

WVDN JUN 22, 2021



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Dear Abby: Tuesday, June 22

By Abigail Van Buren | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

Landlord Mother Dragged Into Bitter Breakup

Dear Abby: My daughter is separated from her husband, who rents a room from me. Recently, without telling her, he dropped her from his insurance. Now she wants me to kick him out and she's mad at me because I refuse to do it. She says it shows I approve of his behavior. She tells me that he's no good, he used her and he hit on her girlfriend. She's threatening that if I let him stay, we won't be close anymore. He pays me on time, and I hardly ever see him because he works at night. I need the rent money, and we have always gotten along great. I say this is my house and I should decide if he leaves. What do you think? — **In the Middle in Florida**

Dear In the Middle: You need to explain to your daughter that the reason her husband is living with you is because you need the income. Even if you wanted, you might not be able to kick him out right away because of whatever eviction laws may exist in your state. This is your house, and the decision whether to evict him should be yours. However, if you continue allowing him to rent from you, it may cause a breach with your daughter that could be permanent.

Dear Abby: I often feel left out. This past weekend on Facebook I saw two co-workers and a former co-worker went on a weekend getaway. I wasn't invited. Should I retaliate, or must I act like it doesn't bother me? This isn't the first time friends and co-workers have done things like this. I'll comment on their post — "looks like fun" — but never get invited. How should I feel about this and what should I do? — **Overlooked in**

Minnesota

Dear Overlooked: What you should "do" is recognize that your co-workers are not obligated to include you in anything outside of work. They may have mutual interests that bring them together, or chemistry that they don't have with you. Instead of fuming and fantasizing about "retaliating" (which would be uncalled for and inappropriate), form relationships outside this circle of co-workers and friends, and do things on weekends for yourself that are satisfying. If you do, you will be less dependent upon these individuals and less disappointed if your relationships with them aren't as close as you wish they were.

Dear Abby: I have been reading your column for many years, but haven't seen this question before. I'm a senior citizen with a do-not-resuscitate order. I am concerned that if something were to happen to me and I was taken to a nearby hospital, they wouldn't know I have one on file with my health care provider. Is there a way to let first responders know? Thank you for the continual service you provide. — **Last Request in**

California

Dear Last Request: Many individuals accomplish this by posting a notice near their bed, on the refrigerator or in their cellphone contact list designated as ICE (In Case of Emergency). There are also cards that can be carried in the wallet to alert the EMTs about the patient's wishes. Your health care provider can tell you how to get one.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

(MH) Lasting Progress On Substance Use Disorders Will Depend on Identifying Long-term Funding

By WV Daily News | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

Many members of Congress have distributed press releases over the past few days about receiving grants for their communities from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which is distributing \$3 billion in American Rescue Plan funding.

The National Council has also applauded this historic and significant funding because of the important role it plays in preserving a safety net at such a critical time for the country.

These important grants support mental health and substance use disorder treatment, and they represent a much-needed investment because so many communities continue to cope with an unrelenting overdose crisis.

Provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) shows an estimated 90,000 people died from an overdose in the 12-month period ending September 2020. It's unlikely that trend will reverse itself anytime soon.

People in communities throughout the country require treatment for opioid use disorders, excessive alcohol consumption or other substance use disorders including stimulants like cocaine or methamphetamine.

While the press releases provide good news about funding to address a deadly crisis, there's much more to the story. These one-time grants simply won't get the job done.

Our nation needs a more effective strategy if we hope to overcome the overdose crisis. That includes both more funding and sustained funding. It's also important that funding is available with fewer strings attached so states have greater flexibility to apply money to problems unique to communities in their states.

Increasing polysubstance use provides an argument for greater flexibility. According to a report from the Bipartisan Policy Center released last September, Tracking FY2019 Federal Funding to Combat the Opioid Crisis, "rates of polysubstance-involved overdose deaths are increasing, along with rates of methamphetamine and cocaine use. In addition, over the last few years there have been increasing rates of overdose deaths in communities of color."

That's one reason the organization wisely recommends removing restrictive funding language from federal grants to allow spending on substance use disorders generally, including emerging drug use trends such as methamphetamine and cocaine.

Beyond block grant funding, Medicaid also provides an opportunity to improve treatment for those with substance use disorder challenges.

A new report by the Center for Budget Policy and Priorities urges regulators to give states greater flexibility to use Medicaid to address substance use disorders among low income people. This is more important than ever as we look to eradicate inequality and racial injustice across the health care system because Medicaid helps to address substance use disorder across low income and communities of color.

There are so many avenues we can take as a nation to improve care for those with substance use disorders. But any path we take must begin with providing sustained, long-term funding with fewer strings attached.

What we can't do is continue with the status quo because we have too much to lose.

In an op-ed earlier this month, acting director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy Regina LaBelle and Rochelle P. Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, wrote that just 18% of people with opioid use disorder reported receiving medication-based treatment in the past year.

We've made some important policy changes since the beginning of the pandemic to address the overdose crisis. Implementing telehealth has proven effective, and regulators should keep those changes in place in perpetuity. The acknowledgment by the Office of National Drug Control Policy that harm reduction provides an opportunity to reduce overdoses and overdose deaths represented a commonsense policy change. Revisions to the X-waiver will expand access to buprenorphine.

Now we must change how the federal government funds substance use disorder treatment so we can make long-term investments in life-saving programs.

Tokyo Olympics to allow local fans — but with strict limits

By stephen wade ap sports writer | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

TOKYO (AP) — A sharply limited number of fans will be allowed to attend the Tokyo Olympics, organizers announced Monday as they tried to save some of the spirit of the Games where even cheering has been banned.

Organizers set a limit of 50% capacity — up to a maximum of 10,000 fans, all of whom must be Japanese residents — for each Olympic venue, regardless of whether it is indoors or outdoors. Officials said that if coronavirus cases rise again the rules could be changed and fans could still be barred all together. Spectators from abroad were banned several months ago, and now some local fans who have tickets will be forced to give them up.

The decision comes as opposition among Japanese to holding the Games in July remains high, though may be softening, and as new infections in Tokyo have begun to subside.

Still, health officials fear that in a country where the vast majority of people have yet to be vaccinated, crowds at the Olympics could drive cases up. The country's top medical adviser, Dr. Shigeru Omi, recommended last week that the safest way to hold the Olympics would be without fans. Allowing fans presents a risk not just at the venues but will also lead to more circulation on commuter trains, in restaurants and other public spaces. It's already become clear that these Olympics Games will be unlike any others, but organizers have said they are determined to hold them and billions of dollars in broadcast rights and ticket sales are at stake. Still, much of the fanfare that surrounds them — people from around the world rubbing elbows, a celebratory atmosphere in the host city and the showcasing of the host country's culture — will be off the table or far more muted this year.

Seiko Hashimoto, the president of the Tokyo Olympic organizing committee, called the decision “the last piece for the Olympics” to proceed on July 23.

But as with everything about these Olympics — the first postponed in the history of the Modern Games dating from 1896, though previous ones were canceled during both World Wars — the decision raised many

questions.

For one, it is not quite what it seems. Although a maximum of 10,000 fans will be allowed in any given venue, so-called stakeholders — including sponsors and sporting federation officials — will not be counted toward that total, according to organizing committee CEO Toshiro Muto. Japanese media, for instance, reported that up to 20,000 people might attend the opening ceremony, over and above athletes, though Muto said he thought it would be less than that.

The decision on local fans was announced after so-called Five Party talks online with local organizers, the International Olympic Committee, the International Paralympic Committee, the Japanese government and the government of metropolitan Tokyo. A decision on the Paralympics comes on July 16.

Hashimoto, meanwhile, left the door open for a no-fans Olympics if the conditions worsen around the pandemic.

“We need to be very flexible. If there is any abrupt change in the situation, we will hold five-party meetings again to make other decisions,” Hashimoto said. “If there is an announcement of a state of emergency during the Games, all the options like no-spectator games will be examined.”

Officials say local fans will be under strict rules. They will not be allowed to cheer, must wear masks, and are being told to go straight home afterward.

“We would like people to go directly home from the venue without stopping by anywhere,” Muto said.

He said 3.64 million tickets were already in the hands of Japanese residents. He indicated that was about 900,000 more than the seats likely to be available. That will mean a lottery to see who can attend.

Tokyo organizers had expected about \$800 million in revenue from ticket sales, but Muto said the actual figure would be no more than half that. Any shortfall will have to be picked by some Japanese government entity.

The University of Oxford has said these are the most expensive Olympics on record. The official cost is \$15.4 billion, but several government audits suggest it might be twice that much. All but \$6.7 billion is public money. The IOC relies on selling broadcast rights for almost 75% of its income. Another 18% is from sponsors. A cancellation would cost the IOC an estimated \$3 billion-\$4 billion in lost broadcast income — an enormous blow especially at a time when its income flow has already been slowed by the pandemic.

The decision comes just as Tokyo has emerged from a state of emergency as the curve of new cases has flattened. The seven-day average for new infections in the city is about 400 daily.

The capital and other areas are now under “quasi-emergency” status until July 11. The new rules will allow restaurants to serve alcohol during limited hours, the main outcome from the reduced restrictions.

Overall, more than 14,000 deaths have been attributed to COVID-19 in Japan, which has managed the pandemic better than many countries but not as well as some others in Asia. Its vaccination campaign remains behind many Western ones, with about 6.5% of Japanese fully vaccinated and 16.5% with at least one shot.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, who has favored allowing fans, said before the official announcement that he would bar fans if conditions change. Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike echoed that.

“If a state of emergency is necessary, I will be flexible and open to no fans in order to achieve that the Games give top priority to safety and security for the people,” Suga said.

He said he took “seriously” Omi’s recommendations but did not follow them.

In recent polls, support seems to be increasing for holding the Olympics, though a majority still appear to favor postponing or canceling the Games, depending how the question is worded.

More AP Olympics: <https://apnews.com/hub/olympic-games> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Sculpture To Become Focal Point Of Former Beckley Hole

By autumn shelton | WVDN JUN 22, 2021



The infamous Beckley Hole at the corner of Neville and Heber Streets will soon be home to a sculpture designed to represent the comeback of the downtown area.

According to Beckley Mayor Rob Rappold, the 12 ft. high sculpture will depict a cardinal ascending out of a nest. It will be placed at the former Beckley Hole, which is the name given to the site following a major fire in 2012 and subsequent building demolition. The hole would frequently fill with muddy water and soon became a major eyesore and source of frustration for those in the city. It even garnered enough attention to have its own Facebook page “The Beckley Hole” and made Ezra the Camel a city-wide figure.

It took some time for the city to back-fill the hole, but now that they have, they are rebranding the site as the Beckley Plaza. The Cardinal Ascending sculpture will be the focal point.

The idea for this project began about four years ago when the city began working with Morgantown-based sculptor, Jamie Lester, Rappold continued.

At first, the design centered around a stainless steel sphere featuring the word hope. However, Rappold said he declined that idea because he felt it held a negative connotation that could represent desperation.

“We don’t just hope downtown will come back,” Rappold said. That wasn’t the message he wanted to send. Instead, the idea of depicting the state bird ascending out of the nest was the perfect, positive message for Beckley.

“It will be quite an attraction,” Rappold said. “We are really excited about it.”

Once complete, the plaza will be a park where people can relax. It will be totally grassed and include benches and concrete walkways, Rappold added.

Lester, who is a notable sculptor famous for his Jerry West statue outside the WVU Coliseum and for designing the back of the West Virginia state commemorative quarter, said he too is excited to see his sculpture become a focal point for Beckley.

“I am pretty excited about it,” Lester said. “It is the largest piece like this that I have ever done.”

He explained that the work depicts one cardinal as it rises into the sky. Four different versions of the same cardinal will be represented in various forms of flight. The lower cardinal will be sculpted out of bronze and have life-like features. As the cardinal rises, each version, now crafted from stainless steel, becomes more abstract.

The concrete base for the sculpture has just been poured, but that will take about a month to cure, Rappold stated. The sculpture will be ready to go up sometime in mid-July.

The city is planning an event to celebrate the arrival of Cardinal Ascending. More details will be provided at a later date.

Mason Miller Chosen To Nat. Youth Leadership Foundation

By WV Daily News | WVDN JUN 22, 2021



Mason Miller, a fifth-grader at Ronceverte Elementary, was chosen to be a delegate to the 2021 National Youth Leadership Foundation: Pathways to STEM conference in Washington, D.C. this summer.

Candidates for this opportunity were first nominated by a teacher who recognized scholastic merit and leadership potential, which Mason demonstrates in the classroom, the afterschool program and in his community.

Elementary students attending this conference will participate in a variety of unique opportunities that all focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

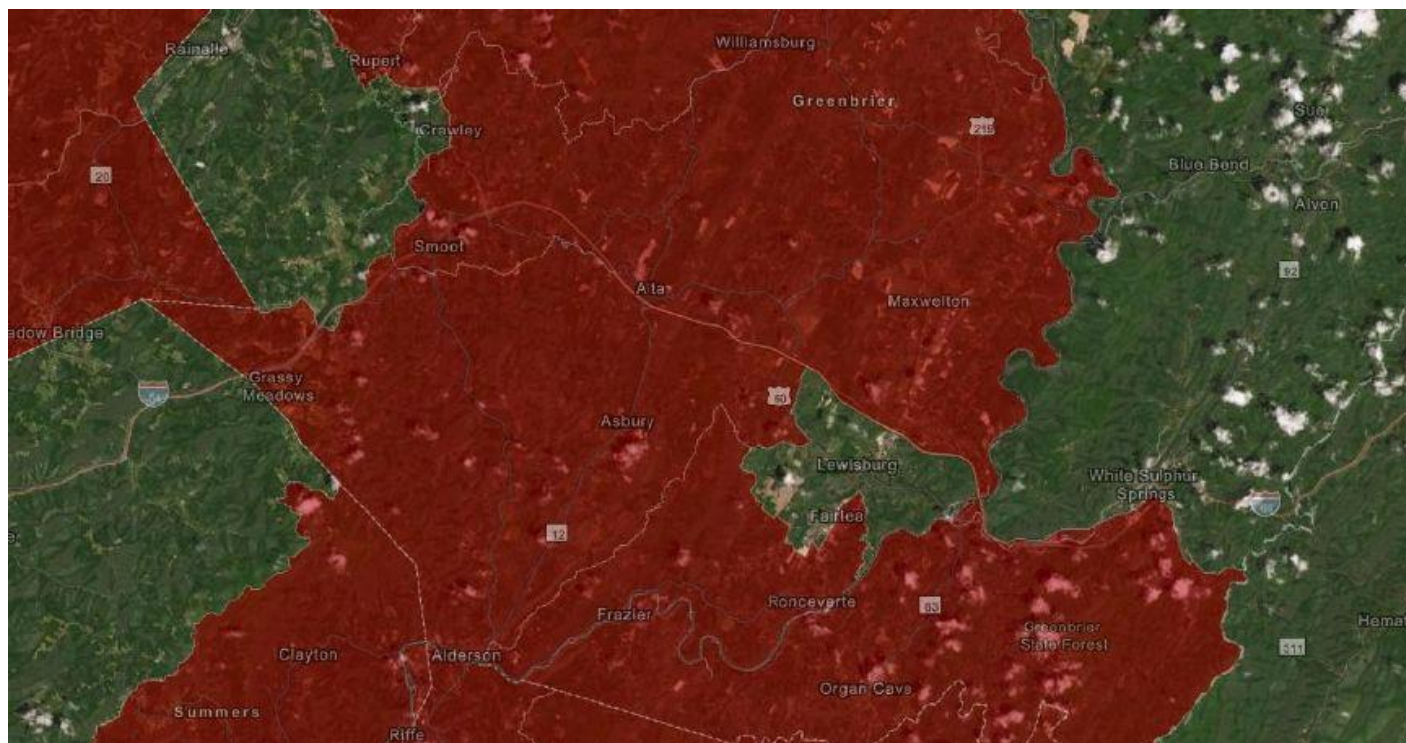
Some of the activities Mason will have the opportunity to participate in include building a robot, training as a doctor and investigating a crime scene, all while making new friends and building skills he will use in his future.

Congratulations Mason, we at Ronceverte Elementary look forward to hearing all about your experience when you return to school.

New public and private internet accessibility

mapping shows WV in the red

By bobby bordelon wvdm | WVDN JUN 22, 2021



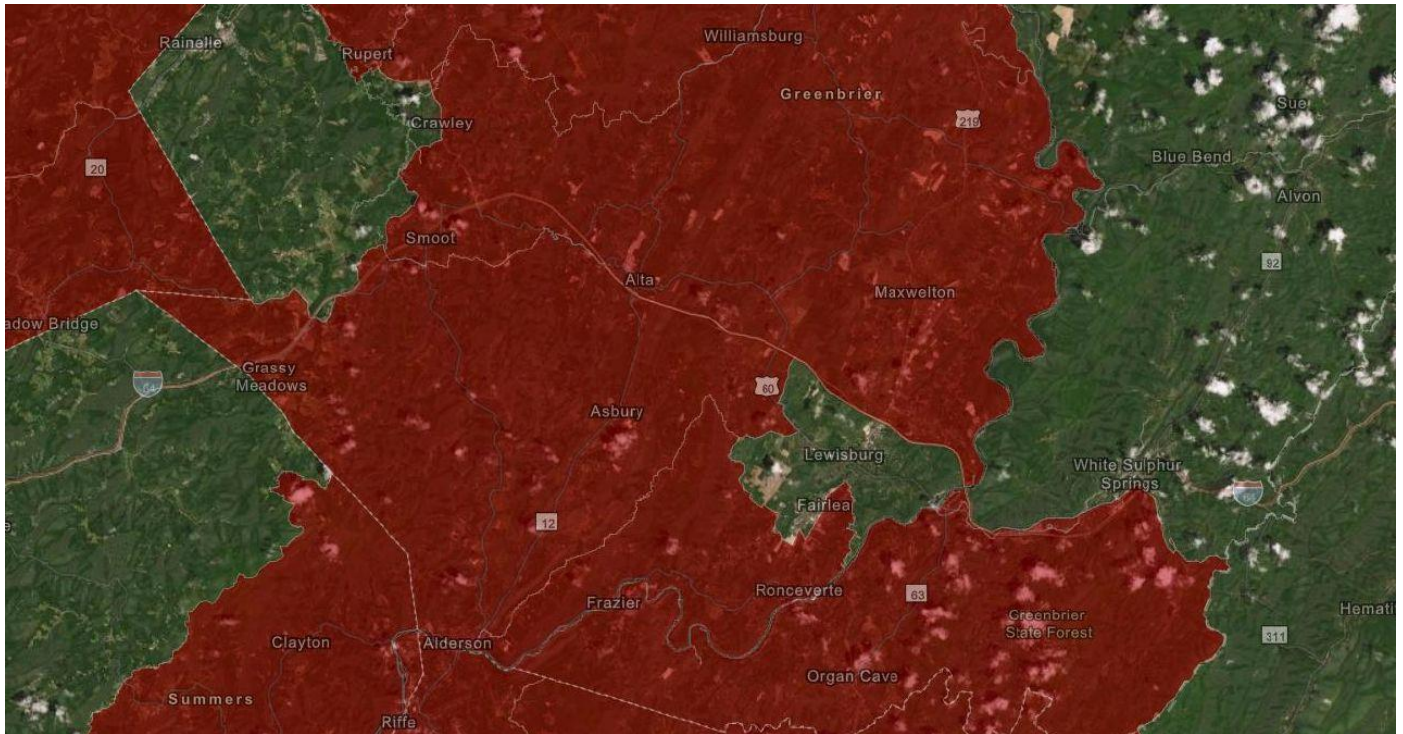
bobby editorial note - this should run with a data graph and a map both

While Greenbrier County prepares its own broadband accessibility mapping, new data from both public and private sources was recently compiled and made available to the public.

The new data and maps were released by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), which explained the map "is the first interactive, public map that allows users to explore different datasets about where people do not have quality Internet access."

"Any effort to close the digital divide starts with solid data, and NTIA continues to help policymakers make more informed decisions on expanding broadband access," said Acting NTIA Administrator Evelyn Remaley. "Now, the public can benefit from our platform to see which areas of the country still don't have broadband at speeds needed to participate in the modern economy."

The maps show county, census tract, and census block level data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), M-Lab, Ookla and Microsoft. In addition, speed-test data provided by M-Lab and Ookla show "the reality that communities experience when going online, with many parts of the country reporting speeds that fall below the FCC's current benchmark for fixed broadband service of 25 megabytes per second (mbps) download, three mbps upload."



“Values shown were derived from Ookla Speedtest results run over the time period from January - June 2020,” explains the NTIA website. “The layer shows speed test results at the census tract level. Tracts with collective median speed test results below 25/3 Mbps are shown in red.”

Zooming in on Greenbrier County, speed tests were not positive — nearly the entire county lights up in red. According to a speed test from Ookla between January and June 2020, service over 25/3 Mbps only appears on the map for areas around Lewisburg, White Sulphur Springs, and Rainelle. The M-Lab data is broken down on the county level, but indicates median speeds were below 25/3 mbps.

The maps also include county-level data on connectivity from Microsoft. When a computer connects to the internet and accesses Microsoft updates or services, it communicates with the company, allowing them “to estimate the device’s throughput speed based on the size of the packet sent and the time it takes to download.” According to the data provided, 75 percent or more of these users in Greenbrier County clocks download speeds below 25 megabytes per second.”

County Name	Greenbrier	Monroe	Pocahontas	Raleigh	Summers
Percent of Households that Have No Computer, Smartphone, or Tablet	17.8	23.2	25.1	16.8	24.2
Percent of Households with No Internet Access	22.1	29.3	27.1	20.3	32.7
Ookla Median Download Speed (Mbps)	25.23	19.217	10.806	68.214	17.98
M-Lab Median Download Speed (Mbps)	17.46363	16.2338	9.4383	33.85625	31.80922
Ookla Median Upload Speed (Mbps)	10.316	4.761	8.855	21.288	4.827
M-Lab Median Upload Speed (Mbps)	6.408868	4.111079	5.012683	15.83638	10.66453
Microsoft Broadband Usage Percentage	14%	7%	7%	37%	11%
Microsoft Broadband Usage	0.14	0.07	0.07	0.37	0.11
Total households	15188	5718	3530	31203	5566
Population 2019 (FCC Estimate)	34662	13275	8247	73361	12573
Percent of Population whose income in the past 12 months is below poverty level	16	15.3	16.6	18.6	21.7

Data set provided by NTIA.

Curiously, the data also includes community survey information from U.S.Census American Community Survey taken from 2015-2019. The survey results suggest large portions of the county have more than 25% of households stating they have internet access above 25/3 mbps. This is contradicted by the data provided by Microsoft, Ookla, and M-Lab.

The maps and data can be found online at <https://broadbandusa.ntia.gov/indicatorsmap>.

“Broadband is no longer nice to have. It’s need to have. To ensure that every household has the internet access necessary for success in the digital age, we need better ways to accurately measure where high-speed service has reached Americans and where it has not,” said FCC Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel. “The latest mapping effort by NTIA is a welcome new tool that provides valuable insight into the state of broadband across the country. Kudos to Secretary Raimondo and Acting Assistant Secretary Remaley for their leadership. The FCC looks forward to continuing our close collaboration with the Commerce Department and other federal partners to fulfill the goal of connecting 100% of Americans.”

This new map is not related to the Greenbrier County Broadband Council’s ongoing map-making survey,

though it could be used to complement the more locally-comprehensive mapping the survey project looks to create.

“What can you do? We’ve got several things we would like you to do to help us out and enhance broadband in Greenbrier County,” explained Sen. Stephen Baldwin during a recent Broadband rally in Lewisburg. “One is to fill out the survey. ... Right now the federal government thinks that broadband in southern West Virginia is just fine. We know that’s not true. It’s not fine. We are tremendously under-served, but we have to prove that. ... If you can fill out the survey, help us get a map together, your business and your home, then it’s going to put us in a better position [for federal and state funds and grants].”

The local survey can be found at <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/e6c7779b3bc74322bd19313d4620b9cf>. A clickable link is also expected to soon be posted on greenbriercounty.net.

Longanacre To Host Education 'Brainstorming Session'

By WV Daily News | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

During this past Legislative session, a Resolution was passed which has given authority to the Legislative Education Committee to review public school policy for possible rewrites and updates.

The purpose of this review is to ensure that educators have all the necessary advantages inside their classrooms to effectively teach and students have the best possible opportunities to achieve a quality education.

On Thursday July 15, 2021, I am hosting the initial brainstorming session in our area for public school stakeholders to identify possible issues with Chapter 18 of the West Virginia Code (Public School Law). This is a statewide effort and similar workshops are being held across the state in order to gather information. Educators and Service Personnel from Greenbrier and Monroe Counties are invited to this meeting which will be held at the Ronceverte Volunteer Fire Department and will begin at 6pm. I would ask all stakeholders to think about what policies/law limits your abilities to educate effectively. This initiative is the initial step in updating our public school law to put students and academic standards first. Your input will be invaluable to this effort.

Please put this date on your calendar and I hope to see you there.

Delegate Todd Longanacre

W.Va. high court: Governor was right in appointing lawmaker

By The Associated Press | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — The West Virginia Supreme Court said Republican Gov. Jim Justice acted within his right when he appointed a lawmaker to fill a vacancy in the House of Delegates. The high court said in a filing this month that Justice had not erred in naming Republican Del. Joshua Booth to the 19th delegate district in Wayne County. GOP officials from the county unsuccessfully sued to block the appointment after they alleged Justice intervened to pick Booth over the recommendations of local Republicans. The seat was formerly held by Derrick Evans, who resigned after being charged with illegally entering the U.S. Capitol in the Jan. 6 riot with a mob of Donald Trump supporters. The court, which had already rejected the challenge to the appointment in February, explained in a new filing that Republicans from the district did not follow the right process in nominating candidates for the seat. The nominations had to be made by the GOP organization of the 19th district, which extends beyond Wayne County. Instead, it was the county GOP that sent a letter to the governor with three nominees. “There is no statutory authorization for such a group to have a role in filling a vacancy for a public office,” the court said.

West Virginia father-son duo writes children's book

By david kirk times west virginian | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

WHITE HALL, W.Va. (AP) — When Chris Isabella was a small child, his father Tom promised they’d write a book together one day. Recently that promise came true.

Most people have a list of things they’d like to finish in their lives. For Tom, one of the things at the top of his list was writing a children’s book with 31-year-old his son, Chris.

In April 2021, the father-son duo self-published their book, “Pecky Penguin and Friends: Danger at Pinnacle Point.” The book focuses on characters Tom used in stories for his son when he was younger.

“Somehow or another we came up with these characters, for example, we both liked penguins,” Tom said.

“We said, once upon a time, that when (Chris) grew up we would write a book one day and share it with other children.”

The Isabellas got their chance as the pandemic rolled around. Tom, who is 61, was retiring from working at the Bridgeport FBI facility and found it was the perfect time to work on the project.

The father-son duo started work on the book early in 2020 then contacted Chris’ childhood friend, Matt Jaco, who is currently a pipeline engineer in Tennessee, to illustrate the book.

“I think it’s important for a children’s book that the visualizations match the story,” Chris said. “We wrote the story and then spent probably double the time getting the characters looks right.”

Both agreed that Jaco’s art is what really makes the book special.

“His illustrations are really what brought it alive,” Tom said. “They match the story and, without that, the story wouldn’t be the same.”

The book touches on themes such as inclusiveness, lying and making friends. However, the main topic of the story is peer pressure.

“We put kind of a lot in a very short space, but it is just fun characters with a bit of morals in there too,” Tom said.

Neither Tom or Chris are interested in turning a profit with the book. The fulfillment of an old promise and working together as a family is really their reward.

“I think it’s just great that we set our mind to something and we did it,” Chris said. “It wasn’t easy. We didn’t

sit down and things just flowed, we had a lot of back and forth. It was half business and half family.”

Tom was sentimental about the time he spent with his son and Jaco working on the book.

“You never get tired of spending time with your child,” Tom said. “But the biggest fulfillment I’ve had was when parents say to me, ‘This is my child’s favorite book.’ Nothing beats that.”

Jaco shared their feelings and was excited the first time he saw his name on the Amazon store page.

“It was a very fulfilling achievement to do it, especially with the teamwork of a longtime friend like Chris and his dad,” Jaco said. “Seeing I completed something, seeing (my art) on a book and seeing my name really meant a lot.”

Their book “Pecky Penguin and Friends: Danger at Pinnacle Point” is available at Amazon by searching the title. Physical paperbacks are \$12.95 and an eBook version can be purchased on for \$9.99.

“I think we all got to know each other better,” Tom said. “Whether (the book) does well or not, it was just fulfilling to bring something to life like that.”

Campaign encourages residents to support small business

By The Associated Press | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — A new campaign is encouraging West Virginia residents to support small businesses as the economy continues to reopen.

The West Virginia Small Business Development Center launched its “Come In, We’re Open” campaign on Sunday. It’s an invitation to people to visit local businesses in their communities, center Director Debra Martin told The Exponent Telegram.

“Throughout the pandemic, small business owners have adapted and persevered and continue to be the backbone of our economy. As West Virginia reopens, it’s critical that small businesses receive enough support to survive long term,” she said.

Business owners around the state can get involved by displaying a “Come In, We’re Open” sign and posting to social media with “#WeAreOpenWV.”

The campaign will last through September, officials said.

Federal holiday pressures companies to give Juneteenth off

By alexandra olson ap business writer | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

NEW YORK (AP) — The declaration of Juneteenth as a federal holiday is putting pressure on more U.S. companies to give their employees the day off, accelerating a movement that took off last year in response to the racial justice protests that swept the country.

Hundreds of top companies had already pledged last year to observe Juneteenth in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd and the national reckoning on racism that followed.

But most private companies take their cues from the federal government — the country’s largest employer —

in drawing up their holiday calendars. President Joe Biden signed legislation Thursday establishing Juneteenth as a federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery, following the passage of a bipartisan Congressional bill.

More than 800 companies have publicly pledged to observe Juneteenth, according to HellaCreative, a group of Black creative professionals in the San Francisco Bay Area that launched a campaign last year to build corporate support for making June 19th an official holiday. That is nearly double the number of companies that had joined the pledge last year.

Patagonia, the outdoor apparel retailer, announced that all of its U.S. stores will be closed Saturday, and its corporate offices would be closed Monday. Other brands, including Target, J.C. Penney and Best Buy had pledged last year to adopt Juneteenth as a paid holiday, though they are keeping stores open. Several major banks have said employees will get a floating paid day off.

Many companies, however, had little time to shuffle their holiday calendars. Some offered employees a regular paid day off or promised to consider adding it to their calendars next year.

Nasdaq said its U.S. exchange would stay open Friday and Monday “to maintain a fair and orderly market and to minimize operational risks” but that it would discuss its future holiday schedule with regulators and companies.

State governments that had not already declared Juneteenth a holiday were also scrambling to respond to the new federal holiday. Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker announced that all state government offices will be closed Friday, superseding a state law signed just two days earlier that would have made June 19 a state holiday next year. Even though federal holidays like Thanksgiving are widely observed, private companies are under no obligation to offer any particular day off. But since many workers don’t know that, they will likely wonder why they are not getting a paid holiday for Juneteenth this year, said Carolina Valencia, a vice president in research firm Gartner’s human resource practice.

In an era of increasing employee activism and fierce competition for talent, Valencia said she expects the number of companies offering Juneteenth to surge next year after employers have had more time to react. “Many employees are going to resent their employers for not giving them the holiday because they don’t understand that it’s a complicated process,” Valencia said.

But she said the devil will be in the details. Many companies will likely offer it as a floating day off, making it unlikely that Juneteenth will become a national holiday on par with July 4th or Memorial Day anytime soon. And many notable companies have not joined the movement. Walmart, which employs 300,000 Black hourly workers and is the country’s largest private-sector employer, told The Associated Press in an email that its employees are free to use paid time off to observe any holiday they wish, including Juneteenth.

Raheem Thompson, a social media specialist for a retail company, said he was disappointed he didn’t get a paid day off. Instead, he said the company sent an email acknowledging the federal holiday and pledging to consider time off in the future.

“It’s kind of bare minimum,” said Thompson, who lives in Atlanta but didn’t want his company named for fear of repercussions. “I don’t think as people of color, we really care that you acknowledge it via email ... that doesn’t really have any true meaning to it.”

Juneteenth commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union soldiers brought the news of freedom to enslaved Black people in Galveston, Texas — two months after the Confederacy had surrendered. That was also about 2 1/2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation freed slaves in the Southern states.

Black Americans, especially in Texas, have long celebrated Juneteenth with church picnics and speeches. But the federal holiday declaration brought it to the attention of some Americans for the first time.

Jamie Hickey, founder of a small fitness company in Philadelphia, said he had never heard of Juneteenth until he heard about it last week on the radio. Then, his four trainers started talking about it at lunch, and he asked them if it was important to them. He decided to make it a day off next year since it was too late to cancel on clients this year.

“They said, ‘are you serious, you are just now hearing about this?’” said Hickey, who founded Truism Fitness last year after the chain fitness company where he and the other trainers worked closed because of the pandemic.

Hickey said he took the lead from his employees because, as a white man, he worried about jumping into trends only to be accused of tokenism.

"I don't want to fake. If you are fake, you get caught and it's a million times worse," Hickey said.

That's a major concern among even the biggest employees, said Eric Eve, CEO of Ichor Strategies, which advises firms on connecting businesses with their communities. Eve said companies will get called out by their employees, customers and even investors if they take steps like observing Juneteenth without investing in Black communities or looking at their own internal diversity.

Still, Eve said the declaration of Juneteenth as a federal holiday will make companies that don't follow suit increasingly look bad.

"For current employees, it will reaffirm a dissonance with their values," Eve said.

Associated Press Writers Urooba Jamal, Anne D'Innocenzio, Michelle Chapman and Roger Schneider contributed to this story.

US hitting encouraging milestones on virus deaths and shots

By michael kunzelman associated press | WVDN JUN 22, 2021

COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have dipped below 300 a day for the first time since the early days of the disaster in March 2020, while the drive to put shots in arms approached another encouraging milestone Monday: 150 million Americans fully vaccinated.

The coronavirus was the third leading cause of death in the U.S. in 2020, behind heart disease and cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But now, as the outbreak loosens its grip, it has fallen down the list of the biggest killers.

CDC data suggests that more Americans are dying every day from accidents, chronic lower respiratory diseases, strokes or Alzheimer's disease than from COVID-19.

The U.S. death toll stands at more than 600,000, while the worldwide count is close to 3.9 million, though the real figures in both cases are believed to be markedly higher.

About 45% of the U.S. population has been fully vaccinated, according to the CDC. Over 53% of Americans have received at least one dose of vaccine. But U.S. demand for shots has slumped, to the disappointment of public health experts.

New cases are running at about 11,400 a day on average, down from over a quarter-million per day in early January. Average deaths per day are down to about 293, according to Johns Hopkins University, after topping out at over 3,400 in mid-January.

In New York, which suffered mightily in the spring of 2020, Gov. Andrew Cuomo tweeted on Monday that the state had 10 new deaths. At the height of the outbreak in the state, nearly 800 people a day were dying from the coronavirus.

Some states are faring worse than others. Missouri leads the nation in per-capita COVID-19 cases and is fourth behind California, Florida and Texas in the number of new cases per day over the past week despite its significantly smaller population.

Meanwhile, because of regulatory hurdles and other factors, President Joe Biden is expected to fall short of his commitment to share 80 million vaccine doses with the rest of the world by the end of June, officials said Monday.

Associated Press reporter Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this story.

Dorothy Hunter

By WV Daily News | WVDN JUN 22, 2021



HUNTER

Mrs. Dorothy Hunter, age 82, of Crawley passed away on June 18, 2021, with her family by her side. She is eternally reunited with her infant daughter and is surely singing with the angels.

Dorothy Lou was born on June 10, 1939 in Trout to the late Samuel and Dessie (Lewis) Sizemore. She married Glen Hunter in 1958 and was the mother of six children. She worked tirelessly as a homemaker and dedicated her life to serving as the pillar of her family. She was a lifelong member of Trout Baptist Church and a talented song writer and a cappella singer, filling many surrounding churches with her beautiful voice.

“A stranger is only a friend you haven’t met.”— words she often shared and lived by. She gave honest advice, was quick witted, but greatest of all, she loved unconditionally. She enjoyed a well kept house, gardening, playing Yahtzee, working puzzles, decorating for every holiday, and hosting crowded family get-togethers. Cooking “enough food to feed Cox’s army”, as she would say, was one of her many talents. At Dorothy’s table, everyone was welcome, and there was always room for anyone needing a meal.

In addition to her parents and infant daughter, Donna Gay, she was preceded in death by three brothers, Ray, Dale, and Don Sizemore; two sisters, Naomi and Lottie; and a daughter-in-law, Charlette Hunter.

She is survived by her husband of sixty-three years, Glen; daughter, Terrie (Barry) Grimmitt of White Sulphur Springs; son, Michael (Pam) Hunter of Crawley; son, David (Kathy) Hunter of Cornstalk; daughter, Teresa (Ronnie) Shuck of Danese; and daughter, Tonia Hunter (Wanda Seal) of Crawley.

She also leaves behind seven granddaughters: Stephanie Worley of Bluffton, SC; Brittany Radford of White Sulphur Springs; Erica Whitt, April Herndon, and Ashley Butler, all of Crawley; Amanda Cannon of Cornstalk; LaTasha Owens of Frankford; and sixteen great-grandchildren.

She is also survived by half-brothers, James and William "Tucker" Sizemore, Hugh "Jumbo", Randy and Jerry Baldwin; and half-sisters, Lesa, Fitzgerald, Delta Thomas, and Jenny Sizemore.

A funeral service will be held on June 23rd, 2021 beginning at 1 p.m. at Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home in Lewisburg. Visitors will be received beginning at 12 noon until time of service. A private burial will follow at home at the family's private cemetery.

Please send online condolences by visiting www.WallaceandWallaceFH.com.

Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home in Lewisburg is in charge of arrangements.

Barbara Jean "Cot" Decker Sponaogle

By WV Daily News | WVDN JUN 22, 2021



SPONAUGLE

Barbara Jean "Cot" Decker Sponaugle of Frankford, WV joined our Heavenly Father on Thursday, June 17, 2021 at Appalachian Regional Hospital in Beckley. She passed away unexpectedly, surrounded by her family.

Barbara was born May 17, 1940 at Frankford, WV and was the daughter of the late Louella Wheeler Decker Hughes. She attended Lewisburg Junior High School and Frankford High School, where she graduated in 1958.

She was a retired Loan Officer for Wells Fargo for 32 years. In 2005, she moved back to West Virginia to her home place with her husband of 24 years and their dog, Bruno, who she loved dearly. Barbara was a member of Enon Baptist Church and was known as never meeting a stranger. She always had a hello for everyone with a smile on her face. She is also known as a loving wife, mother, sister, grandmother, and friend.

Those left to cherish her memory are her husband, Harold; her sons, Jack Richmond of California and Jerry Richmond of Virginia; her step-children, Harold Sponaugle, Jr. (Stephanie), Debbie Yates (Tim), and Cathy Carey (Eddie); a brother, James "PeeWee" Decker; grandchildren, Caleb, Kaitlyn, and Kinsea; step-grandchildren, Tyler, Taylor, Tanner, Kayla, Emily, and Rylan; great-grandchildren, Remington and Fynleigh; a step-great-grandchild, Makena. Barbara was loved by special cousins, Betty White and Pete Hanna; and her wonderful caregiver, Christine McMann; as well as many other relatives and dear friends.

Barbara's request was to be cremated. A celebration of life service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations of sympathy may be made to the Greenbrier County Humane Society, 151 Holliday Lane, Lewisburg, WV 24901.

Please send online condolences by visiting www.WallaceandWallaceFH.com.

Wallace & Wallace Funeral Home in Lewisburg is in charge of arrangements.

Some Of The Coolest Antique Cars Ever Built Arrived In Beckley For The Great Race

By autumn shelton | WVDN JUN 22, 2021



Over 100 of the coolest antique cars ever built rolled into Beckley on Friday, June 25, as part of The Great Race, a controlled-speed road rally and test of endurance for classic cars built in 1974 or earlier.

The Great Race begins at Alamo Plaza in San Antonio, TX, on June 19, and ends in downtown Greenville, SC, on Sunday, June 27. Along the way, each driver must take their car through checkpoints located along scenic, county and state highways. Competitors will travel through 10 states covering 2,300 miles in 9 days. This year, one of the overnight checkpoints will be in Beckley.

According to information provided by The Great Race, 150 classic cars have been entered into the rally including a 1916 Hudson Hill Climber, a 1966 Aston Martin, a 1932 Ford Roadster and many more.

The driver of each car, along with a navigator, must be able to travel 220-250 miles per day and find their checkpoints the old-fashioned way — no GPS is allowed. Scores are given based on the ability of the team to follow course directions precisely. The grand prize winner will take home \$50,000.

In a recent Get Out N Drive podcast, The Great Race Director Jeff Stumb said “It’s like going to the circus and seeing the animals. It’s just the cars, the animals and each car will stay in place until 8 p.m. and then they’ll head to their hotel. So, you know, for three to four hours, it’s a big festival in these cities.”

Jill Moorefield, director of Beckley Events stated, “We are excited to have the opportunity to host this event. It’s a really big deal.”

The city of Beckley has welcomed The Great Race twice before as lunch stops — once in 1995 and again in 2005, but this is the first time the city has been an overnight stop for the event. “Being an overnight stop gives us the opportunity to have these cars displayed in Beckley for an extended amount of time,” said

Moorefield. "This is a real treat for all the car enthusiasts in our region."

Beckley Mayor Rob Rappold added that city officials are "extremely excited" to host a stop on the route. "We are thrilled to death to have it back."