

WVDN AUG 20, 2021



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The Back Pew: People Are Dying

By Sen. Stephen Baldwin | WVDN AUG 20, 2021

For the past 17 months, it's been my great honor to serve on the local COVID Task Force. Local leaders from all walks of life—health care, business, government, non-profits, churches, first responders, and more—work together so that we can better respond to the real world effects of the pandemic.

Why do we do it? Because lives are at stake. People are dying. In Greenbrier County, 66 people died from COVID during the pandemic. In Fayette County, 86 people died. In Monroe County, 18 people died. In Summers, 23 people died. In West Virginia, 2,997 people died. In America, over 624,000 people died.

Those are the stakes. People's lives are on the line. That's why our response to the pandemic matters. Because we want to save as many lives as possible. Each of you reading this knows a family who has lost a loved one. COVID is real. The pain it causes families is real. The sickness it brings on those it infects is real.

With that context in mind, I read Delegate Todd Longanacre's column in which he refers to the COVID pandemic as a "scamdemic." He also called on citizens to, "Shake off the brainwashing." Such political parlor tricks are the principal reason we still can't get this virus under control. Casting doubt on our medical leaders, who tell us vaccines and masks are the best tools we have to fight this virus, is as unprofessional as it is unhelpful as it is unthinkable.

Perhaps most egregious, the Delegate goes on to belittle those charged with keeping our community safe when he wrote, "All of us must keep a close eye on what our County Commissions, City Counsels (sic), elected School Boards, and County Health Officials are doing lest they too shall lead us astray." We should be thanking our public health leaders, not ridiculing them.

Health departments in particular are facing enormous pressures right now. They cannot win in the court of public opinion. So they just keep doing their jobs—trying to protect us from ourselves. We owe them our gratitude and our best effort to stay safe.

The vast majority of West Virginians agree we should listen to our doctors and trust them to give us sound medical advice. For our families, for our schools, for our churches, for our businesses, and for our communities. We all want to be able to live as normally as safely possible. We can do that by following the advice of our medical leaders.

In these trying times, we need to extend grace to each other, rather than riling people up with hysteria and rhetoric. We need to work together. We need to listen more. We need to remember that the medical profession's first rule is, "Do no harm."

Our health departments, nurses, doctors, EMTs, and medical community are our better angels in the fight against COVID. When you see them at the store or at church, thank them for all they're doing to protect us. They have earned our respect and our gratitude.

People are dying. The stakes are high. But do not allow yourself to fall victim to our lesser demons. The American story is one of triumph. Just when it seems there isn't a way, we summon our better angels and find a way.

Now is the time to hold out hope and summon our better angels. We will get through this. Together.

Let Me Do You A Flavor: Salmon Salad

By by lindsey wolford | WVDN AUG 20, 2021



Hey there and welcome back! I'm so glad you decided to grab the paper and sit down with me this week. I figured it might be fitting to bring you a healthier meal after we have all stuffed ourselves with fair food for the last week or so. So, grab a drink and a pen and paper because you will want to start your grocery list!!

I will preface this recipe by saying this takes a little time and prep work but is totally worth it. I saw Valerie Bertinelli make this on her show on the Food Network and I knew I had to try it. For this recipe you will need:

- salmon (a large filet or two)
- Small potatoes (I found a bag of small mixed potatoes at Walmart)
- Cherry tomatoes- however many you want
- Kalamata olives
- 3 or 4 eggs (or however many you want)
- Romaine lettuce
- 2 lemons
- 1 cup dry white wine
- Fresh dill
- Garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

3/4 cup olive oil
3/4 cup white wine vinegar
Salt and pepper

Start by generously seasoning your salmon with salt and pepper and set aside. In a skillet combine 1 cup water, the wine, a few springs of dill, 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard and the juice of one of the lemons and place the lemon halves that you squeezed in the skillet as well. Slice the other lemon while you bring to a simmer and gently place the salmon in the skillet. Top the salmon with the slices of lemon, reduce the heat to a medium low and put a lid on the skillet. Let cook for about 10 minutes

While your salmon is cooking, get out two small pots and fill with water and get them on the stove and bring to a boil. In one pot you will put the eggs and the other you will put the small potatoes but only after the water starts boiling. In the meantime you can make the dressing!

Mix the olive oil, white wine vinegar, 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard, a few generous shakes of garlic powder and pepper and several tablespoons of diced dill. Voila- the dressing is done.

By now the salmon should be about done so turn the heat off and let it sit for about five minutes. Then remove from the pan and let cool. Then add your eggs to one pot and potatoes to the other. This part is important- the eggs only need to cook for 7 minutes. While they are cooking prepare an ice bath to put the eggs in. This is just a bowl of ice water you will put the eggs in to stop the cooking process once you remove them from the boiling water.

While you wait on the eggs and potatoes, go ahead and dice up the romaine lettuce, slice the cherry tomatoes in half and begin building the salad. I used a large casserole dish to prepare this because we eat with our eyes first and I wanted to be able to see all of this beautiful salad!

First lay down the lettuce, then sprinkle the cherry tomato halves and you can go ahead and add however many kalamata olives you want. By now your salmon should be cooled and you can just begin flaking it apart and putting it in chunks on the salad.

Now the eggs should be done and the potatoes shouldn't be far behind. Remove the eggs with a slotted spoon and place them in the ice bath for about 5 -10 minutes. When the potatoes are done, drain them and give them a few minutes to cool down.

Take each potato and smash it down using the bottom of a cup or I used a small mason jar. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. In a skillet put a little olive oil and put on medium high heat. Once the skillet and oil are hot, place the smashed potatoes in the skillet and cook until golden and crispy on each side.. about 3-5 minutes.

While the potatoes cook, peel the eggs and slice in half. They should be beautifully soft boiled and you can place them through your salad. When the potatoes are done you can place them all around your salad and then your salad is done! Plate, drizzle with the dressing you made and serve!!

The original recipe called for green beans in the salad but I left them out. You can substitute other things if you like or take out the things you don't like. Whatever you do have fun and make it yours, and as always I'm sending love from my kitchen to yours!

Airport Authority Celebrates Strong Financial Position, New Sign

By by bobby bordelon | WVDN AUG 20, 2021



The Greenbrier County Airport Authority celebrated a strong financial position and ongoing projects during its Tuesday, August 17, meeting.

According to Martha Livesay, the airport's chief financial officer, the airport's income draws a sharp contrast with this time last year.

"We have a net income of \$74,655.28 - for the same period of last year, with the pandemic going on, we had a loss of \$6,400, so we're doing a lot better," said Livesay. "Our main source, as always, is our Jet A [fuel] sales. We had sales of \$326,103. ... Our other sources of income were landing and ramp fees and our hangar rents. I think that an income of \$74,655.28[means] we're doing well. We're very financially sound."

Not only is income up, Livesay explained, but expenses are down as a result of the CARES Act funding received from the federal government.

"As far as expenses, our [highest] is payroll and benefits, [totaling] \$84,217.36. That is covered by the CARES Act, but it's in the budget because we ... are not always going to have the CARES grant [funds]. ... We should be good for at least another 24 months on payroll [with the CARES Act funding]."

As a result, the airport has a strong financial future for the foreseeable future.

“That has enabled us to put quite a bit of money in savings. Since I’ve been here, for six years, we’ve never been able to do that. I’m pretty happy about that.”

Jon McCalmont of Parrish and Partners and Airport Director Brian Belcher brought several airport project updates, including:

- The years-long environmental study of the airport could close next month after it finally entered the public review portion with the Federal Aviation Administration.
- The new beacon has been placed on the airport’s tower, but has not yet been turned on. The contractor is expected to finalize electrical work on the light fixture after the State Fair of West Virginia has passed. McCalmont noted that the new beacon might look different from far enough away, but because of the high angle its pointed, it likely won’t look brighter from on the ground nearby. The airport is expected to keep the old beacon and could display it on the property in the future.
- A design for the airport’s new entrance sign on Route 219 was celebrated by the Airport Authority. No official action was needed at the time, but the design was projected for everyone to see. The sign will also be moved farther back on airport property.



Airport Director Brian Belcher explains the Greenbrier Valley Airport’s new Route 219 sign, displayed on screen.

- Belcher noted the Mi Tequila Mexican Restaurant opened in the airport and invited the public to give it a try.
- Belcher explained that the airport’s security would be upgraded with incoming new scanning equipment from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

McCalmont also noted a new possible project – a \$38 million dollar project elevating the airport’s runway could be possible as a result of American Rescue Plan funds.

“There is a modification of standard in place for the runway,” McCalmont explained. “You are supposed to have line of sight from the runway to the half way point and five feet off at either point. You should be able to see that ... and you can’t because of the hump in the north end. [FAA] said ‘how much to fix it?’ What that means is you’re raising the north end of the runway 12 feet and then rebuilding the north end of the airport, the full safety area, all the way to the end. Let’s just say it’s expensive. ... \$38 million, so far. ... Two years ago [they] said no way, no how.”

While the project is not certain, the FAA is looking for “big” projects to use the rescue plan funds on. Across West Virginia’s other airports, there are approximately \$350 million in requested projects.

Should the project come to pass, it could stop travel to and from the Greenbrier Valley by air for some time.

“It’s a big thing. That’s the other downside. You could work on a runway in sections but a project of that magnitude would close the runway. In a sense, [it] would close the airport for a period of time. ... For that amount of work [the airport could be shut down for] a month. That’s if you get multiple contractors and multiple teams and [the work] never stops. You would not find anyone to do it right now, the entire construction environment would have to change to even have that be feasible.”

No final decisions were made on the possible project, with McCalmont saying “I really think it’s going to move forward with fixing that because a line of sight modification of standard isn’t super critical. We’re going to go forward with four or five options.”

BoE Approves COVID-19 Back To School Plan

By by bobby bordelon | WVDN AUG 20, 2021



The Greenbrier County Board of Education has approved a COVID-19 back to school plan.

The plan was approved on Wednesday, August 18, and mandates mask wearing for the beginning of the school year, which varies by class. Grades one through six and grade nine will return to school on August 30, and a full grade one through 12 return will follow on August 31. Pre-K and kindergarten will then return on September 9.

Many of the precautions put in place for the return to in-person classes in the previous year will return.

“We could not be more enthusiastic about welcoming students back to our classrooms for what we hope will be a much more normal school experience,” said Superintendent Jeff Bryant in a press release. “... We open this school year with a focus on collaborating with all stakeholders to accomplish a shared goal. That goal is to keep our schools open for learning, and our charge is to do what is necessary to keep our schools safe to achieve this goal. We understand we’ll have to remain flexible and ready to pivot as the COVID-19 and variant situation demands. Protecting the health and well-being of our students and staff will continue to be of the highest priority, with many of the preventive health protocols that we embraced last year remaining in place. This includes things like enhanced cleaning, daily checklist self-screening, managing traffic patterns in our hallways and at large gatherings, emphasizing good hygiene, contact tracing, quarantining, and facilitating vaccinations for those eligible to receive them.”

The plan includes a mask mandate for all personnel and students for the month of September. After October 1, masking will depend on the number of cases in the county. The plan explains:

- “Masks are required for all (students, staff, and visitors) through September regardless of vaccination status or current color-coded map status (unless prohibited by a documented medical condition).”
- “Beginning in October, mask protocol for each day will be determined by the color-coded WVDHHR County Alert Map indicator on the previous day. Principals will include the daily mask protocol in their school-day announcements for students and staff. After October 1, Green and Yellow map status [means] masks are optional for students, staff, and visitors, while Gold, Orange, or Red map status [means] masks are required by students, staff, and visitors.”
- “Per federal Department of Transportation regulations, masks must be worn on buses at all times. ... Bus drivers will wear masks and/or face shields. If alone in a classroom or enclosed area, staff may temporarily remove their mask. Masks must be worn at all times when students or other staff members are present.”
- “Masks are not required when eating in assigned areas or during strenuous activity if it is outdoors where social distancing is possible.”
- “Parents are asked to provide the face mask for their child. If not available from home, the school will provide a face mask. Handmade two-layer face masks are acceptable. Masks must have two layers of fabric.”

“By masking through September, we are allowing time for COVID-19 infections that may be circulating after the State Fair and the Labor Day weekend to dissipate,” said Lead School Nurse Paula McCoy. “This also helps maintain a safer environment for our Pre-K and Kindergarten students who don’t start school until September 9. Exercising caution early on will pay off in the long run in terms of limiting viral illness (including influenza and respiratory syncytial virus) among students and staff and ultimately help us keep schools open.”

The plan does not include a vaccination mandate.

“Staff and students who are eligible to receive the vaccine are encouraged to do so. Vaccination is the leading prevention strategy to protect individuals from COVID-19 disease and end the COVID-19 pandemic. Current

COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States are safe and effective, widely accessible in the U.S., and available at no cost to all people living in the U.S. Thus far the vaccines have also prevented severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to variants, especially by the current Delta variant that is spreading in the U.S.”

Social distancing is expected as well, “whenever practicable:”

– “Social distancing of at least 3 feet will be maintained. Schools may continue to exercise the following: desks facing in the same direction, seating students at tables facing the same direction or using table dividers, removing any non-essential furniture and materials to allow more space in classrooms, and adding tables in cafeteria areas to allow more spacing.”

– Each middle and high school will have a plan in place to limit and manage student traffic between classes.

If a case of COVID-19 is detected, it should be reported to the Greenbrier County Health Department (304-645-1787).

“Those who test positive (even without symptoms) are required to isolate for ten (10) days,” reads the plan. “If symptoms have resolved and the individual is free of fever for 24 hours without use of fever-reducing medication, return to school is permitted. ... District COVID-19 contact persons are responsible for informing and working with the Greenbrier County Health Department to identify next steps and establish contact tracing efforts. There may be times when classrooms, wings, or buildings must be closed for cleaning and sanitizing due to a positive COVID-19 case or related concerns. There may also be situations when an unvaccinated student (or cohort of unvaccinated students who had close contact with a known positive COVID-19 case) will need to quarantine as directed by local health authorities. Parents may be contacted by the Greenbrier County Health Department or Greenbrier County Schools personnel if their student has been in close contact with a positive case and the next appropriate steps will be taken. Parents will be informed by the district of any modifications in school operations via phone, email, text, and the school and district website.”

The plan also addresses orders for full remote learning.

“Should state authorities mandate school closure, instruction will be delivered remotely with educators available via email or phone. In this instance, remote learning for all will be implemented. ... Each school will communicate to families the date and time for students to pick up Remote Learning Lesson Packets (Pre-K-5) or to pick up devices and download Remote Learning Lessons (6-12). Students will receive any necessary textbooks and materials at this time. ... Additionally, should the Governor determine that students will not return to in-person learning but that staff still report to work sites, school meals will be available for pick-up at each school on Wednesdays. Should staff be directed by the Governor not to report, five-day meal boxes will be available for pick-up at designated schools and community locations.”

The entire plan is available at greenbriercountyschools.org by clicking the “BACK TO SCHOOL 2021-2022” banner.

Following school board approval of the plan, School Board President Jeanie Wyatt said, “our board considered input from students, parents, and staff, in addition to the recommendations of national, state, and local health officials. Almost everyone agrees that keeping our schools open for full-time in-person learning is critically important for our students, parents, and community. Our plan requires masks for the first month. Still, it is flexible enough to respond to our community’s infection and positivity rates so that, after October 1, masks will be optional if our county is in the green or yellow category on the map.”

“Please note that the guidance in this document is subject to change as new data and additional information

about the spread and prevention of COVID-19 becomes available,” Bryant wrote in the introduction to the plan. “... The well-being of Greenbrier County students and families and sincere dedication to providing the best education possible to our students have fueled the development of this plan for reopening our school system. As we prepare for the 2021-2022 school year, we do so with the knowledge that flexibility is the name of the game.”



The Board of Education

DHHR Issues COVID-19 Update

By WV Daily News | WVDN AUG 20, 2021

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) reports as of Aug. 19, there have been 3,259,238 total confirmatory laboratory results received for COVID-19, with 176,608 total cases and 3,001 deaths.

DHHR has confirmed the deaths of a 63-year old female from Mingo County, a 79-year old female from Wood County, a 60-year old male from Cabell County, and a 27-year old male from Roane County.

“It is with great sadness that we announce more lives lost to this pandemic. Our sympathies and thoughts go out to these families,” said Bill J. Crouch, DHHR Cabinet Secretary. “We must strive to keep the health of our neighbors in mind by receiving our COVID-19 vaccine.”

CASES PER COUNTY: Barbour (1,707), Berkeley (13,794), Boone (2,289), Braxton (1,112), Brooke (2,324), Cabell (9,807), Calhoun (424), Clay (597), Doddridge (677), Fayette (3,869), Gilmer (958), Grant (1,369), Greenbrier (3,028), Hampshire (2,021), Hancock (2,952), Hardy (1,653), Harrison (6,640), Jackson (2,409), Jefferson (5,072), Kanawha (16,455), Lewis (1,542), Lincoln (1,741), Logan (3,527), Marion (5,007), Marshall (3,867), Mason (2,288), McDowell (1,778), Mercer (5,601), Mineral (3,107), Mingo (2,936), Monongalia (9,851), Monroe (1,304), Morgan (1,358), Nicholas (2,062), Ohio (4,626), Pendleton (741), Pleasants (1,009),

Pocahontas (747), Preston (3,062), Putnam (5,800), Raleigh (7,620), Randolph (3,159), Ritchie (805), Roane (735), Summers (907), Taylor (1,429), Tucker (597), Tyler (819), Upshur (2,350), Wayne (3,523), Webster (650), Wetzel (1,596), Wirt (489), Wood (8,539), Wyoming (2,279).

Delays may be experienced with the reporting of information from the local health department to DHHR. As case surveillance continues at the local health department level, it may reveal that those tested in a certain county may not be a resident of that county, or even the state as an individual in question may have crossed the state border to be tested. Please visit www.coronavirus.wv.gov for more detailed information.

West Virginians 12 years and older are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine. To learn more about the vaccine, or to find a vaccine site near you, visit vaccinate.wv.gov or call 1-833-734-0965.

Free pop-up COVID-19 testing is available today in Barbour, Berkeley, Boone, Jefferson, Lincoln, Mingo, Ohio, Pendleton, Pleasants, and Taylor counties.

For additional free COVID-19 testing opportunities across the state, please visit <https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/pages/testing.aspx>.

Under Attack? Stand Your Ground

By Sen. Stephen Baldwin | WVDN AUG 20, 2021

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is the policy of The West Virginia Daily News to publish articles and columns written by the community's elected officials as is; uncensored and unedited. The community has made its voice heard by electing these individuals and therefore should have the opportunity to hear from them on a regular basis. However, this policy should, in no way, be interpreted as The West Virginia Daily News' endorsement of, or support for any candidate or elected official, regardless of political affiliation or ideology. The West Virginia Daily News remains impartial in all political matters and exists in the service of our constituency of readers. I, as the managing editor, firmly believe that a thoroughly informed electorate, regardless of how comfortable or agreeable that information may be, is the only true measure of defense against the enemies of democracy.

- Matthew Young

As our kids return to school this fall, I'm reminded of something my dad used to tell me: "Stand your ground." Whether someone was picking on other kids, telling the teacher tall tales, or picking a fight with me, his advice was the same, "Stand your ground."

That advice applied again this week. A barrage of personal attacks was launched against me in the media and on social media by a political group and their candidate who hopes to challenge me. They called me every name in the book, falsely attacking my record of service.

This is precisely why people are sick of politics. And precisely why I will not sit by silently and let it happen again. The truth matters. "Stand your ground." I am proud of my strong record of being pro-veteran, pro-law enforcement, pro-all-life, and getting things done for West Virginia.

Supporting WV veterans is near and dear to my heart. I regularly meet with veteran's groups to hear their stories, learn their policy suggestions, and find a way to better assist them. I've introduced bills to provide veterans with benefits such as free hunting licenses, reduced rates at state parks, and no personal property

taxes on their homes. This year, after years of work making this a priority, we gathered full funding to build a veteran's nursing home in southern West Virginia! I will continue to stand my ground for veterans.

Supporting law enforcement is vital in today's world. Our police are severely underfunded. I've sponsored bills that have passed to increase police pay and incentivize young people to go into law enforcement. We need to do more, and I'm proud to have taken these steps in the right direction. I will continue to stand my ground for law enforcement.

Supporting life means supporting all life from womb to tomb. That means protecting children, mothers, the elderly, and the ill. For anyone to claim I support any death is a despicable political parlor trick. I will continue to stand my ground for all life.

Perhaps most bizarrely, I am being attacked for being "ineffective." And I say...

- Tell that to the veterans who will live in the new veteran's nursing in Beckley.
- Tell that to the employees of Anthony Correctional Center who are getting a new facility.
- Tell that to the 4,000+ hard-working citizens who were wrongfully denied their unemployment before I stepped in and got them what they earned.
- Tell that to the hundreds of families who are now in housing post-flood after years of pushing.
- Tell that to the people whose lives have been saved through vaccines and careful public health measures during COVID.
- Tell that to the municipalities and counties who are receiving a windfall of infrastructure dollars.
- Tell that to the hundreds of families for whom I helped obtain their delayed tax refund.
- Tell that to the citizens who are getting broadband for the first time.
- Tell that to the gun owners who aren't paying tax on guns and ammo.
- Tell that to the residents of Page-Kincaid who have clean water in their homes for the first time in decades.
- Tell that to the kids protected by tougher laws for people who ignore school bus stops.
- Tell that to the people who have a "second chance" at life thanks to legal reforms.
- Tell that to the thousands of West Virginians who contact me daily thanking me for being a voice of reason in unreasonable times.
- I will continue to stand my ground achieving real results for this district.

There is also a larger issue at play here. In 1792 as President George Washington finished his second term, he delivered a farewell address. He challenged the American people to remain united despite threats of being torn apart. At that time, 229 years ago, Washington believed the largest threats to American democracy were political parties and "factionalism."

As much as it pains me to admit it, that threat has become a reality in America today. Politics is a bloodsport. People are for you or against you, with no middle ground. Parties stand in opposite corners and lob bombs at each other. Compromise is a dirty word. Personal attacks far outnumber personal relationships. That must change. Our republic requires it to change.

It's my prayer that we can move beyond petty partisanship and work together for the good of southern West Virginia. For American democracy to work, we must work together. As neighbors helping neighbors.

Interview From Night Of Shooting Admissible At Murder Trial

By by bobby bordelon | WVDN AUG 20, 2021

Two statements given to the police by a woman indicted for double homicide will be allowed at trial.

The order allowing the statements was entered by Greenbrier County Circuit Court Judge Robert Richardson on August 6 after a hearing the day before in the case against Terri Lynn Storer.

A Greenbrier County Grand Jury indicted Storer with two counts of murder and Randy Lee Barnhart with two counts of accessory after the fact to murder in August 2020. The charges emerged from a shooting incident near the Greenbrier County and Nicholas County line on Coleman Road in Williamsburg.

“Through investigation it was discovered Jeremiah Thomas, 33, and Jennifer Thomas, 34, had allegedly gotten into an argument over a hunting lease with Randy Barnhart, 45, and Terri Storer, 45,” reads an initial press release from the West Virginia State Police. “During this incident [on November 29, 2019], Jeremiah Thomas and Jennifer Thomas were fatally wounded.”

The two statements in question were both made after the shooting on November 29, 2019. Trooper B.J. Borsman of the West Virginia State Police brought Storer to an ambulance to ask her questions, but she was not placed under arrest. Instead, she was detained and signed a Miranda rights form, allowing police to interview her.

The defense, lead by Counsel Brandon Johnson, argued that because the form did not indicate she was under arrest and because she was “emotional” and “fried” during the interview, it was not given voluntarily.

Opposed to admitting the statement into evidence, Johnson argued “there was no attempt at all to try to determine the mental state of Terri Storer that evening and every opportunity was available. ... What she thought she was waving her rights for was a shooting. ... It doesn’t count to waving your rights for first-degree murder. ... I don’t believe that the state has proved that she gave a voluntary statement.”

During his testimony, Borsman did not give credence to the idea that Storer exhibited enough distress to prevent her from giving a voluntary statement.

“At the time that you arrived, there were people there at the ambulance,” Johnson said. “Did you think that, as a result of what had occurred, that perhaps our client would have been in a state where she wasn’t able to think clearly? ... Wouldn’t that have been something you would have wanted to know?”

“If I would have felt the need to do that, I would have done that, sir,” Borsman said.

Johnson later asked “you didn’t think that shooting two people would put someone in a state of confusion?”

“I didn’t know the circumstances of the shooting sir,” Borsman said.

Johnson also requested Richardson listen to the interviews for indications Storer was giving an involuntary statement.

“If you listen to the tape of the two rounds of interviews, judge, ... I think you’ll find that throughout the

interview, Ms. Storer indicated that her mind was jumbled, that her brain was fried, she was emotional, it's not just some placid type statement that was given," Johnson said.

Prosecution Attorney Patrick Via pushed back against this argument, saying "as to the question of her mental state, absent a showing of some type of mental state that would render the statement involuntary, trooper Borsman did anything that an officer could do on scene. He made a judgement as to where she could understand him and was responsive to him. ... Frankly, absent some type of indication that Ms. Storer was not even capable of giving the statement, that argument goes to weight anyway. If she was suffering from the throws of having just been involved in a shooting, and therefore makes the statement suspect in terms of it's substance, not in terms of voluntariness in having given it, ... then that's an argument to place to the jury."

Though a decision was not made during the hearing, later Richardson would agree with the prosecution.

"At the conclusion of the said hearing, the Court withheld its ruling upon the motion, until it had listened to and considered the audio-recordings of the statement or statements referenced in the State's Motion," reads the order. "... The Court has now listened to these audio-recordings, and ... finds ... that the statements made by the Defendant to S/Tpr. B. J. Borsman of the West Virginia State Police on November 29, 2019, were given freely and voluntarily, that the Defendant was advised of her rights in accordance with Miranda ..., that the Court detects nothing in the Defendant's language, demeanor or tone during her recorded statements to suggest that she was at the time of those statements suffering from any impairment that would have rendered her incapable of voluntarily waiving her Miranda rights; and that no evidence was presented to suggest that the Defendant's capacity to understand her rights was in any way impaired."

As a result, the statements will be allowed into evidence at trial.

The defense also filed a motion seeking to have the trial's COVID-19 precautions, such as jury social distancing, not be in place. Richardson did not rule on the motion, but noted that "people are still dying of COVID-19. The virus is still spreading and it is not my intention to put 12 persons, at this point 50 to 60 percent of whom are likely to be unvaccinated, into a jury box in such close proximity to one another that would be exposing them to the opportunity for the spread of COVID-19. ... The motion to continue on the grounds that having the jurors spread out in the gallery is somehow a deprivation of the due process rights of the defendants is not likely to be well received by the court."

Officer Involved Shooting Caused Temporary Closure Of Beckley Road

By autumn shelton | WVDN AUG 20, 2021

An officer involved shooting in Beckley Wednesday night caused the temporary closure of Rural Acres Drive.

The Raleigh County Sheriff's Department has issued a statement that a deputy was involved in the shooting on Wednesday, August 18. Neither the name of the deputy involved in the shooting nor the name of the suspect is being released at this time.

Members of the West Virginia State Police are investigating the incident.

Further details will be released at a later date.

Live Pro Wrestling Comes to Pipestem

By rebecca stalnaker | WVDN AUG 20, 2021

A live Premier Wrestling League (PWL) match is set to take place at the Pipestem Ruritan Club on Saturday, Aug. 21. The event is outdoors and will begin at 1:00 p.m. The Club is located at 203 Broadway Road in Pipestem, West Virginia. Ringside admission cost is \$12 while general admission is \$10. Food will be available for purchase including hotdogs, BBQs and chips as well as beverages and candy. Seating is being your own lawn chair.

One of the fighters that will be present at the match is former WCW and WWF star, “Sexy” Sean Casey. In addition, Big John Murray of VH1 fame will also be there “looking for a fight.”

Premier Wrestling League’s Official Facebook page has begun posting some of the matchups that will take place at the event on Saturday. This includes Mighty Tier Ali versus Corey Sparks, Ron Mathis versus Aaron West and Crash Cassidy and “Ripped” Ric Reeves versus a mystery tag team.

For more information check out the PWL Facebook page and the LIVE Pro Wrestling – PWL Presents Ignition! event page. Alternatively, the Pipestem Ruritan Club also has an event page on Facebook titled Pipestem Ruritan Presents – PCW Ignition.

Ordinances, Repairs, Holidays approved by Lewisburg City Council

By by bobby bordelon | WVDN AUG 20, 2021



Multiple ordinances, new police vehicles with mobile terminal systems, new holidays, City Hall repairs, and more were considered by the Lewisburg City Council on Tuesday, September 17.

Council celebrated the work both done and upcoming by Schleiff Construction Inc.

"You'll notice the outside of the building, the paint job that's going on looks beautiful," said City Manager Misty Hill. "There's been no real big hiccups coming into plague that."



Schleiff Construction paints City Hall.

The City Hall is not only getting a paint job, but will have the main building and adjacent restrooms improved.

“The first item we have for consideration is a bid for repairs to City Hall,” said Councilmember Arron Seams. “The City Manager mentioned the paint job, there’s some other repointing, some upkeep on the building, making sure that we don’t continue to let it be damaged, and fixing [where] some of the weather is not staying outside like it should.”

Schleiff Construction will be continuing work on the building after council approved the only bid submitted for the project, which will be funded through the CARES Act reimbursement.

“There was one bid for that repair, and it did come under the ballpark for what we were aiming for. It was the finance committee’s recommendation that we approve the bid of \$286,639.86 to Schleiff Construction LLC.”

In addition, another CARES Act project could also go to Schleiff.

“We did ... reach out to Martin Schleiff ... for winterizing the bathrooms,” Hill said. “We’ve asked him to give us an estimate for what he would charge. He’s going to be painting in there anyway.”

This is not the typical Lewisburg winterization, where the restrooms are shut down for the season.

“Normally we winterize them, which is draining the water from the lines, preparing them,” Hill explained. “This

time we want to put a heater in there, put a ceiling in there, insulate a little bit more, and keep the restrooms open downtown for the holiday traffic. ... It'll be great to have those in use."

White also noted this would mean the restroom in City Hall would be closed to the public, instead pointing those downtown to use the restrooms next to City Hall.

"We've had a lot of damage to this restroom and those restrooms are built for a lot of traffic," Hill said. "Now that we have more restaurants downtown, we have really doubled the cleaning downtown in the bathrooms."

Funds from the CARES Act were approved to go to this project during the July City Council meeting.

Council also approved new wayfinding signage, leading guests to parking lots and restrooms scatter throughout downtown. The contract is "not to exceed" \$10,000 with the Mills Group LLC.

Ordinance 295 makes adjustments to the fees associated with the use of the city's parks.

"The most important and biggest thing that we covered [at the Parks Committee meeting] as the modification of our usage fees," said Elkins. "We updated them to make them a little more competitive with other fees in the area. We are still the most competitive of any municipality in the area for how much we charge for day use of the shelter."

The new rates include:

- Lewisburg Parks Shelter Reservation - \$50/day
- Lewisburg Parks Concession Stand Use - \$10/day or \$100 per season
- Dorie Miller Ballfield Reservation - \$10/day or \$100 per season
- Hollowell Ballfield Reservation - \$10/day or \$100 per season

"I want to acknowledge that Councilmember Little did voice, at Finance Committee, that he is uncomfortable with the idea that we have to charge for the park and I want to acknowledge that and make sure it is only to cover the costs of cleaning the park," Elkins said.

The ordinance passed first reading and is expected to go to second reading and public hearing in an upcoming council meeting.

In other business:

- Lewisburg is expecting approximately \$840,000 to come in as a result of the American Rescue Plan. The entirety of the amount was dedicated to the city's ongoing \$37 million water infrastructure project.
- Two ordinances were passed on second reading and public hearing with no comment from the public. The first, Ordinance 293, updates the City Code to comply with changes to the state law from the West Virginia Legislature, including updates to the traffic code and general offenses. The second, Ordinance 294, approves a zoning change for 53.26 acres owned by DNA Holdings LLC. The change takes the zoning from I-1, limited industrial, to PUD, planned unit development.
- Resolution 486 grants White and a handful of city officers to approve a Master Equipment Lease-Purchase Agreement for five 2022 Chevrolet Tahoes for the Lewisburg Police Department. The resolution was approved

by council.

- Resolution 487 also approves a Master Equipment Lease-Purchase Agreement for mobile data terminals for the Lewisburg Police Department. This resolution was also approved by council.

- The Lewisburg Volunteer Fire Department held their corporate elections on June 24. The election results included a unanimous vote of confidence in Fire Chief Joe Thomas, which White and council celebrated with a round of applause during the review. The vote also confirmed First Assistant Chief Matt Carver and Second Assistant Chief Gary Workman. In addition, the department's Mutual Aid Agreement with the Fairlea Volunteer Fire Department was approved by council with no substantial changes from last year's agreement.

- Four new holidays were added to the city's administrative schedule. This includes Juneteeth, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and New Years Eve. Councilmember John Little noted "we have been granting those dates in previous years, but we just had to bring that up for a vote everytime. The only new day is Juneteenth, which is a new federal holiday."