Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Employee of the Month

Technology's Carla Pullen Makes Everyone's Job Easier

CARLA PULLEN, an Office Assistant for the Office of Technology, has been selected as the department's **Employee of the Month** for March.

A six-year employee of state government, Carla serves as the office administrator for the Development Center. She also is the wellness coordinator for her agency and conducts various seminars for the staff throughout the year.

According to Carla's co-workers, "Carla is the person we all go to when we need something to make our jobs run smoother." Another co-worker added, "She has a tremendous work ethic no matter what job she is assigned. Carla is one of our best -- an example for all."

In her spare time, Carla enjoys volunteering for various organizations. She is a 19-year member and officer in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. As a newlywed, she now enjoys spending her time with husband Jack (also of the Office of Technology) and her family and friends.

Please join Carla's friends and co-workers at a special ceremony in her honor on Thursday, March 9, at 11 a.m. at the Office of Technology's conference room at One Davis Square.

CARLA PULLEN
March Employee
of the Month

Aviation Division Offers New Online Program to Enhance the Use of the State's Aircraft

The Aviation Division has implemented a new website system whereby cabinet secretaries and their designated agency directors can scan state aircraft destinations. It may be accessed at the Aviation Division website (**http://aviation. state.wv.us)** by selecting the "Scheduling" page, and then scrolling down to "Flight Availability." (**Note:** Authorization is required to access this page.)

"A current monthly calendar is shown with all flights and destinations for each day," said Aviation Pilot Mark Erb. "Below the calendar is a list of the dates with more information, such as available seating, departure and return times, and any remarks that may pertain to that particular flight." At the bottom of the page is a convenient Flight Calculator, which lists popular in- and out-of-state destinations. In addition, the times and current charges for the individual aircraft are displayed.

With the new online flight scheduling now available, agency personnel can quickly determine if there are available seats for a particular area. More passengers on each flight results in additional savings.

Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- Earl Maxwell Joins the Department as the Grievance Board Director
- State Tax Department Offers Helpful Tips to State Taxpayers
- New Classroom and Technology-Based Programs Part of OHRD's Program Schedule
- Administrative Notes

Earl Maxwell Joins the Department as the Director of the Grievance Board

Newly appointed Director of WV Education and State Employees Grievance Board Earl Maxwell says it's a good time to be in state government.

A native of Elkins, West Virginia, Earl Maxwell had just started his third term as Randolph County's prosecuting attorney when he was offered the position as Director of the West Virginia Education and State Employees Grievance Board. "It's quite an honor to serve in this administration," said Maxwell. "These are exciting times for West Virginia and a good time to be in state government."

Prior to his public service, Maxwell operated a private law practice in Elkins from 1993 to 1996. He is a member of the West Virginia Bar Association and the Fourth Circuit Judicial Conference. A graduate of Michigan State University, Maxwell earned his bachelor's degree and later pursued his master's degree and law degree from West Virginia University.

"The Grievance Board is a very interesting organization," said Maxwell. "I have been very impressed by how well it is organized and the quality of personnel we have working here." Maxwell offered praise to his predecessor, former director Ron Wright who retired last fall.

Established in 1985 by the West Virginia Legislature, the Grievance Board's mission is to equitably, consistently and expeditiously resolve employment problems between employees and county boards of education, higher education institutions and state agencies so that good morale may be maintained, effective job performance may be enhanced and the citizens of West Virginia may be better served.

The Board employs hearing examiners, often referred to as Administrative Law Judges (ALJs), to hear and decide employment disputes. The Board renders approximately 300 decisions a year. They also have about 550 hearings conducted by the Administrative Law Judges. Also, the Grievance Board offers mediation services.

While Maxwell admits he is still just getting his feet on the ground, he says his main focus is to work with his new Board and the ALJs to shape a direction for improving the services of the agency. The Board has three new members who were appointed last fall. He said it is intended to be very insulated from any type of influence on the outside. "It is the Board's policy to keep their offices separate from other agencies and to hold hearings in neutral locations, because both the employees and the administrators are entitled to have their hearings heard in a place where neither can perceive an advantage."

Maxwell said he feels the system works well and does not need major changes. He does hope to apply enhanced changes to technology within the process in order to make the grievance procedure less inconvenient, and more timely, smoother and easier to use.

'I'm definitely looking forward to the job," said Maxwell. "It's very exciting. We also hope to talk to our client base and reach out to learn their concerns as to what we should be doing at the Grievance Board to make the system better. And, as we progress into the future, I think we will see many new ideas come forward."

West Virginia Legislature's Website

Designed to strengthen your connection to West Virginia's legislators and the laws that govern this state, the West Virginia Legislature's website provides access to various resources, including contact information, legislation and educational materials.

The Legislature's online Bulletin Board maintains prompt information during legislative sessions through the Legislature's calendars, meetings, abstracts, indexes and journals. Citizens can also view the entire **West Virginia Code**, interactive district maps, committee agendas and membership information at **www.legis.state.wv.us**.

Computer Virus Awareness

A computer virus is a software program that can be self-replicating, and spreads by way of a computer network, often the Internet, much like a human flu, such as a common cold, spreads throughout a community. "The first viruses were written about 20 years ago," said Jim Richards, Director of Information Security for the Office of Technology. "Virus software is written for many reasons, and not all of them are to inflict harm. But, in most instances, virus infections on computers provide unwanted results, and require technical staff to take actions to eliminate the virus, and repair any consequences of its action."

Viruses continue to cause businesses millions of dollars each year in damages and lost productivity. Symptoms of viruses include dramatic decreases in computer performance; computers "hanging up" and not working; inability to start certain programs; processor overload, causing slow responses; inability of some anti-virus software or other software from not loading or working correctly; and causing some unusual error messages.

Many consequences of viruses are not readily apparent to the user. They may take control of a computer and use it to attack other computers on the network; allow problems to be initiated to or by the infected computer; send spam to other machines; or destroy files on your computer.

Information Systems Specialist Ed Trader of the Office of Technology said that most viruses used to be introduced into computers through e-mail attachments. "Today many, if not most, viruses and similar threats known as worms and trojans are spread by infected or malicious websites that a user visits," he said.

To reduce the likelihood of infecting your computer with a virus, or virus variants, Richards and Trader recommend following these simple rules:

1. Always use up-to-date anti virus software.
2. Never open attachments to your incoming

Aviation Scheduling

The concept was conceived by Gov. Joe Manchin, who wanted an efficient method to take advantage of current information technology to improve aircraft scheduling, and as a result, have fewer empty seats. For example, if one agency schedules four passengers on the state's King Air 350 for a flight to Martinsburg on a particular day, then the five vacant seats are available to another agency who may also have meetings scheduled in that area, or who may reschedule upcoming meetings for that day. The result is that the agencies share the cost of the flight and, over time, produce a sizeable cost savings to the state.

"Although state aviation has been well received over the years, there is always room for improvement," said Aviation Director Keith Wood. Passenger surveys had identified the need for a quick reference for state agencies to determine when and where state aircraft were going on a daily basis and how many seats are available on any given flight.

Wood said that with this new online program, state agencies can obtain a snapshot view into aviation on a monthly or daily basis. Armed with this knowledge, they are now able to see what flights are scheduled and share the cost with the other agencies if seats remain available.

"It is Governor Manchin's philosophy that aircraft, if utilized properly, can become

Pictured is an inside view of the King Air 350 state aircraft.

an effective business tool, enabling us to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of state government," said Wood.

Sarah Tignor, the Aviation Flight Coordinator, is responsible for the scheduling of the state aircraft and for keeping the online schedule up to date. For questions or additional information, call Tignor at 558-0403.

Sixth Annual Aviation Safety Day

The Sixth Annual Aviation Safety Day, sponsored by the Aviation Division, will be conducted at the State Hangar Facility on March 23. Aviation Safety Day consists of discussing and performing various forms of safety training. The agenda will include in-house pilot training and "hands on" classes for administrative personnel, pilots, mechanics and the governor's security personnel. No flights will be scheduled or performed on this day.

State Tax Department Offers Helpful Tips to State Taxpayers

The State Tax Department offers helpful tips below on filing your personal income tax return:

1. File Electronically: It's fast, accurate, secure and the preferred method for filing. Taxpayers who file electronically get their refunds faster than those who file paper returns.

2. Free Income Tax E-File: The West Virginia State Tax Department will be entering into an agreement with Free File Alliance member companies that offer free on-line services to qualified West Virginia taxpayers. Each Free File Alliance member sets taxpayer eligibility requirements for its program. For more information on Free File Alliance, visit the Tax Department's website **www.state.wv.us/taxdiv**.

3. Federal Forms: The federal forms must be completed first in order to complete the state return.

4. File Early: The earlier you file, the faster your return is processed. The processing time will be longer if the return is filed on or around April 15.

5. Enclosures: Enclose W-2's, 1099's and other supporting documents as required.

6. Direct Deposit for Refund Returns: Whether filing electronically or filing a paper return, taxpayers may choose to have their refund directly deposited. It is faster, safer and easier to track should any questions arise.

7. Payment Options for balance due returns: Returns filed with a balance of tax due may use these payment options:

• Payment voucher:
  IT-140R- Use this voucher to make payment if filing a paper return.
  IT-140V- Use this voucher to make payment if filing electronically.
• Electronic Funds Transfer:
  Tax payment to be deducted automatically from a checking account. May authorize the withdrawal to occur at the time return is filed or delay payment until April 15.
• Payment by credit card:
  Payments can be made through Official Payments Corp., by telephone or the Internet. Visit **www.officialpayments.com** for additional information.

8. Mail return to the West Virginia State Tax Department: Enclosing a check/money order with return mail to: P.O. Box 3694, Charleston, WV 25336-3694. For all other returns, mail to: P.O. Box 1071, Charleston, WV 25324-1071.

9. Verify social security number.

10. Mathematical errors: To avoid math errors, visit the Tax Department's website and use the fill-in forms that automatically compute the return for you.

11. Use the label: Make any necessary changes on the label.

12. Married filing separate: Taxpayers who file married filing separate must use Rate Schedule II to compute the tax. Do not use the tax tables.

13. Free Taxpayer Services: If you have questions or need assistance with the filing of your West Virginia income tax return, call or visit the Charleston Tax Office, located 1206 Quarrier Street (telephone: 304-558-3333 or 1-800-WVA-TAXS [1-800-982-8297] TDD [hearing impaired] 1-800-282-9833). Taxpayer Service Representatives are available between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on normal business days.

14. Refund Information: Beginning March 1, the status of a refund may be checked by calling 1-800-422-2075 or visiting the website. The following information is required to check the status of a refund: the social security number listed first on the return; the dollar amount of the refund and the filing status.

15. Federal Tax Credit (EITC): *The Earned Income Tax Credit* (EITC) is a refundable Federal Tax Credit for working families with income less than $37,263. If you meet certain rules and are eligible, you may receive money back from the IRS even if you don't owe taxes, but you must file a federal tax return. Contact the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 for additional information or visit **www.wveitc.com**.

Got Stress?

The American Academy of Family Physicians says two-thirds of all office visits to family doctors are due to stress-related problems. How can you better cope with this? People who cope with stress best seem to have these things in common:

• The sense of being in control of their lives;
• A network of friends or family to provide social support; and
• Personality traits like flexibility and hopefulness.

New Classroom and Technology-Based Programs Featured on OHRD's 2006 Training Schedule

The Division of Personnel's Organization and Human Resource Development (OHRD) Section has released its 2006 Program Schedule. The schedule includes several new classroom offerings, the first of which is a planned series of videoconferences, and the section's first online training program.

OHRD will offer *Managing and the Law* as an online program for managers and supervisors in the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR). They will also deliver programs to DHHR and the Department of Environmental Protection administrators via videoconference.

Evelyn Davis, Assistant Personnel Director of the OHRD Section, stated that customers can expect an increased use of innovative delivery methods in the future. "Our plans include additional online and videoconference programs for most state government managers and supervisors," she said. "We want to leverage technology to the greatest degree possible. At the same time, we will continue to deliver creative training programs in a traditional classroom setting."

Nearly 40 classroom training programs will be offered on the 2006 schedule. In addition to the DOP-Policy 18 management programs and returning favorites, OHRD is offering five new programs:

• **After Action Reviews: Learning in Real Time.** This half-day program teaches the basics of conducting after action reviews, a process de-signed to facilitate learning and improving team performance.

• **Customer Service Management.** This half-day program will assist customer service managers by providing tools to help define customer issues; provide employees with productive feedback; support employees in dealing with angry customers; and lead employees through a regular review of their own service performance.

• **Email Etiquette/Telephone Techniques.** This full-day program will help employees increase the effectiveness of their email and telephone communications.

• **Providing Exceptional Customer Service.** This half-day program will help employees develop their listening skills and enhance their ability to handle sensitive customer situations. Participants will also learn the five main reasons customers complain, so that these costly mistakes may be avoided.

• **Writing for Results.** During this two-day program, participants will learn tips and strategies for improving memorandums, letters, emails and reports. Specific areas to be addressed include using correct grammar; selecting the appropriate tone; selecting the right format; preparing drafts, and editing and proofreading.

In addition, the Center for Quality Government will offer a revised and updated version of *Supervising for Success I: Fundamentals of Supervision*. The Center will again offer *Supervising for Success II: Leadership Essentials,* and the *Managing for Excellence* series.

Managing for Excellence II: The New Realities will be conducted at Blackwater Falls State Park and *Managing for Excellence III: Beyond the Boundaries* will be offered at Northbend State Park.

A regional conference is scheduled for April 2006 at Blackwater Falls State Park for managers and employees located in the northern part of the state.

Davis said the 2006 schedule represents a giant step forward for OHRD. "For several years, we have wanted to offer programs using alternative technologies. We're excited about these new developments and look forward to building upon our program in the years to come."

Davis said she promises future improvements within the OHRD. "We want our customers' experience with our website and with our registration system to be as efficient and user-friendly as possible," she said.

The 2006 Program Schedule for the Division of Personnel's Organization and Human Resource Development Section includes the first in a planned series of videoconferences, and the section's first online training program. The full schedule of classes offered by the Division of Personnel may be accessed at www.state.wv.us/ admin/personnel/ OHRD.

Computer Viruses

e-mail when the attachment or the origin of the e-mail is uncertain in any way. Even if you receive an e-mail from someone you know, but the e-mail or attachment is unexpected, do not open before confirming with the sender that the communication is legitimate. Viruses can use "hijacked" e-mail lists to send out e-mails that appear to be from your friends or business associates, but are not.

3. Limit your Internet site visits to those that are necessary to perform your job function. Websites that lure "web browsers" for non-business activities are more likely to contain suspicious materials that you should not allow to reach your computer.

4. Refrain from clicking on links that are embedded in e-mail solicitations, or that imply that you need to click on a link and provide information to fix a problem. These are often traps to get you to reveal personal information, and may also take you to a site that can infect your computer.

If you think your computer may be infected with a virus, contact your agency technical resources or call the Office of Technology's Help Desk at 558-1257.

Graduation...A Time for Our Youth To Look Toward their Future

Do you have a son or daughter graduating from high school or college this spring?

If you do, we would like to announce this event in the next issue of **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes**. Simply send an email to Debbie Harrison at *dharriso@wvadmin.gov* or call her at 558-2315.

Welcome!...to the employees who recently joined our department: *Cammie Parker* (Ethics), *Wendelyn Campbell* (Grievance), and *David Oliverio* (General Services).

Best Wishes...to the following employees who recently resigned from the department: *Sarah Long* (BRIM), *Tammy King* (Leasing - General Services), *Karen Adkins* (Finance), *Mary McLaughlin* (Personnel), *Andrew Lawrence* (Aviation), and *Chrystal Lackey* (PEIA).

Hat's Off... Congratulations to *Yvonne McCormick* of the Division of Personnel who recently was promoted from a Personnel Specialist to a Senior Personnel Specialist.

PEOPLE TALK

Baby News... Congratulations to Purchasing's Beverly Toler who became the proud grandma to Kaya Dove Toler. She was born on January 27, weighing 7 lbs., 10 oz. and was 20 3/4 inches long.

Wedding Bells... Two employees of the Office of Technology, Carla Bright and Jack Pullen, exchanged wedding vows on February 14 (appropriately on Valentine's Day). Best wishes to the happy couple!

Got News?... Let us know what's going on with you and your family. Contact Diane Holley, Editor, at (304) 558-0661 with information to share with the department's employees.

During the Month of March... The following holidays and awareness should be remembered: American Red Cross Month, National Women's History Month, Girl Scout Week (12-18), St. Patrick's Day (17), National Poison Prevention Week (19-25) and the first day of Spring (20).

MARCH IS
AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH
"There in times of greatest need."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY...in March

1	Tom Harper .... PEIA		15	Charles Stark .... Technology	
2	Gloria Long .... PEIA		16	Darlene Fletcher ..... Personnel	
3	Mischa Difilippo .... BRIM			Raymond Hackney Gen. Srvcs.	
	Brenda Greene .... Technology			Jason Haught .... PEIA	
4	Gene Young .... Purchasing		17	Mike Adkins .... PEIA	
5	Valerie Brown .... Purchasing			Charles McMinn .... Technology	
	Tenicia Butler .... BRIM		19	Michael Davis ...... Gen. Srvcs.	
	Susan Jenkins .... Technology		20	Tammie Means ...... Technology	
6	Robert Seabolt .... Finance		21	Tim Hall .... Gen. Srvcs.	
	Jeremy Wolfe .... BRIM		23	Clyde Arline Pros. Atty. Institute	
8	Catherine DeMarco ... Purchasing			Lydia Garcelon ...... Technology	
	Chris Sforza .... Finance			George Muncey .... Technology	
	Tom Williams .... Personnel			Rob Worlledge .... Finance	
9	Joan Adkins .... Purchasing		24	Tom Bailey .... Gen. Srvcs.	
	Tari Crouse .... Personnel			Tanya Cyrus .... PEIA	
	Jack Hickok .... Public Defender		25	Gloria Brown .... Personnel	
10	Pam DuKate .... Gen. Srvcs.		26	Natalie Faulkner .... Technology	
13	Angela Peck .... Technology			Robert Hovatter ..... Gen. Srvcs.	
14	Marvin Barker .... Technology			Marilyn Summers ... Technology	
15	Tim Basford .... Personnel		29	Phil Morrison..Pros. Atty. Institute	
	Lori Cottrill .... CPRB				
	Charlene Good ...... Technology				