

News & Views online

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The monthly employee newsletter of the WORKFORCE West Virginia Division ♦ Available online at www.wvdep.org/bep/

Wood Wins Quarterly Veterans Services Award



Garry Wood, Local Veterans Employment Representative in Morgantown WORKFORCE West Virginia, was the 4th Quarter Veterans Incentive Award winner for his outstanding service in helping veterans in his local area. He received the certificate he is holding above and also a bonus award.

WORKFORCE West Virginia Assists in Deterring Identity Theft

In an effort to minimize the risk of identify theft to employees, WORKFORCE West Virginia has made changes to several of their personnel forms, including the time sheet and leave requests. Social Security numbers are no longer being used for these documents. Instead, the EPICS number assigned to each employee is being utilized. It is hoped that this will greatly reduce the risk of an employees personal identification being compromised.

It is estimated that over nine million people suffer identity theft each year. WORKFORCE West Virginia will continue to maintain the highest level of confidentiality possible to its employees and its customers.

Cogar Wins "In the Arena" Award

FAM employee Tammy Cogar (pictured below) recently was awarded the "In the Arena" award, given to Department of Administration employees who exhibit courage and conviction in the completion of their duties. Ms. Cogar recently accepted a position in FAM. She was an employee of the Department of Administration up until that time, and thus was honored by Secretary Robert Ferguson in a ceremony on August 15, 2006.

Secretary Ferguson stated that Tammy L. Cogar's courageous actions as the State's Leasing Manager ended years of poor decision-making that resulted in the inefficient operation of state government. He also stated that she challenged the status quo, and asserted herself in the midst of fierce opposition while exposing herself to personal and professional risk. By doing so, she had enhanced the state's leasing standards and procedures for future use.

Former and present coworkers were present as Tammy received this prestigious award.



Tammy Cogar, winner of the "In the Arena" Award

Blankenbeckler Named Workforce WV Employee of the Year

While overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Huntington Unemployment Compensation office as well as serving on



several special workgroups, Jean Blankenbeckler is a very busy person. Even though she is busy, she still believes in providing a quality product in addition to providing a caring, supportive atmosphere for fragile customers who may be facing their first bout of unemployment.

She is a valuable member of any workgroup

because of her work ethic and experience. She provides a respectful, positive attitude for her office and the agency as a whole.

She is a leader by example and empowers her staff to provide quality service to all their internal and external customers. She is considered as an extremely valuable asset to WORKFORCE West Virginia. Because of these things and many other reasons, Jean Blankenbeckler is the Employee of the Year.

Mercer County Job Service and Welch Workforce WV Join Forces as Partners in Education



National College recently recognized its workforce development partnership with the Mercer County Job Service and WORKFORCE West Virginia in Welch for providing its clients with enhanced job skills and professional training. The Bluefield Campus of National College presented a plaque to David Hodges & James Campbell (above) with the Mercer County Job Service and to Ronald L. Wyatt & Teresa Montgomery (below, left) with the WORKFORCE West Virginia office in Welch in a brief ceremony.

The Workforce Development Grant Program provides up to \$4,000 in privately-funded grants to students receiving Workforce Investment Act, Trade Adjustment Act, or other federal or state worker training program funds. Both grants are funded by National College.

National College of Business & Technology is celebrating 120 years of higher education dedicated to the training and educating of men and women for a full life and a successful career in a number of general and particular fields. For over a century, the college has continued to develop students intellectually, culturally and socially.

Jeffers Passes Away

Former Governor's Workforce Investment Division Executive Director James S. Jeffers has passed away at his home in Cape Coral, Florida. He was 62. He served as Executive Director of GWID under Governor Cecil Underwood. After his retirement from state government, he moved to Cape Coral, Florida, where he was elected to city council in 2005. He was recognized as Handicapped American Citizen of the year in 1977 by President Jimmy Carter and Outstanding Young Citizen of Chicago in 1979.



4th Annual Workforce Conference Held in Charleston



WORKFORCE West Virginia held their 4th Annual Workforce Conference on August 29 - September 1, 2006. This year's session was held in conjunction with the West Virginia Employer Advisory Committees. Over 350 workforce professionals attended this conference, held at the Charleston Marriott Town Center. A variety of workforce-related topics were presented in workshops by nationally-known speakers, including Robert Knight of the Arbor Workforce Institute, Beth and Frank Lengel of Lengel Vocational Services, Ed Bowman and Beth Brenly of USDOL in Philadelphia and Tim Condon of Profiles, International.

A variety of topics were covered by conference speakers, including *Employer Responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act*, *The Well Workplace and the Bottom Line*, *EEO Laws*, *The World is Flat*, *Implementing the Youth Common Measures*, *Excellent Procurement in a Lean, Flat World*, *Legal Issues for West Virginia Employers*, *What Employers Really Want*, *The Jethro Factor*, *Creating a Job Search ICU*, and *23 Years After "A Nation at Risk" - Are We Still?*

Charleston Mayor Danny Jones (pictured bottom left) welcomed conference attendees to Charleston, and keynote speaker Congresswoman Shelley Moore-Capito (pictured bottom right) addressed the conference as well. Executive Director Ron Radcliff (pictured top) also spoke to the conference, urging all workforce professionals to work together and coordinate services.

In conjunction with the conference, an awards banquet was held on August 31st. Those winning awards were:

WVEAC Region 1 Employer of the Year - Greenbrier Valley Medical Center;

WVEAC Region 2 Employer of the Year -

Huntington Steel & Supply Company, Inc.;

WVEAC Region 3 Employer of the Year - BB&T, Charleston;

WVEAC Region 4 Employer of the Year - Benson International, Inc.;

WVEAC Region 5 Employer of the Year - Russell Nesbitt Services, Inc. (also won **Statewide Employer of the Year**);

WVEAC Region 6 Employer of the Year - Novelis of Fairmont;

WVEAC Region 7 Employer of the Year - Pilgrims Pride.

Outstanding Case Manager - Marion Cochran - Williamson WORKFORCE West Virginia Center;

Outstanding Marketing & Communications - Fairmont WORKFORCE West Virginia Center;

Outstanding Parter - Charleston Job Corps Center;

Outstanding Training Provider - Goodwill Industries of KYOWVA.



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Deadline for *News&Views online* is the first day of the month.

Planning for a Possible Flu Pandemic

(Reprinted from *PandemicFlu.gov*)

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

To plan for a pandemic:

- Store a two week supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.
 - Periodically check your regular prescription drugs to ensure a continuous supply in your home.
 - Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes, and vitamins. Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.
 - Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.
 - Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic.
- To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:
- Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water, and model the correct behavior.
 - Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues, and be sure to model that behavior.
 - Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick.
 - Stay home from work and school if sick.

Inactive adults can reverse poor health with exercise

Researchers at Duke University Medical Center have found that the negative effects from living a sedentary life can be reversed by participating in moderate exercise. The participants in the study who had shown the most decline from physical inactivity also showed the greatest level of improvement once they embarked on programs of moderate physical exercise, say researchers.

Participants in the study did not change their diets, so change was attributed directly to exercise and not to change in food intake.

"The good news is that a small amount of physical activity can make a big difference in reducing risks for developing such conditions as heart disease, strokes or diabetes," says Duke exercise physiologist Jennifer Robbins. "Our findings demonstrate that while the cost of choosing a sedentary lifestyle can be high, switching to an active way of life can be beneficial at any time.

A small way to stay positive in the office

Staying positive can be hard in today's world, but here's one small way to work a little positivity in your daily routine. Each day, before you sit down to work, grab a small piece of paper and write a nice thought down about someone you work with. Later, when you see that person, work your positive thought into your conversation. It's a small way of making the world just a little nicer, and it just takes a minute to plan and a short time to deliver.

Whatever course you decide upon, there is always someone to tell you that you are wrong. There are always difficulties arising which tempt you to believe that your critics are right. To map out a course of action and follow it to an end requires courage. —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Items to Have On Hand in Case of a Flu Pandemic

(Reprinted from *PandemicFlu.gov*)

- * Ready-to-eat canned meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, and soups
- * Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
- * Protein or fruit bars
- * Soap and water, or alcohol-based (60-95%) hand wash
- * Dry cereal or granola
- * Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- * Peanut butter or nuts
- * Thermometer
- * Dried fruit
- * Anti-diarrheal medication
- * Crackers
- * Vitamins
- * Canned juices
- * Fluids with electrolytes
- * Bottled water
- * Cleansing agent/soap
- * Canned or jarred baby food and formula
- * Flashlight
- * Pet food
- * Batteries
- * Portable radio
- * Manual can opener
- * Garbage bags
- * Tissues, toilet paper,
- * Disposable diapers

Psychiatrists looking for ways to treat Internet addiction

Are you addicted to the Internet? According to an article in *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, the Internet has certain properties that promote addictions and the development of pseudo relationships in some people. As the Internet is becoming more pervasive, more people are suffering from obsession, according to researchers. Some people are not able to control how much they use the Internet, and it becomes a focal point in their lives. Problems derived from overuse of the Internet are "cybershakes," headaches, dry eyes and carpal tunnel syndrome. Therapists are now developing appropriate treatments for those who have been afflicted by these problems.

July Employees of the Month



Dusty Smith



Elizabeth Losch



Ron Wyatt

Dusty Smith is a purchasing assistant in the FAM Procurement Unit. Once you give Dusty an assignment, you can be sure that it will be completed. She is very dedicated to her work and will go to great lengths to fulfill her job duties. She is constantly willing to take on more responsibilities and never backs down from additional work or a challenge. She is pleasant and helpful. She doesn't "pass the buck" on to someone else. She has an upbeat personality and automatically makes you feel comfortable talking to her.

Elizabeth Losch serves as the senior interviewer for the Summersville Job Service Office. She has unselfishly and willingly shared her expertise during this time of merging of functions and systems. She is a great communicator. If you need help, you will never have to ask twice. She helps her coworkers in dealing with the MACC system. She is a very dependable employee, and readily accepts new challenges and works hard to make the office all that it can be.

Ron Wyatt serves as a dual manager in the Welch office. Any problem that is given to him is answered thoroughly, and works diligently to find answers that he does not know immediately. He is a positive role model and uses the utmost courtesy in dealing with both staff and the public. He always has a kind word and a smile for all. Ron always keeps his employees abreast of new information as it is made known to him.

How to avoid those Monday morning blues

Nina Spencer, a business/motivational keynote speaker and workshop facilitator, says that according to a 2003 Towers Perrin Survey of 1,100 employees, one-third of employees loathe their jobs. Reasons employees gave for loathing their jobs were "boredom, overwork, concern about their future, and a lack of support and recognition from their bosses as key reasons for their unhappiness." Well, if you are feeling that way, then Monday morning must be a monumental pain, Spencer says. And according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, the majority of heart attacks take place between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. on Monday mornings. So knowing all of the above, how do you get in sync to get yourself to the office in the best shape possible on Monday mornings? Here are a few of Spencer's tips for easing into your week and staying positive:

- Use part of Friday to ease your re-entry on Monday morning. Clear and clean your desk before you zip off to your weekend. If you can't get everything done, at the very least tidy up before you leave. It'll be nicer for you to walk into work and face a clean desk or a desk with neat piles when you begin on Monday again.
- Think of Sunday night as school night. Go to bed just a little earlier than the rest of the week so that you can get a clean start.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine so that you will feel truly rested when you wake on Monday morning.
- Before you go to sleep on Sunday night, take time to count your blessings in life.
- Skip reading the newspaper on Monday morning. Reading the news, which is often about things we have little or no control over, can make it hard to get a good start on our week.
- Try to arrive a little early at work so you feel like you have a jump on your day.
- Ask your boss if you can work from home on Mondays.

We're sleeping even less than we think we are, study finds

Waking up is oh so hard to do. At least it seems like it's probably getting harder according to the many studies, which are drawing a tired picture of modern day adults. It seems that we are sleeping a lot less than our predecessors were 100 years ago—and not only that, but we think we're sleeping more than we actually are. A recent University of Chicago sleep study looked at the sleep characteristics for 669 middle-aged adults and found that not only are people not getting enough sleep, but they are getting even less sleep than they think they are.

In the study, participants spent 7.5 hours a night in bed, however they spent only 6.1 hours actually sleeping. The study's authors say that sleep times have been decreasing since 1900, when people reported sleeping an average of nine hours a night. By the 1970s people were reporting getting an average of seven hours per night. Researchers found that, overall, participants spent 7.5 hours per night in bed, and it took them an average of 22 minutes to fall asleep, and that they actually spent 6.1 hours sleeping. Researchers then divided the time asleep by the time in bed to determine total sleep "efficiency." They found that sleep efficiency average to be 81 percent. The study found that black men had particularly short sleep spans and poor quality of sleep—5.1 hours per night and 73 percent efficiency.

New study reveals why you might feel sleepy after you eat

Taking a siesta after lunch might just be in the natural order of the universe, according to researchers at the University of Manchester. The scientists have recently discovered how brain cells or "neurons" that keep us alert are switched off after a meal.

"We have pinpointed how glucose—the sugar in food—can stop brain cells from producing signals that keep us awake," Denis Burdakov, of the Faculty of Life Sciences and lead researcher, says.

Burdakov's research reveals how glucose blocks or "inhibits" neurons that make orexins—tiny proteins that are vital for normal regulation of the state of human consciousness. "These cells are critical for responding to the ever-changing body energy state with finely orchestrated changes in arousal, food seeking, hormone release and metabolic rate to ensure that the brain always has adequate glucose," Burdakov says. When orexin malfunctions, narcolepsy can result as well as obesity. Researchers also think orexin could be involved in learning, reward seeking and addiction. Burdakov says that this previously unknown mechanism is so sensitive that it can pick up on minute changes in glucose levels—like the ones that take place after eating a meal, hence they believe the tradition of taking a siesta persists around the world.

Need to give feedback? Try these tips

Have you ever given feedback to someone, and that person pulled back from what you were saying and fell into a defensive mode? If so, then you know giving feedback is an important, but complicated process—especially for managers—because it can affect morale and the bottom line. According to "A Deeper Look at Coaching: Meeting Your Challenges" in the *Leading Effectively e-Newsletter*, the most important factor in giving feedback is to give your coachee the opportunity to learn and develop. Sloan R. Weitzel in *Feedback That Works: How to Build and Deliver your Message*, says there are several ways to ensure that you give feedback in the most effective way:

- Be specific when you describe the situation and behavior.
- Tell the coachee what effect this has had on you.
- Once you give your feedback, then be quiet and give it some time to sink in.
- Stay away from blaming words, and frame your feedback in "I" statements rather than "you" statements.
- Be sensitive. What you are saying could potentially be painful to the coachee.

Guard your space against interruptions

Are you constantly barraged by interruptions? These days, who isn't, right? But how do you manage your interruptions? Here are a few ideas for keeping your time to yourself at work:

Don't chime in. When office chatter starts up around your cube, you may be tempted to join the fun. But take a deep breath and think before you do. You may become involved in an ever growing and time consuming funfest. Can you afford to? Would it be best for you to just put your headphones on and keep on plugging away at your task. You don't want to be asocial, but you do have work to complete, so you will need to decide on a case-by-case basis what you should do.

Learn to break away. If you're involved in a conversation with someone that you need to bring to an end, you can try mirroring what the person has just said and then changing the subject. The mirroring allows you to avoid seeming rude. For instance, if someone is talking about the new juice machine in the cafeteria, you can say, "Yes, it's great. By the way, I'm just starting to work on the Johnson file, do you have anything you need to add." This tactic will guide the conversation back to work and clue the person in to the fact that you are moving on.

Don't make your space too inviting for others. Unless you have clients meeting you at your cube, you probably don't want to set up a comfy chair for someone to crash on in your space. Use your judgment: Would you be better off without that extra chair for visitors?

IAWP FALL INSTITUTE TYGART LAKE STATE PARK OCTOBER 26 AND 27, 2006

**DON'T DELAY!!
MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS TODAY!!!
DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2006**

The annual International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP) Fall Institute is near. The event will be held at the Tygart Lake State Park in Grafton, West Virginia, beginning at 12:00 pm on October 26 with registration & concluding around noon on October 27, 2006. Other Paid Leave has been approved for up to 15 hours (which includes travel time).

The agenda is **full** of exciting speakers to include Ron Radcliff, Executive Director, WORKFORCE West Virginia, Valerie Comer, Director of Employment Service and Nancy Fink, Maryland IAWP, who will give a wonderful Customer Service presentation, just to name a few.

Room reservations must be made no later than September 26th by calling Jim or Cheryl at Tygart Lake State Park (304) 265-6147. Mention IAWP to receive the special conference rate of \$58.00 per night. Cabins are also available for those interested. More information is available by going to the Tygart Park State Park website at <http://www.tygartlake.com/>. The Institute registration fee will be \$25 and will cover prizes, dinner Thursday evening, entertainment and breakfast the following morning. The \$100 Gas Card raffle winner will be announced. It's not too late to buy raffle tickets. For more information contact Mary Spellman, WVIAPW President, at mspellma@workforcewv.org or Chris Robinett at crobinet@workforcewv.org. A Silent Auction will be held, so bring some items to auction off.

Please fill out the attached registration form and mail to:

Chris Robinett, Treasurer, WVIAPW
ES Policy, Procedures & Training
Cost Center 5202
112 California Avenue
Charleston, WV 25305
E-mail: crobinet@workforcewv.org



MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS DIRECT WITH TYGART LAKE STATE PARK – 304-265-6147. ASK FOR CHERYL OR JIM. ROOMS ARE \$58.00 PER NIGHT (SUBJECT TO TAXES).

RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY SEPTEMBER 26, 2006, AS SPECIAL ROOM RATE MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE AFTER THAT TIME.

REGISTRATION FEE IS \$25.00. YOUR REGISTRATION INCLUDES THURSDAY MEETING, THURSDAY AFTERNOON SNACK, THURSDAY NIGHT DINNER, ENTERTAINMENT, FRIDAY MORNING BREAKFAST AND SNACK.

REGISTRATION FEE: MEMBERS - ONLY \$25.00
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**DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS AND
REGISTRATION: SEPTEMBER 26, 2006**

Study reveals the devastating effects of verbal abuse

Remember the old saying, sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me? Well, Florida State University researchers have found that it's not true.

A new study by Florida State researchers has found that children who are verbally abused grow up prone to be self-critical, and are more likely to be plagued by depression and anxiety.

The study found that people who were verbally abused in childhood were 1.6 times more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety than those who had not been verbally abused. Those who were abused were also twice as likely to suffer mood or anxiety disorders during their lifetimes, according to psychology professor Natalie Sachs-Ericsson, the study's lead author.

"The old saying about sticks and stones was wrong. Names will forever hurt you," says Sachs-Ericsson.

The study was published in the *Journal of Affective Disorders*. FSU researchers teamed with University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and included 5,614 people from ages 15 to 54.

The study revealed that 30 percent of participants reported a parent sometimes or often verbally abused them. This high percentage surprised researchers, according to Sachs-Ericsson.

Parents, Sachs-Ericsson says, often are merely repeating parenting styles from their own parents—or they may not know of positive ways to motivate and discipline their children.

The result is that, over time, children who are verbally abused come to believe what their parents are saying about them is true. They lock on to the negative statements about themselves and use them for an explanation for anything that goes wrong. So for instance, if a parent tells a child that he or she is crazy or no good, when something negative happens, say the child doesn't make the basketball team or the cheerleading squad—then the child will tell him or herself that it is because he or she is crazy or no good. This pattern of thinking often spills over into adulthood and causes much anxiety and suffering.

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