



# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration  
December 2024 - Volume 31, Issue 12

## Employee of the Month

### Sabatino's Experience Has Your Parking Needs Covered



**Andrew Sabatino**  
December Employee  
of the Month

Andrew Sabatino, parking supervisor for the Real Estate Division's Parking Services Section, has been selected as the Department of Administration's *Employee of the Month* for December.

A state employee for nine years, Sabatino makes the weekly parking schedules, manages reserved spaces, trains parking attendants, performs evaluations, and inspects parking equipment. In addition, he assists visitors and employees with their parking questions and directs them where they need to be.

"I have known and worked with Andrew for 10 years and I have always been impressed with his work ethic and his ability to handle customers and visitors. He greets visitors joyfully and his expertise is such that he can always answer anyone's questions and assist any way he can," said the co-worker who nominated him. "Andrew began with

our agency as a parking attendant, and during his tenure, was promoted to parking supervisor. He is dependable, efficient, and unfailingly punctual.

"Andrew also projects a warm, cheerful attitude to our guests. I have seen him resolve conflicts and handle difficult situations with remarkable patience and admirable tact. He loves people, works hard, and always tries to lift the spirits of those around him. I believe these characteristics represent all that is good in our organization."

When he's not working, Sabatino enjoys spending time with his wife, traveling, and reading. He also is active in his church and teaches an adult Sunday school class.

Sabatino will be joined by friends and co-workers at a special ceremony presented by Acting Cabinet Secretary John McHugh on Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024, at the Piedmont Guard House.

## State Parks Connected to Internet Thanks to Assistance from West Virginia Office of Technology

Part of the appeal of West Virginia's state parks is they offer opportunities to unplug and unwind, but sometimes connectivity to the outside world is needed. The West Virginia Office of Technology is spearheading a project, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce and the Division of Natural Resources (DNR), to bring broadband internet to all 42 parks throughout the state.

The project is being developed in two phases: first, the fiber needs



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# Department of Administration's 2024 *Employee of the Year* Nominees Recognized



**Billy Graham**  
*January Recipient*



**Trina Sweeney**  
*February Recipient*



**Tracy Batman**  
*March Recipient*



**Bradlee Wolfe**  
*April Recipient*



**Mary Youngblood**  
*May Recipient*



**Jason Hays**  
*June Recipient*



**Amanda Downs**  
*July Recipient*



**Ashley Huffman**  
*August Recipient*



**Steve Adkins**  
*September Recipient*



**Leslie Gwinn**  
*October Recipient*



**Lindsey Atkins**  
*November Recipient*



**Andrew Sabatino**  
*December Recipient*

Each year, the Department of Administration recognizes an employee as its *Employee of the Year*. This year's nominees (highlighted below) will be joined by their peers and *Employee of the Month* committee members on Dec. 11, 2024, for a small reception, where the recipient will be announced by Department of Administration Acting Cabinet Secretary John McHugh. An official email announcement of the 2024 *Employee of the Year* winner will be sent to all Department of Administration employees following the celebration.

Congratulations to our deserving *Employee of the Month* recipients for this year!

**BILLY GRAHAM**, our January *Employee of the Month*, is a Facilities Equipment Maintenance Technician with the General Services Division (GSD).

**TRINA SWEENEY**, our February *Employee of the Month*, is a Customer Service Supervisor for the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA).

**TRACY BATMAN**, our March *Employee of the Month*, is an Accountant/Auditor 3 with the Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB).

**BRADLEE WOLFE**, our April *Employee of the Month*, is an Information Systems Specialist 3 with the West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT).

**MARY YOUNGBLOOD**, our May *Employee of the Month*, is a Human Resource Specialist 3 in the Division of Personnel (DOP).

**JASON HAYS**, our June *Employee of the Month*, is a Driver 3 for the West Virginia Purchasing Division, Surplus Property Unit.

**AMANDA DOWNS**, our July *Employee of the Month*, is a Public Information Specialist 2 with the PEIA.

**ASHLEY HUFFMAN**, our August *Employee of the Month*, is an Executive Secretary for the WVOT.

**STEVE ADKINS**, our September *Employee of the Month*, is a Trades Specialist with the GSD.

**LESLIE GWINN**, our October *Employee of the Month*, is an Administrative Services Assistant I with the Finance Division.

**LINDSEY ATKINS**, our November *Employee of the Month*, is an Outreach Officer and Executive Assistant with the CPRB.

**ANDREW SABATINO**, our December *Employee of the Month*, is a Supervisor 1 for the Real Estate Division's Parking Section.

Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes



# Division of Personnel Introduces H.E.L.P. Program

The Division of Personnel (DOP) has launched H.E.L.P., a pilot program designed to offer a personalized and flexible path to completing the Supervisor/Manager Training Program Policy (DOP-P18) requirements. This program is tailored for individuals who have already completed four or more of the required training courses within the last five years and are looking for structured guidance to finish the rest without the hassle of scheduling on their own.

Participants will receive a customized training plan based on their current progress and completion goals, ensuring they stay on track for compliance. Whether they need reminders and check-ins or prefer a fully scheduled plan with more independence, H.E.L.P. adjusts to their support needs.

H.E.L.P. offers numerous advantages to participants seeking a streamlined and supportive way to complete their DOP-P18 requirements:

- **Assisted scheduling:** One of the most significant benefits is that DOP handles all the scheduling.
- **Tailored training plan:** DOP will assess progress, workload, and goals for completion to create a customized schedule that fits the participant's needs. This ensures that the path to compliance is both efficient and manageable within other responsibilities.
- **Flexible support options:** The program offers a range of support levels to meet individual preferences.
- **Organization and focus:** By following a structured schedule designed specifically for the individual's needs, there's no confusion and delays due to piecing together courses. This keeps the focus on professional development while ensuring timely completion of compliance requirements.

Before applying, a prospective participant's manager will need to recommend the individual for the program and agree to adhere to the finalized schedule. Once the manager's support has been secured, fill out the application via Google Forms, providing details about training progress and goals. After the application is accepted, DOP staff will create the personalized training plan and take care of scheduling the remaining courses. As this is a pilot program, DOP is limiting participation to ensure personalized attention.



west virginia  
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL

## Joyful Night Celebration

The annual Joyful Night celebration will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024, at the State Capitol. Additionally, the celebration will be broadcast statewide by West Virginia Public Broadcasting on the West Virginia Channel. To find your station, click [here](#).

**5:00 p.m.**

**Groups arrive: Bus parking on Kanawha Boulevard**

**5:30 p.m.**

**South Plaza Fountain (Kanawha Boulevard side)**

*Pre-Concert Performance*

*Groups will alternate playing festive music until the governor arrives at 5:55 p.m.*

**6:35 p.m.**

**South Plaza Fountain (Kanawha Boulevard side)**

*Tree Lighting Ceremony*

**6:45 p.m.**

**Culture Center Public Reception**

*-Viewing of Student Ornament Contest Winners*

*-Display of West Virginia Artistic*

*-Refreshments*

**7:00 p.m.**

**West Rotunda of State Capitol**

*-Viewing of Trees for Gold Star Mothers, Armed Forces members, First Responders*

*For more information, visit [www.governor.wv.gov](http://www.governor.wv.gov).*



The first of two Christmas trees arrived at the State Capitol Complex on Nov. 18, 2024. The tree, standing approximately 30 feet tall, came from the Crickmer Farm in Danese, W.Va., and will be showcased during the Joyful Night Celebration on Dec. 4, 2024.

## United Way's State Employee Campaign Ongoing, Payroll Deductions Due Dec. 13

The United Way's West Virginia State Employee Combined Campaign (WVSECC) is taking applications for payroll deductions until Dec. 13, 2024. State employees can donate through payroll deduction to the United Way to help youth, families, neighborhoods, and aging populations. Payroll deductions begin Jan. 1, 2025.

The WVSECC is the only state-sanctioned fundraising effort in which employees can use payroll deduction, and donations can be directed to any United Way location of the employee's choice. Donations may also be tax deductible as part of an individual's itemized federal tax return. For a downloadable copy of the pledge form, go to [www.united-waycww.org/give-now](http://www.united-waycww.org/give-now).

In October, the Department of Administration collected more than 300 pairs of socks and \$550 in monetary donations. The Office of Technology hosted a bid-in-a-bag donation collection as part of these efforts (bottom right photo).

As we enter into the cold months, please consider donating new or gently used blankets, coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and hand warmers. These items will be accepted through the end of December. Employees can give donations to their agency's campaign coordinator or place them in the box located inside the Department of Administration Cabinet Secretary's Office.



**The West Virginia Capitol was one of 1,300 landmarks worldwide that turned teal in November. The Light the World in Teal campaign is offered annually by the Alzheimer's Foundation of America as a way to bring attention to the fight against Alzheimer's disease.**

## INTERNET

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to be built in the park, and then it has to be distributed throughout the park. Project manager Jeffery Whitman started the project about a year ago with an aggressive timeline to complete it. Several fiber builds have been completed and several more are in progress.

"When it was first brought to me, I was eager to get started," Whitman said. "This kind of project is one of the reasons I left the private sector. This is the work that really makes a difference in the lives of our citizens."

Whitman has visited each park to make sure the project is staying on schedule.

"The linesmen who are installing the fiber can run up to a mile of it in a single day," he said. "The part that takes more time is the pole permitting and approval process."

All WiFi networks at every park will have the same network name, WVStateParks, and the same password, AlmostHeaven. Beech Fork and Little Beaver State Parks have been completed, with several more on track for completion by the end of 2024.

"This was an initiative from Gov. Justice, and it has been talked about for many years," Whitman said. "It's rewarding to see it coming to fruition. Special thanks to the Governor's Office, Legislature, Commerce, and the DNR for providing this opportunity."

Quotes, Notes and Anecdotes



# Purchasing Division Wraps Up Successful Conference

More than 200 attendees came to Oglebay Resort in Wheeling last month for the Purchasing Division's annual Agency Purchasing Conference. The three-day training opportunity provided attendees with a closer look at the state purchasing process as well as offered ample time for peer networking.

The conference agenda included 47 in-person sessions, with topics ranging from change orders and commodity codes to contract negotiations and common pitfalls in public procurement. The conference also featured a virtual option that offered 10 webinars for participants who were unable to travel to the conference.

"The sessions were designed well, and being able to ask questions live during the presentation was incredibly helpful," said one attendee.

During the conference, Roberta Wagner, an Administrative Services Manager II for the Departments of Health, Health Facilities & Human Services, Office of Shared Administration, was named the 2024 Procurement Officer of the Year.



**Roberta Wagner (above left) was awarded the 2024 Procurement Officer of the Year at this year's Agency Purchasing Conference. Wagner is joined by Purchasing Director Samantha Willis and her supervisor, Bryan Rosen.**

## Administration Employees Share What They Are Most Thankful For

Each month, we ask Department of Administration employees to share their thoughts on an **Employee Question of the Month**. In November, we asked what employees were most thankful for. Those responses can be seen below.

- Family
- My family and co-workers!
- My husband, kids, stepkids, and grandkids (nine altogether). And most of all, my mom and dad, who have always been there for me no matter what.
- My grandmother who is always there to help me with my kids when needed. I wouldn't be able to attend online school full time and work full time if it weren't for her.
- EVERYTHING! As I have gotten older, I have realized so many things to be thankful for. I even made a list at the beginning of the month on my Facebook page of "30 things I was thankful for" to represent the 30 days of November. Health, my family, friends and pets, my job, my home, my vehicle, etc. You become much more appreciative once you have lived life and lost those important to you. It's been a really rough year full of so many losses. I am grateful for each thing I have left.
- JESUS
- Wendy Mays
- My dogs, family, friends, health

- I am most thankful for this amazing new job, and mine and my family's good health.
- I'm most thankful for the wonderful opportunities handed to me by the state. It has allowed me to really get my life and financials in order. Also extremely thankful for my family, especially my mother.
- God, family, and the work I do
- Jesus Christ
- My children. All three of my daughters help keep me on an even keel in their own ways. I simply wouldn't survive without them.
- My beloved, exquisitely beautiful bride!
- God, my family, friends, and my cat
- Waking up every day
- My salvation
- That my mom survived cancer and is still with us today
- We live in a very pressing time, consumed by a lot of uncertainty. So what I am thankful for is my family. I know that no matter what happens, I have them. They are what keeps me going every day. I strive to be a better person

This month, we want to know "What song or lyric best describes how 2024 went for you?" To share your response, visit <https://forms.gle/syTV19mHaE7rRQcr6>.

- and version of myself for them.
- I'm most thankful for the love and support of my family. No matter what is going on, I can always count on them for support, guidance, and love.
- New administration in January
- That another family is hosting so I don't have to cook. Strangers who become friends and friends who become family. You just never know when those random connections will happen and that is beautiful.
- Family memories
- My momma. She's my homegirl!
- I am most thankful for working for one of the best agencies in the state and a place where you feel like it is a family.
- Having almost no digital footprint (not on any social media, never have been, never will)
- That both of my parents are still living
- My Savior Jesus Christ
- I am very thankful for my three healthy children and my two granddaughters and my mom!
- For what God has given me in my life!

## Retirement Board Receives National Public Pension Award

The Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB) has been awarded the 2024 Public Pension Standards Award. This award, offered by the Public Pension Coordinating Council (PPCC), recognizes public retirement organizations that meet or exceed professional standards in plan funding and administration.

“West Virginia’s public pension plans are among the best-funded and administered plans in the country, and this award just validates the hard work and dedication of our wonderful employees,” said CPRB Director Jeffrey Fleck. “We take pride in our motto: ‘Serving those who serve West Virginia.’ We also thank Gov. Jim Justice and the West Virginia Legislature for their support.”

To receive the Recognition Award for Administration, a retirement system must certify that it meets the requirements in five areas of assessment. These requirements can be seen at [www.nasra.org/ppcc](http://www.nasra.org/ppcc).

To receive the Recognition Award for Funding, a retirement system must certify that it meets the requirements for funding adequacy, defined as meeting one or more of the criteria listed. Those requirements can also be seen at the link above.

The Public Pension Standards reflect minimum expectations for public retirement systems management and administration and serve as a benchmark by which all defined benefit public pension plans should be measured.

Congratulations to CPRB on earning this achievement!

**Welcome!** ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Angela Harper** (CPRB); **Jennifer Curia** (Finance); **Dillon Rose** (General Services); **Jim Samples** (Prosecuting Attorney’s Institute); and **Lindsey Bailey** (Public Defender Services). **Kateland Cantrell** also transferred from the Cabinet Secretary’s Office to Ethics, and **Jessica Chambers** transferred from the Purchasing Division to Personnel.

**Best Wishes** ... to **Andrew Lore** (Technology), who recently resigned from our department.

**Happy Retirement!** ... After years of hard work and dedication, we would like to wish **Dave Mullins** (Finance) the very best during his retirement.

**Holidays** ... The Department of Administration will be closed on Dec. 25, 2024, in observance of Christmas Day. They will also be closed a half day on Dec. 24, 2024, and Dec. 31, 2024, in observance of Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve.

**Cohort Applications Due** ... Supervisors/managers who have not taken any of the classes required by the Division of Personnel (DOP) under DOP Policy-18 may apply for the OHRD Cohort Program. Approved applicants move through the classes as one group over the duration of one calendar year. The deadline to submit the application is Dec. 2, 2024.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in DECEMBER

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

Mary Escarda.....BRIM	Amanda Downs.....PEIA
Johnny Fernatt.....BRIM	Felice Joseph.....PEIA
Emily Fleck.....BRIM	Kathy Lester.....PEIA
Catherine Harless.....BRIM	Jennifer Perry.....PEIA
Katie Heindl.....BRIM	Charlotte Stover.....PEIA
Kimberly Hensley.....BRIM	Susan Trail.....PEIA
Tina Baker.....CPRB	Brittany Rutrough.....OEO
Christopher Barr.....CPRB	Brian Holmes.....Personnel
James Brisendine.....CPRB	Melanie Larch.....Personnel
Brittney Conley.....CPRB	John McAlister.....Personnel
Jason Fewell.....CPRB	Bobbie Wisniewski.....Personnel
Charles Hawkins.....CPRB	Pamela Clark.....Pub.Def.
Tiffany Rucker.....CPRB	Jonathan Friley.....Pub.Def.
Charles Wolfe.....CPRB	Gordon Simmons.....Pub.Def.
Stephanie Bailes.....Finance	Joseph Thornton.....Pub.Def.
Renee King.....Finance	Brandon Barr.....Purchasing
Stephanie Kirk.....Finance	Greg Clay.....Purchasing
Matthew Reynolds.....Finance	Steven Bradbury.....Real Estate
Steven Adkins.....Gen.Srvs.	Christopher Morton.....Real Estate
Richard Atencio.....Gen.Srvs.	Bob Paulson.....Sec. of Admin
Joseph Belcher.....Gen.Srvs.	Heather Abbott.....WVOT
Richard Casdorff.....Gen.Srvs.	Rodney Chapman.....WVOT
Shaun Dempsey.....Gen.Srvs.	Jason Curia.....WVOT
William Dodson.....Gen.Srvs.	Jennifer Harmon-Boykin.....WVOT
Timothy Lee.....Gen.Srvs.	William Holmes.....WVOT
David Parsons.....Gen.Srvs.	David Lester.....WVOT
Steven Phillips.....Gen.Srvs.	Gary Lewis.....WVOT
Dillon Rose.....Gen.Srvs.	Kenneth Martin.....WVOT
Glennis Sigmon.....Gen.Srvs.	Christopher Rankin.....WVOT
David Taylor.....Gen.Srvs.	Jeremy Rhodes.....WVOT
Jonathan Trout.....Gen.Srvs.	Geoff Richardson.....WVOT
Michelle Bradley.....Grievance	Georgina Richardson.....WVOT
Jennifer Barger.....PEIA	Patrick Scragg.....WVOT
Courtney Blankenship.....PEIA	Vincent Sodaro.....WVOT
Teresa Burdette.....PEIA	Joann Sturgeon.....WVOT

# Administrative Notes

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

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Special Thanks  
Cindy Baker