



# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration  
MARCH 2013 - Volume 20, Issue 3

## Employee of the Month

### Burdette Honored for Professionalism and Work Ethic at PEIA

**TERESA BURDETTE**, an Insurance Assistant II with the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA), has been selected as the Department of Administration's Employee of the Month for March.

A state government employee for more than two years, with an additional two years on contract with PEIA, Burdette provides customer service to PEIA members. Prior to becoming a state employee, she worked with PEIA as an

employee of its third-party administrator.

"Teresa is a dedicated worker. Due to her professional presentation, Teresa is the dedicated customer service representative to meet with all the 'walk in' visitors to PEIA," said one co-worker. "She provides exceptional customer service for a variety of PEIA programs, such as medical and prescription claims; eligibility; benefits at retirement; and life insurance."

Said another co-worker,

"Teresa readily volunteers to attend our Benefit Fairs and after-hour meetings which require our customer service representatives. She is truly a dedicated state employee."

In her spare time, Burdette likes to read and spend time with her family. She will be joined by friends and co-workers at a special ceremony presented by Cabinet Secretary Ross Taylor on Thursday, March 7 at 11:15 a.m. at the PEIA office in Kanawha City.



**TERESA BURDETTE**  
March Employee of the Month

## Governor Tomblin Delivers State of the State Address

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin emphasized investment in West Virginia's future through more efficient and effective government during his *State of the State* address on February 13 before a packed House of Delegates chamber. Gov. Tomblin pledged to once again bring both sides of the aisle together in an effort to make West Virginia an even greater place to live, work and raise a family.

During the address, the governor presented a balanced budget to members of the Legislature, with no new taxes.

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Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin presented to the members of the Legislature a balanced budget with no new taxes during his State of the State Address on February 13.



## SNEAK PEEK

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• 'West Virginia 150' at Culture Center Focuses on State's History / Page 3

• Policy Addresses When Commuting Becomes Hazardous / Page 4



Staff members of the West Virginia Ethics Commission include, from left: Lucy A. Suchy, Lobbyist Registrar; Arlie O. Hubbard, Deputy General Counsel; Lietta J. White, Paralegal; Theresa M. Kirk, Executive Director ; Kimberly B. Weber, Attorney; and David O. Lucas, Investigator. Not pictured is C. Joan Parker, General Counsel, who has been selected by the Commission to succeed Kirk when she steps down on March 8.

## Ethics Commission Promotes Impartiality of Actions Within Our State Government

One of the first realizations for new hires to state government is that employees are subject to a greater level of scrutiny, particularly when compared to private sector employment.

Ensuring that public officials operate in a manner consistent with existing state laws, the West Virginia Ethics Commission is charged with administering a code of conduct for public servants to promote and strengthen the public's confidence in the integrity and impartiality of governmental actions.

The Ethics Commission conducted its first meeting at the state Capitol in August of 1989.

"In its early days, it was an exciting and challenging time for the Ethics Commission as a relatively small staff and newly appointed board members attempted to render advice to thousands of public servants who had never previously been subject to an Ethics Act," said Ethics Commission Executive Director Theresa Kirk, who joined the Commission in 2004. "The Ethics Act, as with any code of conduct, is at times challenging to interpret and apply. The challenge was even greater in 1989 as there was limited access to computer research. Hence, in its efforts to apply the Ethics Act to specific factual

### Parker Selected as New Executive Director

The West Virginia Ethics Commission selected C. Joan Parker as its new Executive Director at a special meeting conducted on February 21. Parker succeeds Theresa Kirk who will step down as executive director on March 8.

Prior to her selection, Parker served as the Ethics Commission's general counsel for the last four years and has been with the agency for the last seven years.

Look for more details about the transition in the April issue of *Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes*.

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## LOOKING AT ADMINISTRATION: Ethics Commission

**W.Va. Code or Executive Order:** West Virginia Code §6B-1-1, et seq., West Virginia Code §6-9A-1 through 12

**Mission statement:** The Ethics Commission administers a code of conduct for public servants, promoting and strengthening the public's confidence in the integrity and impartiality of governmental actions. It further interprets the Open Meetings Act which promotes transparency in government.

**Number of full-time employees:** 7

**Website:** <http://www.ethics.wv.gov>

**Telephone number:** (304) 558-0664 / Toll Free: 1-866-558-0664

**Physical address:** 210 Brooks Street, Suite 300 Charleston, WV 25301

# 'West Virginia 150' at Culture Center Focuses On History as State Approaches Its Anniversary

The history of West Virginia is often on display at the Culture Center, but the exhibit currently underway is intended to offer a special look at the state. "West Virginia 150" focuses on 150 people, places and events that helped to shape the lives of West Virginians over the past 150 years, coinciding with the celebration of the state's birth of June 20, 1863.

West Virginia Division of Culture and History Deputy Commissioner Caryn Gresham said work on the exhibit began last year with the question of what was special about West Virginia, then looking through the more than 60,000 items in the State Museum archive for things to represent the history. "We wanted quirky, interesting things," Gresham said. "We sought out items that would help people see the personality of West Virginia and not just a list of dates."

"West Virginia has such a rich and interesting history that it was really difficult to narrow the exhibit down to 150 items," said Museum Director Charles Morris. The final list contains suggestions from the public as well as from archivists, historians and other employees of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

Visitors to the exhibit can add their own suggestions to a book placed at the end of the exhibit. A special online exhibit featuring these recommendations will open later this year. The public also is encouraged to donate items to com-



Along with the State Museum, the Culture Center will be spotlighting the history of the state of West Virginia with "West Virginia 150," which focuses on 150 people, places and events that helps shape the state and its residents. Above, visitors tour the State Museum.

memorate the state's birthday.

Gresham said the Division of Culture and History makes a constant effort to ensure that displays in the Culture Center are interesting, and rotated frequently to allow new and different items are available for the public view. This includes, of course, state employees working on the Capitol campus.

"We have a unique situation where all of our exhibits are free and open to

the public," she said. "This is great because then people on campus can come and enjoy a piece of West Virginia history at no cost."

These displays include a rotating photographic history of the state on the north-facing wall near Archives and History. "We change the photos to include things such as recreation

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## West Virginia State Training Center Open for 2013 Reservations

It is a new year ... and as your agency prepares for various training events, it is important to remember the West Virginia State Training Center (WVSTC), located in Building 7 on the Capitol Complex, is accepting reservations.

Renovated in 2010, the WVSTC has three rooms available. Each room has wireless access and TV/projection systems for presentation use. Tables and chairs in the rooms can be rearranged (except in the Executive Room) to suit most meeting needs, and both the Regents and the Capitol rooms have a tabletop lectern for use. Facility usage is free for state agencies.

Maximum capacity in each room is as follows:

- Capitol Room: 100-125 people
- Regents Room: 25-30 people

- Executive Rooms: up to 15 people.

Rooms are normally reserved for use Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Reservations outside normal hours or on holidays and weekends require the obtaining party to contact the Division of Protective Services and the General Services Division to obtain building and room access and security. There may be a fee for these services.

For information about reserving space in the West Virginia State Training Center, contacting the Facility Scheduler, Bethany Sharp, at (304) 558-3950, ext. 57241 or email requests to [DOPRegistrar@wv.gov](mailto:DOPRegistrar@wv.gov). The Reservation Request Forms and additional information can be found at [www.personnel.wv.gov/ohrd](http://www.personnel.wv.gov/ohrd) under the "How Do I?" section.

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## The Benefits of Workplace Incident Investigations

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By *Jeremy C. Wolfe, Loss Control Manager  
West Virginia Board of Risk and  
Insurance Management*

Workplace incidents do happen and their costs can be substantial. When an incident occurs, what is your organization's reaction? Conducting incident investigations can identify the causes of the incident and will help to prevent such situations from reoccurring within the workplace.

Incident investigations are often poorly understood in the workplace. As a result, they can lead to finger-pointing and meritless blaming. Productive workplace investigations identify the causal factors of an incident and make recommendations for corrective action by determining what happened, how it happened, and why it happened. Effective investigations focusing on the "root cause" of the incident can benefit an organization in the following ways:

- Determining the exact cause of the incident;
- Determining the likelihood of recurrence;
- Enabling the development of risk management controls to prevent future incidents; and
- Demonstrating organizational concern, bolster employee confidence and improve public relations.

Incidents that result in injury/illness, damage to a vehicle, property damage, or injury to a third party or their property should be investigated, as well as environmental spills/contamination, theft, workplace violence, vandalism, etc. Many organizations broaden their approach to incident investigation to include all "near miss" incidents, those incidents that do not result in actual or observable injury or damage to an employee or third party.

Some helpful tips when faced with

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## State Capitol Lights Up Charleston



**Tom Williams, an employee in the Division of Personnel, captured this image of our State Capitol all aglow during a fall evening. Department employees are encouraged to send us pictures of the Capitol or other areas of the state that they visit to share in Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes. Please send images to [Chad.B.Williamson@wv.gov](mailto:Chad.B.Williamson@wv.gov).**

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## Policy Addresses Situations When Emergencies and Weather Makes Commuting Hazardous

Long before April showers bring May flowers, Mother Nature still holds the potential to serve up more formidable weather throughout the state.

West Virginia's winter season is always filled with the potential for heavy snowfalls, which includes the month of March. The infamous blizzard of 1993 occurred in March. Adverse weather combined with the state's mountainous terrain, can make commuting to and from a work a difficult task.

The Division of Personnel has an Emergency Situations/Inclement Weather policy to establish guidelines when acts of nature, such as Super Storm Sandy in October, or other emergency events, such as the gas pipeline explosion on Interstate 77 in December, puts commuting in peril.

"In the past year alone, we have seen these situations occur and it puts state workers in a tough position. The number one priority is always safety first. Yet, if a state employee cannot come to work, the issue of being out of the office does need

to be addressed," said Linda Coleman, Human Resources Coordinator for the Department of Administration.

The Emergency Situations/Inclement Weather policy addresses when annual leave is to be used and when it should not be charged to a state employee. It also notes how state employees are to adjust their schedules if required to work during these situations or if a state of emergency is declared after an employee reports to work.

"Even this time of year, there is always the possibility of a snowstorm. Even so, no two situations are exactly alike. Each circumstance is unique. This policy addresses the many scenarios that could play out," Coleman said. "What is common each time is that it is essential for employees to be in communication with their immediate supervisor whenever in this situation and this applies to everyone from a new employee to an agency director," Coleman said.

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## BRIM

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a workplace incident that requires an investigation include the following:

- Secure the area where the incident occurred to prevent future injuries or property damage;
- Visit the incident site before the evidence is disturbed;
- Document observations of the condition of the incident site;
- Photograph or video tape the incident scene from all angles;
- Identify and conduct general interviews of eye witnesses and other individuals who could provide pertinent information;
- Review other sources of information, such as design specifications, drawings, policies/procedures, maintenance records, employee training records, etc.; and
- Notify law enforcement (if warranted), insurance carriers, and other relevant officials associated with your organization.

Many organizations utilize a risk manager and/or safety director to conduct incident investigations. Often times an organization's safety committee can be a vital asset in incident investigations and review. Both can be equally beneficial as long as investigations are fair and equitable treatment is provided to all sides involved in the incident. For incident investigations to be an effective tool for an organization, an internal incident report should be prepared. The following can be useful in developing information to be included in such a report:

- Background information – where and when the incident occurred, who and what were involved, and who witnessed the incident;
- Account of the incident (what happened?) – sequence of events, extent of damage, incident type, source of energy/material (if necessary);
- Analysis of the incident – direct causes, indirect causes (unsafe acts and conditions), basic causes (policies/procedures, personal/workplace factors, et cetera);
- Recommendations to prevent recurrence for immediate and long-range action to remedy causes.

Incident reports should be maintained on file permanently. Completing a report and filing it away with little or no action will do nothing to prevent the incident from occurring again. The report should be provided to senior management or others who can do something about the recommendations submitted.

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## ETHICS

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scenarios, oftentimes the first Executive Director and staff members would call various states to discuss whether their offices had ever been faced with the same question. Nevertheless, the newly appointed Commissioners worked hard and issued 200 opinions in 1990.”

The Ethics Commission continues to endure. Kirk, who is stepping down as Executive Director on March 7 and will be replaced by Joan Parker, the agency's current general counsel, said the workload remains constant for its staff of seven full-time employees.

“The attorneys are responsible for conducting training for public ser-

vants on the meaning and application of the Ethics Act and Open Meetings Act, rendering advice, and enforcing the Ethics Act through the investigation and complaint process,” she said. “They are greatly assisted with their work by a full-time investigator and paralegal. The Commission also has a lobbyist registrar, Lucy Suchy, who has been with the Commission since its inception. Her primary responsibilities include administering the registration and reporting requirements for lobbyists and overseeing the Financial Disclosure Statement filing requirements. She also serves as the office manager.”

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## TOMBLIN

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This time last year, West Virginia had a projected budget gap for Fiscal Year 2014 of nearly \$400 million. Gov. Tomblin noted a budget deficit was avoided through prudent measures that will continue because “they are the right thing to do for future generations.” He added, “balancing our budget sends the right signal to businesses – that West Virginia is stable. But we must do more. We must continue to focus on job creation, lowering the cost of doing business, and eliminating inequities in our system.”

Gov. Tomblin presented a bold plan for improving the state's education system. The governor introduced a number of proposals including improving hiring practices for teachers, more flexibility at the county level, and a full-day four-year-old preschool program option within three years. The governor's legislative agenda also includes a number of public safety initiatives. The governor concluded his remarks with a reference to West Virginia celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of becoming a state.

“The Mountain State was born during the national firestorm of civil strife 150 years ago this year,” he said. “West Virginia set out on its own journey, with hope and promise. We survived many challenges to get to where we are today—a place we call home. As we come together to celebrate our State's 150th anniversary on June 20th, let's celebrate our history knowing some of her best days lie ahead.”

The West Virginia Legislature convened on February 13 and will conclude the Regular Session at midnight on April 13.

As for the Commission's board members, they are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. As required by statute, the members have varied backgrounds. Some are former or appointed public officials. For example, at present the Commission has a former state Senator and a former member of the House of Delegates. Other members represent the public at large. The Commission meets monthly, generally on the first Thursday, and is supported by a small full time staff - an executive director, three attorneys, and administrative support.

## MUSEUM

Continued from Page 3

throughout the state, or county courthouses,” she said. “This opens the opportunity to share with people what collections are at Archives or the State Museum, or beyond that, to further explore their personal histories, to find what is valuable to them, or to possibly donate to Archives or the museum.”

The State Museum is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the first Monday of each month. The Archives Library hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday through Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and closed Sunday. The Culture Center offices are open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## POLICY

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The Emergency Situations/Inclement Weather policy can be reviewed at, <http://www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empref/POLICIES/Emerg2.pdf>. For additional questions about this policy, contact Coleman at (304) 558-6181, ext. 203 or [Linda.F.Coleman@wv.gov](mailto:Linda.F.Coleman@wv.gov).

Interested in reading past issues of **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes?** Visit <http://www.administration.wv.gov/newsletters/Pages>.

**Welcome! ...** The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome our new employees: **Robert Berry** (BRIM); **Erin Vance** and **Anna Holstein** (CPRB); **Arlie Hubbard** (Ethics); **Billie Armes**, **David Jarrell** and **Glennis Sigmon** (General Services); **Hillary Balding** and **Maureen Batista** (Personnel); and **James Bowles** and **Joshua Tinnel** (Technology).

**Best Wishes ...** to **Martin Wright** (Ethics); **Shawn Carper** (Finance); **David Connell** (Grievance Board); **April Huddleston** (Personnel); **Dan Miller** (Purchasing); **David Riebe** (Real Estate); and **John Sandoro** (Technology), who recently resigned from our department.

**Happy Retirement! ...** After years of hard work, congratulations to **Barry Gunnoe** (Fleet) and **Patricia Perez** (PEIA), who can now kick back and relax.

**Mileage Reimbursement ...** West Virginia Department of Administration officials announced in January that the state mileage reimbursement rate for privately-owned vehicles for state use will remain at 47 cents per mile. A bi-annual review of the state’s mileage reimbursement rate for privately-owned vehicles is conducted in both January and July of each year by the Department of Administration cabinet secretary. The state of West Virginia is not statutorily required to follow the federal mileage reimbursement rate set by the Internal Revenue Service. This state rate will be in effect until further notice or after the next review is published in July 2013.

**Congratulations! ...** Sharon Carte, Executive Director of the Children’s Health Insurance Program, was recently recognized as a recipient of the 2013 Immunization Award winners sponsored by the West Virginia Immunization Network.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in March

1 Thomas Harper ..... PEIA	17 Charles McMinn ..... Technology
Gloria Lewis ..... PEIA	18 Daniel Ball ..... Gen. Svs.
Therman Mullins ..... Technology	Sue Lipinski ..... Technology
3 Mischa DiFilippo ..... BRIM	Gloria Taggart ..... Finance
5 Billie Catlett ..... Grievance	20 William Jones ..... Gen. Svs.
6 Scott Belcher ..... Gen. Svs.	Tammie Means ..... Technology
Jeremy Wolfe ..... BRIM	21 Tim Hall ..... Gen. Svs.
7 Chris Chapman ..... Technology	22 Crystal Rink ..... Purchasing
Jeff Williams ..... Technology	Jack Toler ..... Technology
8 Catherine DeMarco .. Purchasing	23 Clyde Lee Arline ..... Pros. Atty.
Timothy Hyatt ..... Technology	George Muncey ..... Technology
Chris Sforza ..... Finance	Robert Worledge Jr. .... Finance
Thomas Williams ..... Personnel	24 Thomas Bailey III ..... Gen. Svs.
11 Mary Bolton ..... Personnel	25 Jyotshna Arjuna ..... Technology
12 Jamie Hardman ..... CPRB	John Dunlap ..... Technology
Adam Heflin ..... Personnel	26 Natalie Faulkner ..... Technology
13 Greg Harman ..... Gen. Svs.	Philip Heyliger ..... Technology
Janice Morgan ..... Technology	Robert Hovatter ..... Gen. Svs.
Angela Riley ..... Technology	Ora Salyers ..... Personnel
15 Lori Cottrill ..... CPRB	Marilyn Summers ..... Technology
Charlene Good ..... Technology	29 Philip Morrison..... Pros. Atty. Inst.
Charles Stark ..... Technology	30 William Hargus ..... Technology
16 Darlene Fletcher ..... Personnel	Tara Lyle ..... Purchasing
Jason Haight ..... PEIA	31 Krista Charley ..... Grievance

# Administrative Notes

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