



# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration  
APRIL 2016 - Volume 23, Issue 4

## Employee of the Month

### Purchasing's Montantez Assists Vendors on Daily Basis

Gail Montantez, the Vendor Registration Coordinator for the Purchasing Division, has been selected as the Department of Administration's *Employee of the Month* for April.

A state government employee for



**Gail Montantez**  
April Employee of the Month

more than three years, her responsibilities include managing the State Vendor Registration Program, which entails ensuring that vendors wishing to do business with the state are in compliance with the Purchasing Division's vendor registration requirements.

"Gail has such a positive and calm demeanor in explaining the vendor registration requirements to interested vendors. Her role is instrumental in the state procurement process since all vendors awarded a contract must be properly registered," stated one co-worker.

Another co-worker explained, "Last fiscal year, Gail processed more than 4,000 vendor registration disclosure statements, including more than 2,200 paid registrations, totaling \$282,375.

Despite the high level of responsibility and the volume of calls she receives on a daily basis, Gail is always professional, friendly and pleasant and treats each vendor as if he or she is the most important call of the day. With the implementation of *wvOASIS*, Gail was a great problem solver in determining changes to procedures or simply how to deal with a specific situation."

In her spare time, Gail enjoys spending time with her husband and three kids, reading, painting, drawing, and traveling both in- and out-of-state.

She will be joined by friends and co-workers at a special ceremony presented by Acting Cabinet Secretary Mary Jane Pickens on Thursday, April 7, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. in the conference room at the Purchasing Division office.

## Department of Administration Introduces New Flickr Account

The Department of Administration has recently launched its own Flickr photo site, [www.Flickr.com/wvadministration/albums](http://www.Flickr.com/wvadministration/albums). Flickr is a media sharing website that allows users to load digital photos and videos online where they can be shared with more than 16 million active users each month.

Administration will use the site to post photographs highlighting events and projects applicable to Department employees, such as the *Employee of the Month* and *Year* ceremonies, general Capitol campus work and dedication ceremonies for new state government buildings.



The new Flickr account features photographs of the Capitol grounds, ribbon cutting ceremonies for new state government buildings, Department of Administration employee events, and more.

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## SNEAK PEEK

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# DOP Survey Results Provide Insight into the Training Wants and Needs of State Employees

In January of this year, the West Virginia Division of Personnel (DOP) conducted a survey to learn about employees' interests and readiness for training. They received more than 2,000 responses to their 10 question survey exploring topics, such as new course development and the best learning formats (i.e. online, face-to-face, blended learning, etc.).

"We are trying to find better ways of educating our regular employees," explains Bobbie Seyedmonir, assistant director of the Division's Organization and Human Resource Development (OHRD) section. Currently, DOP has mostly supervisors taking part in training, and for many respondents, training simply is not a priority.

One of the primary focuses of the survey was to determine training topics employees would like to see. While the survey provided prefabricated options,

such as time management, writing, and interpersonal communication, respondents were also able to suggest other subjects. DOP hopes to offer a limited number of certification programs in the future for some of the more popular topics to encourage enrollment and completion.

"I was surprised that stress management was one of the most requested topics," acknowledged Seyedmonir. "Usually people don't recognize or admit that they are stressed and need help."

Even if DOP expands the training program to offer more topics geared to employees, Seyedmonir noted that it is important to offer training in a format they want. Though online courses are a convenient and cost-effective option for those not wanting to travel away from their office, the survey found it was the least preferred method of training.

Participant responses revealed that state employees instead prefer blended learning, or a combination of online and face-to-face interaction. But with such a small training staff, OHRD is faced with a dilemma, effectively accommodating the needs of state employees with what the group can actually provide.

"[The survey] is a great first step," adds Seyedmonir, "but not the end of this needs assessment."

The collected survey data still needs further analytics and additional research is planned. Over 30% of respondents said they would participate in a follow up survey or focus group, and with continued feedback, OHRD hopes to continue improving accessibility to training and providing relevant topics for all state employees. DOP extends its appreciation for those who participated in this survey.

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## Planning Now Underway for 2016 Holiday Season

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While the holiday season is still many months away, it is never too early for the General Services Division (GSD) to begin planning. For the upcoming season, GSD is seeking two holiday tree donations—one to be displayed on the south plaza (Lincoln side) and one on the north plaza (at the fountain circle). The two trees will be on display from just after Thanksgiving to New Year's Day.

"We start looking at the trees as early as July," shared John Cummings, who serves as the Grounds Manager at the state Capitol campus. "I would like to have the choice made as early as possible and to have several backups should one fall through."

Choosing a tree to cut down and put on display can be challenging. Each tree needs to stand 25 to 30 feet tall. A blue spruce is preferred.

"The tree has to be uniform in shape from all viewpoints since it is seen at 360 degrees," pointed out Cummings.

There are also several logistical fac-

tors that go into making the decision. When traveling to each site to view the trees, Cummings and his team consider the ease of access for Division of Highway trucks, which will be used to load and haul the tree back to the Capitol campus. The area surrounding the tree also needs to be relatively flat to accommodate the truck and hoist. Any power line, utilities or gas meters surrounding the tree may also be a hazard and should be considered.

"We check with local authorities like the police or sheriff's office to give us an escort during transport if inside a city or town," said Cummings. "We sometimes have to involve local street departments to block off parking... ease of access is the key!"

While a third tree is placed within the Governor's mansion, this has been graciously provided by Crickmir Tree Farm owner Al Tolliver for several years, and while Cummings views and picks out the tree beforehand, Tolliver generously hauls the tree to Charleston



**The transportation, loading and unloading of the state capitol holiday trees are a large factor when making a selection. In the photo above, state employees work to load the 2015 tree for transport back to Charleston.**

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from Danese, WV.

If you or somebody you know would be interesting in donating a tree to be displayed during the 2016 holiday season, contact the General Services Division at 304.558.2317.

# State Employees Urged to Review Guidelines on Political Activities

As election season approaches, the Department of Administration would like to encourage its employees to review the Division of Personnel's (DOP) classified employee guidelines on what political activities are permitted and prohibited. The guidelines are complex, but reflect the application of state and federal law.

**Classified Employees May...** serve in a variety of volunteer positions. These positions must be done without compensation and on personal time. This includes working as a poll clerk, serving a political party delegate, voluntarily attending political dinners and rallies, serving on a campaign committee, and displaying signs on private property. Employees may also take an unpaid leave of absence to be a candidate for a paid local partisan or non-partisan elective office.

**Classified Employees May Not...** engage in political affairs during work hours. This includes distributing campaign literature, posting information to employee bulletin boards, and selling tickets to political affairs to other classified employees or soliciting contribu-

tions from other employees in the classified service. Employees must be careful to never use their authority or influence, directly or indirectly, to pressure another employee's vote for a candidate or issue.

Classified employees also may not serve as a campaign financial agent or treasurer for a political committee or candidate or him or herself be a candidate for any partisan or non-partisan national or state paid public office or court record. While employees may serve their respected political parties in many ways, they may not serve on a committee of a political party on a national, state or local level.

The restrictions surrounding political activities for government workers are developed to educate employees, so please be sure to review the requirements and ensure that you are obeying all rules. Specific questions regarding political activities should be directed to the DOP's Employee Relations Section at 304.558.3950 ext. 57209. More information can be found in the *West Virginia Code* §29-6-20 and Section 16 of the DOP's *Administrative Rule*.



Did you know the Capitol Food Court has its own website? Visit [www.wvcapitolfoodcourt.com](http://www.wvcapitolfoodcourt.com) to view the latest menu and to learn more about their offerings. Breakfast and lunch menus are posted for the State Capitol food court and the Snack Bar, which is located in Building 7.

In addition to its regular menu, each week the Capitol Food Court posts a list of daily lunch specials. The Capitol Food Court website also features a catering menu and a contact page. Be sure to visit the website before your next visit and enjoy some fresh food.

## Capitol Food Court

Monday - Friday

7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

304.558.1086

[www.wvcapitolfoodcourt.com](http://www.wvcapitolfoodcourt.com)

Located in the  
State Capitol basement

## May I Accept this Gift? An Ethics Policy Review

When accepting gifts, West Virginia state government employees and officials are required to adhere to the rules set forth in the Ethics Act. Enforced by the West Virginia Ethics Commission, the Ethics Act encompasses important restrictions regarding the acceptance of gifts from lobbyists or "interested persons," which is defined as those who do or seek to do business with your agency, are regulated by your agency, or are financially interested in the activities of your agency.

"We get a lot of complicated questions about whether public employees and officials may receive free admission to conferences and professional association meetings," said Kimberly Weber, General Counsel for the West Virginia Ethics Commission. "For example, we had a recent Advisory Opinion, AO 2015-18, in which the Commission allowed a public employee to accept a \$2,000.00 recogni-

tion award from a professional association. That situation was complicated and very fact specific."

The Ethics Act does provide guidelines for gifts that may be accepted, which include the following:

- Meals and beverages of any amount can be accepted; however, the interested party must be present. Meal vouchers or gift certificates are not approved.
- Gifts of a nominal value (under \$25.00) are approved.
- If an individual is invited to a speaking engagement or serves as a member of a panel, that individual is approved to accept reasonable expenses. While this includes food, travel, and lodging, amenities such as golf or spa treatments (excluding benefits offered as part of a room package that is available to all guests) are not allowed.

- Ceremonial awards and gifts, such as plaques and engraved items, are acceptable.
- Public officials and employees may accept free tickets to political, charitable, or cultural events customarily given as a courtesy. This does not include sporting events.
- There are no restrictions on private and personal gifts.

Some individuals may be required to file a financial disclosure form for gifts and meals over \$100.00.

Gifts for charitable purposes also have restrictions. Full details and guidelines may be found in the Commission's Legislative Rule on gifts, Title 158, Series 7, or by visiting [www.ethics.wv.gov](http://www.ethics.wv.gov).

For additional information or advice on gifts, contact the Ethics Commission at 304.558.0664 or toll-free at 1.866.558.0664. All calls are confidential.

# Don't Click the Bait: 5 Things to Consider Before Opening an E-mail

One of the most popular schemes used by hackers and identity thieves is phishing. Phishing (pronounced fishing) schemes are a successful technique used to compromise e-mail accounts and install malware. These attacks are often very sophisticated and convincing to the individuals receiving the e-mails. The West Virginia Office of Technology (OT) offers five tips for employees to consider before clicking on an e-mail or attachment.

## 1. Who is the e-mail FROM?

If an e-mail arrives from someone you do not know or someone who would not normally e-mail you, be suspicious and do not open any links or attachments.

## 2. Who is the e-mail TO?

If the "To" field is empty, be wary. While empty "To" fields are common on large e-mails like a newsletter, it is also used by scammers to target more than one individual.

## 3. Is the SUBJECT line relevant?

While incoherent or incomplete subject lines are easy to spot, also be on the lookout for e-mails containing a vague subject line. An e-mail subject claiming to be an agency report will catch your attention but does not offer any specific in-

formation and may be irrelevant to your position.

## 4. Does the ATTACHMENT make sense?

If you were not expecting an attachment from an unknown individual, do not open it and assume the attachment is hostile. Even if you know the individual who sent the e-mail, always use caution when opening an unexpected attachment. Be sure to check the attachment for random names or numbers in the name and consider if the attachment is relevant to the message text.

## 5. Is the MESSAGE text logical?

E-mails with grammatical and spelling errors should be suspicious. Many phishing e-mails will have an element of urgency or claim to require immediate action. If you are unsure whether a link can be trusted, hover your mouse over the link without clicking to see its true destination.

Have you received an e-mail that seems suspicious? Forward it to OT at [OTPhishing@wv.gov](mailto:OTPhishing@wv.gov) or [ServiceDesk@wv.gov](mailto:ServiceDesk@wv.gov). It is always best to use caution when dealing with an unusual e-mail. If you have fallen victim to a phishing attempt or believe your account or computer was compromised, please contact the OT Service Desk immediately.

## Flickr

Continued from Page 1

The Department of Administration possesses an extensive photograph collection that documents events around the Capitol campus, including construction and renovation projects; annual recognition events; *Employee of the Month* recipients and their recognition ceremonies; and various other public and employee events.

"Flickr is a convenient and cost-effective way to manage and share photographs that illustrate the programs, services and activities that the Department of Administration offers with our employees and the general public," said Department of Administration Communications Director Diane Holley-Brown.

"We are very pleased to be able to offer this addition to our website for everyone we serve. These photographs may be used without advanced permission; however, we do ask that any use include attribution as a courtesy to the Department of Administration," she continued.

A link to the Flickr page can be found on the Department of Administration's website, [administration.wv.gov](http://administration.wv.gov). Questions related to this Flickr account may be directed to Public Information Specialist Aimee Cantrell at [Aimee.B.Cantrell@wv.gov](mailto:Aimee.B.Cantrell@wv.gov) or 304.558.4213.

## April Showers Bring May Flowers... and More Vehicle Accidents

While most drivers worry about driving on snow-covered roads, research shows that driving in the rain is actually more dangerous. The Fleet Management Office is pleased to share its defensive driving topic for April on driving safely in the rain. A study performed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) found that 46% of all weather-related accidents happened during rainfall; only 17% occurred during snow or sleet.

Drivers may be safer in the snow simply because they stay home. Often times, drivers underestimate the danger of wet roads and do not allow rain to deter them from traveling. But science and statistics show more caution is needed. A vehicle traveling as slow as 35 MPH can hydroplane in as little as 1/12th inch of water on the road.

In order to be more prepared the next time you hit the road in rainy weather, review these tips from the NHTSA.

### 1. Slow down and leave room between you and the other vehicles around you.

The only way to avoid hydroplaning is by slowing down. Speed limits are based on ideal driving conditions—not stormy or snowy weather.

### 2. Turn your headlights on.

Turning on your headlights in the rain allows other vehicles to see you better. In fact, if you're using your windshield wipers at all, some states require you to have your headlights on, including West Virginia. For more information on this state law, check out *West Virginia Code* §17C-15-2, Traffic Regulations.

### 3. Turn-off cruise control.

Turning off cruise control allows you to better control your speed based on

the road's wet conditions. Using cruise control, conversely, can actually increase your chance of losing traction and hydroplaning.

### 4. Avoid hard braking or turning sharply

In the rain, tires have traction with a layer of water instead of the pavement. Hard braking or turning sharply increases your vehicle's chance of losing control.

### 5. If you do experience hydroplaning/skidding:

Don't panic, remove your foot from the accelerator and continue to steer the vehicle. Slamming on the breaks will only making the skidding worse and take longer to get the car under control.

For more tips on driving in rainy conditions, visit the Fleet Management's website at [www.fleet.wv.gov](http://www.fleet.wv.gov) and check out April's Defensive Driving Topic.

# Public Service Recognition Week Events Planned for May



The Department of Administration will observe Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW) once again this year, with a series of events planned during the week of May 2-6. Created in 1985, PSRW honors public employees who serve in federal, state, county, and municipal government.

Two notable events that occur each year as part of this celebration include the Governor's Award Ceremony as well as the Department of Administration's Award Ceremony.

The Governor's Award Ceremony honors public employees with 30+ years

of public service, within five year intervals. This event is by invitation only and will be held on Wednesday, May 4, at 2:00 p.m. in the Upper Rotunda of the Capitol building.

Likewise, the Department of Administration will recognize Department employees with 20 and 25 years of public service during a brunch on Thursday, May 5, at 10:30 a.m. This event, also by invitation only, will be held outside the House of Delegates Chamber in the Upper Rotunda.

Other activities are being planned for the remainder of the week. More information will be shared with employees as it becomes available via email and in the May issue of *Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes*.

Questions relating to the PSRW events may be directed to Kim Nuckles at 304.558.4331, ext. 57004, or e-mail at [adacoordinator@wv.gov](mailto:adacoordinator@wv.gov).



Each May, the Department of Administration observes Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW). In the photo above, employees with 20 and 25 years of public service attend a special brunch held during the 2015 PSRW celebration.

## Gov. Tomblin and the First Lady Joined Children for the Annual Spring Celebration on the State Capitol Campus

The Capitol campus is often the setting for many exciting events offered throughout the year. This past month was no different.

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin and First Lady Joanne Jaeger Tomblin joined many of the state's children on the State Capitol grounds on Saturday, March 26, 2016, for the 2016 Easter Carnival.

This celebration was a great way to kick off the spring season in the Mountain State. The family-friendly event offered a number of games and activities across Capitol Complex.

"This annual event has become a favorite of West Virginia residents and their children for several years," First Lady Tomblin said.

Immediately following the Easter Carnival, the West Virginia Division of Culture and History hosted the eighth annual A. James Manchin Memorial Marble Tournament, which was located at the West Virginia Culture Center.



Photo courtesy of Office of the Governor

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin and First Lady Joanne Jaeger Tomblin hosted the annual Easter Carnival on Saturday, March 26, 2016 at the State Capitol Campus. Hundreds of people from around the state attended this family friendly event, which offered games and activities to attendees. From face painting to bicycle giveaways, children enjoyed the event. Following the Carnival, visitors were invited to the eighth annual A. James Manchin Memorial Marble Tournament.

## PEIA Benefit Fairs Scheduled

The Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) is hosting benefit fairs across the state during its Open Enrollment period (April 2-May 15) for Plan Year 2017.

These sessions give policyholders the opportunity to speak with representatives from PEIA, the Health Plan, Minnesota Life, Humana, and CVS Caremark. All changes for Plan Year 2017 become effective July 1, 2016.

**As a part of the Healthy Tomorrows initiative, all PEIA PPB Plan policyholders must report their biometric numbers prior to the end of open enrollment to avoid a \$500 medical deductible penalty for Plan Year 2017.**

Members may review and update their accounts online by clicking on the "Manage My Benefits" button on the PEIA website at [www.peia.wv.gov](http://www.peia.wv.gov). Members are also encouraged to attend PEIA Benefit Fairs. Below is information relating to two of the fairs:

**April 19 – Charleston**  
Holiday Inn Express Civic Center / 3-6 p.m.

**April 20 – Huntington**  
Big Sandy Superstore Arena / 3-7 p.m.

Benefit fairs are also offered in Martinsburg, Morgantown, Wheeling, Beckley, and Parkersburg. For more information or questions about the PEIA plans or changes that will be effective on July 1, 2016, consult the PEIA Shopper's Guide which will be available on the PEIA website or call the PEIA Open Enrollment Helpline at 1.877.676.5573.

**Welcome!** ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Andrew Bragg, Shaun Dempsey, Christopher Ellis, and Tina Withrow** (General Services); **Jerri Nelson** (Personnel); **Scott Johnson** (Public Defender Services); **Charles Barnette** (Purchasing); and **Michael Ross** (Technology);.

**Happy Retirement!** ... After years of hard work and dedication, we would like to wish **Richard Miller** and **Perry Rawlings** (General Services); **Marsha Casto** (Personnel); and **Linda Coleman** (Technology) the very best during their retirement.

**Best Wishes** ... to **Tina Vanhose** (CPRB); **Emily West** (Ethics); **Daniel Stonestreet** (General Services); **Bill Rheinlander** (PEIA); and **Carmen Young** (Technology), who recently resigned from our department.

**Tell Us About Your Grad!** ... As in the past, **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes** will be recognizing all of our graduates for this year. If you have a child or grandchild graduating from high school or college, please e-mail Jessica Chambers at [Jessica.L.Chambers@wv.gov](mailto:Jessica.L.Chambers@wv.gov) by April 15 with the name, school and future plans of your special graduate.



**Got News?** ... We want you to share YOUR good news with your department co-workers! Send your information to Communication Director Diane Holley-Brown at [Diane.M.Holley@wv.gov](mailto:Diane.M.Holley@wv.gov)!

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in April

Below is a list of Department of Administration employees celebrating their birthdays during the month of April:

Cynthia Adkins .....CPRB	Richard Miller .....General Services
Jason Agan .....General Services	Tina Murdock .....CPRB
April Battle .....Purchasing	Carlos Neccuzi .....Technology
Kenneth Bowles .....Technology	Matthew Nelson .....Technology
Matthew Brummond ..Pub. Def. Svcs.	Robin Perdue .....Grievance
Keith Burdette .....General Services	Ray Perkins .....Technology
Rosa Burgess .....CPRB	Melissa Pettrey .....Purchasing
Michael Cheeks .....Technology	Michael Powell .....Finance
Anne Crabtree .....Technology	Perry Rawlings .....General Services
Kim Derechin .....Personnel	Gary Reed .....PEIA
John Dotson .....General Services	Karen Roberts .....Surplus
Shelly Ellis .....Personnel	Lori Sayre .....CPRB
Carles Farley .....General Services	Jane Shinn .....Finance
Becky Farmer .....Fleet	Matthew Short .....Technology
Brenda Gould .....Grievance	Nathaniel Sizemore .....Technology
Andrew Guz .....General Services	Donna Spano .....Technology
Thomas Hackney ..General Services	Donald Stennett .....Pub. Def. Svcs.
Paul Hardy .....CPRB	Deanne Stevens .....BRIM
Jim Hawley .....General Services	Jeremy Summers .....Technology
Rebecca Hayes .....Finance	George Tanner .....General Services
Nidia Henderson .....PEIA	Edward Thaxton ....General Services
Bernard Huffman .....PEIA	Jeremy Walker .....Personnel
Mark Isabella .....Personnel	Kimberly Weber .....Ethics
Samantha Knapp .....Purchasing	Trent White .....Technology
Jeffrey Lawrentz .....BRIM	Torrence Williams .....CPRB
Delorah Logan .....CPRB	David Williams .....General Services
Melanie Lopez .....Technology	Jeffrey Wilson .....Technology
Byron Lusher .....Technology	Shelia Young .....CPRB
Harry Mandel .....CPRB	Stefanie Youngblood .....CPRB

# Administrative Notes

**Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes** is published by the West Virginia Department of Administration

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