



# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration  
OCTOBER 2025 - Volume 32, Issue 10

## Public Defender Services Celebrates Recovery Month

Public Defender Services (PDS) joined the nationwide observance of National Recovery Month in September by raising awareness and showing visible support for recovery efforts. Staff across the agency wore purple and decorated their offices in honor of individuals, families, and communities affected by substance use disorders.

National Recovery Month, held each September, highlights the strength of people in recovery, promotes evidence-based treatment, and recognizes the dedicated professionals who provide vital support. By wearing purple—the official color of Recovery Month—PDS employees expressed solidarity with clients and communities striving toward healthier, substance-free futures.

“Recovery Month is about hope and transformation,” said Mallory Thompson, coordinator of programs for PDS. “As an agency, we want to stand with those in recovery, celebrate their progress, and remind everyone that recovery is possible.”

In addition to donning purple, PDS offices were decorated with ribbons, banners, and signs encouraging awareness and resilience. The effort not only created a sense of unity among staff but also sent a message to clients and the public: recovery is a journey worth supporting every step of the way.

PDS provides essential legal representation for indigent clients throughout West Virginia, many of whom are impacted by substance use. By participating in Recovery Month, the agency emphasizes its commitment to both justice and the well-being of those it serves.

“Our agency is committed to holistic representation. The funds held by Public Defender Services are committed to improving the child abuse and neglect proceedings. Accord-



The Public Defender Services building in Boone County shines purple in honor of National Recovery Month, showing support for those affected by substance use disorders.

ingly, committing these funds to the continued support of the family treatment court makes perfect sense,” said PDS Director Dana Eddy.

This year’s Recovery Month theme, Recovery is REAL (Restoring Every Aspect of Life), reflects the importance of community involvement in helping individuals build sustainable paths forward.

### PDS OPEN HOUSE

Oct. 24 | 4-6 p.m.

112 California Ave., 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
Charleston, WV 25305

Come visit our new location  
by the WV State Capitol!

*Refreshments will be provided.*

RSVP by Friday, Oct. 3

Call 304-352-0812

or email [Ryan.A.McCoy@wv.gov](mailto:Ryan.A.McCoy@wv.gov)

### SNEAK PEEK

WVOT's Tinnel  
Named Procurement  
Officer of the Year  
/ Page 2



Rockhounding in  
West Virginia  
/ Page 4

October is Cybersecurity  
Awareness Month  
/ Page 5

## WVOT's Tinnel Named Procurement Officer of the Year

Josh Tinnel, procurement manager for the West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT), was named this year's Procurement Officer of the Year during the Purchasing Division's annual conference in August.

"I'm thrilled to see Josh recognized as Procurement Officer of the Year," said his co-worker Allison Plants, who is also a procurement specialist for WVOT. "His leadership and mentorship have shaped how our team approaches procurement, and his ability to write precise specifications for highly complex technology sets a standard of excellence statewide. It is especially impressive how quickly he mastered his role and wvOASIS, demonstrating both skill and dedication. This award is a well-deserved celebration of his expertise, vision, and commitment."

The Agency Procurement Officer of the Year award program was created in 1996 to recognize outstanding performance, dedication, and leadership in the area of procurement. The criteria used in making this selection include tenure, performance, communication skills, internal training efforts, cooperation with agency and purchasing staff, projecting a positive image, exhibiting good purchasing practices, and participation in professional purchasing organizations.

"We at WVOT procurement are extremely proud of Josh for being named Procurement Officer of the Year, a recognition we believe is truly deserved," said Derrick Day, information systems manager for WVOT. "Josh is a pleasure to work with. He is knowledgeable, dedicated, and consistently productive. He approaches every task with a strong commitment to doing things the right way and is always willing to lend a hand when needed. His professionalism and work ethic sets a high standard, and we're fortunate to have him on our team."



**Procurement Manager Josh Tinnel receives the 2025 Procurement Officer of the Year award from Purchasing Director Samantha Willis during the annual Purchasing Division conference in August.**



## Purchasing Division Imaging Operator Finds Joy in Baking

Angelina Villanueva keeps files in order as imaging operator for the Purchasing Division. But when she's not at work, her time is spent baking.

Villanueva started baking in 2020 while she was a stay-at-home mom to her daughter, who is now six years old. It was something to keep her busy during the COVID-19 pandemic, but she soon discovered she loved doing it.

"I loved seeing my ideas come to life exactly how I imagined them, and sharing my baked goods at family gatherings made the experience even more rewarding," she said. "Watching everyone enjoy what I made inspired me to keep going."

Villanueva started baking brownies, cookies, cinnamon rolls, and cheesecakes, but over time her efforts have focused more on cakes and cupcakes. And as incredible as it may sound to those with a sweet tooth, she doesn't eat many baked goods.

"My family serves as my team of taste testers to make sure everything I bake is delicious," she said. "My grandmother, in particular, is my toughest critic, and I value her honesty because it pushes me to improve."

Villanueva's specialty is homemade-style cupcakes and cakes inspired by candy, cookies, cereal, and fruit flavors. She likes to create desserts that give people the same feeling of enjoying a beautifully created homemade treat at a family gathering.

"My goal is always to bake with love, and I want everyone to feel that in every bite," she said.

---

**Angelina Villanueva, imaging operator for the Purchasing Division, channels her creativity into baking specialty cakes and cupcakes outside of work.**

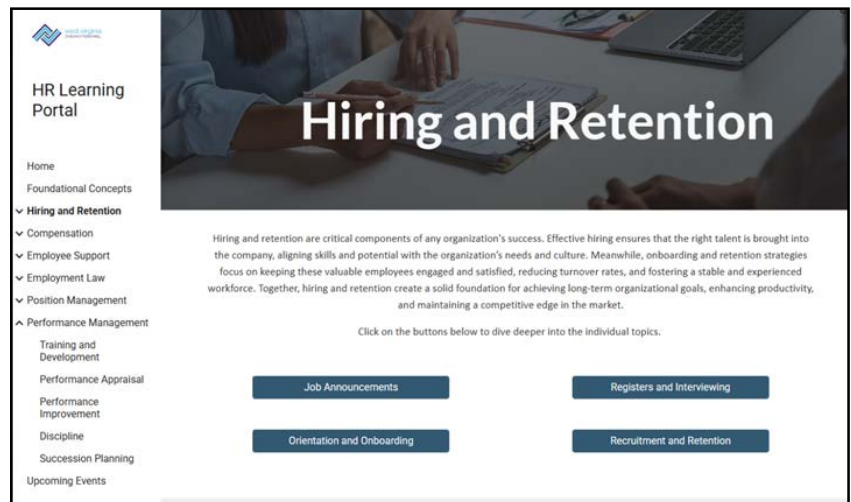
# HR Learning Portal Expands Its Impact

When the Division of Personnel (DOP) launched its HR Learning Portal last year, it had one goal: create a dedicated space where human resources employees could find information they need for their jobs. Following its creation, DOP realized its learning portal was a valuable resource for many individuals within state government.

“While the HR Learning Portal will always be tailored to the needs of state HR employees, it can also provide guidance to individuals who have questions on topics like annual leave or compensation,” said DOP Director Sheryl Webb. “This is an especially good resource for managers or supervisors who may need to provide employees an answer while their HR representative is out of the office.”

The HR Learning Portal is organized into six sections covering frequent HR themes: hiring and retention, compensation, employee support, employment law, position management, and performance management. Each section is broken down into further topics to help users easily access information. Composed of job aids, links to classes, FAQs, website directories and more, the HR Learning Portal serves as a one-stop shop for users.

“We want the HR Learning Portal to be a resource and not a



The Division of Personnel's HR Learning Portal is a centralized resource for state employees on key HR topics.

replacement for an agency's HR employee,” added Webb. “This is a useful tool for guidance, but we encourage individuals to speak with their agency's HR representative or contact DOP when in doubt.”

To access the HR Learning Portal, visit <https://sites.google.com/wv.gov/hr-learning-portal>.

## 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 an 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 intent to re-

tire. Once the individual officially terminates employment, the employer must complete its required certification and report the employee's final salary and service to CPRB. Upon receipt of the employer certification, CPRB will then 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 [www.wvretirement.com](http://www.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](http://www.wvretirement.com/Forms/2017RetSelfServ.pdf).



---

# Rockhounding in West Virginia: A Hidden Treasure in the Mountain State

---

West Virginia is best known for its rolling mountains, winding rivers, and rich coal heritage. But beneath its scenic landscapes lies another hidden gem—literally. Rockhounding, the hobby of collecting rocks, minerals, and fossils, is a growing passion in the Mountain State, attracting both amateur collectors and seasoned geologists.

## A Geological Wonderland

West Virginia's complex geological history has left it rich in mineral diversity. The state sits atop layers of sedimentary rock with pockets of igneous and metamorphic formations. Ancient seas, volcanic activity, and tectonic shifts have created minerals that include quartz, calcite, siderite, and even rare fluorite.

One of the most exciting aspects of rockhounding here is the chance to find unique specimens linked to the state's coal seams. In some areas, pyrite ("fool's gold") crystals occur in coal deposits, while concretions—rounded mineral nodules—can be found in shale beds.

## Popular Rockhounding Locations

While much of West Virginia is private land (meaning you'll need permission before collecting), there are several well-known spots and public areas where enthusiasts have had luck.

- **Spruce Knob and Seneca Rocks Area** – Noted for quartz crystals and fascinating sedimentary formations, this region offers scenic hiking alongside collecting opportunities.
- **Smoke Hole Canyon** – Known for its dolomite formations, occasional calcite crystals, and fossils in limestone outcrops.
- **Coal Region Tailings** – With landowner permission, old mine tailings can yield pyrite cubes and coal balls.
- **Rivers and Creeks** – Gravel bars along rivers like the New and Potomac can reveal quartz pebbles, agates, and Jasper washed downstream.

## Fossil Hunting

In addition to minerals, West Virginia offers rich fossil deposits, particularly from the Mississippian and Pennsylvanian periods. Marine fossils such as brachiopods, crinoid stems, and coral are common in limestone layers, while plant fossils—ferns, seed ferns, and lycopsids—can be found in shale near coal seams.

## Rules, Respect, and Safety

Rockhounding is about more than just the hunt—it's about stewardship. Always ask permission before collecting on private land, follow regulations in parks and wildlife areas, and avoid damaging sensitive formations. Safety is also essential: wear sturdy shoes, use eye protection when hammering, and watch for unstable rock faces or slippery stream beds.

## Tools of the Trade

For beginners, a small kit with a rock hammer, safety goggles, chisel, hand lens, and a sturdy bag is all you need. A field guide to rocks and minerals of the Appalachian region can help identify finds on the spot.

## The Joy of the Hunt

For many, rockhounding in West Virginia isn't just about adding to a collection—it's about connecting with the land. Each crystal, fossil, or mineral tells a story. Even if you're just turning over stones in a creek bed, there's a thrill in uncovering something beautiful that's been hidden in plain sight.

So if you're traveling the state this fall, don't just look at the view—look down. West Virginia's rocks have stories to tell, and with a good eye and a little patience, you just might take home a piece of its deep geological past.



Quartz, calcite, siderite, and fluorite

# October is Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Every October, Cybersecurity Awareness Month offers an opportunity for people to learn about how to protect themselves online. This year's theme, Stay Safe Online, is all about the simple ways to protect yourself, your family, and your business from on-line threats.

Small actions can make a big difference. There are four easy steps anyone can take to boost their online safety. They include using strong passwords, turning on multifactor authentication, recognizing and reporting scams, and updating software, according to the National Cybersecurity Alliance and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

The State Privacy Office elaborates further on how to protect your personal information:

- **Secure your accounts:** Ask for protection beyond passwords. Many account providers now offer additional ways for you to verify your identity before you conduct business on that site. Always use multifactor authentication (a multistep 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.
- **Lock your computer** when you have to be away from it.

Be cautious of unsolicited messages asking for personal information. Avoid sharing sensitive information or credentials 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/>.

## New Phishing Alert Button in Gmail



The KnowBe4 Phish Alert Button (PAB) is now available in your Gmail toolbar. If you receive a suspicious email, simply click the phish hook email icon. With one click, the message is sent to the West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT) security team.

To begin using the Phish Alert Button, please follow the steps outlined in this guide to enable the chrome extension: **How to:**

### **Enable Phishing Hook in Gmail.**

The difference between the KnowBe4 Phish Alert Button and Gmail's "Report Phishing" is that the KnowBe4 Button sends the email to the WVOT security team and removes it safely from your inbox.

When you use the new KnowBe4 Phishing Alert button, the security team does a quick check, confirms if it's phishing, and reports it as needed. This strategy strengthens WVOT's core services, stops threats from spreading, and keeps the whole organization safer.

To learn more about the Phish Alert Button, visit **KnowBe4**.

If you experience any trouble activating the button, please call the Service Desk at 304-558-9966 or by email at [servicedesk@wv.gov](mailto:servicedesk@wv.gov).



# 50% OFF electronics

## Oct. 20-31



2700 Charles Ave., Dunbar, WV

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Last month, we asked Department of Administration employees “If your alarm clock had a voice, what would it say every morning to wake you up?” Below are some of the responses we received.

- In Sue Bob White’s voice...  
YOU GOT BILLS TA PAY!
- Wake up, fat boy!
- Wake me up before you go-go...
- For the love of God, just get out of bed already.
- Hurry, the boat is about to leave.
- Time to make the donuts!
- The voice of my neighbor Bobby screaming “get out of bed, stop being lazy!”
- IT’S SHOWTIME!!!!

**Welcome!** ... The Department of Administration is pleased to welcome **Daniel Muncy** and **Chad Velez** (GSD); **Shelton Tenpenny Haddix** (Public Defender Services); and **Brittany Cummings** (Technology).

**Best Wishes** ... to **Christopher Boggess** and **James Brisendine** (CPRB); **Robert Tanner** (Finance); **Meredith Hollandsworth** and **Terry Cantrell** (PEIA) who recently resigned from our department.

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

**Our Condolences** ... The Department of Administration is saddened to note the loss of **Brandon Fox** (CPRB), who passed away recently.

**Join us** ... for the **8th West Virginia Digital Government Summit** on **Tuesday, Oct. 21**—an opportunity to collaborate, share ideas, and shape the future of digital government in our state.

**Vaccines Clinic** ... The State Capitol Division of Protective Services wishes to inform state employees of the upcoming **flu and covid vaccines clinic** sponsored by Kanawha Charleston Health Department (KCHD) at the Capitol Complex. The vaccines will be offered at **Building 1 Upper Rotunda Senate, Monday Oct. 6, 2025, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY in OCTOBER

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

AVIATION William Chouinard

BRIM David Dyer  
Solomon Phillips

CPRB William Barker  
Rebekah Borchers  
Rodney Burdette  
Shawn Cunningham  
Kinsey Fox  
Larra Radford  
Lisa Trump

ETHICS Michael Kawash  
John Roush

FINANCE Melody Duke  
Shelia Gray  
Carmen Looney

GEN.SRVS. James Atkins  
Steven Bratchett  
Anjelique Griffin  
Jason Griffith  
Michael Griffith  
Sidney Harmon  
Randall Hazlewood  
Charles Mullins  
Daniel Muncy

GEN.SRVS. cont.  
Dustin Parsons  
Marissa White  
Marie Wilmer  
Latisha Wright

GRIEVANCE Susan Miller

PROS.ATTY. INSTITUTE  
Sherry Eling  
Luke McVay

PUB.DEF.SRVS. Rebecca Carnefix  
Quinn Wooten

PEIA Carlyn Barker  
Michelle Bauer  
Kasi Bell  
Beverly Hedrick  
Cheryl Jackson  
Jared Robertson  
Lee Stone  
Jessica Virts

PURCHASING Jessica Carl  
Cheryl Cohen  
John Estep  
Joanna Hays  
Courtney Johnson  
Larry McDonnell  
Christopher Seckman

REAL ESTATE Caroline Bruce

TECHNOLOGY James Bowles  
Jeremy Boykin  
Stephen Cain  
Robert Caldwell  
Eric Daniel  
Tate Hamon  
Reece Harvey  
Christopher Johnson  
Adam Malone  
Duncan Martin  
Garrett Mueller  
Janetta Paxton  
Gregory Pittman  
Robert Richmond  
Michael Ross  
Wanda Shafer  
Meghan Shears  
Malachi Sherrod  
Dustyn Stover  
Ruby White

## Quotes, Notes &amp; Anecdotes

is published by the  
West Virginia  
Department of  
Administration

Patrick  
Morrisey

Governor

Samantha  
Knapp

Communication  
Director/Editor

Production  
Courtney  
Johnson  
Teresa Cutlip  
Jessica Carl