



Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration
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Employee of the Month

Finance's Gwinn Shows Caring Initiative in Role



Leslie Gwinn
October Employee
of the Month

Leslie Gwinn, an Administrative Services Assistant I in the Finance Division's Shared Services Section, has been selected as the Department of Administration's *Employee of the Month* for October.

A state employee for three years, Gwinn's duties include processing billing, checks, and credit cards, and applying payments to accounts for various department agencies and boards. She handles billing for the Fleet Management Division and deposits for Aviation, as well as collections, reimbursements, and travel processing.

"Leslie always goes above and beyond to help all her co-workers. She shows her dedication to the Department of Administration

by always taking time to help customers and other agencies on the phone or by email," said the co-worker who nominated her. "If she isn't sure of the answer, she will find out for you. She always takes the initiative to search out a fix for a problem, or assist another employee who is struggling at work to make it easier for them."

When she's not working, Gwinn enjoys being outdoors, reading, and spending time with family and friends.

Gwinn will be joined by friends and co-workers at a special ceremony presented by Acting Cabinet Secretary John McHugh on Thursday, Oct. 10, 2024, at 1 p.m. at the Finance Division offices in Building 15.

'Secure Our World' for National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

October is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and it serves as a good time to review your personal information that is publicly available online. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the National Cybersecurity Alliance (NCA) are continuing the theme "Secure Our World," created last year for the 20th anniversary of Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

The State Privacy Office recommends the following tips to protect your personal information:

- **Secure your accounts:** Ask for protection beyond passwords. Many

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SNEAK PEEK

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Ethics' Briggs Retiring After 46 Years of Service

The Department of Administration's longest-serving employee is moving on to a much-deserved retirement after serving various state agencies for the past 46 years.

Ellen Briggs, the Ethics Commission's executive assistant, is retiring Oct. 31, 2024. She started her career in public service on Nov. 3, 1978, as the secretary to the Dean of Students at the West Virginia Institute of Technology in Montgomery.

"I was 19 years old, and that was my first real job," she said. "I remember going home after work that day and telling my mother that I didn't want to go back. She said, 'Just give it a week or two, and we'll see.' Well, 46 years later, it's true that moms do know best."

In 1984, she began a 30-year stint at the Board of Medicine. While Briggs thought she would retire from there, she started working for the Ethics Commission in 2014 and says it is the best job she has ever had.

Briggs' advice to anyone just starting a career in public service is to stick with it.

"I knew the benefits would be amazing, but I have discovered they are even better than I thought as I enter into retirement," she said. "I would advise others to work hard, enjoy time with co-workers, and just have fun doing what you do, taking pride in each task.

"Respecting others is so important in life and in your career," she continued. "Doing your job with commitment and care will earn the respect of others and give you a sense of accomplishment. Have a work ethic above and beyond the norm. I have learned that I may be the only state employee that a member of the public deals with, so I should represent the state well."

She has had several memorable moments during her long career, including one recently during Public Service Recognition Week.

"During the Department of Administration ceremony when I received my 45-year service award, I also received a standing ovation," Briggs said. "I was humbled. Department of Administration people are the best, and never fail to show their appreciation."

Her co-workers aren't the only ones who appreciate Briggs' dedication; her boss does as well.

"Ellen sets a high bar for achievement and professionalism, for sure, but she brought so much more to our workplace and to my life over her decade-long career with the Ethics Commission," said Director Kim Weber. "My family, friends, and colleagues all know how I feel about Ellen. She is a mentor, a friend, and a confidante. She is a Christian leader, first and foremost, and among the happiest people I know. I will always cherish her."

Briggs serves as a Hospice volunteer and youth leader at her church and plans to devote more time to those things, along with some other volunteer work.

"I might even sleep a little late sometimes!" she said. "Whatever it is that I do, though, I know I will continue to be shaped by all that I've learned during my time here. It has truly been an honor and a blessing to serve the state of West Virginia as an employee all these years. As a proud, lifelong resident of 'Almost Heaven,' having the opportunity to give back to the place I call home has been a very fulfilling experience. It was my goal from day one to serve the state well, and I can certainly say that these years have served me well in turn."

When she started working, the office had IBM selective typewriters, and employees walked down three flights of stairs to make a copy. While office amenities and technology have changed, the friendships have endured.

"The friends I have made while working have seen me through good times and not-so-good times," she said. "I have lifelong memories and will embrace the friendships that I have enjoyed and those that will continue into retirement."

Congratulations and best wishes for a wonderful retirement!



Ellen Briggs
Ethics Commission
Department of Administration's Longest-Serving Employee

WVSASP Joins Event for National Veterans Small Business Week in November

The West Virginia State Agency for Surplus Property (WVSASP), which is overseen by the Purchasing Division, is joining forces with other state organizations to present a special webinar during National Veterans Small Business Week. This week, celebrated in mid-November each year, is designed to honor and recognize the challenges faced by veteran-owned small businesses.

On Thursday, Nov. 14, 2024, WVSASP will present on the Veterans Small Business Enhancement Act of 2018, which allows veteran-owned businesses access to retired federal property. In addition to the WVSASP presentation, "An Orientation

to Federal Surplus for Veteran Businesses," attendees will also learn about how to receive their VetCert and use [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).

"We are excited to educate veterans on the opportunities available to them through this program," said WVSASP Assistant Manager Mark Fox. "WVSASP is proud to once again be working with the West Virginia Small Business Administration on this project."

Registration for this webinar is free and open to veterans across the country. To register, visit <https://tinyurl.com/WVSsurplusVeteranWebinar>. Questions regarding this event should be sent to WVSASP@wv.gov.

CPRB Shares Information and Resources for State Employees Planning for Retirement

As many state government employees prepare to retire soon, the Consolidated Public Retirement Board (CPRB) would like to share a few reminders about what they can expect during the retirement process and after retirement.

Prospective retirees should allow adequate time for CPRB to process their retirement paperwork as the process can take anywhere from six to eight weeks. For those who are considering retirement soon, there are some requirements necessary to start the process. First, they are encouraged to request a Benefit Estimate at least six months prior to the date they wish to retire. This will allow adequate time for proper retirement planning. For help with the planning process, employees can call CPRB at 304-558-3570 to schedule either an in-person or phone appointment.

Once the individual nears the retirement date, the retiree must submit all retirement forms filled out completely and correctly. Upon receipt of the completed retirement packet, the employer will be notified of the individual's intention to retire. Once the individual terminates employment, the employer can complete the required employer certification and report final salary and service to CPRB. Upon receipt of the employer certification, CPRB will be able to process the final retirement calculation.

Once retirees receive their first payment, they can sign up for the Retiree Self-Service (RSS) to obtain information about their benefits and make transactions 24 hours a day. Examples of the services available via the RSS include viewing the monthly pay statement a couple of days prior to payment receipt, as well as printing annual 1099-R tax documents.

For questions related to retirement, members can visit wvretirement.com. To sign in to the Retirement Self-Service portal, please visit <https://mywvretirement.wv.gov>. A guide to registering for the Retirement Self-Service can also be accessed at www.wvretirement.com/Forms/2017RetSelfServ.pdf.

CPRB's Retirement Self-Service document (seen left) can also be accessed at www.wvretirement.com/Forms/2017RetSelfServ.pdf.

Go to the website The address is: <https://mywvretirement.wv.gov>. You'll know you're in the right place when you see the Login box.

Select Register In the Login box, click on [Need to Register?](#) This will take you to a new screen.

Register – Step 1	Register – Step 2	Register – Step 3
<p>Type in your 9-digit Social Security Number. Don't include dashes.</p> <p>Type in your Birth Date like this: MM/DD/YYYY. Do include slashes.</p> <p>If your Month/Day of Birth has only 1 digit, put a zero first.</p> <p>Example: June 2nd, 1942: 06/02/1942</p> <p>Click on Next>>.</p>	<p>Type in your Net Pay. Don't include the dollar sign.</p> <p>Click on Next>>.</p>	<p>Type in the User ID you made up in the Prepare step (above).</p> <p>Type in the Password you made up. When asked, type it in again.</p> <p>Pick a "secret question" and type in your answer.</p> <p>Type in your email address if you want us to contact you that way.</p> <p>Click on Next>>. <i>You're done!</i></p>

CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS

Continued from Page 1

account providers now offer additional ways for you to verify your identity before you conduct business on that site. Always use multi-factor authentication (a multi-step account login process that requires users to enter more information than just a password) when available.

- **Make passwords long and strong:** Combine capital and lowercase letters with numbers and symbols to create a more secure password.
- **Unique account, unique password:** Maintain separate passwords for every account to help thwart cybercriminals.
- **Own your online presence:** When available, set the privacy and security settings on websites to your comfort level for information sharing. It's okay to limit those with whom you share information.

Be cautious of unsolicited messages asking for personal information. Avoid sharing sensitive information or cre-

dentials with unknown sources. Additional safety recommendations can be found online at <https://www.cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month>.

If you think your information has been compromised at work, you can report a security incident to the West Virginia Office of Technology through a submission form at <https://sites.google.com/wv.gov/othub/>.



Liberty Bell Rang at State Capitol in Annual Remembrance of 9/11

On the north side of the State Capitol Complex sits the West Virginia Liberty Bell. While normally quiet, it is rung each year to memorialize the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001.

“It’s hard to believe it’s been 23 years since the horrific attack on this country,” said Gov. Jim Justice during the ceremony. “Think of the courage of those running to the fire. Think of the courage of those on the airplane that prevented them from attacking another part of this great country. Think of the people we lost. Think about their loved ones. Today is the day that we show that we have never forgotten and that we show love forever more.”

The Liberty Bell ringing has taken place each year since 2002. It is rung four times in remembrance of the four crashes and the lives lost on that day.

The West Virginia Liberty Bell is identical to the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Each state has a replica of the bell.



Gov. Jim Justice rang the West Virginia Liberty Bell as part of the annual Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony. A video of this event can be seen on YouTube.

Park Offers a Step Back in Time Alongside Outdoor Adventures

Since the 1950s, Cedar Creek State Park has been delighting visitors in Gilmer County. From its historical buildings to its trails, Cedar Creek State Park has something for everyone.

Described as offering a chance to step back in time to the pioneer days, Cedar Creek State Park has two historical buildings for visitors to enjoy. The first is a fully restored log cabin that serves as the campground check-in station. The second is a one-room school, complete with a tin roof, pot-bellied stove, desks, and bookcases. The school building is open on most Saturday mornings during the summer and at special times throughout the year.

Cedar Creek State Park is also home to three small ponds that are stocked with trout in January and March and with catfish in May. The pond is also home to muskies, bass, crappies and bluegills. Fishing enthusiasts may also want to fish in Cedar Creek, which runs through the park. The waterway is home to smallmouth bass, muskies, longnose gars, rock bass and bluegills.

In addition to these fishing opportunities, there are also 14 miles of hiking trails, as well as facilities for tennis, basketball, volleyball, croquet, and softball. While a traditional golf course is located just outside the park, some visitors may be interested in playing a round of miniature golf instead.

To learn more about Cedar Creek State Park or other West Virginia state parks, visit <https://wvstateparks.com>.

STATE PARK HIGHLIGHT

CEDAR CREEK STATE PARK

2947 Cedar Creek Rd. • Glenville, WV 26351

304-462-8517 • CedarCreekSP@wv.gov

ACCOMMODATIONS:

- Cabins

ACTIVITIES:

- Biking
- Boating**
- Camping
- Fishing
- Geocaching
- Golfing**
- Hiking
- Mini golf
- Museums**
- Outdoor sports
- Paddleboats
- Swimming

**Located outside of park

NEARBY:

- Bulltown Historic District
- Burnsville Lake and Wildlife Management Area
- Glenville Golf Club
- Job’s Temple, National Historic Landmark
- North Bend State Park

Department Employees Share Favorite Ice Cream Around the State

Last month, we asked Department of Administration employees to share their favorite ice cream shops as part of our *Employee Question of the Month*. In addition to sharing their favorite locations, many employees also shared their

Austin's Ice Cream: Ceredo/Kenova

- Pralines and cream on a waffle cone
- Grape pineapple

Baskin Robbins

- Baseball nut

Berkshire's Frozen Custard: Princeton

- Flavor of the week

Caffe Romeo: Charleston

- Red velvet gelato

Crafts of the Coal: Food Truck, Dunbar/Sissonville (Opening Oct.)

Dairy Cream Corner: Fairmont

- Funnel cake sundae with caramel sauce
- Raspberry soft serve cone

Dairy Freeze: Winfield

- Great soft-serve

favorite treat to order at these locations. Thank you to all who participated in last month's question. Below is our employee guide to ice cream across West Virginia.

Dairy King: Philippi

- Blackberry Cobbler Snowflake

Dairy Queen

- Butterfinger or a cookie dough blizzard
- Brownie batter blizzard with chocolate soft serve and pecan topping
- Peanut buster parfait
- Banana split
- Anything butterscotch
- Oreo blizzard with peanut butter cups
- Cotton candy blizzard

Ellen's: Charleston

- Coconut ice cream
- Mint chocolate chip
- Peach Cobbler Delight

Evan's Sweets: Princeton

- Banana split

Fat Eddies: Summersville

- Strawberry Cheesecake Storm

Frostbite: Clendenin

- Banana pudding Frostbite
- Brownie Frostbite
- Ice cream cone or banana split

Huskey's: Cross Lanes

- Pumpkin (seasonal)

I Scream Sunday: Ripley

- The Blended Minion is good!
- Leprechaun sundae
- Night of the Living Dead

Main Street Creamery & Grill: Hurricane

- Milkshakes

Manzy's Sweets and Treats

- Banana split



Dept. of Administration CFO's Daughter is West Virginia Pumpkin Festival Queen

Grace Long, the 14-year-old daughter of Sarah Long, chief financial officer for the Department of Administration, is the 2024 West Virginia Pumpkin Festival Queen.

The West Virginia Pumpkin Festival is Oct. 1-6 in Milton. As the Pumpkin Festival Queen, Grace will be on-site from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day of the festival and participate in many of the activities.

Grace is a student at Bible Center Middle School.

"She decided earlier this summer that she wanted to play a bigger role in a West Virginia festival this year and asked to enter the pageant," Sarah said. "This is something new for both of us."

Grace was a judge for the Pumpkin Festival parade on Sept. 29. She also will serve as a judge for other festival competitions, such as bake-offs.

The West Virginia Pumpkin Festival features vendors, crafts, pumpkin contests, ax throwing, a quilt show, live music, and Huskey's pumpkin ice cream. For more information on the West Virginia Pumpkin Festival, visit <https://wvpumpkinfestival.com>.

Department Agencies Invited to Celebrate Socktober with Donations

With cold weather quickly approaching, warm socks are needed to help the less fortunate in our communities. The Department of Administration is partnering with the United Way of Central West Virginia this month for Socktober, during which employees can donate pairs of socks for those in need. Agencies will have bins for collecting donations or agency United Way coordinators can reach out to Shelley Whitehill at 304-352-4311 to schedule pickups. Employees are also encouraged to wear special socks during the week of Oct. 28-31, 2024. The sock schedule is posted below.

Participating employees can send pictures of their socks to Kateland.J.Cantrell@wv.gov for a chance at prize giveaways from the State Credit Union and possibly be featured in the next issue of *Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes* and on the Administration Station.

For more information about the United Way of Central West Virginia, visit www.unitedway-cwv.org.

Monday, Oct. 28

Breast Cancer Awareness

Tuesday, Oct. 29

School Spirit

Wednesday, Oct. 30

Crazy Socks

Thursday, Oct. 31

Halloween Socks



United Way of Central West Virginia

Welcome! ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Brandon Fox** (CPRB); **Kenneth Meadows** (General Services); **Meredith Hollandsworth** (PEIA); **Carol Hudnall** (Purchasing); and **Amanda Kelley, Kenneth Meadows, and Michael Metz** (Technology).

Best Wishes ... to **Ashley Summitt** (BRIM) and **Krista Peyton** (Technology), who recently resigned from our department.

Happy Retirement! ... We would like to wish **Lawrence Copley** (Aviation) the very best during his retirement.

Question of the Month ... Thank you to all of the individuals who continue to participate in our *Employee Question of the Month*. Last month, we asked employees to share their favorite place to get ice cream and what they like to order. The answers to that question can be seen on Page 5.

This month we want to know... “*What is your favorite or most memorable Halloween costume you had as a child?*” To answer this question, visit <https://forms.gle/7HMsmnj4jxEwSBAw9>.

Blood Drive ... The American Red Cross will host a blood drive on Oct. 8, 2024, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Building 7’s Capitol Room. For more information, visit www.redcross.org/give-blood.html.

Got News? ... Share YOUR good news with all of your department co-workers! Email Samantha.S.Knapp@wv.gov with detailed information so we may include it in the next issue of the newsletter.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in OCTOBER

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

Melody Duke.....BRIM	Jessica Vartz.....PEIA
Solomon Phillips.....BRIM	Mary Jane Ayoob.....Personnel
Lori Tarr.....BRIM	Kerri Nice.....Personnel
Rebekah Borchers.....CPRB	Joseph Thomas.....Personnel
Rodney Burdette.....CPRB	Sherry Eling.....Prs.Atty.
Kinsey Fox.....CPRB	Luke McVay.....Prs.Atty.
Larra Radford.....CPRB	Cheryl Cohen.....Purchasing
Lisa Trump.....CPRB	John Estep.....Purchasing
John Roush.....Ethics	Courtney Johnson.....Purchasing
Shelia Gray.....Finance	Larry McDonnell.....Purchasing
Carmen Looney.....Finance	Christopher Seckman...Purchasing
Susan Miller.....Grievance	Caroline Bruce.....Real Estate
James Atkins.....GSD	James Bowles.....WVOT
Steven Bratchett.....GSD	Jeremy Boykin.....WVOT
Philip Brooks.....GSD	Stephen Cain.....WVOT
Jonathan Greenfield.....GSD	Robert Caldwell.....WVOT
Michael Griffith.....GSD	Eric Daniel.....WVOT
Sidney Harmon.....GSD	Tate Hamon.....WVOT
Randall Hazlewood.....GSD	Christopher Johnson.....WVOT
Dustin Parsons.....GSD	Corey Leist.....WVOT
Marissa White.....GSD	Adam Malone.....WVOT
Marie Wilmer.....GSD	Duncan Martin.....WVOT
Carlyn Barker.....PEIA	Gregory Pittman.....WVOT
Michelle Bauer.....PEIA	Robert Richmond.....WVOT
Kasi Bell.....PEIA	Michael Ross.....WVOT
Beverly Hedrick.....PEIA	Wanda Shafer.....WVOT
Cheryl Jackson.....PEIA	Meghan Shears.....WVOT
Lee Stone.....PEIA	Ruby White.....WVOT

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