



Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration
August 2007 • Vol. 14, Issue 8

Employee of the Month

Connie Byrne Serves as a Team Player in Finance Division

CONNIE BYRNE, a Financial Reporting Specialist II for the Financial Accounting and Reporting Section of the Finance Division, has been selected as the Department of Administration's **Employee of the Month** for August.

An eight-year employee of state government, Connie works with agency personnel to provide training, gather financial information and answer questions relating to the state's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

She also works on the Single Audit contract, the department's leave system and various West Virginia Financial Information Management System (WVFIMS) projects.

According to one of her co-workers, "Connie is a real team player...she is an excellent role model for new employees due to her work ethic and skill set."

Another co-worker added, "She is a definite asset to the Finance Division and her hard work and commitment to the

agency is truly appreciated. Connie is always willing to help explain procedures and processes to others, so they too will be able to perform their best."

In her spare time, Connie enjoys riding four-wheelers or relaxing with a good book. Mostly, she cherishes her time with her family.

Please join Connie and her co-workers at a special ceremony in her honor at 11 a.m. on Thursday, August 2, in Building 17.



CONNIE BYRNE
August Employee
of the Month

Students and Agencies Capitalize on Each Other's Resources through Internship Program

The Governor's Internship Program has a record number of interns this year ... offering a bright future for West Virginia, according to Ray Sanders, the program director.

"This program has some of the most outstanding young people in our state. What a refreshing opportunity to work with them and see what they have to offer state government and public service," Sanders said. "Our mission is to get these outstanding



students to stay in West Virginia by providing them outstanding opportunities to reach the goals

they have set forth."

The Department of Administration has hired a large number of interns, with a total of 12. "The caliber of students coming through this year's program has been extraordinary. The program benefits both the student and employer," said Cabinet Secretary Rob Ferguson. Let's meet our interns for this year:

Continued on Page 3

Pictured (l-r) are eight of this year's interns assigned to Administration: Matthew McDaniel, Michael Cary, Timothy Abraham, Afton Hutson, Katie Harper, Ravikiran Muvva, David Beaufort and Andrew Dawson.

Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- ◆ Understanding US Postage Guidelines Saves State Agencies Money
- ◆ Governor's Executive Order Requires New Hires to Pass Drug Screen Test
- ◆ Key Transaction Reduces Teachers' Retirement Liability
- ◆ Administrative Notes

Understanding Postage Guidelines Can Save State Agencies Money



Understanding the guidelines and preparing your mail effectively can save your agency money in postage. Folding a larger letter in half and placing it in a smaller envelope is less expensive now that the post office is going to shape-based rates.

Both the United States postage rates and the guidelines applying the correct rates changed this past May.

The new standard is referred to as shape-based rates. Prior to May 14, 2007, rates were weight-

based; a one-ounce letter, flat and parcel all had the same rate (39 cents). Because flats and parcels require more space in mail bags, trucks and planes, shape-based rates were instituted. Now, the one-ounce letter, flat and parcel rates are 41 cents, 80 cents and \$1.13, respectively.

Understanding the guidelines and preparing your mail properly can save your agency money in postage. Here are some tips to help your agency stretch its postage budget:

- ◆ Five sheets of average paper can be mailed at the one-ounce rate. If you currently mail flat papers in an 8.5" x 11" envelope, half-folding the papers to fit in a 6" x 9.5" envelope or tri-folding them into a #10 envelope will allow the piece to go at the letter rate instead of the flat rate, saving 39 cents per piece. This would save almost \$400 for 1,000 pieces.
- ◆ Combine (or "household") mail going to the same recipient. The two-ounce letter rate has decreased. You can mail up to 10 sheets in a letter-size envelope for 58 cents. Make sure it is creased well, because if it is thicker than 0.25" it will be classified as a flat instead of a letter.
- ◆ Parcels heavier than 13 ounces are automatically charged

the priority mail rate. Priority mail is charged according to its weight and the destination zone. Using priority flat-rate envelopes (\$4.60) and boxes (\$9.15) could save money. These packages are provided free by the USPS.

- ◆ Job Squad Inc. is the state's presort vendor. Presorted mail gets postage discounts. To be eligible, pieces must be machine readable (not handwritten), have a good address (city and state on last line, street address on next-to-last line) and have sufficient quantities going to the same first three digits of the zip code.
- ◆ Send mail third class instead of first. To qualify, the mail pieces must be generic (no invoices, checks or personal information, such as SSN) and there must be at least 200 pieces. **Limitations:** third class mail may take up to two weeks to be delivered and undeliverable pieces are discarded unless the agency pays for their return.

Questions about mailing letters, flats or parcels prepared by the agency should be directed to Danny Pauley of the Central Mail Office at 558-2333 or e-mail at DPauley@wvadmin.gov.

Questions about options for mass mailings prepared by the Data Center should be directed to Cathy McClung at 558-0855 or e-mail at CMcClung@wvadmin.gov.

Food Tax Reduction Eases West Virginians Tax Burden

Last month, West Virginians were given some tax relief, thanks to Gov. Joe Manchin III and the State Legislature.

The sales tax on food and food ingredients for human consumption was reduced from five percent to four percent. Prepared food, along with food sold through vending machines and soft drinks, however, remains at six percent.

This is the second food tax reduction since Gov. Manchin took office, resulting in an overall reduction of one-third percent of the food tax within the past two years.



Internship Program Continued from Page 1

Ravikiran Muvva, a graduate student at West Virginia University (WVU) majoring in health care administration, works for the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA). He works with disease management programs, performing data analysis. "The program offers great opportunities for building a career," he said.

Matthew McDaniel, a sophomore at WVU Tech majoring in computer science and mathematics, also works at PEIA with automating database functions. He creates databases and programs to replace paper processes. "I turned down a higher paying job for one related to my field," he said.

Travis Ratcliff, a senior at WVU Tech majoring in technology management, works for the Office of Technology with the server team, creating network logon forms and assisting in networking issues. He said he has learned valuable life skills and how to conduct himself appropriately on the job. He feels this program is vital for students needing confidence in their skills before graduating.

Timothy Abraham, a summa cum laude WVU graduate with degrees in political science and multi-disciplinary studies, has worked for the Cabinet Secretary's Office for three years, assisting Secretary Ferguson and the legal staff. He plans to attend WVU Law School next fall. "This program is a great opportunity for West Virginia college students to gain exceptional first-hand experience in state government that

helps prepare us for the real world after graduation," he said.

David Beaufort, a junior at the University of Charleston majoring in computer information systems, works at the Purchasing Division on web-based projects and a variety of computer related tasks. "I want people to know this is a great program for college students because they gain hands-on work experience and knowledge while working with different state agencies," he said.

Jeffrey Pratt, a senior majoring in computer science at Marshall University, works for the Office of Technology on an e-government initiative targeting counties and municipalities throughout West Virginia. "The events provided during this program during the summer offer students learning opportunities that they may not have elsewhere," he said.

Afton Hutson, a WVU law student working for the department's general counsel, performs legal research, drafts legal pleadings and works with the Pharmaceutical Cost Management Council. "I'm glad to get this kind of legal experience. I have enjoyed the program and the events as well," she said.

Andrew Dawson, a senior majoring in finance at Marshall University, works for the Finance Division by performing data entry and assisting with the mail distribution. "Once I graduate, I hope to land a job with an investment firm," he said. "I think the program is a great opportunity for college students looking for real work experience."

Steve Broadwater Jr., a cum laude graduate from Bethany College with a bachelor's degree in political science, plans to attend WVU Law School in August. Working for the Public Defenders' Appellate Advocacy Division, he summarizes trial transcripts and performs legal research. "I have learned a great deal. It is preparing me for law school," he said.

Michael Cary, a University of Charleston graduate with a major in english and double minor in history and leadership, performs various tasks in the Cabinet Secretary's Office. "This program matches the interns' interests with the needs of the agencies and prepares students for the jobs of tomorrow with a bright future for our state's next generation," he said.

Katie Harper, a sophomore at Marshall University majoring in public relations and business management, works for PEIA. She performs public relations duties. "The insight I have gained in the world of public relations is something not easily replaced or learned from a college textbook or course," she said.

Jeff Bass, a Fairmont State University student majoring in information systems, works for the Office of Technology at the William R. Sharpe Jr. Hospital. He assists with user hardware and software problems and with new equipment implementation. "Even though I am older and have been in the workforce for a long time, this program has opened doors that might not have happened otherwise," he said.

The Department of Administration appreciates our interns and wishes them the best in their future pursuits.



Pictured: (l-r) Travis Ratcliff, Jeffrey Pratt and Steve Broadwater. Three interns have been assigned to the Department of Administration agencies located off the Capitol campus. All of these students have expressed their pleasure with their internship experience.

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

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Governor

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Ferguson Jr.**
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Diane Holley
*Communication
Director/Editor*

Production
Debbie Harrison
Tony O'Leary

Special Thanks
Betsy Chapman
Cathy McClung
Kaye Parks



Governor's Executive Order Requires New Hires to Pass Drug Screen Test

Gov. Joe Manchin III has issued an Executive Order calling for new hires of the Executive Branch to pass a drug-screening test before starting employment.

The initiative, the Governor said, brings West Virginia state government in line with private industry and many other public agencies that screen potential employees for illegal drug use. This Order requires the Division of Personnel to create the policy which applies to agencies that report to the Office of the Governor.

This Division of Personnel policy will apply to state employees, independent con-

tractors and volunteers engaged in any work or service-related activity that affects the performance of state agency business.

"West Virginians deserve and almost always get dependable, quality public employees for their hard-earned taxpayer dollars," Manchin said. "Certainly, illegal drug use by our employees is unacceptable by any standard. This simple measure will lower the risk of hiring people who are unfit for their jobs due to drug use.

"It holds our new employees to the same standards that are in place in most of the business world, and should help to reduce workplace injuries, poor morale and lax work habits that coincide with drug abuse."

The Order requires all prospective employees to submit to a drug screening test after the state agency has extended a conditional offer of employment.

Test results cannot be used for law-enforcement purposes and will be kept private, consistent with state confidentiality laws and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. The employing agency is responsible for the cost of the initial drug-screening test.

Fresh Fruit Fridays Coming to the Capitol

Capitol Market Brings Variety of Home-Grown Offerings on State Capitol Campus Each Week



BRIM's Sue McMinn took a day off to spend with her granddaughter, Jordan, at the Capitol Market. The two then went home and fixed a fresh vegetable dinner. It was Jordan's first time to string beans and shuck corn.

The Capitol Market at the State Capitol campus is back again this year offering state employees the opportunity to acquire fresh vegetables during their lunch breaks. The market is open every Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. through September 5.

For the third consecutive year, the Capitol Market has proven successful. In fact, the Department of Agriculture has expanded this event to include "Fresh Fruit Fridays" during the month of August.

First Lady Gayle Manchin and Agriculture Commissioner Gus Douglass kicked off the event on July 18. The Capitol Market coincides with the First Lady's Healthy Lifestyles Initiative program and the Department of Agriculture's on-going effort to promote the state's farmers' markets.

Sue McMinn of the Board of Risk and Insurance Management decided to take a day off to spend with her 10-year-old granddaughter, Jordan. Together, they visited the opening day of the Capitol Market and, while shopping for produce, watched the ThistleDew farm owner, Steve Conlon of Proctor,

perform his Bee Bearded Man demonstration.

"We bought fresh corn, green beans, tomatoes and peaches," said McMinn. "Jordan had never strung beans or shucked corn. We fixed a fresh vegetable dinner and she had a ball. We ate the corn on the cob without salt or butter. It was so sweet and delicious. Now she wants to move to a farm. It was worth the day off to spend time with her."

Other state agencies have assisted in the effort to bring the Capitol Market to the Capitol campus, including the Department of Health and Human Resources, Division of

Continued on Page 6

Department of Administration Personnel Assist in Key Transaction to Reduce Teachers Retirement System

The state's Teacher Retirement System got a huge boost recently thanks to the efforts of several Department of Administration personnel.

Cabinet Secretary of Administration Robert Ferguson and General Counsel Jim Kirby were instrumental in the state's sale of its tobacco securitization bonds for approximately \$911 million with \$807.5 million of it dedicated to Teacher Retirement System (TRS).

The transaction was the result of the work performed by the Tobacco Settlement Finance Authority (TSFA), which is chaired by Secretary Ferguson. The TSFA council was created by legislation passed during the 2007 Regular Session of the State Legislature, with the intent to address the underfunded teacher's fund.

Kirby had accompanied Deputy Chief of Staff Joe Martin to New York City to oversee the sale which was outlined and guided by the work of the TSFA and its team of professionals.

With the sale and other dedicated contributions made since taking office, Governor Manchin said at a press conference that the state can pay off the TRS debt at a "manageable" \$285 million per year.

Without the bond sale and past work, the state's obligation to the debt would increase annually until its final payment of

\$724 million in 2034. This will save state taxpayers more than \$2.5 billion.

"What we have done is we have ensured the future of West Virginia, our children, and our grandchildren, in not having to bare the burden of this debt. I had said when I first came in office we must manage our debts responsibly, and not pass on the sins of the past into future generations, we have done that and done it in a responsible manner," Governor Manchin said.

The governor recognized Secretary Ferguson and Kirby during the press conference announcing the transaction was complete. Also attending and speaking at the press conference were members of the teacher and school service personnel unions.

West Virginia is among 46 states that settled with the nation's four largest cigarette makers in 1998 to recoup health care funds spent treating tobacco-related illnesses.



General Counsel Jim Kirby (far left) and Secretary Ferguson join Gov. Joe Manchin and Deputy Chief of Staff Joe Martin at a press conference announcing the approximate \$911 million bond sale, \$807.5 million of which was dedicated to the state's Teacher Retirement System.

Surplus Property Auction Scheduled for Aug. 4

The West Virginia State Agency for Surplus Property (WVSASP) will conduct its next absolute auction Saturday, August 4. The auction site is at 2700 Charles Avenue in Dunbar.

The auction gates open at 9 a.m., with the sale beginning at 10 a.m. For additional information and a list of merchandise to be sold, please contact WVSASP at (304) 766-2626 or toll-free at (800) 576-7587.

Please note that property will not be awarded through the weekly sealed bid process the week immediately preceding the public auction. Specific merchandise advertised for this public auction will not be available for sealed bids. There are no minimum bids at the auction. State employees, with the exception of Purchasing Division employees, are allowed to participate in the sale.



Surplus Property has scheduled an absolute auction for Saturday, Aug. 4 at 2700 Charles Avenue in Dunbar. Gates open at 9 a.m. with the auction beginning at 10 a.m.

Capitol Market on Campus
Continued from Page 4

Natural Resources, Department of Administration, Division of Motor Vehicles, Department of Education and Office of Public Defenders Services.

For more details on the Capitol Market, contact Tony Richard of the Department of Agriculture at 558-0185 or trichard@ag.state.wv.us.



The Capitol Market is back in full swing offering employees at the Capitol campus the opportunity to acquire fresh vegetables during their lunch breaks each Wednesday from 11:30-1:00 until September 5.

Staying Well...
HealthNotes

Study: Sleep improves memory, learning

While your conscious mind is off duty as you sleep, your brain cells are on a path of their own. Researchers note that during sleep, brain activity processes information learned during the day. Brain cells replay the memory during deep sleep, and that replay makes memory stronger. Moreso, because most Americans don't get the recommended minimum of seven hours of sleep a night, they could realize attention lapses and poorer recall of facts from the previous day.

Welcome!...to our new employees: **Tina Eddy, Dawni Mullins,** and **Tami Reed** (all of CPRB); **Jose Molinar, James Easley,** and **Therman Mullins** (all of Technology); **Richard Miller** (General Services); **Lisa Moten** (Personnel); **Kim Painter** and **Theresa Jones** (Real Estate). Please note that **Bob Kilpatrick** transferred from the Finance Division to General Services Division. Other transfers related to the consolidation efforts within the Office of Technology. These employees transferred from the Department of Commerce to our department: **James Amos, Bill Ferguson, Phillip Hart, Jeremy Nicholson,** and **Teddy Thompson.**

Best Wishes...to the following employees who resigned from our department: **Linda Lyter** (Finance), **Christy Romeo** (Personnel), **Timothy Moore** (CPRB), **Tonya Devontenno** (CPRB), **Gerald Burgy** (General Services), **Roger Bailey** (General Services) and **James Kelemen** (PEIA).

Best Wishes...to the following employees who retired from our department: **Jim Casto** and **Roger Paxton** (both of the General Services Division). Enjoy your retirement!

PEOPLE TALK

Baby News...Congratulations to Purchasing's **Roberta Wagner,** the proud grandmother of Youssif Amr Elrahimy. He was born on June 25, weighing 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was 20 inches long.

Patience...

Have patience in all things, but chiefly have patience in yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them. Every day begin the task anew.

St. Francis de Sales

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in August

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2 Gary Burns Technology | 18 Mike Sheets Purchasing |
| 3 Butch Chittum Purchasing | Beverly Toler Purchasing |
| Jack Rogers Public Defenders | 19 Annie Anderson Technology |
| 4 Rosa McFarland ... Public Defenders | Bob Krause Gen. Svcs. |
| Mark Miller CPRB | Donna Price Technology |
| Sabrina Snead Technology | David Tincher Purchasing |
| Jim Wells Personnel | Michael Usher Technology |
| 6 Pam Gunter WVCHIP | 20 Robert Fisher BRIM |
| Shelia Straley Finance | Bryant Reynolds Technology |
| 7 Patricia Bowgren CPRB | Carla Taylor Gen. Svcs. |
| Michele Null Technology | 21 Cynthia Dillon Finance |
| 8 Kellie Carper Public Defender | Tim Miller Purchasing |
| Robin Chambers Finance | 22 Cindy Smith Technology |
| Kristi Strader Purchasing | 23 Bryan Hoffman Finance |
| 9 Melissa Jarvis CPRB | 24 Frances Buchanan PEIA |
| 10 Linda Dexter BRIM | Rebecca Whyte Technology |
| Larry Meninger Technology | 25 Carol Carpenter Technology |
| 11 Don Patterson Technology | Tammy Patton CPRB |
| 12 Ed Nelson Technology | Bonnie Walker Personnel |
| 13 Phillip Debruyne Technology | 26 Sheila Coughlin..Public Defenders |
| Brittany Smith CPRB | Janis Reynolds Grievance |
| Darrell Stephenson Gen. Svcs. | 27 Glen Smith Technology |
| 14 Marita Dean Technology | Gerald Stricklen Gen. Svcs. |
| Pam James Technology | 28 Michael Austin Purchasing |
| Richard LeMasters Technology | Greg Ganoe Technology |
| Richard Wickert Technology | 29 Candace Vance PEIA |
| 15 Marilyn Padon Technology | 30 Elizabeth Humphreys.Technology |
| 16 Nancy Baire Technology | Nancy Stark Technology |
| Cynthia Good Technology | Claudia White CPRB |
| Joyce Larrabee Technology | 31 Sharon Carte WVCHIP |
| 18 Chris Bostick Aviation | Cynthia Dotson PEIA |
| Jim Hicks Technology | Debra Rayburn Aviation |

