

# WVDN MAY 28, 2021

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# Paul Todd Rankin

By WV Daily News | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

## **RANKIN**

Paul Todd Rankin, age 72, of Mechanicsville, VA passed away on Saturday, May 15th, 2021.

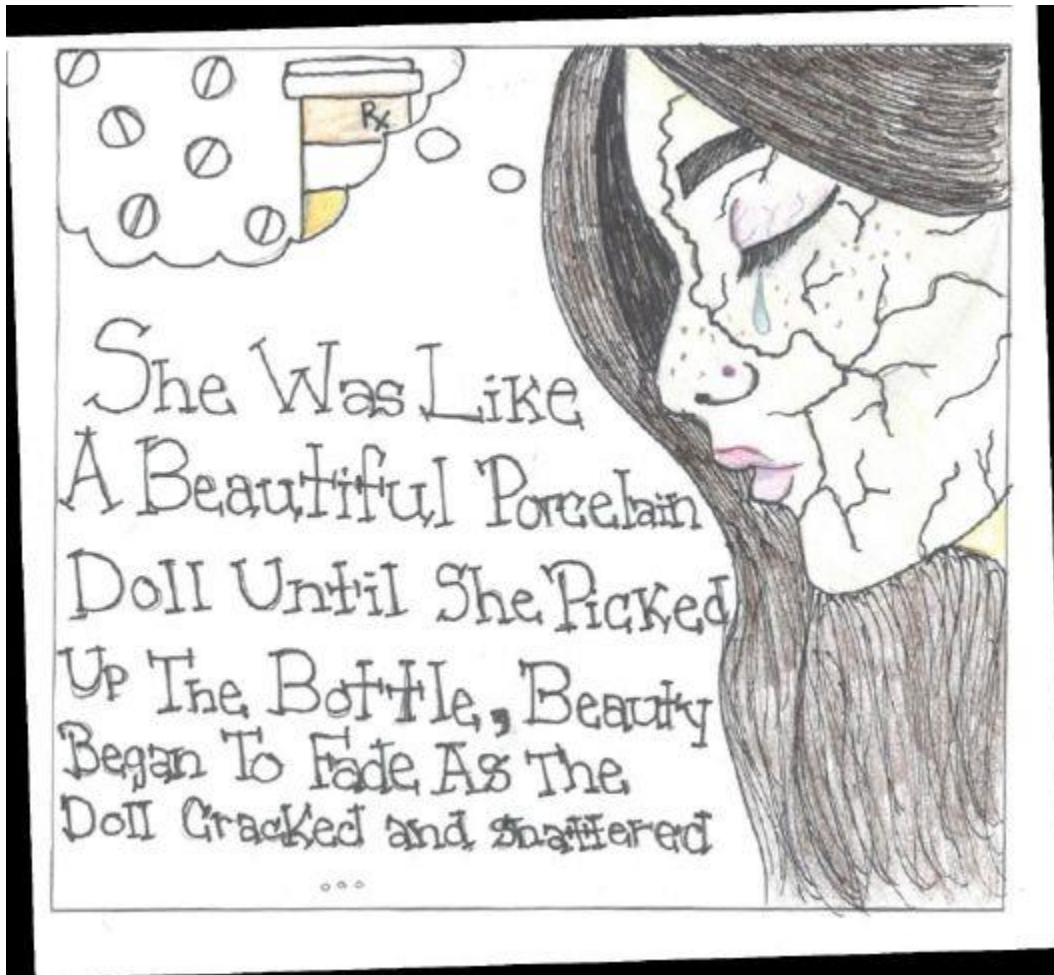
Services will be held in White Sulphur Springs, WV on June 5th, 2021 at 1 p.m. Visitation will be on June 4th from 6 to 8 p.m. Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home is assisting the family.

Please send online condolences by visiting [www.WallaceandWallaceFH.com](http://www.WallaceandWallaceFH.com).

Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home in White Sulphur Springs is in charge of arrangements.

# Morrissey Announces Statewide Kids Kick Opioids Winner

By WV Daily News | WVDN MAY 28, 2021



Attorney General Patrick Morrisey announced a north central West Virginia student as the statewide winner of this year's Kids Kick Opioids contest, a public service announcement partnership with elementary and middle schools that encourages students to raise awareness of prescription painkiller abuse.

Judges selected Liliona McKenzie Wright, 14, of Rivesville Elementary/Middle School in Marion County as the statewide winner. They chose the eighth grader's artwork from entries submitted by students across West Virginia.

Wright's winning design features a drawing of a woman crying with a thought bubble depicting prescription pills above her head. "She was beautiful like a porcelain doll until she picked up the bottle, beauty began to fade as the doll cracked and shattered...", the illustration reads.

"Liliona's design shows the grim reality of the opioid epidemic and how opioid abuse can destroy lives," Attorney General Morrisey said. "My congratulations to Liliona, our runner-up and all of our regional winners for their hard work in promoting awareness of opioid abuse. We must do everything possible to attack the root causes of addiction and teach our youth the serious consequences of drug abuse."

Liliona's design will soon appear in newspapers across West Virginia as the Attorney General's next public service announcement.

Judges also recognized Caitlin Modesitt, an eighth-grade student at Ravenswood Middle School in Jackson County, as the statewide runner-up. Her design will appear with Liliona's on the Attorney General's website.

Judges recognized winning entries from 67 students overall. Liliona, Caitlin and each of the regional winners

will have their work displayed at the State Capitol in the fall.

Kids Kick Opioids represents one of many initiatives through which the Attorney General has sought to combat West Virginia's drug overdose death rate, including a lawsuit against the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration that achieved sweeping reforms to the nation's drug quota system.

The Attorney General also has combated the opioid crisis with civil litigation, multistate initiatives, funding to target opioid abuse, criminal prosecutions, new technology, engagement with the faith-based community and education.

The West Virginia Board of Pharmacy, West Virginia Association of School Nurses and the Capitol Police assisted the Attorney General in judging the public service announcement contest.

## Justice Announces Prizes In Upcoming Vaccination Incentive Lottery

By WV Daily News | WVDN MAY 28, 2021



During Thursday's briefing, Gov. Justice announced that the State of West Virginia will soon be giving away a million-dollar grand prize, additional cash prizes, college scholarships, pick-up trucks, and much more through a series of upcoming lottery drawings for West Virginians who have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

"There are going to be so many wonderful prizes that you can win, it will blow you away," Gov. Justice said. "We are going to make a few West Virginians millionaires before this is over. Some people will win trucks and scholarships and on and on, but we've got to get you vaccinated first."

Gov. Justice announced that the first lottery drawing will be held on West Virginia Day, June 20; the State's 158th birthday.

Specific details about the incentive package are still being finalized. The Governor plans to announce additional details next week. However, he added that all West Virginians who have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine will be eligible to enter to win one of the many prizes that will be made available.

"Not only are a bunch of people going to win all kinds of great stuff, but, by getting vaccinated, it'll protect your life and it'll protect your family and friends all around you," Gov. Justice said, adding that the slogan for the program will be "Save a life; change your life."

Gov. Justice was joined for Thursday's briefing by his English Bulldog, Babydog. The Governor said that Babydog will serve as the mascot of the vaccination incentive lottery program.

"If you won't do it for me, if you won't do it for your family, you've got to get vaccinated for Babydog," Gov. Justice said. "She wants you vaccinated so badly."

## **Batman Empowers Local Youth To Become Superheroes**

By Theresa Flerx WVDN | WVDN MAY 28, 2021





Superheroes often build on tragedy and adversity to drive them to become avengers against evil and saviors of the world. According to DC Comics, an 8-year-old Bruce Wayne witnessed the death of his millionaire parents at the hands of a villainous robber. This induced a young Wayne to gather skills, fine-tune his body and create a vehicle equipped for the future role of the crime fighter known as Batman.

The Greenbrier Valley has its own Batman equipped with a Batmobile who uses his troubled past as a vehicle to teach children four noble principles: 1) never give up; 2) always do the right thing; 3) help other people; and 4) never be a bully. Points that have the potential to turn youngsters into superheroes in their own right, especially in today's environment consisting of an epidemic proportion of teen suicide attempts, rampant drug use, bullying and other damaging factors.

Recently, Batman spoke to 8th graders at Eastern Greenbrier Middle School aiming to change their mindsets and challenge them to be better humans heading into high school.

Removing his classic mask with hood and bat-shaped ears to speak as himself, John Buckland, he asked the students to take a self-inventory, "What kind of 8th graders have you been?"

Buckland shared his grueling past enduring physical, emotional and sexual abuse, which lead him to addictions, failed relationships, violent crimes and incarceration in a maximum-security prison.

"The inspiration of the idea [for Heroes-4-Higher] came to fruition after my return home from Iraq as a firefighter with the Department of Defense," Buckland explains. "Upon returning home it seemed the news was saturated with stories of youth in crisis. I was determined to help make a difference in all of the troubles that our youth face in their lives. Issues of bullying, drugs, broken homes, abuse of all types plague our children. These issues are very personal to me, as I was a victim of many of these issues myself growing up." Following two suicide attempts, he is still alive to carry the message, "It's not about the mistakes, it's what you do with that mistake."

Mistakes, Buckland shared with EGMS students, concerning armed robberies, when he "put a gun to

teenagers' heads and took their money," during which the "bullied became the bully." He became a "tough guy, mean as a snake."

Buckland described mistakes made in relationships when "I used girls to feel better about myself."

And he told of the time when the mother of his young son ran down the street with the one-year-old boy and flagged down a car to get in with two strangers, in an attempt to escape Buckland's fury.

"How scared must she have been of me to get into a car with strange men?" he asked the 8th graders.

"It was because of these struggles that the hero characters, especially Batman, along with extensive therapy and support, gave me the inspiration I needed to overcome and then reach out to help others through their pain," Buckland explained. "I learned through Batman to turn my pain into personal empowerment and use that to help others overcome their own pain."

Buckland requested the EGMS students begin owning their mistakes by apologizing to those hurt by their actions, inactions, words, or social media posts.

Citing the extraordinarily high number of youth suicide attempts, Buckland told the West Virginia Daily News that suicide is the second leading cause of death for youth today.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention breaks those figures down as "suicide is the second leading cause of death for ages 10-24" and for "college-age youth and ages 12-18." (CDC WISQARS)

CDC further explains that "More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease, COMBINED.

Each day in our nation, there are an average of over 3,703 attempts by young people grades 9-12. If these percentages are additionally applied to grades 7 and 8, the numbers would be higher."

If youths' struggles weren't already dire, the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted additional strain on youngsters.

According to the CDC, "Adolescents aged 12-17 years accounted for the highest proportion of mental health-related [emergency department] ED visits in both 2019 and 2020, followed by children aged 5-11 years. Many mental disorders commence in childhood, and mental health concerns in these age groups might be exacerbated by stress related to the pandemic and abrupt disruptions to daily life associated with mitigation efforts, including anxiety about illness, social isolation, and interrupted connectedness to school."

More information can be derived through, the Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System (YRBS), "a survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, that includes national, state, and local school-based representative samples of 9th- through 12th-grade students. The purpose is to monitor priority health-risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth in the United States."

Heroes-4-Higher is an organization that began on September 4, 2012. The name is based on the principle that it teaches four points to take the children, the real heroes, to a higher level. The mission of H4H is to inspire children to be the hero. The outreach is active in drug rehab facilities, youth behavioral health programs, foster care systems and grief counseling, churches, schools, college empowerment events, entire community events, the city mission, domestic violence shelters and programs, and anywhere else people need hope.

More information can be found at John Buckland - Heroes4higher (get-card.com).

For those experiencing suicidal thoughts, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by calling 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255) or use the online Lifeline Crisis Chat at [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org).

Both are free and confidential and the person will be connected to a skilled, trained counselor in their area.

## **Game Changer Initiative To Bring Change To West Virginians Battling Drug Misuse, Addiction**

By autumn shelton wvdm | WVDN MAY 28, 2021





West Virginia has the highest rate of opioid deaths in the country. Joe Boczek wants that to change.

The Morgantown resident has spent over 34 years in the media, serving as a public relations coordinator for the West Virginia University athletic department, five bowl games, five NCAA basketball tournaments, and much more. However, his biggest claim to fame might become Game Changer — an initiative he co-founded in 2019 with Bernie Dolan and Don Robinson to “address the growing opioid and substance misuse problem in West Virginia.”

Boczek spoke before an audience at The Greenbrier on Wednesday, May 26, at the Game Changer Golf Classic, where he admitted that changing the outcome of drug addiction in the state is not going to be an easy task, but he is more than ready to try.

“As West Virginians, we will pay any price, bear any burden and meet any hardship to assure the survival of the youth and citizens of our communities,” Boczek said. “This is West Virginia and tonight is the dawn of a new era. . .we share an obligation to ensure our children and teenagers have every opportunity to exist in a positive environment full of love and support.”

Boczek continued that a full spectrum response is required to “change the game” in the state.

“This disease does not discriminate,” Boczek said of the opioid crisis. “It’s attacking with a vengeance and destroying our family unit — the very core of our society.”

Many children are facing a future without one or both parents and numerous grandparents are taking their golden years to raise their grandchildren, Boczek said. Additionally, mothers and fathers should not be faced

with planning the funerals of their children, who have died of an overdose.

“This has got to stop and it must stop now,” Boczek stated.

If ever a person could change the outcome of drug addiction statistics in West Virginia, Boczek is that person. But, he cannot do it alone. Fortunately, some of the biggest names in the sports world, notable West Virginians, state educators, those at the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation and those with numerous state organizations are standing at his side.

Alabama Head Football Coach Nick Saban and his wife Terry, both West Virginia natives, have joined the Game Changer initiative along with U.S. Senator Joe Manchin and Gov. Jim Justice to lend their expertise at helping end the crisis. Each spoke before the audience at The Greenbrier that same evening.

“The drug and opioid crisis is an opponent that we have not figured out how to beat,” Saban said. “This is a big game that we are fighting against. This game has negative consequences for so many people in so many ways, and we need to have a strategy for this problem.”

He added that he and his wife are dedicated to helping those in their home state, even though they don’t get back to West Virginia as often as they would like.

“We can’t and won’t stand idly by without trying to do our part,” Terry Saban added.

Manchin said that it would be hard to find one person in West Virginia who is not affected in some way by drug addiction.

“We have got over 10,000 homeless children in West Virginia and we have a Covid-19 pandemic that exacerbated our drug epidemic problem. We had over 90,000 people die in America from an overdose last year,” Manchin said. “We must do something.”

Justice added that as head coach for the Game Changer initiative, he believes the future of West Virginians will be bright.

“I’ve said many times that our kids are the greatest treasure we have in West Virginia, and we need to do everything in our power to combat substance abuse from the classroom to help ensure our children have the brightest future possible,” Justice stated.

According to information provided by Game Changer, 90% of alcohol or other drug addiction starts during adolescence, 1,275 West Virginians died from an overdose in 2020 — a 45% increase from 2019 and 55% of youth in West Virginia are being raised by their grandparents.

As for Boczek, he said he hopes years from now, when he is no longer around, that people will still come together for the Game Changer initiative and discuss what progress has been made for West Virginians, and that the initiative will continue to provide hope to those children who once had none.

The Game Changer Golf Classic was a two-day event designed to raise money for the Game Changer initiative. Events on May 26 included a reception and dinner at The Greenbrier, while events on May 27 included the golf event and a special educator luncheon.

Funding will be used to develop opioid and substance misuse prevention education programs for use in all of West Virginia’s middle and high schools.

# Welcome Center Seeks Non-Profits To Provide Safety Breaks

By WV Daily News | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

The West Virginia Department of Transportation (District Nine) is accepting applications for non-profit organizations to provide Safety Breaks at our I-64 Welcome Center near White Sulphur Springs. Qualifying groups will provide small pre-wrapped baked goods and coffee to promote safety during the following high-traffic holidays: Father's Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, opening day of Buck (Deer) Gun Season, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Day, and New Year's Eve and Day.

To qualify, groups must be non-profit with identifiable safety programs targeting bicycle, automotive, pedestrian, ATV, or other transportation, or participate in the Adopt-A-Highway Program. The activity must be conducted for the express promotion of safety and not as an advertisement or solicitation for funds for the organization.

For official rules and applications, please contact Matt Curry, I-64 Supervisor, via email at [Matthew.R.Curry@wv.gov](mailto:Matthew.R.Curry@wv.gov) or by telephone (304) 536-1472. The deadline for calendar year 2021 applications is Monday, June 14, 2021.

## Let Me Do You A Flavor: Lobster BLTs

By Lindsey Wolford WVDN Columnist | WVDN MAY 28, 2021



Hey there, and welcome back! Oh, do I have a treat for you this week! I got the inspiration for this week's recipe from the Food Network magazine and made a few adjustments. This week I bring you a Lobster BLT that is the perfect summer sandwich paired with a cold pea and corn salad that is sure to please your tastebuds. So, pour a drink and pull up a chair because you will not want to miss out on this!

I will start by saying this week's dish has a lot of components, but don't be discouraged. You could probably make the pea salad the day before to make things a little easier. For this meal you will need:

- 1-2 pounds of bacon
- 4-6 lobster tails (I used frozen ones/Sams Club brand found at Walmart)
- 2 avocados
- 1 lemon
- Green leafy lettuce
- 1-2 large tomatoes
- 1 cup mayo
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 1 garlic clove minced
- 2 small steam bags of peas
- 1 small bag of steamed corn
- 1 cup ranch dressing
- ½ small onion
- Thick sliced bakery bread
- Salt and pepper

I started by thawing out the lobster tails. Then steam the peas and corn. While those are steaming in the microwave go ahead and put on a pot of water to boil. Like I mentioned before you can prepare the pea salad the night before if you want. Dice the onion and combine with the steamed peas and corn, ¼ cup mayo and ranch dressing. You can top or fold in some crumbled bacon once you have it cooked, but other than that the pea salad is done!

Cook your bacon. I fried mine on the stovetop but you can prepare in the oven and it works just as well — just be sure you drain on a paper towel to pull away extra grease. Once the water is boiling place the lobster tails in the water and set a timer for 4 minutes. When the lobster is done, drain and rinse with cold water to help pull the shells away from the meat. As your bacon continues to cook, crack open the lobster tails and pull out the meat and set on a plate to the side. You are almost done!

Now let's make the aioli! In a small bowl combine the ¾ cup mayo that is left, the ketchup, the minced garlic and the juice of half the lemon. Taste and see if you need a little salt. Then set aside. Next, slice the avocado and squeeze the other half of the lemon juice over top, sprinkle with salt and pepper, toss together and set aside. Lastly, slice your tomatoes and get ready to assemble these tasty BLT's!

You can toast your bread if you want — that is totally your preference. To build the sandwich, lay a large piece of lettuce down on one piece of bread and then top with tomato, bacon, avocado slices, lobster and then drizzle aioli on top and close with the second piece of bread. That's it friends! Slice and enjoy and serve with the pea salad.

When I talked to Annie at the Village Wine Shop about a possible wine pairing for this meal, here is what she had to say, "This sounds like a sandwich we could eat all week long! To pair with any lobster dish, especially with bacon and garlic, a fine chardonnay will hold the boat for such powerful flavors! Most chardonnays tout flavors of butter and oak, vanilla and/or citrus and pale fruit. Both will satisfy the creamy, salty, and pungent, quite well. A nice bubbly can also work well.

The idea is to enhance the flavor of the dish with the wine's tastes. To add a butter note to lobster that has none, is perfection. Here, I'd go all out and pour the Rombauer Chardonnay! Have a horse in the Preakness? Drink Rombauer. The CEO of NASA coming to dinner? Drink Rombauer! Having a lobster BLT with garlic aioli with a pea salad?!! DRINK ROMBAUER! Gordon Ramsey likes to sharpen his team with smart/sassy quips. Here's one..."You put so much butter in it, it tastes like a Rombauer! So, with all this hype and a price that commands accolades, Rombauer Chardonnay is a bold, smooth, soft, buttery, creamy, french bread, pear skin icon!"

So, there you have it. You could change this up with turkey bacon, regular mayo instead of aioli or whatever other fun changes you can think up. This is a great meal to enjoy on a summer evening and everything can be prepared ahead of time and you can assemble it when you are ready. I hope you try this and see that with a little time you can have a really tasty dish to enjoy with your family, and as always, I am sending love from my kitchen to yours.

## **When is Severe Weather Season in West Virginia?**

By jaine schmidt wyatt | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

Anyone who has lived in West Virginia knows that the state can get severe thunderstorms. But first, let me define what a severe thunderstorm is. A severe thunderstorm is a thunderstorm that has one inch diameter hail (size of a quarter) and/or a 58 mph wind gust and/or a tornado.

Even though severe thunderstorms can happen at any time during the year it is most prevalent during the middle and end of June. The following maps below from the NWS Storm Prediction Center bears this out.

The bottom line; stay alert and follow the local forecast which can be found at NWS Charleston at [weather.gov/rlx](http://weather.gov/rlx).

## **Did you Know that the National Weather Service is part of the Federal Government?**

By Theresa Flerx | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

Did you Know that the National Weather Service is part of the Federal Government?

It is important for everyone (especially if you pay taxes!!) to know what the federal government actually does. So here is a snapshot of the National Weather Service (NWS):

- Do you know The National Weather Service mission? The NWS mission is “The Preservation of Life and Property and the Enhancement of the National Economy”.
- Do you know what cabinet level agency the NWS falls under? The NWS is part of the Department of Commerce.
- Do you know how much each taxpayer pays for the NWS? About the cost of a Big Mac meal! A great return on investment. The NWS budget is around 950 million dollars (give or take a few million).
- Do you know what the National Weather Service does (other than the public forecast)? Aviation Forecasts, Marine Forecasts, Fire Weather Forecasts, Hazardous material leaks, Severe Weather, Tropical Systems in the Atlantic Basin and the Pacific Basin.
- Did you know that the NWS is the ONLY entity that is allowed by law to issue Weather Advisories, Watches and Warnings. It is ILLEGAL for any private entity and other agencies to issue these on their own. They can be fined and sued whereas NWS employees cannot be sued for a wrong forecast etc (it has been tried and thrown out of court every time).
- Do you know what happens during a government shutdown? As a former manager I can tell you it’s a royal pain!

No one is allowed to leave the office to meet with congressional representatives, law enforcement, the public, etc. All tours are cancelled.

You are not allowed to call in sick or take vacation. If you are sick or have surgery you are not allowed to come back to the office till the shutdown is over. If you are in on vacation and a shutdown occurs you are not allowed back in the office till the shutdown is over. This is because sick leave and annual leave are “paid leaves”. During a shutdown there is no money therefore there is no “paid leave”.

- Do you believe we are “essential” during a government shutdown? Absolutely! Without the NWS there would be much fewer commercial flights, much less marine traffic into ports, no in-person briefings of firefighters during wildfires, no in-person briefings during hazardous spills, no in-person briefings during radiation leaks, etc. The national economy would be affected.

As you can imagine this can leave an office short-staffed with people working a lot of extra hours. This can be very stressful; even more so during a severe weather event. Years ago a study was done that showed that a forecaster working a severe weather event is under the same stress as a neurosurgeon during surgery!

Even though we have been paid after every shutdown is over there is no law that states that we are required to be paid. It is always up to Congress.

I hope this helps everyone understand what the NWS does. Are you surprised?

## **Attorney General Morrissey's Mobile Office Sets June Stops for Central and Southeastern West Virginia**

By Theresa Flerx | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

CHARLESTON — Attorney General Patrick Morrissey announced a representative from his office will meet with central and southeastern West Virginia residents in June to discuss consumer-related issues and answer any potential questions.

“These public events are a great way for consumers to talk one-on-one with our consumer representatives,” Attorney General Morrissey said. “Residents can easily get questions answered, learn what is going on in their area and how to keep personal information safe and secure.”

Justin Arvon, a consumer outreach and compliance specialist with the office, will host the events as scheduled below:

June 3: 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – The Chocolate Moose, 1818 Harper Road, Beckley

June 7: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Kirk’s Restaurant, 130 Hinton Bypass, Hinton

June 8: 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Tudor’s Biscuit World, 107 Bolt Road, Glen Daniel

June 10: 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Gino’s Pizza, 2159 Main St., Clay

June 14: Noon to 1:00 p.m. – Marlinton Town Hall, 709 Second Ave., Marlinton

June 15: Noon to 1:00 p.m. – Monroe County Public Library, 303 S. Main St., Union

June 17: Noon to 1:00 p.m. – Wendy’s, 200 Main St., Oak Hill

June 18: Noon to 1:00 p.m. – Mount Hope Public Library, 500 Main St., Mount Hope

June 22: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Raleigh County Courthouse, 215 Main St., Beckley

June 24: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Richwood City Hall, 6 White Ave., Richwood

June 25: 11:00 a.m. to Noon – Chick-fil-A Crossroads Mall, 31 Crossroads Mall, Mount Hope

June 28: 11:00 a.m. to Noon – Greenbrier County Courthouse, 912 Court St., Lewisburg

For information on additional requirements specific to any location, attendees are encouraged to contact Justin Arvon at 304-590-6462.



# Severe Thunderstorm Outlook Categories:

By mark strobin | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

## Understanding Severe Thunderstorm Risk Categories

THUNDERSTORMS (no label)	1 - MARGINAL (MRGL)	2 - SLIGHT (SLGT)	3 - ENHANCED (ENH)	4 - MODERATE (MDT)	5 - HIGH (HIGH)
No severe* thunderstorms expected	Isolated severe thunderstorms possible	Scattered severe storms possible	Numerous severe storms possible	Widespread severe storms likely	Widespread severe storms expected
Lightning/flooding threats exist with all thunderstorms	Limited in duration and/or coverage and/or intensity	Short-lived and/or not widespread, isolated intense storms possible	More persistent and/or widespread, a few intense	Long-lived, widespread and intense	Long-lived, very widespread and particularly intense
					

\* NWS defines a severe thunderstorm as measured wind gusts to at least 58 mph, and/or hail to at least one inch in diameter, and/or a tornado. All thunderstorm categories imply lightning and the potential for flooding. Categories are also tied to the probability of a severe weather event within 25 miles of your location.



National Weather Service

[www.spc.noaa.gov](http://www.spc.noaa.gov)



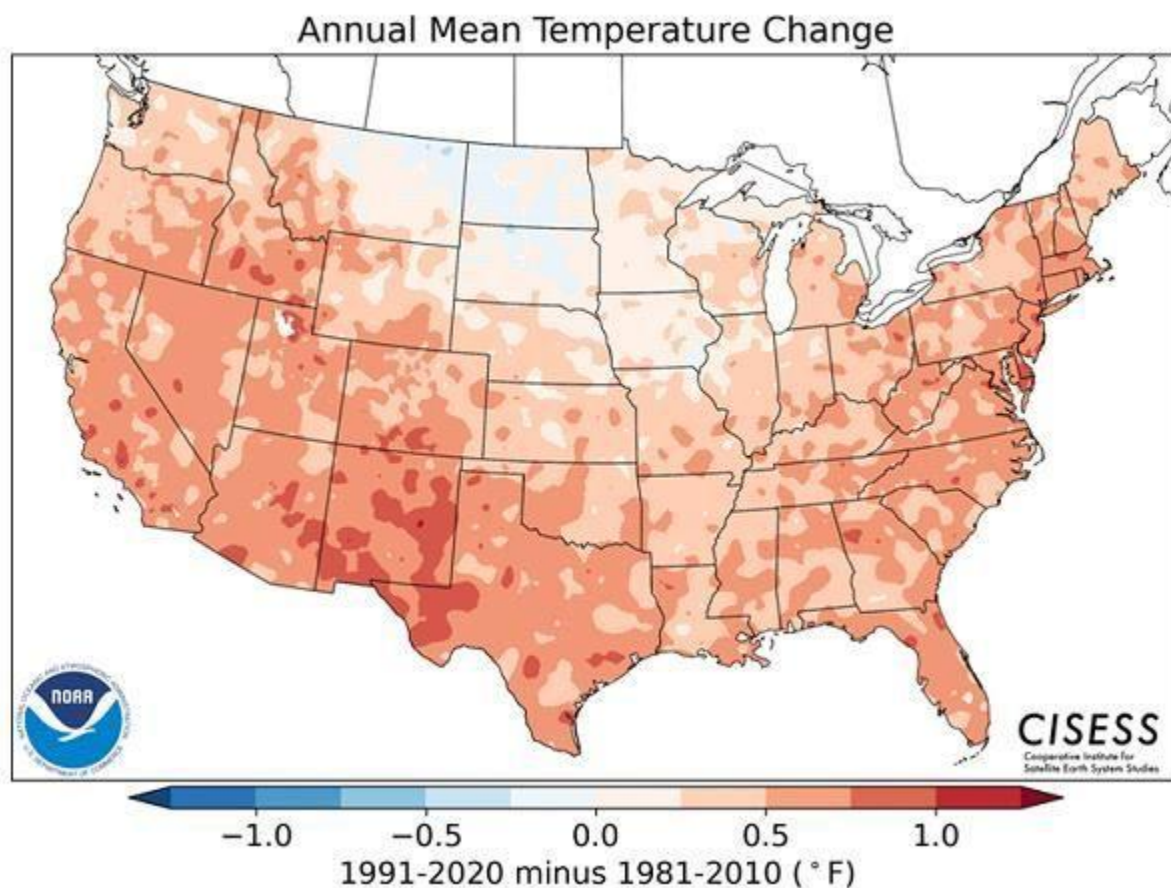
First, here is the definition of a severe thunderstorm. A severe thunderstorm is a thunderstorm with one inch diameter hail (the size of a quarter) and/or a 58 mph wind gust and/or a tornado. So how were these definitions developed? A tornado is obvious. Meteorologists consider hail the size of quarters to be “severe” because it is the minimum size required to produce damage relevant to most property in the United States. In particular, roof damage. The wind damage threshold, on the other hand, is a legacy that is less about scientific research and more about preventing airplane crashes. Nevertheless, winds that gust to 58 mph can certainly cause tree and power line damage, as well as blow around loose objects outdoors and prove dangerous to some high-profile vehicles.

Below are the different categories of severe thunderstorm probabilities and their definitions from the NWS Storm Prediction Center.

For the latest information on severe thunderstorm potential please see The Storm Prediction Center at [spc.noaa.gov](http://spc.noaa.gov).

## New Climate Normals:

By Theresa Flerx | WVDN MAY 28, 2021



America's new normal temperature is a degree hotter than it was just two decades ago!

On May 4, 2021 the NOAA National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) released updated climate normals, reflecting observed data for the 1991-2020 period. These updates occur every ten years, in accordance with established practices by the World Meteorological Organization, and reflect the most recent three decade period. Climate normals provide a benchmark to compare daily weather to and are broadly utilized by industry, media, and researchers.

Climate normals are produced for a number of meteorological variables including temperatures, precipitation, growing season length, etc. In producing the newest set of Climate Normals, the years of 1981-1990 were replaced with the years 2011-2020 before passing through NCEI (National Centers for Environmental Information) data quality checks.

The uses for climate normal are many. For example, planners use climate normal to prepare for flooding and drought, farmers use climate normal to decide what and when to plant and energy companies use climate normals to meet demand.

The U.S. Climate Normals collection has 10 versions: 1901-1930, 1911-1940, and so on through 1991-2020. Places where the annual temperature during a given Normals era was colder than the 20th-century average are blue; places where the temperature was warmer than average are red.

As can be seen, the earliest map in the series has the most widespread and darkest blues, and the most recent map has the most widespread and darkest reds. Temperatures across the U.S. have been steadily warming thru the 20th century and the early 21st century.

# Pokémon Cards In Short Supply In Lewisburg

By bobby bordelon wvdn | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

Parents looking for Pokémon cards, or any trading cards, for their kids in the Lewisburg Walmart might have noticed empty shelves over the past few weeks. The cards will soon be restocked and relocated in the store due to safety concerns, clean-sweep inventory purchases, and theft emerging from the skyrocketing price of cards online.

According to Marketplace, sales of Pokémon and other trading cards have skyrocketed since the beginning of 2020. Several celebrities, such as the rapper Logic and Youtuber Logan Paul spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on cards. Some nostalgic collectors remember the hobby from their youth and decided to try again during COVID-19 shutdowns. As a result, popularity has surged - now collectors and scalpers both want more and more cards.

The Lewisburg Walmart has been no exception to the craze. Although there are rumors of a fight that took place in the Lewisburg store, no one has been able to confirm this with The West Virginia Daily News, including Lewisburg Chief of Police Chris Teubert. However, the vendors stocking these cards have been nervous with the extra attention from customers.

"The vendors ARE being harassed and stalked at certain stores," said one anonymous employee of the Lewisburg Walmart. "A friend of mine is a vendor and once when I saw her in Covington she had two other of her employers associates practically guarding her while she stocked the cards, and I noticed 5 guys watching from the stationary aisle (which was in line with where the cards are stocked)."

Recently, Target stores announced they would no longer be carrying the cards due to violent incidents in their stores, such as the arrest of four individuals who assaulted a fifth in Wisconsin. The victim chased the attackers away after drawing his concealed carry gun.

A common reason for the sweeping purchases is resale value online. Some rare cards can be sold for hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars, leading some scalpers to purchase entire inventories to resell online for a huge profit.

"We've had people from Covington, Beckley, Charleston, etc, drive here for trading cards," the employee said. "They'd also send in multiple people and go to different registers. ... One customer informed me of a card he found used to resell for about \$10, now, [sells for] almost \$50 to \$75."

The employee told The West Virginia Daily News that the cards are flying off the shelves, both through single individuals purchasing the entire inventory and theft.

"After inventory back in March, we were short \$1,000+ in trading cards," they said. "[They were] stolen. That's just Lewisburg."

Some stores are even locking down selected cereals, such as Trix and Cinnamon Toast Crunch, which carry packs of Pokemon cards inside the box. Locally, the Lewisburg Walmart will be moving all trading cards from the front of the store to the back.

"We've removed them from their designated aisles, and as of next week, they're going to be locked in a store room and only certain associates (I think Electronics) will have the keys to that room and it they can only be purchased between designated times," the employee said.

With the new rules in place, local parents and collectors should hopefully be able to get ahold of packs once again.

“It’s frustrating as someone who collects the cards as a hobby, since these people are just doing it to turn a quick buck,” said Alex Smertneck, friend of the author and Pokemon card aficionado. “I used to buy about a pack weekly whenever I would go to the grocery store, but since November I haven’t even seen the shelves stocked in [my local] Walmart.”

A request for comment from Lewisburg’s Walmart managers was redirected to corporate-level public relations.

## **Support Programs Available At St. James Episcopal Church**

By WV Daily News | WVDN MAY 28, 2021

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 7:00 p.m. and every Thursday at noon at St. James Episcopal Church in Lewisburg. All are welcome.

St James is located at 468 Church Street in downtown Lewisburg

*“If you’re Struggling tonight, please know you’re not alone. You Matter very much. Don’t give up.”*