

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration

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Employee of the Month

Personnel's Kathy Blizzard Ensures Accurate Accountability

KATHY BLIZZARD, an Office Assistant 2 for the Staffing Services Section of the Division of Personnel, has been selected as the department's **Employee of the Month** for May.

A seven-year employee of state government, Kathy enters application information into the TRAC system, the division's database. She generates score notices and provides quality control for the

information entered. In addition, she assists individuals who contact the Division of Personnel with questions relating to the application process.

According to one of Kathy's co-workers, "She conducts herself very professionally with both external and internal customers, providing timely and accurate information."

Another co-worker added, "Kathy is very dependable,

responsible and extremely accurate. She provides a check and balance with the counselors which prevents inaccuracies."

In her spare time, Kathy enjoys watching NASCAR racing and spending time with her family.

Please join Kathy at a special ceremony in her honor on Friday, May 5, at 10 a.m. on the second floor of Building 7.



KATHY BLIZZARD
May Employee of the Month

Maintaining the Capitol's Campus in the Summer Involves More than Mowing Grass

To West Virginians and visitors alike, our State's Capitol resides on one of the most beautiful campuses in the United States. The grounds serve as a haven not only to squirrels and birds, but public employees seeking refuge from a busy day's work.



Spring flowers brighten the State Capitol campus; however, maintaining this beauty takes time and hard work.

While maintaining the grounds is no easy task, it is one that Grounds Manager Kenny Young of the General Services Division says he thoroughly enjoys. The year-round responsibilities differ depending upon the time of year, and are often

unrelenting, strenuous, and dirty, but definitely appreciated.

"Our work is cyclical," said Young. "Many people think all we do is mow grass, but there's a lot of hard work that goes into this campus. The staff's day begins at 6:00 a.m., when most people are just getting up. We have to start preparing for spring in the fall. All beds are stripped of annuals, thoroughly tilled and raked smooth. Then, approximately 30,000 tulip bulbs are planted on six-inch centers

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- ◆ Five Common Mistakes Supervisors Make Relating to Harrassment
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Surplus Property Public Auctions...

A Place to Shop Til You Drop



March's surplus auction enticed 498 registered bidders, who purchased 42 vehicles, large amounts of office furniture and computer equipment.

Preparing for a college-bound child who needs a vehicle or furniture or, perhaps, are in need of certain property for yourself? For great bargains on vehicles, computers, office furniture, lawn equipment and more, the place to go is to the West Virginia State Agency for Surplus Property (WVSASP), located at 2700 Charles Avenue in Dunbar, WV.

Delivery trucks arrive daily loaded with good, usable property that could meet your needs at a price you can afford. Where does this property come from? State-owned property no longer needed by government agencies is retired and made available through WVSASP to public agencies, non-profit organizations and, eventually, to the general public.

WVSASP serves as a central agency for the disposal of state-owned personal property. Currently, the Division of Highways and Higher Education are exempt from participating in this program and have legal authority to dispose of their own equipment.

"First and foremost," said WVSASP Manager Ken Frye, "we offer property to eligible organizations, such as public agencies, local governments,

and schools or to hundreds of non-profit organizations in the state who are eligible to acquire this property."

If the property is not acquired by eligible organizations, the public is offered the opportunity to competitively bid on state surplus property through a sealed bid or auction process. Individuals may visit the surplus location and place a bid on an item and bids are opened on the following Monday at 9:00 a.m.

Public auctions are also conducted, beginning in March and continuing through the first of December. Frye said about eight to ten auctions are held a year. "The auctions begin at 10:00 a.m., but most people come in around 8:30 or 9:00 to register. Customers are given opportunities to come in the week before the auction in order to register and inspect the property."

March's auction enticed 498 registered bidders, who purchased 42 vehicles, large amounts of office furniture, including filing cabinets, chairs, desks, credenzas, book cases and computer equipment. Several riding lawn-mowers were also sold.

"It is entirely possible for someone to come down and buy a good Jeep Cherokee for around \$4,000-\$5,000. Everything is sold "as is, where is." We make no claims as to the usability, suitability or condition, but, if we know something about a particular piece of equipment such as a bad transmission, we will announce it the day of the sale."

Prior to this past legislative session, WVSASP was not allowed to sell their property via the internet. "We are very excited about being able to do so now," said Frye. "We've been talking about it for years, but state law didn't provide for that method of sale." The Surplus Property Program is funded solely by the sales of the property, receiving no appropriations or grants. "So, to be able to sell via the internet will offer us a broader and more competitive customer base," he added.

In order to participate in a public auction, you must register at Surplus Property. Frye says it is a simple process in which a form must be completed, supplying your name, address and telephone number after which a bidder number is assigned. **All state employees, with the exception of those working in the Purchasing Division, are eligible to participate.**

For those individuals who have never participated in a state auction, Frye describes it as a laid-back atmosphere where his employees are eager to walk beginners through the process. "It's really a lot of fun. If a beginner makes a mistake, we'll back up and help them out."

The next public auction is scheduled to take place on May 20. Visa and MasterCard as well as personal checks are accepted.

For questions or for information on items or future auctions, visit www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/surplus or call (304) 766-2626.

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Joe Manchin III
Governor

Robert W. Ferguson Jr.
Cabinet Secretary

Diane Holley
Public Information Officer/Editor

Special Thanks

Betsy Chapman
Debbie Harrison
Dawn Jordan
Kaye Parks
Sandy Singleton
Matt Turner

West Virginia ... America's Best Whitewater Experience

By Matt Turner
Division of Tourism

From the unpredictable conditions on the spring Cheat River to guaranteed summer fun on the New River to the world-famous Gauley River season in the fall and the historic and scenic Shenandoah and Potomac rivers, West Virginia has a river trip to suit any level of adventurer.

The New and Gauley rivers in 2001 played host to the best whitewater rafting teams from across the globe for the World Rafting Championships. It was the first time the event was held anywhere in North America. But you don't

have to be a world-class paddler to enjoy the fabulous scenery and wild adventure. Nearly 30 licensed, professional outfitters can "send you down the river" with guides, modern equipment and even a photographer and videographer to capture your trip on film. They set up customized river trips for groups and offer canoeing, camping, horseback riding, mountain biking, rock-climbing and even llama trekking!

Outfitters host day and overnight trips ranging from wild to mild on both rivers and they provide complete lodging and meal packages, ranging from secluded riverside spots to rustic cabins in the forest to excellent golf and dining packages at high-class resorts such as the Greenbrier and Glade Springs.

For additional information, visit the state tourism web site, or these recommended sites: West Virginia Professional River Outfitters (www.westvirginiaoutfitters.org); New River Convention and Visitors Bureau (www.newrivercvb.com).



Whitewater rafting in southern West Virginia isn't just for hard-core adventure seekers. More than 20 rafting outfitters in the gorge offer trips that range from wild to mild and for ages 6 to 86.

Capitol Campus

Continued from Page 1

and top dressed with compost."

The rest of fall, he said, deals with the never-ending chores of leaf removal, grass mowing, aerating the lawn, picking up dead limbs and tree trimming as well as assembling fall decorations.

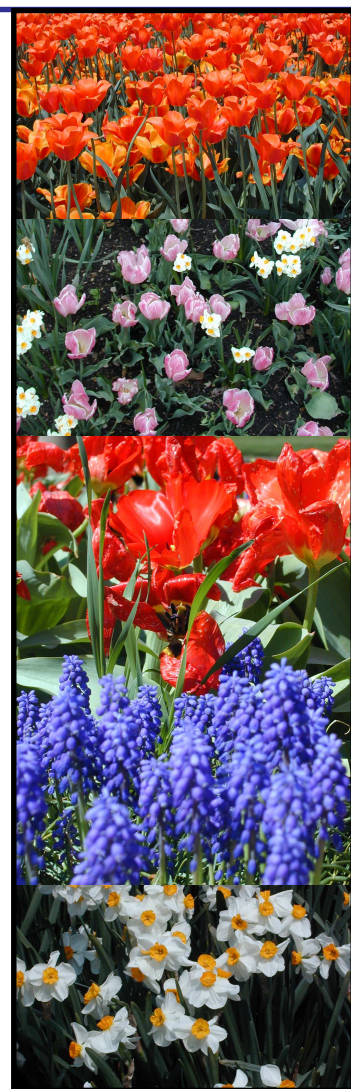
Winter chores not only include snow removal, but also edging the lawn, mulching, maintaining the equipment, and decorating the campus for the holiday season. Young said winter is their toughest season, since his workers have to report to work at 4:00 a.m. or earlier for snow removal. "We monitor the weather the night before for snow predictions, but sometimes the weatherman is wrong. If that's the case, we'll find other things to do like working on equipment." Removing snow from all the parking lots, garage area, sidewalks and steps must be done prior to employees arriving for work.

In early spring, damaged areas of the lawn have to be repaired, the tulips weeded and dead limbs picked up. The lawn is aerated once again. After the tulips have flowered, approximately two and a half weeks are invested in digging up the bulbs. The beds are tilled and raked smooth for the planting of approximately 11,000 annuals on 12-inch centers. Weather permitting, planting these annuals generally takes another two and a half to three weeks to complete.

The summer months are spent caring for the flower beds and planters by weeding, watering, deadheading and fertilizing. In addition, because of the many special events that take place throughout this season, temporary summer workers are hired to assist with the extra chores associated with this time of year.

In addition to the actual work, Young spends hours in planning the designs of each bed, taking into consideration which flowers require sun, which do better in the shade and what colors will be most attractive. Pricing must be factored in as well. Once October rolls around, the cycle begins to repeat itself.

To provide the best look for the campus, Young said he often gets ideas from books and the internet, as well as looking at how others landscape their properties. He adds that his vacations often include taking pictures of ideas he can bring back home. "I just like seeing things grow," he said. "It's a never ending job when you have a campus this size. The lawn, itself, takes about two days to cut which gets mowed twice a week. Once it's mowed, it's time to do it all over again."



Common Mistakes Supervisors Make Relating to Harassment



Supervisors can help prevent inappropriate behavior by enforcing the Division of Personnel's Interpretive Bulletin DOP-B6 Prohibited Workplace Harassment.

In many substantiated harassment or discrimination complaints filed with the West Virginia Equal Employment Opportunity Office, the supervisor could have prevented the inappropriate behavior by enforcing the Division of Personnel's Interpretive Bulletin DOP-B6 *Prohibited Workplace Harassment*, according to EEO Specialist Dawn Jordan.

Managers and supervisors harbor misconceptions that lead them to make poor choices in dealing with harassment that they see, hear

and read in the workplace. The actions they take affect workplace morale, productivity and could ultimately lead to costly litigation against their agency and the State.

During her ten years of investigating harassment and discrimination complaints as well as training managers and supervisors in harassment prevention and intervention, Jordan has compiled a list of misconceptions that supervisors have which could be costly:

- **No one complained about the behavior, so I assumed it was not offensive.** The problem with this belief is that if an employee files a lawsuit and proves that the supervisor knew of the illegal harassment and did nothing to stop or prevent it, the agency could be held liable.

- **The victim asked me to keep it confidential and to do nothing.** Once any member of management knows of the harassment or discrimination, they are required by policy and law to take action to stop the inappropriate behavior or their agency may become liable.

- **I know to whom I can tell these type jokes. I take them in my office and shut the door.** There are multiple problems with this statement. First of all, as a supervisor, you are a role model and are responsible for enforcing the *Prohibited Workplace Harassment* Interpretive Bulletin. Also, there is no guarantee that everyone is comfortable with your jokes. If you are telling inappropriate jokes which violate policy, then your employees may not feel comfortable complaining to you of inappropriate behavior in which you yourself have engaged. It will be uncomfortable for you to discipline an employee for committing the same infractions of the policy that you have violated. Your employees may use their knowledge of your behavior against you when you initiate disciplinary action against them. Supervisors must hold themselves to a higher standard than employees.

- **It was a he said/she said, and there were no witnesses.** Even if there were no witnesses to the inappropriate behavior, chances are that if the person harassed the complainant, then they may have harassed someone else in the same manner and a pattern can be established.

- **If I addressed every "little" situation that appeared to be harassment or discrimination, then that is all I would ever get done.** If this is your situation, then you already have a major problem and need



Congratulations to our Employees' Graduates!

Congratulations to our department employees who have children graduating this year from college and high school: Finance's **Jane Patterson** has a daughter Christine who will be graduating from West Virginia University (WVU) on May 6 with a bachelors degree in textiles, apparel and merchandising and minors in both business and communications. Office of Technology's **Joyce Watson** has a son, Richard, who will be graduating from Old Dominion University with a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering technology on May 6 and will be commissioned as an ensign in the US Navy. Purchasing's **Diane Holley** has a son, Zach, who will graduate from Sissonville High School with plans of attending Marshall University where he will major in pre-pharmacy. Personnel's **Teresa Martin** has a son, Scott, graduating from Herbert Hoover High School, with plans to attend Nashville (TN) Auto Diesel College. Aviation's **Sarah Tignor** has a daughter, Tiffany, who will graduate from Herbert Hoover, with plans to attend the University of Charleston. Office of Technology's **Emily Washington** has a son, Michael, who will graduate from Riverside High School this year. Best wishes to all of the graduates!

Continued on Page 5

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) Available Online

The 2005 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), which presents the financial condition of the State on a fiscal year basis from July 1 through June 30 of each year, is now accessible at www.wvfinance.state.wv.us/CAFRGAP.HTM.

This document contains three sections: an introductory section, a financial section, and a statistical section. The introductory section includes a transmittal letter with narrative commentary on matters of interest to the reader, the State's organizational chart, and list of principal officers.

The financial section includes the general purpose financial statements, combining financial statements by fund type, and schedules for account groups. The statistical section includes selected financial, economic and demographic data for the State on a multi-year basis.

Prior to the close of each calendar year, the CAFR is submitted to the Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) for consideration in the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting program.

The Financial Accounting and Reporting Section of the Finance Division, the agency responsible for submitting the state's CAFR each year, has received the GFOA recognition for the past 10 years for their efforts.

May 2006

Elevator Status in Buildings 5 and 6 Clarified

A memorandum was recently distributed to employees in Buildings 5 and 6, providing a status summary of the elevator work being performed in those buildings.

Due to code requirements relating to the lack of a fire safety recall feature, the two passenger elevators which were previously in operation in both buildings were directed to shut down in March by the Division of Labor until this feature could be installed. Installation of this feature, which enables the elevators to automatically go to the first floor in the case of a fire and to then cease operability, takes approximately 30 days to complete.

As a temporary solution, an attendant has been placed in one passenger elevator and the service elevator to provide accessibility to the upper floors while work is being performed on the non-working passenger elevator in each building. Once this feature has been installed in one passenger elevator, the attendant will switch while similar work is being completed to the other passenger elevator. An additional 30 days will be required to install the feature in the second elevator. Manual elevators (those with an attendant) are not required to have this feature installed. Within a 60-day period, from start to finish, it is expected that both buildings will have two up-to-code passenger elevators and the service elevator in operation.

There are more complex problems with the remaining passenger elevators in these buildings which have been out of service for a lengthier period. Replacement of these elevators is necessary before operability can resume. Plans are in place to proceed with these replacements as soon as possible.

The repairs on these elevators are in addition to the modernization project which is currently underway on all passenger elevators in these buildings. These actions are part of our overall commitment to restore all elevators at the State Capitol Complex to proper working order and safety conditions.

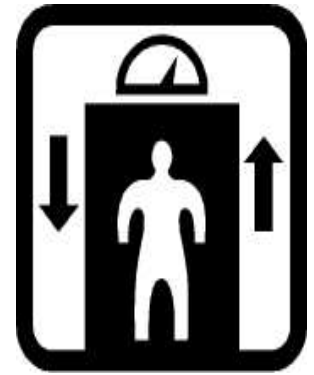
Harassment Continued from Page 4

to get some help. This statement tells me that you may already have a hostile working environment, and you have knowledge of it.

"This is not an all-inclusive list of misconceptions that supervisors have that create liability for the state," Jordan said. "It is just a tip of the iceberg. The bottom line is that you have to take every complaint of harassment or discrimination seriously, and you must take action if you

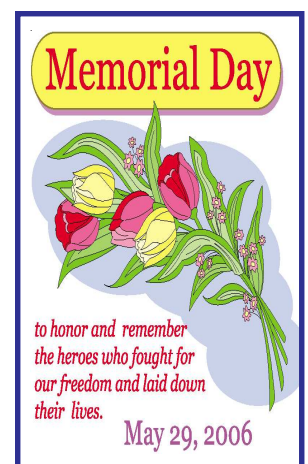
become aware of any discriminatory or harassing behavior." For more details on responsibilities as a supervisor and manager, consider attending the Division of Personnel's class, *Preventing Workplace Harassment: A Shared Responsibility*.

For questions relating to equal employment opportunity issues, contact your agency's EEO counselor or the Department of Administration's EEO Coordinator Donna Lipscomb at (304) 558-3392.



Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles that one has overcome while trying to succeed.

Booker T. Washington



Giant Salad Marks Celebration of 500 Pound Weight Loss



The Public Employees Insurance Agency weight management program recently celebrated its participants losing a total of over 500 pounds.

The celebration took place in Gary, West Virginia and centered around a massive 500-pound salad containing 110 heads of lettuce, 165 pounds of carrots and about 120 cucumbers. Prepared in a swimming pool, it took about 2 1/2 hours to prepare and about four hours to eat.

Cheryl Mitchem, coordinator of the weight management program through the Tug River Health Association said the salad represented the total pounds lost by about 27 participants in the program.

"The participants in the program shed the excess weight over a five-month period from October 3 through March 1. I think it is a phenomenal accomplishment," Mitchem said. "As you know McDowell County is number one in diabetic deaths across the state. The best thing we can do to reduce the diabetic rate is change their lifestyle."

PEIA's Open Enrollment

The deadline for PEIA's Open Enrollment is **May 12**. Employees are to make their choice for Plan Year 2007, which begins July 1, 2006. For questions regarding Open Enrollment, call the Open Enrollment Help Line at 1-877-676-5573.

Welcome!...to the employees who recently joined our department: **Edward Dolly** and **Michael Slaughter** (Office of Technology), **Stephen Schumacher** (BRIM), **Tammy Erwin** and **Priscilla Burford** (PEIA), **Dan Morris** (CPRB) and **Ted Fore** (General Services).

Best Wishes...to the following employees who recently resigned from our department: **Linda Clements** (Personnel), **Judy Harmon** (PEIA), **Joyce Jeffery** (Technology), and **Ralph Holbrook** (CPRB).

Governor's Internship Program...The deadline is approaching to become a mentor of a college student this summer. This worthwhile program offers the brightest college students to work during the summer gaining hands-on experience, while providing valuable employment services to your organization. For more details, visit www.wvqip.org or contact Program Coordinator Ray Sanders, Education and the Arts, at (304) 558-2440.



PEOPLE TALK

Baby News...Stacy Shamblin White of CHIP and her husband Gary are the proud parents of a baby boy they named Braeden. Braeden was born on 3/23/06 and weighed 6lb. 2 oz. at birth. Congratulations Stacy and Gary.

Thumbs Up...to Cedric Greene of the Secretary's Office, who during a visit to the Board of Risk and Insurance Management Office assisted employees in the Underwriting Department for more than two hours in getting a mass mailing prepared. BRIM employees expressed their appreciation to him. **Do you have a 'Thumbs Up' award that you would like to give?** E-mail Diane Holley at dholley@wvadmin.gov with the details!



'THUMBS UP'
AWARD

Great Job!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ...in May

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Susie Samples Personnel | 18 | Bob Nichols CPRB
Charles Warner BRIM |
| 2 | Jonathan Kinder CPRB
Jean-Paul Moreau Personnel | 19 | Andrea Darr Pros. Atty. Inst.
Kerry Jones CPRB |
| 3 | Marl Erb Aviation
Christy Romeo Personnel
Larry Stover PEIA | 21 | Chuck Bowman Purchasing |
| 4 | Larry Thaxton Purchasing | 22 | Beth Williams Personnel |
| 6 | Carolyn Brady CPRB | 23 | Patricia Huffman .. Technology
Mary McFarland Grievance |
| 7 | Jane Bracken Technology
Tom Lucas Gen. Svcs. | 24 | Jennifer Lovejoy Purchasing
Lisa Rogers Technology
Maria Yoakum Technology |
| 8 | Anthony Cooper Purchasing | 25 | Brett Clutters Technology
Brenda Jones CHIP |
| 10 | Cynthia Boyd CPRB | 27 | Janice Boggs Purchasing
Matt Hackworth Purchasing
Carolyn Thomas ... Gen. Svcs.
Jean Tucker Sec. Office
Ken Young Gen. Svcs. |
| 12 | Carolyn Saul Technology
Kyle Schafer Technology | 28 | Kelly Williams Finance |
| 13 | Ken Lucas Gen. Svcs. | 29 | Robert Dixon Technology
Robin Roberts Technology
Gene Walters Technology |
| 14 | Paula Atkinson CHIP
Sherra Barker PEIA
Earl Maxwell Grievance
Ed Trader Technology
Burley Williams PEIA | 30 | David Mullins Finance |
| 16 | Martha Bostic Personnel
Liz Martin Finance
Amanda Shirey PEIA | 31 | Jeff Swisher Gen. Svcs. |
| 18 | Louie Davitian Technology | | |

