

The PRESTON COUNTY News

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INSIDE

PRESTON PRIDE



The county has been hit hard by a series of winter storms and flooding over the last few days.

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SPORTS



The Preston Knights took down the University Hawks in overtime Wednesday.

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ON THE WEB

ONLINE POLL

This week's question: Do you think the proposed merger and organizational agreement between Kingwood Water Works and PSD No. 2 is good for customers of both public service providers and ultimately the county?

a) Yes. The proposed merger and agreement between Kingwood Water Works and PSD No. 2 is good for the water customers.22.2%

b) No. Many of PSD No. 2's customers live outside the Kingwood Water Works governing boundary or city of Kingwood limits, ultimately limiting representation on the Kingwood Water Works board of directors.22.2%

c) Too early to tell. Final approval of a merger between Kingwood Water Works and PSD No. 2 must come from the West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC), which may take up to a year.55.6%

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March roars in like a lion



Staff Photo by Theresa Marthey

McKinney Cave Road flooded where it crosses Decker's Creek in Bretz and was closed for several hours on Wednesday. Office of Emergency Management Director Duane Hamilton asked Preston County residents to not cross flooded roads, as the water may be deeper than anticipated, leaving residents stranded.

Weather wreaks havoc in county as month begins

by Theresa Marthey
STAFF WRITER

KINGWOOD — March came roaring in like a lion in Preston County. After a beautiful first couple of days, the weather went from sunny to flooding rains and finished with a foot of snow and frigid temperatures.

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin issued a statewide state of preparedness on Tuesday that permitted the mobilization of resources to keep residents safe during the potential severe weather.



Staff Photo by John Dahlia

Floodwaters and rain turned to snow and ice within 12 hours Wednesday night into Thursday. U.S. Rt. 7 in Kingwood was so bad, the only vehicles on the typically busy main road were snow plows.

See LION, A3

Perfect scenario causes major flooding in downtown Bruceton Mills

Warm temperatures, rain, melting ice too much for Big Sandy Creek

by John Dahlia
EDITOR

BRUCETON MILLS — Warmer than usual temperatures mixed with consistent, heavy rain created an almost perfect scenario for major flooding in Bruceton Mills.

Initially, flood predications focused mainly in and around the Town of Rowlesburg, which sits adjacent to the Cheat River. But most damage from flooding happened a good ways north.

"We heard there was an ice jam-up north of us in Clinton Mill," Bruceton Mills business owner Liberty Starr Shaffer said. "When it broke loose, water rushed into town."

Shaffer and her parents run the Mill Stone Ice Cream Shop on Morgantown Street in Bruceton Mills. She said they had no idea the Big Sandy Creek was going to flood the area. But when they came into town at 8 a.m. Wednesday, Shaffer knew it was bad.

"When I got there, I had three feet of water in the basement," Shaffer said. "A few hours later, I had over five feet."

Across the street, waters from Big Sandy Creek continued to rise and threatened the Bruceton Pharmacy and Bruceton Medical Center building.

Pharmacy and building owner Scott Tingler was



Staff photo by John Dahlia

The rear parking lot of the Mill Stone Ice Cream Shop in Bruceton Mills was completely surrounded by floodwaters on Wednesday.

not taking any chances. He and a few of his employees ran out to a nearby home improvement store and bought dozens of sand bags in an attempt to protect his building and business.

"I saw the water coming up and knew I needed to protect my investment," Tingler explained. "I bought every sand bag I could find."

See CREEK, A3

Preston County school schedule hit hard by weather

Classes set to run until June 15

by Theresa Marthey
STAFF WRITER

KINGWOOD — Preston County students missed another two and a half-days of school due to the weather.

On Wednesday, students were dismissed three hours early,

with Bruceton Mills dismissing first due to severe flooding.

School officials ended up cancelling classes the rest of the week due to snow and frigid temperatures.



Wotring

"We had to add a couple more days onto the schedule due to the wild weather," Superintendent Stephen Wotring said. "Students are scheduled until June 15, with teachers' final day as June 17."

Wotring explained that Thursday and Friday need to be made up by students because although Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin declared a state of

emergency, it did not go as far as closing government offices or schools.

"Because the declaration did not say schools will be closed, we have to make those days up," Wotring said. "Short of a legislative reprieve, we tacked those two days to the end of the school year, taking us to the 15th."

Wotring explained there are counties that have missed more

school days than Preston and may have trouble getting their 180 days in.

"I think everyone understands the legislature mandated 180 days in the year," Wotring said. "However, we cannot go past June 30 due to July 1 being the beginning of a new fiscal year."

See SCHOOL, A3

Local areas left without water during flooding

Parts of Newburg lose electricity also

From Staff Reports

NEWBURG — Newburg, Fellowsville and Evansville residents lost water pressure on Wednesday when a main line broke in the Scotch Hill area around 9 p.m.

According to Newburg Mayor Edgar Fortney, the water is provided by the Newburg Water Service. Approximately 250 households were affected by the break.

Workers had difficulty in finding the area of the leak because of flooding taking place during the day. After a continued check, they managed to pinpoint the leak in the Scotch Hill area off U.S. Rt. 50 near Fellowsville.

According to Fortney, the 15 1/2-inch water main break was fixed late Thursday night. But workers couldn't pump water until electricity was restored in Taylor County, where Newburg Water Service buys its water.

Finally, when power in Grafton was restored, water was pumped into the newly fixed line, only to cause another blowout, forcing crews to head back out a second time.

Fortney had been out at the scene of the water break and was pleased by the staff working for the Newburg Water Service.

"I try to take care of the men," Fortney said. "They are doing a really good job, and they are a good bunch of guys."

Newburg firefighter Karla Tasker said the biggest problem for the people affected was the lack of water.

"People here have a secondary source of heat for the most part," Tasker said. "Water is the main concern."

See WATER, A3



Staff photo by John Dahlia

Workers from the Newburg Water Service and Newburg Mayor Edgar Fortney, top in black, worked through the night Thursday and all day Friday and Friday night repairing a massive water line break at the Scotch Hill Road area near Fellowsville.



Preston Memorial Hospital Foundation
Annual Spring Gala

April 18, 2015
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