare students for just about anything, the unknown. Colleges, universities and businesses want students who can think critically, problem solve, communicate orally and in writing, work on a team, are dependable and have a good work ethic."

That's a huge responsibility, considering that the child is just in kindergarten. But the curriculum in West Virginia starts right at kindergarten and continues to build on those initial concepts and learning patterns in the hopes that once she walks across the stage to accept her high school diploma, she'll be ready for that next step. And she'll be ready, no matter what that step will be.

At least that's the concept.

This is the first year that all public schools in West Virginia are participating in new standards — the Next Generation Content Standards in English Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics. Adopted by the West Virginia Board of Education in 2010, the standards were phased in

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Beyond classrooms

Dr. J. Robert Baker, an English professor and the director of the Honors program as well as a member of the Undergraduate Research Advisory Council at FSU, said the Undergraduate Research Program began in 2005 as a way to support undergraduate research and allow students to work with faculty mentors on projects appropriate to students' particular disciplines.



Teaching teachers

How do we teach teachers? What is the process like, and how has it changed over the years?

Carolyn Crislip-Tacy, an interim dean of the School of Education at Fairmont State University, has been involved with education at the college level for about 31 years.

She said one of the biggest changes in how we teach our teachers falls within the role of technology.



Future classroom

As technology continues to grow, so will the need to update the environments in which students learn. That new technology has been on the horizon for students in West Virginia and has already begun to take shape.

When looking at the classroom of tomorrow, you'll likely see more one-to-one technology where students can receive more individualized training.



Career paths

Times are changing — students don't have to go to a four-year university to reap the benefits of having a successful career. Certificate programs, associate degrees and the community college system are becoming increasingly popular across the state.

Middle-skill jobs — which require more than a high school education but not a four-year degree — account for more than half the jobs in the state.

Core

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

starting in July 2011 in kindergarten, adding first grade in 2012, second grade in 2013 and third through 12th grade just this school year.

You may have heard of this shift in the educational system and may not have even known. West Virginia is one of 43 states to voluntarily adopt what is commonly referred to as "Common Core Standards" and develop it to meet the needs of its schools, educators and, most importantly, its students.

"Common Core" became a buzz word in West Virginia this legislative session as it was on the brink of repeal before its first full year of implementation. At the last minute, instead of an outright repeal, which would have placed the state in jeopardy of losing more than \$360 million per year in federal funding, lawmakers instead agreed to study the standards for a period of two years before any subsequent actions.

Studying is how West Virginia drafted its latest education standards.

According to Clayton Burch, the chief academic officer for the West Virginia Department of Education, in 2010 more than 100 classroom teachers and higher education officials came together to develop Next Generation Content Standards by looking at the previous standards and how Common Core guidelines could be implemented to fill in gaps.

"This group of West Virginia educators found the standards to be research and evidence based, aligned with college and work expectations, rigorous and internationally benchmarked," Burch explained. "A particular standard was included in the document only when the best available research and evidence indicated that its mastery was essential for college and career readiness in a 21st-century, globally competitive society."

Farley said several Marion County teachers participated in that process, and since its imple-

mentation, have trained on the statewide and regional level to be able to adapt the new standards into their day-to-day lesson plans.

"We have continued to provide extensions for training in the West Virginia Next Generation Content Standards through several venues," Farley said. "We try to focus the majority of our staff development around the standards and giving teachers time to share strategies and tools, design instruction and rearrange the curriculum map to deliver them to students. It is an ongoing process."

Part of the confusion for parents is understanding that the standards are merely a clear grade-by-grade expectation of what a child should master. The lesson plans are not dictated by the standards, but rather the teacher.

"Teachers know best about what works in the classroom," Burch explained. "That is why these standards establish what students need to learn, but do not dictate how teachers should teach. Instead, schools and teachers decide how best to help students reach the standards."

Those standards are certainly more rigorous than what was in place before, but that's necessary for the success for the students, Burch said.

"For the first time in West Virginia history, students are the focus of the standards, not teachers," he explained. "What the student knows, understands and can do is the benchmark for these standards, not what the teacher is doing."

For example, Farley said that for years, algorithms were used to solidify a math concept — a basic process in repetition that delivers an expected result. These are the math lessons parents remember and can't understand why their children aren't being taught in the same way.

"This is fine for the quick, one-way method to get to an answer, but limits possibilities," Farley explained. "The



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Aiden Slusser participates in the 2015 Math Field Day. Common Core standards for math are not just about memorizing tables or repeating algorithms, but finding multiple approaches to a mathematical concept to promote true understanding.

Common Core focuses on fluency with number facts, but goes deeper. Now we try to teach students to understand the 'thinking' behind the numbers, to understand others' thinking about how to get to the answer in more than one way, and the relationship of the numbers.

"This builds more critical thinking and better application of the numbers in varied possibilities," Farley said.

So it isn't just a memorization of the multiplication table any more. Children are not just learning that 2 times 2 equals 4, but understand the concept of multiplication and exactly why 2 times 2 equals 4. Once a student has mastered that skill, they will

be expected to be able to use that mastery to accomplish the next standard.

The standards focus more on the ability of the student to use the skills they have learned previously, to help them move to the next level in the standards," Farley explained. "We no longer expect students to only memorize information for a test."

A lot of the standards are centered around the depth of knowledge, spending more time on a concept to understand it fully and avoid what Burch refers to as teaching principles of math "a mile wide and an inch deep."

There's more than one way to understand multiplication, for example, other than just memo-

rizing a table. And there's more than one way to teach it, too. Spending more classroom time understanding the concept, explaining it in several different ways, is intended to cement the lesson.

"It is kind of like a carpenter's toolkit," Burch explained. "You need different tools to do different jobs. The mathematics standards allow teachers to address the individual student learning needs by making a broad statement that permits flexible approaches."

It's more than just crunching numbers with an algorithm that's either right or wrong. Burch says it's more about understanding how and why you get to that right answer that resonates with a child's brain and helps her adapt it to the next lesson.

"This approach provides the students with connected learning that will build upon and enhance future understanding," he explained.

There have been a lot of misconceptions about the shifts the new standards have in English language and arts, too, said Burch. It's not true that West Virginia's new standards no longer allow students the time to read classic literature in advanced grades, he explained.

"English and language arts teachers are able to continue teaching the beloved classics.

However, the demand comes from the other content areas to provide content-rich nonfiction for their students to read," he explained.

In fact, there's even more emphasis on reading than previous standards, but there is a shift on creating a "true balance" between literary works and informational texts.

For example, it isn't just about reading "The Diary of Anne Frank," but getting a more complex understanding about what it was like for Jews living in Nazi-occupied countries during World War II from other nonfiction sources, like similar documented

occurrences, news coverage of the time or research-based texts.

Students are also expected to constantly build on their vocabulary, be able to use the texts they read to write reports with sources of information cited and be able to engage in conversations about the texts read to demonstrate understanding.

These standards aren't in place to ensure that a student masters third grade, but that the lessons of third grade are carried over to the fourth grade and beyond to that day when the student enters the workforce.

"This approach to learning benefits not only the educational system, it also has a clear connection to our workforce," Burch said. "West Virginians and their businesses and corporations deserve students who are college and career ready. This means they can work cooperatively, complete tasks and understand a wide range of solutions to problems."

"They are able to read closely and comprehend at a depth of understanding so they can apply what they have read to a variety of situations and demands," he explained.

Today, colleges are demanding more than ever from their students, Burch explained, and there needs to be a way to get West Virginia students on par with those demands.

To ensure all students are prepared for success after graduation, the Common Core establishes a set of clear, consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in math and English language arts," he said.

"This approach to education brings a plethora of opportunity to both the educational system and the community at large.

"Better qualified teachers and college- and career-ready students help grow the economy and attract businesses to our state," Burch said.

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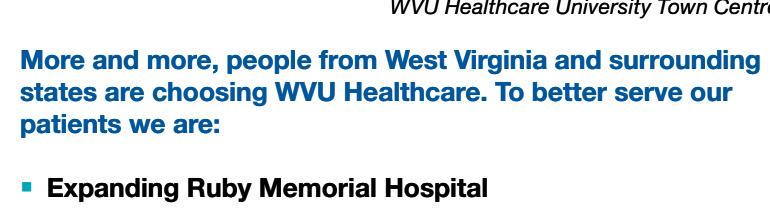
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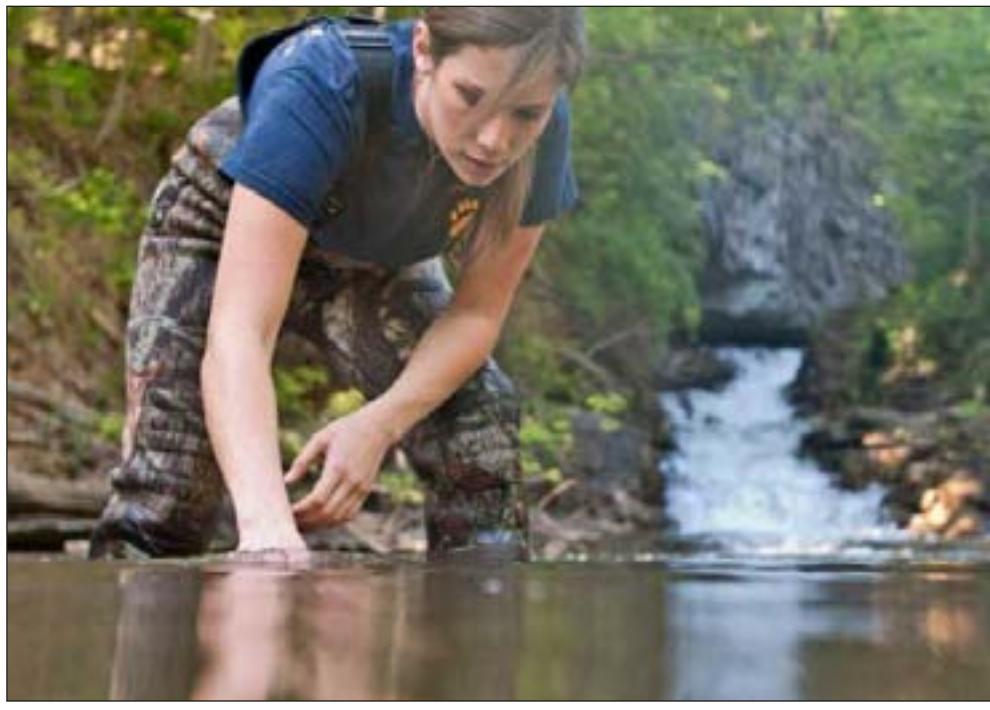
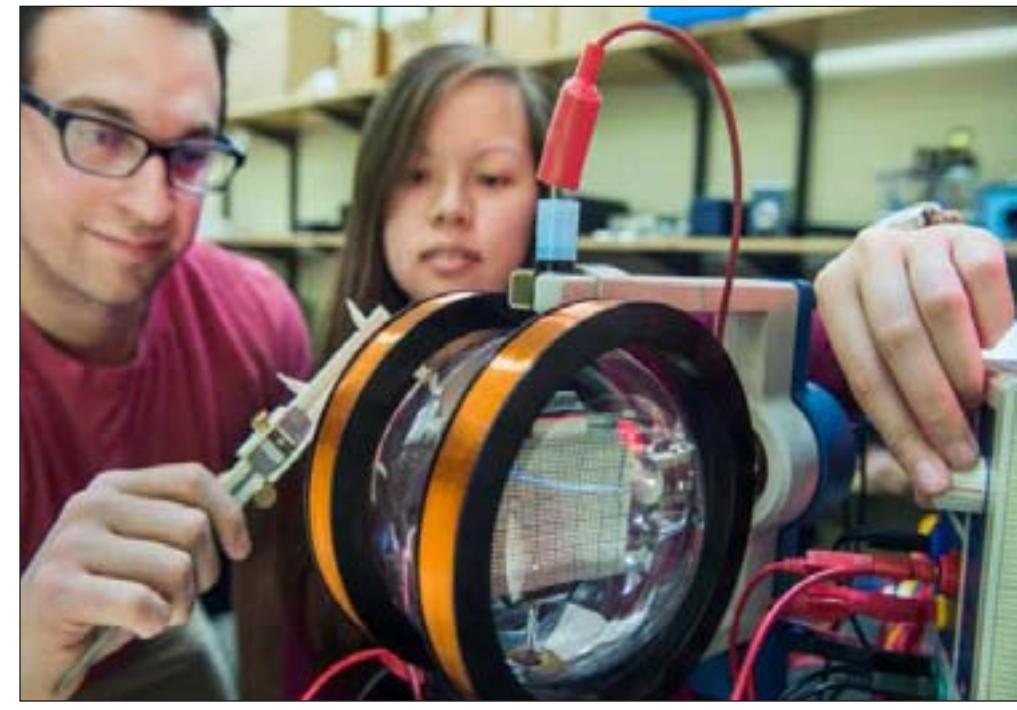


PHOTO COURTESY OF WVU

Students and faculty in West Virginia University's wildlife and fisheries resources program conduct research on management, biology and ecology.



WVU PHOTO BY BRIAN PERSINGER

Undergraduate students Lucas Hawkins and Viviana Nguyen are pictured in West Virginia University's Advanced Physics Laboratory.

Higher ed research breaks boundaries of classroom

BY NICOLE FIELDS
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — When Dannie Arnold, a senior at Fairmont State University, began studying the environmental impacts of Marcellus shale drilling, she made an interesting discovery: There actually hadn't been much research conducted on the topic.

The biology major from Braxton County admitted she was somewhat surprised, but it also meant her research regarding how drilling activities affect water quality meant she had a "unique" opportunity.

"This is a great opportunity to be part of history," Arnold said.

Arnold is part of an ongoing project at FSU in which students study water quality above and below Marcellus shale drilling sites in North Central West Virginia. She and her fellow team members spent several days last summer traveling to different sites in Doddridge and Harrison counties to collect data that ultimately would be used to help determine the effects drilling activities have on water.

Her role involved collecting water samples from various sites and putting 10 water fleas in each sample. Then she measured how much the water fleas either reproduced or how much fatality there was and compared the different levels from each of the sites.

After the team members collected the water samples, they spent time testing the water for nitrates and sulphates in the lab as well as studying data and crunching numbers.

The results?

"The total dissolved solids, which don't necessarily mean pollutants — it could be ions, different salts, any number of things — the value for total dissolved solids was higher almost in every case below the sites," Arnold explained. "We didn't find much else that correlated. We studied quite a few different parameters ... and we didn't see correlation with almost any of those, but we did with total dissolved solids. It was higher in almost every case."

"We can't say for sure whether that means that that's pollution. It could be any number of things," she added. "But we did see that that was the case with all the sites, which is interesting that we saw an increase like that."

Earlier this month, Arnold took those results to Undergraduate Research Day in Charleston, where she presented the group's findings and was able to talk with legislators and other officials who are interested in shale drilling.

The entire process — from collecting water samples in streams around the region to taking her work to the state's capital — was possible thanks to grant funding through the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience Fellows Program at FSU, which is part of the Undergraduate Research Program at the university.

Dr. J. Robert Baker, an English professor and the director of the Honors program as well as a member of the Undergraduate Research Advisory Council at FSU, said the Undergraduate Research Program began in 2005 as a way to support undergraduate research and allow students to work with faculty mentors on projects appropriate to students' particular disciplines.



PHOTO BY NICOLE FIELDS

Fairmont State University senior Dannie Arnold studies water samples in a lab on campus.

Although funding for the Undergraduate Research Program has dwindled in the past three or four years, Baker said the program — and research in general — can be a critical component of students' success because it exposes them to a different level of thinking.

"It's one thing to sit in a classroom and take part in discussions or take notes and then write papers or pass tests," Baker said. "But you learn in a deeper way and a more engaged way when you're conducting your own research."

He said students at Fairmont State conduct research on a range of topics, from a math student studying the use of statistics in actuarial science to a national security student studying groups like Hezbollah and Hamas and understanding their origins in connection to organized violence.

Baker said research benefits students because it gives them the chance to think beyond a regular classroom setting, but it benefits the country as a whole because "the sharper the citizens of the country think, the stronger the country will be."

Arnold echoed that sentiment. "It's really important to be able to take what you've learned in the classroom and see that it actually is worth something," she said. "It's one thing to spit something out on a test, and it's another thing to see it put into application."

Plus, as Arnold pointed out, students' research could ultimately have a significant impact on the Mountain State.

"There's not ... a lot of research on the environmental impact (of Marcellus shale drilling) yet, so it's really a unique opportunity to look at this firsthand before it's been studied to a large extent," she said.

But without funding, research at universities across the country becomes more difficult. That's why education leaders say initiatives like the Research Trust Fund are so important.

According to information from the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's Division of Science and Research (wvresearch.org), the Research

research projects. King mentioned that astrophysics researchers at WVU are leading an international team as they attempt to detect gravitational waves, or tiny ripples in the fabric of space and time.

"The idea is that by Einstein's theory of relativity, it predicts that there are these gravitational waves in the universe," King explained. "So as these waves move through, they're going to affect the transmission of electromagnetic fields through the universe. (The researchers) are looking for differences in timing between different pulsars that would indicate the presence of these electromagnetic waves."

Maura McLaughlin, an Eberly Family Distinguished Professor in the department of physics and astronomy at WVU, is part of the project. She said that by using the Green Bank Telescope in Pocahontas County, the team is participating in something that could be "really transformative" because the waves have never been detected so far away.

In fact, she said if they end up detecting gravitational waves, it would be a "Nobel Prize-worthy experiment."

"It's already put West Virginia on the map," she added. "We're really on the forefront."

While that awareness of the state and its research is important, King said the project also allows students to gain experience that will help them in their future careers.

"In a sense, these students are learning skills that don't just apply to solving a very complex astrophysical problem, but they're skills that they can translate when they go out into the workforce," King said.

And that's becoming increasingly important as industry becomes more of a key partner in research. King said by teaming up with universities, industry can tap into different areas of expertise to help solve specific problems.

"Then the relationship develops where (the industry is) going to provide some funding to solve these kinds of problems, but at the same time, the students who work on these projects often find that when they complete their degree (they) go on and work for that company because they've developed the expertise to solve this problem

that's important to that company," he said.

That makes research important on multiple levels, King explained, from having funds in place to support the research to having faculty who are actively engaged in research. King said when faculty members aren't engaged, their understanding of that particular field can stagnate.

"By having faculty who are engaged in research working with the students, they're really keeping the students up to date with what's going on today in their discipline, not what was going on five, 10, 15, 20 years ago," he added.

That translates to success when students graduate.

"Certainly, universities are places where new ideas come forth. At the end of the day, what's important is that those new ideas get translated out to impact on society," King said. "A lot of that happens through the students who take those ideas and go out and help solve problems."

Email Nicole Fields at nfields@timeswv.com or follow her on Twitter @NicoleFieldsTWV.

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WHEN: 10:00 a.m. Friday, April 3rd, 2015

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WHAT WILL THE FUTURE BE LIKE?

"Younger kids will become older kids, because they get older."	There will be flying cars, signs, houses and roads. Everybody is young. The future will be clean. The people wear sparkling flying shoes. There are puppies and they wore flying shoes, too.	I will invent a new Pokemon game.	I think the future will be like all technology. Computers will be smarter.	I think the future will have flying cars and jetpacks.	I think there will be an app on your phone that will you a dimensional portal. I think that if something happens to our world, that there will be pods to send us to a new world or a giant space ship as big as planet Earth to keep us safe from harm.	I think that in the future all of the cars in the universe will be controlled by video games, and all of the food will be free.	I think in the future, there will be no teachers. Instead, there will be robots. They will take over the schools. Then soon, people would not need to go to school. Finally, robots would rule the world.	I think it will have people being good and not bad. I hope it will be good in the future.	"In 200 years from now there will be an iPhone 9. In 10,000 years there will be flying remote controlled cars for people to drive."
Addison, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Hope, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Raven, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Makenna, 3rd Grade White Hall Elementary	Michael, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Braxton, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Jackson, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Isabella, 3rd Grade Jayenne Elementary	Morgan, 3rd Grade Blackshere Elementary	Anthony, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary
<small>Written By: Homefinders PLUS Mary Lou Jones CRS, GRI Broker/Owner 304-652-5295</small>	<small>Sponsored By: GILLETTE REPAIR SERVICE</small>	<small>Sponsored By: TMC TECHNOLOGIES</small>	<small>Sponsored By: WesBanco Bank, Inc.</small>	<small>Sponsored By: MORGANTOWN ROLLER VIXENS</small>	<small>Sponsored By: Marion County Chamber of Commerce</small>	<small>Sponsored By: WHTC beyond expectations</small>	<small>Sponsored By: Gillette Repair Service</small>	<small>Sponsored By: WVU Healthcare</small>	
I think our future will have treadmills for streets and roads. TV's, couches, and tables will be floating in the air.	"In 20 years they will have better cars that do not need gas. Also, I do not think there will be any bugs to bother me."	"There will be more technology and cool things!"	I will become the best soccer player in the world in the future.	"I think the future will have talking dogs."	I think the future will have flying cars. They might have new technology. There might be doors that open themselves. I think they will have bikes as fast as cars. They might make new kinds of food.	In the future there will be talking animals and talking plants.	I think the future will have flying cars, 1,000 inch TVs, and no more wars for the Army to fight.	I think the future will have hover boards. It would be cool if they came out with an invisible car. It's awesome if they also made you invisible too. I wish it was all real, but maybe some day someone will make them.	I think the future will be full of education, excitement and intelligence.
Eryn, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Samantha, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary	Lacy, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Arman, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Landon, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary	Tyler, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Haley, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Logan, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Drew, 3rd Grade White Hall Elementary	Abby, 3rd Grade Blackshere Elementary
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"I think there will be flying cars in the future and there will be robot pets."	We will have space ships to drive in. There will be robot servers that will do everything for you.	I think I will not have to get my license because cars will drive me.	I think it will be like all the same cars and houses but different. But new kinds of animals and dinosaur bones. More schools, more journeys, different rocks and minerals, more technology and classrooms and more books, different mountains and volcanoes and more solar systems.	I will become a world class quarterback for the Pittsburgh Steelers, win every award and become famous.	There will be cars that drive themselves automatically.	First, I think there will be flying cars. Then, I think someone will invent a device that if you put it on an animal's paw it can speak.	"In 100 years there will not be school, they will make \$500 bills, and everyone will be rich."	"I think we will have flying homes and flying cars."	I think the future will have big houses and cars that can fly.
Nicholas, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary	Ella, 3rd Grade Blackshere Elementary	Sabrina, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Camden, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Jacob, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Katelyn, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Ethan, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Kaden, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary	Makayla, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Alivia, 3rd Grade Northview Elementary
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The future will have time machines, jet packs, and even flying dogs and cats.	I will help sick people by becoming a nurse.	In the future I think the world would have new cars, more new clothes, and the prices will go higher. New inventions of all good stuff would appear, I will check it all out!	In the future there will be women presidents and kids will have jobs. All people in the whole wide world will be free.	"There will be flying cars."	In the near future, I will earn a scholarship in math and play golf for Oregon.	I want to be a vet and the youngest soccer player in the world. I want to have three children and a mansion as a house. My car will be a limousine.	"I think it might be the same, but it will be improved. I think the buildings will get better and we will have more technology."	I think it will be like everyone is wearing weird clothes.	The future will have lots of new inventions. Some inventions might be teleporters or time machines. There will also be a flying car. There will also be a blanket to make you invisible.
Abreonna, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Taylor, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Amelia, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Gracie, 3rd Grade White Hall Elementary	Dakota, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Braxton, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Sophia, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Abby, 3rd Grade Jayenne Elementary	Reese, 3rd Grade Blackshere Elementary	Brody, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary
<small>Written By: Homefinders PLUS Alan Hall Realtor, GRI 304-652-5295</small>	<small>Sponsored By: TMC TECHNOLOGIES</small>	<small>Sponsored By: Manchin Injury Law Group</small>	<small>Sponsored By: JUDD'S MINI STORAGE</small>	<small>Sponsored By: GILLETTE REPAIR SERVICE</small>	<small>Sponsored By: TRAILER CITY, INC.</small>	<small>Sponsored By: AROMATHERAPY Colleen Linger NMT 304-203-5295</small>	<small>Sponsored By: WesBanco Bank, Inc.</small>	<small>Sponsored By: Homefinders PLUS Monica Everett, Associate CRS, GRI Broker/Owner 304-652-7523</small>	
"100 years from now there will be flying cars that can teleport all over the world."	There will probably be cars that take up less resources and are faster, better space travel and lots more robots. There might even be a cure for cancer!	20 years from now a robot does your chores.	In the future I think I will invent a flying car. The car will have moveable seats and super speed. I think I'll also invent it bendable and carry around stores and flying schools.	The future will be awesome! There will be flying cars and trucks and kids can be president.	I think the future will have flying cars. You will pay with fruit in the future. Instead of playing video games with a controller, you will go into the game.	There will probably be cars that take up less resources and are faster, better space travel and lots more robots.	I think there will be less people and there will be mostly robots.	I think in the future the children will have a better education.	I predict the future will have flying cars, robot people, and the tv handswipe. It'll be amazing.
Mason, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary	Masen, 3rd Grade White Hall Elementary	Adriana, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Hayden, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Ian, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Kelsey, 3rd Grade White Hall Elementary	Logan, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Sophieia, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Nathan, 3rd Grade Blackshere Elementary	Espon, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary
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I think the future would have tons of cool electronics. There might be new kinds of animals. In the future I will be a marine biologist in Florida. The schools will learn different history that we do. We may wear all white clothes or colored clothes. Maybe we will have another war.	"I think in the future there will be no more drugs and a lot of new games."	The future holds a job for me to become a high school baseball player.	I think the future will have flying vehicles and more inventions. I also think there is also going to be more rules to keep us safe.	I think there will be people living in space and eating dried fruit in pancakes.	There will be no more black and white movies and shows.	Flying cars will be in the future.	"I think in the future we will have a president that will not allow cigarettes, drugs and beer. Drugs can make you get in an accident, or weak and sick."	The future holds some kind of science job. It will be either a chemistry or engineering job.	I think the future will have more inventions than now, maybe some robots and more electric towers. I think it will be cool.
Drea, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Meredith, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Caleb, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Meghan, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Jessica, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Tristion, 3rd Grade Blackshere Elementary	Graham, 3rd Grade Blackshere Elementary	Johnnie, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Koh, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Autumn, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary
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"The future will have flying cars, robot servants, and animals will be able to talk."	In the future I think there will be flying cars and space ships.	I think there will be dancing, horses, and everything will be blue and green.	"In 100 years the world is going to be better and everyone is going to be happy and nice. There will be robots watching everyone so people are not bad."	The future holds a dream for me to become a WVU basketball player and to become rich.	"I think there will be a new invention. It will be a new school."	I think in the future there will be hover cars. And there will be helper robots. I hope there will be flying houses too. A clock that you can set a time and then when you're done sleeping the clock will talk to you.	I think our future will have a flying basketball court. I think there will be an app on your phone that will automatically give you a portal.	"If we keep polluting our environment, humanity won't have a future and nothing will exist."	"In 1,000 years no one will be poor, every job will pay good money! There will be big town meetings every month to celebrate the great accomplishments that everyone has created. The best part about the future is the unknown."
Harmonie, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary	Cannon, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Emillie, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Michael, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary	Aniyah, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Hayley, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Brod, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Brent, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Aethan, 3rd Grade Jayenne Elementary	Ella, 3rd Grade Eastwood Elementary
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"I think the future will be really, really colorful and bright!"	I want to become an engineer that develops new technology to help the earth.	I think the future will have flying pigs and space trains.	The future will be like the past but different. All the kids in third grade will be taller.	I hope the future will be me playing pro future and basketball. I hope I will play running back in football. In basketball I would play point guard. And you get paid a lot.	I think the future may have a lot of robots that help with homework, chores, and studying. They could even play with you wherever you go.	I think there will be robots that work for us in the future. I think our future will have flying cars.	I think there will be flying cars and everyone will have a chip in their head that will make them smart so we don't have to go to school. People will fly and be indestructible. Hopefully, there will be free mansions.	I think that the future will have a robot as the President and the people will be cyborgs.	"There will be no more drugs because it happened so much people already stopped it. Maybe, people can help or make a machine to help our world stay clean and be healthier."
Jenna, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Jack, 3rd Grade Suncrest Primary	Gracie, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Autumn, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Greysen, 3rd Grade East Park Elementary	Kyleigh, 3rd Grade East Dale Elementary	Braden, 3rd Grade Skyview Elementary	Conner, 3rd Grade Fairview Elementary	Conley, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary	Caylee, 3rd Grade Rivesville Elementary
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Structural, space issues need to be addressed at schools

BY SEAN McNAMARA
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Anybody who looks at a particular building or facility long enough can almost always pick out something that could be improved.

This is oftentimes the case for education facilities in Marion County, and while the board of education would no doubt like to fix them all, it is not always that simple.

"The problem that you get into when you're dealing with facilities is that oftentimes your serious need is expensive enough that it becomes very difficult to address it without passing a bond or doing something where you can acquire millions of dollars to renovate or replace," explained Gary Price, the superintendent of Marion County Schools.

He explained that projects have recently been completed across the county, notably at East Fairmont Middle School and athletic facilities at the armory and East-West Stadium, among others.

These projects have been completed with the aid of funding from grants and the School Building Authority of West Virginia.

"There is a list that we have to submit to the School Building Authority letting them know what our school building project priorities are," Price said.

"Oftentimes the projects at the top of your priority list are more expensive projects. They are either renovation or replacements of school buildings, but when you're trying to make the renovations that you can with local funds, you often don't have that money without passing bonds."

The biggest needs, as Price explained, are middle schools that are indeed in need of these major renovations. These projects, however, may end up slipping down the priority list based on available funds.

"Our two biggest needs that we need to address are Mannington Middle School and Monongah Middle School," he explained. "To address those is going to require several million dollars of

investment at either place.

"Whether those buildings are renovated or replaced, it's going to be a multi-million dollar investment. We don't necessarily have funds on hand so that we can address those needs, so then we would choose to address the needs of other schools that we do have funds available for."

Monongah Middle School Principal Claude Malnick is aware of not only the extensive upgrades that the nearly 100-year-old facility needs, but also how difficult those could be to achieve.

"Monongah Middle School has been on the list for several years to not only receive an upgrade, but to possibly receive a new facility," Malnick said. "We've done some upgrades and maintenance, but we're actually looking for a new facility."

He said Monongah Middle School is always looking for ways to improve, but that cosmetic upgrades do not fix a century-old building.

He went on to explain that communities have met, and while they would love new facilities, they would like to avoid consolidation and keep small schools in communities.

"It's definitely time, and the students and the community of Monongah deserve it," Malnick said.

Monongah currently has a small gymnasium in the bottom floor of the building and as a result leased a gym that students walk to for physical education classes.

Despite all these issues, Malnick is aware of the process and has full faith that the BOE will do everything in its power to make the right decisions at the right times.

"Mr. Price has been very proactive in what he's done as a superintendent," he said. "I have faith in him that we'll go about this in the right way and make sure that we're successful in whatever we try to do."

"It doesn't stop what we're doing here to try and make this place a better school every year."

One project that is about to get underway with help from the SBA is in Rachel at the Marion

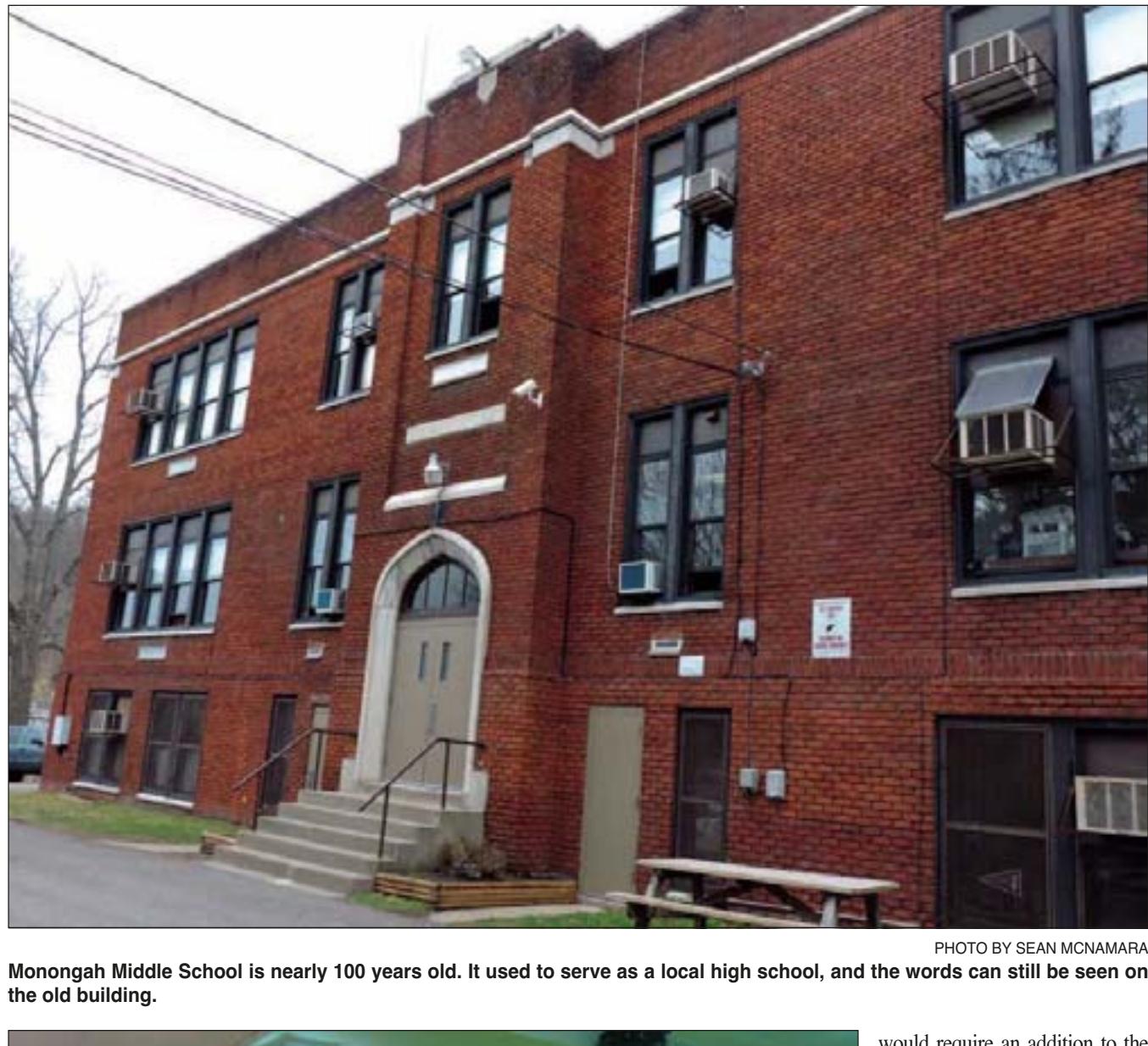


PHOTO BY SEAN McNAMARA
Monongah Middle School is nearly 100 years old. It used to serve as a local high school, and the words can still be seen on the old building.

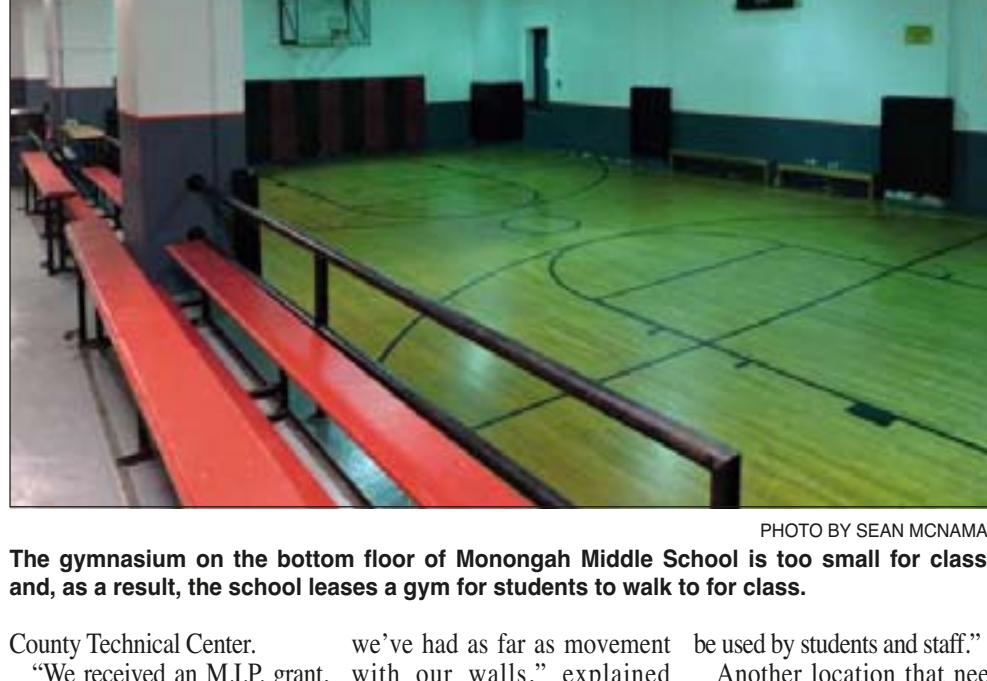


PHOTO BY SEAN McNAMARA
The gymnasium on the bottom floor of Monongah Middle School is too small for classes and, as a result, the school leases a gym for students to walk to for class.

County Technical Center.

"We received an M.I.P. grant, which means major improvement project, from the School Building Authority to correct some structural issues at the Marion County Technical Center," Price said.

"They're going to be doing remediation to our building to correct the iron pyrite issue that

we've had as far as movement with our walls," explained

Technical Center Principal Raymond Frazier.

Frazier and Price agreed that the geological issues are at a point of stabilization that working on it now seems like the best option.

"It's still something that needs addressed, and we're very thankful for what the board of education and School Building Authority are doing to remediate the building," Frazier said.

This pyrite issue has caused many cracks in walls and movement in the floors, leaving several classrooms and labs in rough shape.

"The grant was for \$725,000, but we are pledging double that; we're pledging \$1.5 million for that project," Price added. "There's been a shifting of pyritic shale underneath that building. We have addressed those concerns a couple of times."

The shifting seems to have stabilized so we think that we can get in there and correct those structural issues and make those areas of the building safe again to

be used by students and staff."

Another location that needs some work, and has already had some, is East Fairmont High School.

"We also have some structural issues in the band stage area at East Fairmont High School," Price said. "The damage there is not nearly as severe as at the technical center. Nevertheless, there are some cracks in the walls and some places where, it appears from the settling of the building, we've had some problems with some doors and some hallways and some walls cracking."

"We're going to have to go in and correct some problems there."

In addition to the issues that are either being or need to be fixed, Price listed an array of projects the BOE is looking to complete.

Elementary school upgrades are needed throughout Marion County, as Price explained.

"On East Side, we would like to relocate the East Dale kindergarten and preschool students over to the main building, which

would require an addition to the side of the building of six or eight classrooms to accommodate the needs of those students," Price said.

Again, money is the issue.

"We also could use additions at White Hall and Watson," he continued.

Watson is currently overcrowded, Price said, and with White Hall being a quickly growing community, the BOE anticipates an addition needed soon.

"We anticipate that it soon will be overcrowded," Price said. "We need the extra classrooms at Watson for the students that are already there. We need the extra space at White Hall for the students that we anticipate being there."

These projects, like everything else the BOE would like to achieve, will not come cheaply.

Many other projects are needed in the county, such as a gymnasium at Barrackville School and an all-purpose room at Fairview Elementary.

Price explained that despite all these needs, the community has been more than helpful in attempting to fund the projects.

"We don't feel that it would be feasible to load up a couple bonds at one time, especially when they're paying their property taxes," he said. "They have voted to support us by a 100 percent excess tax levy, and they're paying off the bond for EFMS and Fairmont Senior. So they're already paying a significant amount of money to support Marion County schools, and we certainly appreciate that. We don't want to try and take advantage of their good nature by trying to add some additional on before we can take some of that off of the tax ticket."

Once the next cycle comes around from the SBA, Price said they will attempt to gain whatever funds they can.

Email Sean McNamara at smcnamara@timeswv.com or follow him on Twitter @SMcNamaraTWV.



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER
Shifts in the pyritic shale underneath the Marion County Technical Center have caused the building to shift, resulting in cracks in the walls.

PHOTO BY TAMMY SHRIVER
The shifting of shale under the MCTC has stabilized and the BOE will begin renovations on the building thanks to an M.I.P. grant it has received.

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Teaching teachers evolves as roles change

BY ANGELEE WILEY
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — When we think of teachers, we often think of individuals standing in front of a classroom helping students learn.

But how do we teach those teachers? What is the process like, and how has it changed over the years?

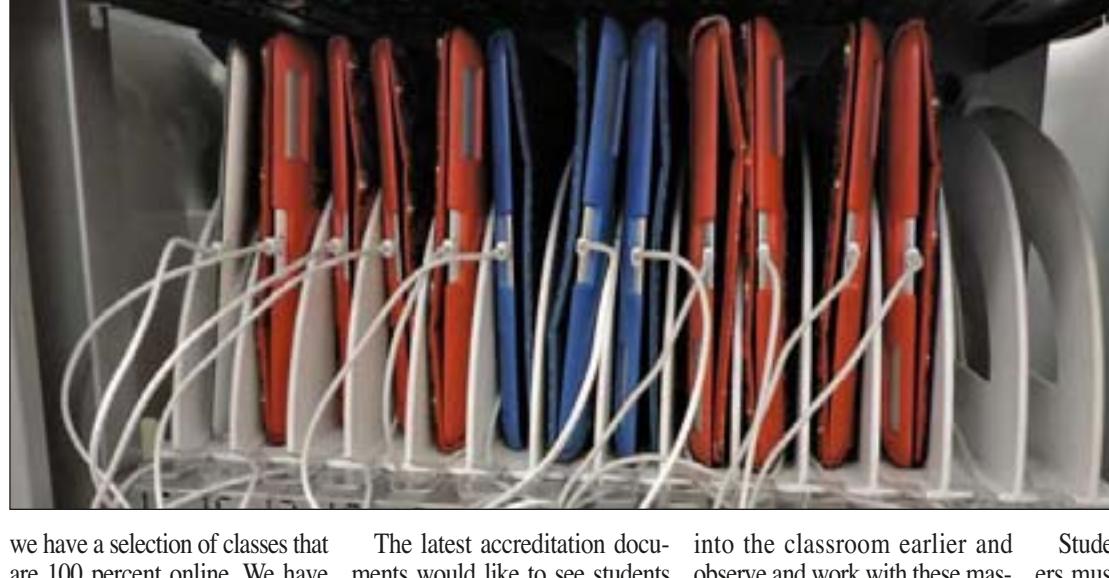
Carolyn Crislip-Tacy, an interim dean of the School of Education at Fairmont State University, has been involved with education at the college level for about 31 years.

She said one of the biggest changes in how we teach our teachers falls within the role of technology.

"I tell my students that when I was at West Virginia University, one of the first computers I saw was in a 10-by-10-foot room. People were feeding cards into it," Crislip-Tacy said. "The technology, of course, is the biggest change over the years, and that's what's really driving the change in education today, and I think it's only going to get more dramatic."

Virtual education is certainly on the rise, and online classes become more popular every year.

"Everything used to be face to face and very traditional. We're moving away from that, to now



This cabinet, located inside a classroom at Fairmont State University, is filled with iPads for students to use. Carolyn Crislip-Tacy, an interim dean, said this technology allows students to be more interactive.

PHOTO BY ANGELEE WILEY

we have a selection of classes that are 100 percent online. We have every variation of a hybrid course in between," Crislip-Tacy said. "Students are having more of a choice over their learning, and I think that's going to continue."

Crislip-Tacy said another way teaching teachers has evolved is there are higher standards that students must meet to be a teacher. She said students have to go through more testing now than she did when she was in college.

"I think the biggest thing that's changed — it's gotten more rigorous over the years. There's more standards. There's more tests that the students have to take, and (the standards are) getting even higher," Crislip-Tacy said.

The latest accreditation documents would like to see students be in the top 25 percent of ACT scores to even be admitted into an education program. Crislip-Tacy said she is afraid that if they require students to be in the top 25 percent, this will push people away from the education field.

She said being a teacher requires more than being a good test taker.

"I don't think that one test is a true indicator of whether they have the ability to be a good teacher," Crislip-Tacy said.

Gayle Manchin, the president of the West Virginia Board of Education, said they are considering raising the GPA for students to get into the college of education because they want to make sure students are serious about the program.

"We don't want the teaching program to be a last resort for students," Manchin said. "I think with these new standards, students will begin to see an entirely different scenario."

CAEP is a new accrediting program for all colleges to follow in West Virginia. Manchin said the new standards under CAEP are more rigorous than in the past.

Manchin believes that making things tougher will only benefit students in the long run.

"Students should have much earlier clinical experience," Manchin said. "Students who are going to be teachers need to get

into the classroom earlier and observe and work with these master teachers."

One difference Manchin has observed over the years in the way teachers are taught is that the role of the teacher has had to be transformed.

"Teachers used to be put into the classroom to tell students what to think," Manchin said. "The theory today is that we teach students how to think, to use different levels and different skill sets that we weren't called upon to use."

Crislip-Tacy said teachers are more of a facilitator in the classroom, and the teacher's role is more student-centered than ever.

Manchin believes that in order to get teachers to be more involved once they are in the classroom, those values must be expressed to them while they are still students themselves.

Manchin also thinks future teachers must be taught to ask the right questions and brainstorm solutions to fix problems they may run into in the classroom.

Teachers must understand that every student will have a different learning style, so they must provide an atmosphere where students can learn in different ways.

Crislip-Tacy said the focus must move toward problem-based learning, where students are solving real-life problems and teachers help students figure these steps out.

Students wanting to be teachers must know they will have to be comfortable with ambiguity and change to go into this profession.

In the future, Manchin would like to get students in the classroom early so they can see if this type of atmosphere is for them.

"We believe probably one of the most important things in teaching teachers today is to expand that clinical process," Manchin said.

In five years, Crislip-Tacy believes the way teachers are taught will have changed. She believes more classes will be offered online and students will pick the courses they take.

"I still think that technology is

going to drive it. As the technology changes, we have to keep changing the curriculum," Crislip-Tacy said. "We have to help teachers move toward this facilitator role."

When Manchin tries to envision five years down the road, she isn't sure if teachers will even be taught in a brick and mortar building.

"I wonder if there will be school buildings, if kids will actually go into a building?" Manchin said. "I think there will be spaces students will go, but things will be more flexible."

Ten years from now, Crislip-Tacy believes technology will continue to drive the way teachers are taught. She likes the way technology has helped in the classroom, but said it will be important to not fall behind.

"I think it's a good thing, but it's a steep learning curve," Crislip-Tacy said. "We just have to try and stay ahead of it and stay on the cutting edge."

Manchin believes that in 10 years, there will be no schedules, and teachers will be taught in a completely different way. She even thinks the typical 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. school schedule will be obsolete.

Email Angelee Wiley at awiley@timeswv.com or follow her on Twitter @AWileyTWV.

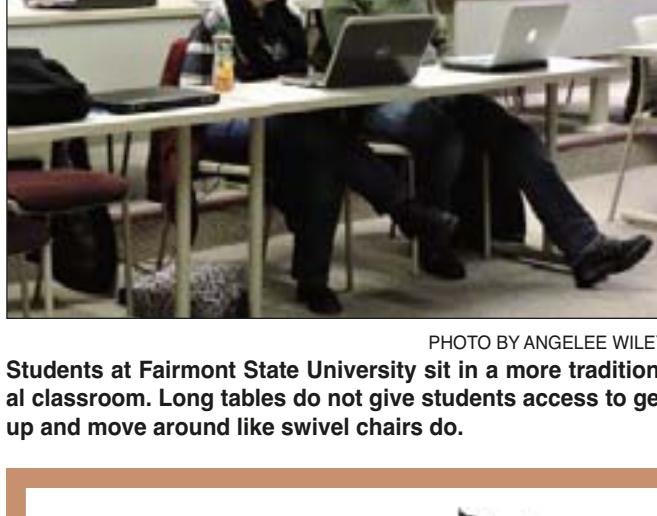
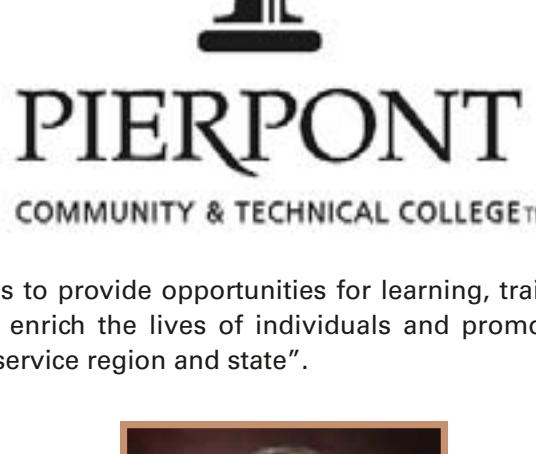


PHOTO BY ANGELEE WILEY

Students at Fairmont State University sit in a more traditional classroom. Long tables do not give students access to get up and move around like swivel chairs do.



PHOTO BY ANGELEE WILEY
Denise Lindstrom teaches a class at Fairmont State University. This traditional way of a teacher standing at the front of the classroom in front of students seems to be disappearing with the creation of new technology.



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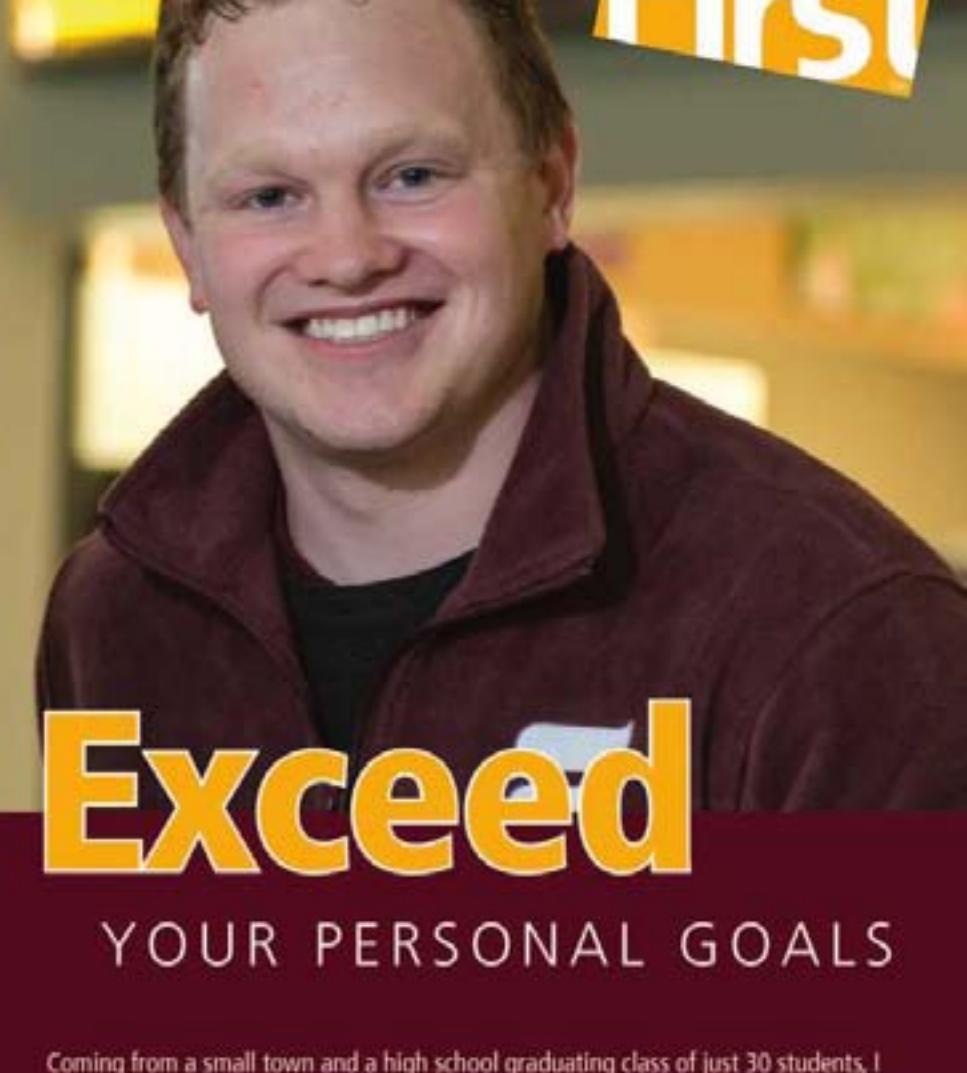
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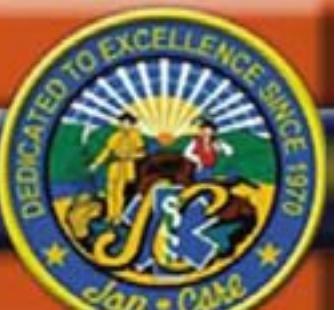
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Building on the past



PHOTO BY RICHARD BABICH

The Clarksburg Street bridge in downtown Mannington is being taken down a section at a time and will be replaced with a span reflective of the rich history of the city.

Downtowns have a definite place in the future of cities

BY MISTY POE • TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — What downtowns used to be exist only in memories and faded photographs.

The structures are still in place, but the stories of people four and five deep peering at window displays at Christmastime seem so distant to where we are today. The downtown — the heart of the city — is distinct in its architecture, the way the buildings are spaced apart and laid out and the way the traffic moves.

And each downtown is distinct with its features that immediately identify the place where you are.

Think about the large dome of the Marion County Courthouse — it is uniquely downtown Fairmont.

But the old department stores with their bustling lunch counters are gone. Gone are the days where you could move from shop to shop to get all your essentials, plus that pair of shoes you had your eye on, and then make it an evening by grabbing dinner and watching the latest film at the movie theater.

Downtown Fairmont is no longer that place.

But that doesn't mean it doesn't have a place in the future, said Main Street Fairmont director Kate Greene.

"The revitalization of the city center is critical to the health of the city as a whole," said Greene, who also works closely with the city's Urban Renewal Authority. "A conserved historic center is sometimes the only difference between two cities and is often the best asset for attracting investment and talented people."

"We aren't alone in our 'decline from the golden age' story — it happened all across America — but the resurgence is unique and there is no one-size-fits-all approach," Greene explained. "Every city has to find its own way back."

SEE DOWNTOWN, PAGE 3A



Gaps in trail

Have you ever wanted to bike from Fairmont to Washington, D.C.?

Opening up that opportunity has been in the plans for the Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission (MCPARC).

In North Central West Virginia, as well as all along the East Coast, residents love to get out and use the rail trail for walking, biking, running or just getting to where they need to be.

— Page 4A



Supporting arts

Jen Thomas, the founder of the Fair Mountain Arts Project, said crowd-funding initiatives can be used to raise money for arts projects within a community. And that's exactly what she wants to do in her latest endeavor to bring awareness to the arts and artists in the Friendly City.

"The goal is to provide a center to give artists space to do what they do best — working, exhibiting, teaching and all of those things."

— Page 1B



Future generations

In working to encourage students to stay away from drugs, there is a group of teenagers trying to communicate to their peers about the consequences of drug use. This group is called the Marion County Teen Taskforce.

The Teen Taskforce is a part of the Family Resource Network of Marion County (FRN).

— Page 3B



Regional tourism

Upon a visit to the Convention & Visitors Bureau of Marion County website, you'll find not only attractions in Marion County, but also for the entire state.

"One of the things in the past that we've found is that most of the beauties we're trying to advertise are outside the region," said Leisha Elliott, the executive director of the CVB. "The state encourages you to advertise 50 miles and beyond (your area)."

— Page 4B

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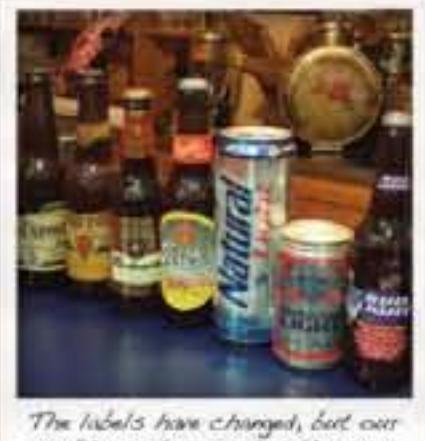
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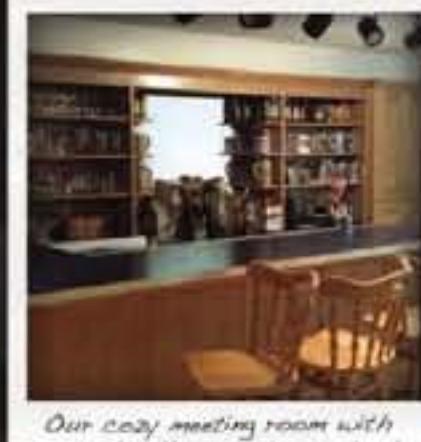
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Gaps need to be filled in rail-trail system

BY MATT WELCH
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — Have you ever wanted to bike from Fairmont to Washington, D.C.?

Opening up that opportunity has been in the plans for the Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission (MCPARC).

In North Central West Virginia, as well as all along the East Coast, residents love to get out and use the rail trail for walking, biking, running or just getting to where they need to be.

But there's a big gap that doesn't allow residents to get the full experience they could otherwise.

In Fairmont, there's the West Fork River Trail that runs from Fairmont to Shinnston, and there's also the Marion County Trail that runs from Morgantown Avenue to Pricketts Fort and connects with the Mon River Trail South to continue to Morgantown.

But both of those trails end in Fairmont, with a gap in between.

"MCPARC has been working with Main Street Fairmont and the City of Fairmont to get those two trails connected through Palatine Park," said Tony Michalski, the director of MCPARC.

"I think it's a great idea," added Kathy Wyrosdick, the director of planning and development for the City of Fairmont.

In addition to meeting with the City of Fairmont, Michalski and MCPARC have met with the West Virginia Rail Trails Council to get more land to build better trails to connect the two.

"The way the city is laid out, some of it is going to have to be on the main city streets," Michalski said. "But as long as we get the right sidewalks, it should be fine."

The gap in Fairmont is one of just a few throughout a larger connection known as the Great Allegheny Passage.

The Great Allegheny Passage already runs 150 miles from



PHOTOS BY MATT WELCH

This sign on the West Fork Trail at Pricketts Fort denotes that the trail connects to the Mon River Trail.



This part of the West Fork Trail is intersected by a local street. In some areas, like Fairmont, working with city planners to map out the best place for a trail involves planning around streets and sidewalks.

Pittsburgh and connects with the 184 1/2-mile C&O Canal in Cumberland, Maryland, creating a total length of 334 1/2 miles of passage between Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.

With the additions of some trails in the Fairmont area, the trail can be connected through North Central West Virginia as well.

"We're missing part of a larger system," Michalski said. "The goal is to have a trail from Parkersburg into Clarksburg, then through to the West Fork River Trail through to the Mon River Trail to Pennsylvania."

"Groups are working on connecting trails to the Great Allegheny trail," he continued. "There's really only a few miss-

ing gaps to get all the way to D.C., and we hope to bring some of that down into West Virginia."

Wyrosdick, who has been involved with the planning of helping the trails become a possibility, said the impact could be significant throughout the region.

"You can look at the impact locally," she said. "It provides additional opportunities for recreation, such as the availability it provides for more people to walk, ride bikes and run."

"And when you look at the entire corridor that could be connected to the Great Allegheny Passage in Maryland and Pennsylvania and eventually D.C., you have to look at the economic impact," she added. "It could be a substantial economic return."

According to the River Town Program, a market research study looked at the economic impact related to the Great Allegheny Passage in 2008 and 2009 and found that the trail was credited with \$40 million in direct spend-

ing by trail users and \$7.2 million in employee wages at trail-related businesses.

The report also said more than 50 new businesses were created because of that economic impact, and business owners have indicated that 25 percent of gross revenue is directly attributed to trail users.

With many businesses being so close to the trails, Wyrosdick said it would also help cut down on the number of vehicles needed in the area.

"There's a number of people that I notice on the trail who use the trail as a means to walk to work or school, and providing a connection would give a lot of people an alternative mode of transportation that they wouldn't have otherwise," she said.

Not only that, but focusing more on Fairmont, visitors and residents alike would have more opportunities to take in the scenery Marion County has to offer.

With the connecting point of the two Fairmont area trails being Palatine Park, both Michalski and Wyrosdick agreed more people would visit the area.

"It allows people who don't want to drive to be able to see these parks (in Marion County)," Wyrosdick said.

"We've estimated before that there are about 30,000-40,000

visits to the trails (in Marion County) annually," Michalski added. "We hold races and other events throughout the year, and we'd be able to hold a lot more events throughout the county with these additions."

With these additions, however, comes a need for an extra effort to make the county shine.

With more visitors expected through the area on the trails, Michalski said efforts for cleanup each year are always important.

"All of our trails within Marion County are paved and blacktopped, and we do have about three miles in Harrison County that we maintain and it's crushed limestone," he said. "The Friends of Trails in Marion County will hold events around the county to clean up."

According to Wyrosdick, planning on the West Side of Fairmont has been more thought out, but plans on the East Side are also coming along.

A majority of the trail is planned to run through the "Belt Line" neighborhood.

"It's pretty straightforward," she said. "MCPARC has taken care of most of the planning, but we've been there as added support."

Email Matt Welch at mwelch@timeswv.com or follow him on Twitter @MattWelch_TWV.

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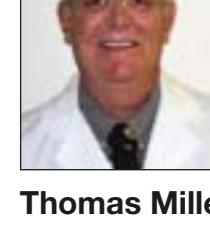
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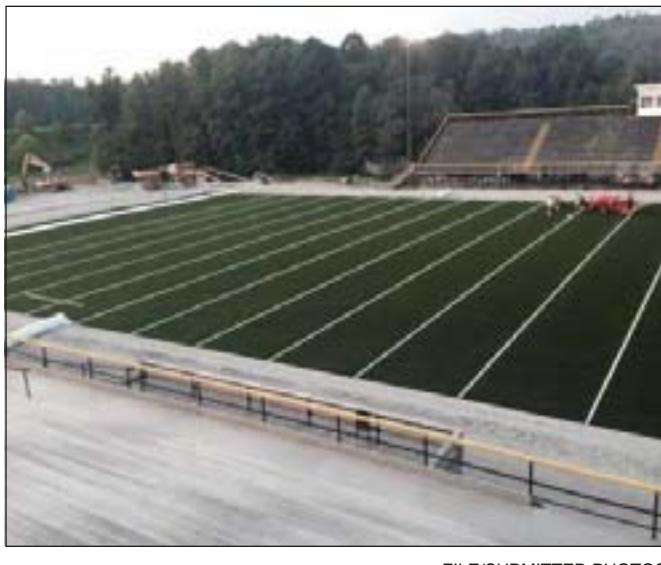
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FILE/SUBMITTED PHOTOS

East-West Stadium (left), the Marion County Armory (center) and Husky Field (right) all received significant makeovers in 2014. Marion County Schools Superintendent Gary Price said more renovations were done to county athletic facilities in 2014 than ever before.

Athletic facilities going through major facelifts

BY JOE MITCHIN
FOR THE TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

together a blueprint of Retton Arena's renovation project.

Projected at \$1.2 million, upgrades included a new floor, seating, sound system and lighting. McNeely was proud to report that the project was done on time and under budget.

The playing facility was just the start of the changes going on inside the Feaster Center. The basketball programs also executed fundraisers to gather enough money to build a theater room and hospitality room next door.

"I think renovating and upgrading facilities is an ongoing thing," McNeely said. "When you look at recruiting and how to attract athletes, they look at how good the facilities are. So we are going to continue to try to do that."

As far as the future of FSU athletics, the department is planning some "window dressing"-type projects for the arena to upgrade the banners that hang on the walls. Future improvements in several locker rooms are also on the table.

Outdoors, Duvall-Rosier Stadium, home of Falcon football, softball, women's soccer and soon-to-be women's lacrosse, also satisfies McNeely.

The stadium's press box looks great and the field's turf is still relatively new and handling all

the foot traffic well.

However, the FSU athletic department does have one thing on its wish list.

"When I look around the conference and across the rest of the country, we have a good football facility," McNeely said. "But we can improve it. We can provide better seating."

Elsewhere on campus, the AD has hopes and dreams that would be impressive if they can be completed.

First, he'd like to turf the school's lower field that is used primarily by the band. It could provide less strain between the sports that are fighting for field time at the stadium.

Also, McNeely's big project includes building an indoor multiuse facility for all athletic teams to use.

These might be the type of things many Marion County students can look forward to in their own backyard when they weigh college options. Those students, too, have seen major improvements to their athletic facilities recently.

East-West Stadium was wrapped with brand new turf last summer, as was North Marion's Husky Stadium. Both were showcased by football and soccer teams last fall.

"We're elated to upgrade our

facilities," said Andy Neptune, the Marion County BOE administrative assistant. "It was a combination of a lot of people, from our superintendent's vision to the help of the board members.

The work at East-West Stadium really tied things together. The turf was just the cherry on top of it all. The steps and the seating, which we are continuing to work on, was a big step forward."

The two projects topped \$1 million. However, that's just skimming the surface of the county upgrades.

The Fairmont Senior High School Field House, formerly known as the Woody Williams Armory, has gone through a renovation that included upgrades in the floor, seating and lighting.

The purchase of the arena was unexpected to many BOE members, but when the opportunity arose, the county jumped on it.

"It was such a great way to preserve the site," Neptune said.

Marion County was in need of these improvements for several years, especially in comparison to neighboring counties. That pressure pushed the perusal of diving into these projects.

The board is certainly happy with the end result.

"We knew we were on a timeline, and we knew we needed to

get covered for the next 20-30 years," Neptune said. "Right now, if you stack us up with everyone else around, (Marion County) is tough to beat."

Much like FSU, there are a lot of ideas being bounced around in terms of future renovations.

First, a track around Husky Stadium should be ready for use next year. It'll be the first time in years Marion County students will be able to host home meets.

After the completion of that, the attention will turn to East Fairmont. The board is in talks of turfing a field at the high school for practices. New lighting is also on the agenda.

However, these things take time, and many don't realize all that goes into a renovation project.

It takes months to build the idea from the ground up, and it starts with a budget. After one is established, the involved personnel goes from there by contacting the companies that will help in the building process.

There's a lot that goes into the upgrades, but the finished ones are appreciated.

"We want all of our young students to have the best," Neptune said. "Under our great vision, direction and support, we can make it happen."



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THE VISITOR CENTER

Healthy aging made simple: Tips from a geriatrician

BY MARTHA ROSS
SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

SAN JOSE, Calif. (TNS) — When geriatrician Mehrdad Ayati first met Lee Katz in 2011, he encountered yet another patient — and her spouse — who were in despair over the conflicting and contradictory information they received in her care.

The Menlo Park woman was in a downward spiral of multiple chronic conditions that would lead to her death in April 2013 at age 84.

But the different specialists who rotated in and out of her case made things worse, with mix-ups and questionable interventions that took her in and out of the hospital and added to her suffering, husband Martin Katz says.

"They didn't know what one another was doing," says Katz, who is a retired pharmaceutical researcher and executive. "Then Dr. Ayati appeared on the scene. He started looking at the entire patient, her personal and social history, all her medical problems."

Ayati coordinated Lee Katz's care and the information coming at them from different directions.

"He put it all together," Katz says.

What Ayati did for Lee Katz, he is now doing for everyone in his new book, "Paths to Healthy Aging." This "guidebook," as Ayati calls it, is designed as a concise overview of the basic ways people can improve their physical and mental health and enjoy life as they age.

Ayati is an assistant professor at the Stanford School of Medicine and treats geriatric patients at the Stanford Medical Center and the Veteran's Administration hospital in Palo Alto. He specializes in providing comprehensive care with a focus on prevention.

With his wife and co-author, Arezou Azarani, who has a Ph.D. in physiology, he synthesizes his experience and the latest research on nutrition, exercise and geriatric medicine into a book that emphasizes healthy lifestyle choices.

Ayati says those choices can be just as important as cutting edge medicine in fending off many common complaints, from high blood pressure to sleep disorders, from depression to frailty. These choices include eating a balanced diet, exercising regularly, being socially involved, and pursuing creative, stimulating activities. Ayati also is a fan of keeping things simple and

Tips for healthy aging

Below are prescriptions for mental and physical health from Stanford geriatrician Mehrdad Ayati in his book "Paths to Healthy Aging."

Avoid trendy and drastic diets or exercise programs, especially rigorous programs you won't stick to.

Vitamins aren't necessary unless a doctor identifies a deficiency, and be wary of nutritional supplements. You can generally get all your nutrients through a balanced diet of mostly whole, organic foods; limit your intake of canned, frozen or instant foods, as well as alcohol and caffeine.

Find a hobby, or sign up for a class. Trying a new subject or activity can challenge you mentally and physically.

Don't just hang out with seniors; find ways to spend time with people of all ages.

Keep in touch with your network of friends.

Find a geriatrician. While there is a shortage of geriatricians, you won't necessarily have to see one often. This specialist will offer care that is comprehensive and focuses on prevention.

Mehrdad Ayati's "Paths to Healthy Aging" is available at www.pathstohappyaging.com.

affordable when it comes to eating better and exercising.

People don't need to join expensive gyms or start a strenuous program, he says.

"Physical health is achieved by persistent and enjoyable workouts," he says.

Ayati's book similarly tries to keep things simple with how it uses concise explanations and short chapters to acquaint people with key concepts.

"There is so much information out there, but it's hard to know which information is valid," Ayati says. "My goal is to sim-

plify the journey."

Ayati loves working with older patients, in part because he was born and raised in Iran, where the culture reveres its elders.

"They are considered very sage, are highly respected and have a central position in the family and their community," Ayati says. "Gray hair is considered an asset, and the day you get your first gray hair, you don't dye it — you brag about it."

Unfortunately, he works in a specialty facing a shortage of experienced practitioners. About 80 percent of adults 65 and older require care for chronic conditions. To meet their needs, the United States would need about 17,000 more geriatricians, according to the American Geriatrics Society.

When students show an interest in geriatrics, Ayati gives them all the encouragement he can. One thing he especially likes about geriatrics is that doctors are encouraged to spend much more than just 10 minutes with patients, who typically have a complex set of medical issues.

For Ayati, some of that time is spent just talking to patients and learning their work and family history and how they live.

"I learn a lot from my geriatric patients," he says.

Ayati uses that same conversational approach in his book to correct misconceptions, including his view that people should stay away from nutritional and vitamin supplements unless a doctor has found a serious deficiency that needs to be addressed. Taking too much vitamin D, for example, can be toxic, he says. Generally, people can get all the nutrients they need by eating a balanced diet.

Ayati devotes a chapter to the problem of over medication, because he has seen too many patients suffering the ill effects of taking drugs they don't need.

He recalls one patient who ended up in a skilled nursing

facility after falling at home and breaking his hip. This downward spiral started sometime earlier when the man went to see his primary care doctor for depression.

The doctor prescribed anti-

depressants, but failed to get to the root cause of the depression. The man had restless leg syndrome, which caused him to lose sleep and go through his days exhausted, unable to concentrate or remember things.

depressants, but failed to get to the root cause of the depression. The man had restless leg syndrome, which caused him to lose sleep and go through his days exhausted, unable to concentrate or remember things.

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Manna Meal, which provides hundreds of free meals to Charleston's homeless and needy 365 days a year, hopes to establish a garden to help offer nutritious foods to its clients.

Charleston soup kitchen seeks new garden to keep growing

BY DAWN NOLAN
THE CHARLESTON GAZETTE

CHARLESTON (AP) —

Preparing and serving hundreds of hungry men, women and children well-balanced, nutritious meals — without having regular access to fresh ingredients — is a nearly impossible task, but it's one that soup kitchens like Manna Meal face daily.

"Typically, meals at a soup kitchen have too little fiber, too much fat and contain a lot of empty carbs," said Jean Simpson, executive director for Manna Meal, which provides hundreds of free meals to Charleston's homeless and needy, 365 days a year.

Though Manna Meal receives many charitable donations from businesses and individuals, the quality can be lacking, and the amount, especially that of healthy produce, isn't enough to meet the organization's goal of serving vitamin-rich foods and a steady stream of vegetables.

"What we glean from grocery stores are items that most people won't purchase," Simpson said.

"It's stock that's either bruised,

blemished, dented, is past or close to the end of its shelf life."

As a way to supplement these donations, Manna Meal staff and volunteers have been planting

and harvesting thousands of pounds of vegetables and herbs from its off-site garden since 2009.

Now, because of an agreement with the property owner where the garden currently sits, the organization is searching for a new space.

"Tom Jett has been gracious enough to let us use his land for the last six years," Simpson said.

"We're very grateful and have agreed to return his property to him in its original condition by Nov. 15."

Which gives Manna Meal about eight months to plant and harvest their final crops, tear down their beds, fences and other additions, replant grass and hopefully move operations.

"We have a lot to do," Simpson said.

That's why she hopes to obtain a larger site, within a reasonable distance from downtown, as soon as possible, or by mid-July at the latest.

"We'd like to find something that is flat and between 2 and 2 1/2 acres," Simpson said.

"We want to have enough room to be able to have in-ground and raised beds and still have room for a tool shed, car port to store our tractor and a compost building."

To meet these criteria, Manna

Meal's committee has been contemplating several options, from finding donors with available property who may be willing to give or let the organization borrow a portion of their land to purchasing a piece of property themselves.

"This is a very long-term commitment for us, so we've thought about establishing a fundraising campaign so that we could buy some land, but that would take quite a bit of money," Simpson said.

Despite whichever avenue is chosen, the purpose of the garden — providing fresh produce to feed the hungry — will remain the same.

"Whatever I can't use immediately, I'll put out for clients to take," Simpson said.

"We also give to Covenant

House and the Dunbar-Institute Samaritan Center. Food pantries are starving for fresh product, though many lack the refrigeration needed to keep it. Our goal is to be able to share with others because we want to change the nutritional level of the food that is normally served at a soup kitchen."

For more information or to help with Manna Meal's search for a new garden space, email Jean Simpson at jsmanameal@wirefire.com.

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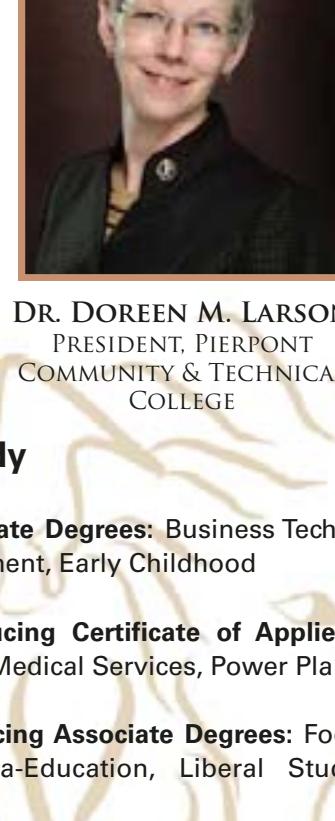
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LEADERSHIP

Leading communities

Volunteer boards shape our path to the future

BY MISTY POE
TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

FAIRMONT — What makes a leader?

It's an age-old question, the topic of which books have been written, seminars presented and college fields of study dedicated to.

To say that the answer is simple is far too dismissive.

However, in the simplest terms, a leader is defined as someone who leads. Sometimes it is a business. Sometimes it is a government entity. Sometimes it is a community organization.

But leaders, no matter what they are charged to lead — be it a multimillion-dollar company or a PTO bake sale — share a few common traits.

Honesty, for one.

Leadership also includes the ability to delegate responsibilities. There are very few people who are able to change the world by themselves. But they surround themselves with people who are capable of doing so much more than just one person when they work together.

Then there is the ability to communicate. You can have a head full of ideas and a heart full of the desire to make things better, but if you can't put those thoughts and theories into words to rally change, you cannot be successful.

A good leader also possesses a good sense of humor.

A leader has to have confidence, commitment and a positive attitude. After all, who would follow a man who was unsure of himself, who didn't really care about the task at hand and who felt like the whole exercise would end up being a waste of time?

There are also needs for creativity and intuition. Brick walls come in any leader's path, but finding a new way to overcome that wall in ways no one has thought of before is key. Also knowing when and where you'll hit those walls is a plus.

And perhaps the most important quality is the ability to inspire others. Look back at all the history books, all the accounts of the world's greatest leaders and you will find that to be a common trait between them all.

Whether history has been kind and labeled them iconic or the world remembers their mistakes, the greatest leaders had the uncanny ability to make others want to follow them, make them believe in the mission and ensure them that what seems impossible is far from it.

In these pages, you will find the faces and names of people we believe possess these leadership qualities, with the greatest being the ability to inspire people in their community, in their towns, people who want to see the same changes and improvements. Without their leadership, we feel very little advancement would take place.

These are the leaders of our community who are building the roads and bridges we'll take to the future.

All week, we've given readers a sneak peek into the future of several areas — energy and industry, technology, health care, education and workforce development, communities. There are many needs that have to be met before we can achieve the future growth in these areas.

And the leaders within these pages are making that happen. These are our leaders, whether the people chose to elect them to office, they volunteered to serve or they were appointed to the position. And with that position comes the responsibility of making decisions on a day-



to-day basis that will deal with the issues of today before they become problems of the future.

And really, there isn't much reward to holding the future in your hands like that. There are no big paychecks or special benefits to sitting on boards like these. And often, there's very little understanding of what you do or gratitude for doing it.

We offer this section as a way of recognition, to offer our thanks to those who give so freely of their time to ensure our future is built upon a solid foundation.

Thank you for reading this week. We hope you really enjoyed it, as we did preparing it for you.

Email Misty Poe at mpoe@timeswv.com or follow her on Twitter @MistyPoeTWV.

Convention & Visitors Bureau of Marion County**Elliott****Bray****Provins****Bickerstaff****Michalski****Atha****Carkin****Cinalli****Coogle****Jenkins****Linger****Merritt****Metcalfe****Sharps****Ward**

The Convention & Visitors Bureau of Marion County promotes the area as a group tour, meeting and vacation destination.

The chairman of the board appoints a nominating committee that seeks candidates from the hospitality and tourism industry, and the four motel taxing authorities, selects one member each to fill positions on the Board of Directors, and the slate of candidates is presented and elected by majority vote.

The board meets the first Wednesday of each month at 3 p.m. at the visitor center located at 1000 Cole St., Suite A, Pleasant Valley.

Contact the CVB at 304-368-1123.

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Fairmont-Marion County Transit Authority**Levitsky****Carpenter****Corley****Hatfield****Morgan****Smith**

The Fairmont-Marion County Transit Authority board determines the organization's mission and purpose.

The members select the general manager, support the general manager and review his performance, focus on organizational planning, oversee and monitor resources, enhance the organization's programs and services through advocacy and serve as a court of appeals if appropriate.

Contact the authority at 304-366-8177.

George Levitsky, general manager
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West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation

The West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation's board of directors is charged with endorsing the organization's operational and financial strategies, developing directional policy and appointing, supervising and remunerating senior executives and ensuring the accountability of the organization.

The board identifies and elects its own members and meets quarterly, generally in the Alan B. Mollohan

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Contact the WVHTC Foundation at 304-366-2577 or 304-363-5482.

Region VI Local Elected Official Board

The Region VI Local Elected Official Board assists in the planning and oversight of all programs and services funded through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, One-Stop Centers or other grants.

The board consists of elected officials in the region.

Contact Region VI at 304-368-9530.

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Marion County 911 Board**McIntire****White****Carpenter****Cinalli****Guerrieri****Bledsoe****Moran****Emerick**

Department and West Virginia Department of Natural Resources. Marion County 911 is currently staffed with 25 full-time employees and two part-time employees.

One board member is appointed by the Marion County Commission from every agency dispatched, for staggered three- or four-year terms.

It meets at 1 p.m. the third Thursday in February, May, August and November at the center, 50 Centerview Drive Fairmont. Contact: www.marioncountywv.com/departments/marion_county_911/; cledsome@marioncountywv.com; 304-367-0915.

Chris McIntire, DHSEM

Lloyd White, Health department

* Chuck Shields

* Sgt. James Branham

* Joe Masturzo

Marion County Development Authority**Reese****Cosco****Garcia****VanGilder****Elliott****Cinalli****Fantasia****Thompson****Staggers****Shaw****Skidmore****B. Phillips****Hulsey****Morris****Moore****Gribben****Costello****Rosic****W. Phillips****Hershman**

The Development Authority is the lead economic development agency in the county. The authority provides small business loans and is involved in developing property.

The membership is selected so that each municipality has a representative, and business and labor positions are chosen from those sectors. The county commission and county clerk are also part of the board.

Contact the authority at 304-367-5400.

Charles Reese, director
Janice Cosco
Rick Garcia
Ernie VanGilder
Randy Elliott
Kris Cinalli
Nick Fantasia
Robert Thompson
Allen Staggers
Tina Shaw
Brent Skidmore
Butch Phillips
Sandra Hulsey
Mark Morris
Allan Moore

Karen Gribben
Donna Costello
Charles Rosic
William Phillips Jr.
James Hershman

Fairmont Urban Renewal Authority**Montgomery****Warner****Fantasia****Pallota****Higginbotham****Gribben****Wood**

The Fairmont Urban Renewal authority was created to redevelop areas that have been identified as slum or blight in accordance with WV Code 16-18-1, and to promote the public health, safety and welfare within the city.

The group meets every fourth Tuesday at 4 p.m.

Blair Montgomery
Fran Warner
Gina Fantasia
Mark Pallotta
Pete Higginbotham
Robert Gribben
Richard Wood

Region VI Workforce Investment Board

The Region VI Workforce Investment Board Full Board was established to plan and implement a system to coordinate the skills local job-seekers are obtaining with the skills that local employers want for their businesses.

The board consists of 13 county commissioners and the mayors from Marion, Harrison and Monongalia counties, and those elected officials designate other members.

Contact Region VI at 304-368-9530.

Donald Black
Michael Bombard
Penny Brown
Michael Callen
Jan Derry
Claudia George
Gregory Hefner
Mike Herron
Leroy Hunter
Doreen Larson
Phil Leinbach

Michael Manypenny
George Marshall
Nick Biafore
Robert H. Mollohan
Dave Morris
Judy Pratt
Michael Reed
Melanie Thompson
Lori Turner
Katherine Wagner
Janie Lou White
Allen Wilson

Fairmont Community Development Partnership**Gribben****Skidmore****Swisher****Rogers****Luthy****Schreffler**

Fairmont Community Development Partnership

The Fairmont Community Development Partnership is involved in the community and development, and partners with different organizations. A major interest of this nonprofit organization is neighborhood revitalization, which takes the form of both affordable and market-rate housing, and commercial development.

The board is elected by the membership at the annual meeting as vacancies occur. Individuals can be nominated

by the board itself or independently nominated.

Contact the partnership at 304-366-7600.

Bob Gribben, executive director

Brent Skidmore

Debbie Swisher

Jay Rogers

Ned Luthy

Paul Schreffler

Regina Riley

Susan Riffle

Tracy Evans

Belinda Biafore

Main Street Fairmont**Greene****Boyce****Sellers****Bajus****Swain****Worth****Pellegrin****Swearingen****Blais****Keener****Scaffidi****Moran**

Each local Main Street program establishes a broad-based governing board that includes a variety of representatives from the community. The board guides policy, funding and planning for Main Street.

People are recommended to the board who might have an interest in preserving/revitalizing downtown Fairmont, and the nominating committee/selection committee then brings forth the slate of candidates to be approved.

The Main Street board meets the fourth Thursday of each month at the Erickson Alumni Center. Contact Main Street at 304-366-0468.

Kate Greene, executive director

Lewis Boyce

Bo Sellers

Cindy Bajus

Emily Swain

Wayne Worth

Amy Baker Pellegrin

Sharon Swearingen

Christa Blais

Deana Keener

Sandra Scaffidi

Marianne Moran

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as well as the many unique forms of the disease.

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Marion County Chamber of Commerce



The Marion County Chamber of Commerce is a volunteer organization that focuses on the economic well-being and quality of life in Marion County, and North Central West Virginia. The chamber is dedicated to businesses in Marion County, helping new ones get started and growing the existing ones.

The nomination committee receives the names of individuals who are interested in joining the board of directors, and the membership votes. The board meets bimonthly.

Contact the chamber at 304-363-0442.

Tina Shaw, president
Chuck Branch
Peggy Coster
Barbara DeMary
Norm Gundersen
*Evan Kliethermes

Doreen Larson
Nathan McVicker
Kelly Miller
Tracy Miller
Chad Nuzum
Jonathan Rider
Maria Rose
Allen Staggers
Chip VanAlsburg
Kevin Wilfong
Brian Wilmouth
Steve Williams

Marion County Solid Waste Authority

The Marion County Solid Waste Authority board is in charge of the functions of the solid waste authority. The Marion County Solid Waste Authority manages waste in Marion County by recycling and through litter control.

The Marion County Solid Waste Authority board meets at 6 p.m. on the fourth Monday at the Marion County Solid Waste Authority office located at 1532 Helens Run Road in Farmington. The group may be contacted by calling 304-825-1976.

James McDonald, chair
Jesse Corley, vice chair
* Dennis Kittle, secretary/



treasurer
* Chris Yurchick, board member
Arden Fisher, board member
Bobbi Benson, executive director

Marion County Parks and Recreation Commission



MCPARC is committed to providing quality park and recreation areas for all leisure activities. MCPARC offers year-round programming for all ages: basketball leagues, community-ed classes, 10K runs, youth sports, occupational therapy, dance lessons, monthly bus trips, playground programs and much more. MCPARC is also active in many areas of the community and helps many organizations with special events and projects. MCPARC also offers community grants to help many municipalities and nonprofit groups increase recreational opportunities throughout the county.

MCPARC has 10 outdoor pavilions at various parks that can be reserved for seasonal use. MCPARC also offers an indoor facility at East Marion Park with restrooms and kitchen that is available yearround and

ideal for birthday parties, family reunions and meetings.

The purpose of MCPARC is to administer a system of public parks and recreation in Marion County; promote public interest in recreation and support, foster, and promote recreational activities; cooperate with, and encourage the participation of other agencies, both public and private, in the accomplishment of the above endeavors.

Members are nominated by current board members.

MCPARC meets at 6 p.m. every third Monday at the

MCPARC office, 100 Cole St., Suite B, Pleasant Valley.

Contact: web, www.mcparc.com, MCPARCFUN@aol.com, 304-363-7037.

Commission members:
Michael Cimiglia, president
Richard Walton, secretary
Richard Hackett, treasurer
Dave Shaw, vice president
* Toni Michalski, director
Robert Brookover
J. Phillip Burton
Jay Ford
Lenny Stafford
Craig White

Marion County Commission

The Marion County Commission is the governing body of Marion County.

The commission is made up of three officials, elected to six-year rotating terms. Each commissioner must reside in a different magisterial district (Palatine, Middletown, West Augusta).

The Marion County Commission meets Wednesdays at 10 a.m. at commission chambers, Room 403, J. Harper Meredith Building, 200 Jackson St., Fairmont.

Quarterly evening meeting for 2015 are March 25, June 24, September 23 and December 9.

Contact relliott@marioncountywv.com, evangilder@marioncountywv.com, rgarcia@marioncountywv.com



ioncountywv.com; 304-367-5400.

Randy Elliott, president
Ernie VanGilder
Rick Garcia

Marion County Rescue Squad

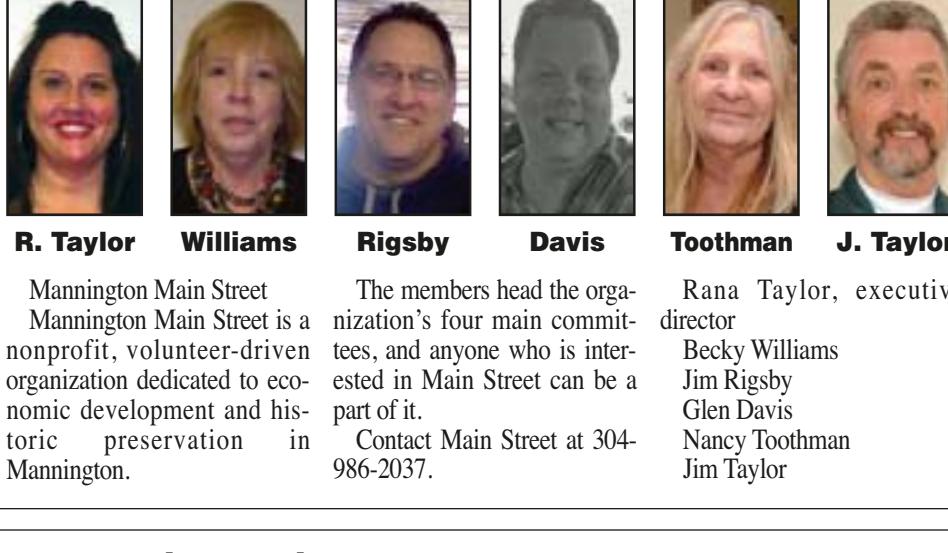
For the Marion County Rescue Squad, one member is appointed by the City of Fairmont, one by the county, and one by Fairmont General Hospital. The remaining six are elected.

The MCRS meets at 6 p.m. the fourth Thursday of the

month at 400 Virginia Ave., Fairmont. Contact: www.mcrswv.com; mcrs@mcrswv.com; 304-363-6246.

Bill Bickerstaff, President
Charlie Maxwell, Vice-President
Cathy Reed-Vanata, Administrator

Mannington Main Street



R. Taylor
Williams

Rigsby
Davis

Toothman
J. Taylor

Mannington Main Street
Mannington Main Street is a nonprofit, volunteer-driven organization dedicated to economic development and historic preservation in Mannington.

The members head the organization's four main committees, and anyone who is interested in Main Street can be a part of it. Contact Main Street at 304-986-2037.

Rana Taylor, executive director
Becky Williams
Jim Rigsby
Glen Davis
Nancy Toothman
Jim Taylor

Marion Regional Development Corporation

The role of the Marion Regional Development Corporation is to facilitate development and job creation. MRDC leverages public grants, and private capital, to create business parks with "shovel ready" pads that local businesses can expand to, or new businesses can locate at.

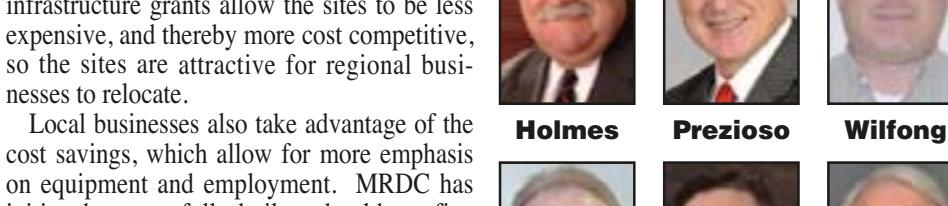
These sites are developed with roads and utilities, and marketed regionally. Public infrastructure grants allow the sites to be less expensive, and thereby more cost competitive, so the sites are attractive for regional businesses to relocate.

Local businesses also take advantage of the cost savings, which allow for more emphasis on equipment and employment. MRDC has initiated, successfully built and sold out five business parks in Marion County. MRDC is a successful example of collaboration.

It is a mix of local, county and state government leaders, board members and community leaders.



Fantasia
Schmidt
McDaniel



Holmes
Prezioso
Wilfong



Skidmore
VanAlsburg
Staggers



Rogers
Rose
Larson



Elliott
VanGilder
Garcia



MCPARC/DNR Family Fishing Day

WHAT: Day of Fishing and Family Time

WHERE: Curtissville Lake

WHEN: 10:00 a.m. Friday, April 3rd, 2015
Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.

WHO: For Families (Parents must have children present, over 15 years of age need a fishing license.)

WHY: To encourage everyone to get outdoors and enjoy a truly recreational lifestyle while learning about the joys of fishing.

COST: Free!!!

Check out the new campgrounds and recreational improvements at Curtissville Lake

* DOOR PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED THROUGHOUT

DNR OFFICERS WILL BE PRESENT TO ASSIST THE CHILDREN



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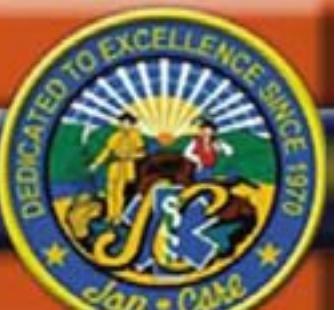
EVERY SECOND COUNTS

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