

# Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration

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## Employee of the Month

### General Services' Ashby Admired by Peers and Customers

**JENNINGS ASHBY**, a grounds keeper for the General Services Division, has been selected as the Department of Administration's **Employee of the Month** for July.

A 22-year employee of state government, Ashby is responsible for maintaining the grounds at the headquarters of the Department of Environmental Protection Agency in Kanawha City.

His duties includes maintaining the lawn as well as planting new vegetation, mulching, fertilizing, watering

and pruning the flowering plants, trees and shrubs. He also rakes and mulches the leaves in the fall and clears the snow from the walkways and parking lot in the winter.

"Jennings does an outstanding job maintaining our grounds," according to one DEP employee. "Our residential neighbors have noticed and commented on how nice our grounds look and routinely compliment Jennings' work."

Another DEP employee added, "He has done an ex-

cellent job and is always willing to help out whenever we need an extra hand. Both his work ethic and personality make him the type of employee every agency wants."

In his spare time, Ashby enjoys hunting and fishing.

Ashby will be joined by his friends and co-workers at a special ceremony presented by Cabinet Secretary Rob Ferguson at 11 a.m. on Thursday, July 3, in the Capitol rotunda.



**JENNINGS ASHBY**  
July Employee of the Month



### Ride Share Program Offers State Workers Economic, Social Value

Marie Butler remembers when she began commuting from her home in Parkersburg to her job at the Capitol in Charleston. It was 2003, and gas was \$1.59 a gallon.

Five years later, with gas prices at \$4 a gallon and threatening to climb ever higher, Butler said carpooling just makes more and more sense. Butler, who oversees the Ride Share program, said she has seen a sharp increase in the number of state employees interested in participating.

The Division of Energy began the program in the 1980s, with a giant map to keep track of participants and areas, and posting up notices looking for those interested in joining. But things fell to the wayside until Hurricanes Katrina and Rita struck in 2005. The storms battered oil refineries

in the Southeast, and the result was skyrocketing prices at the pumps.

"We decided to resurrect the entire program," said Butler, who is an executive secretary in the Division of Energy.

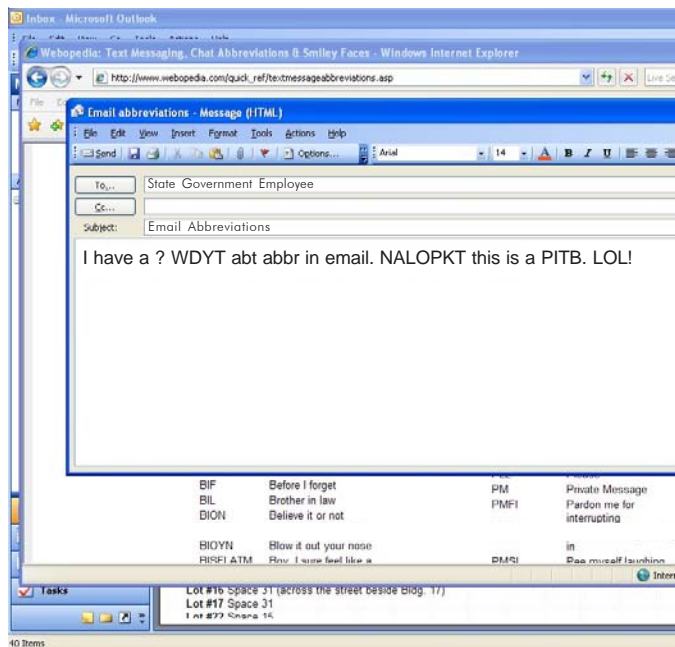
Since the program's return, Butler said she has seen a marked increase in interest, with 91 active members in the database.

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## Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- ◆ E-mail Etiquette Important in the Workplace
- ◆ Update on Teachers Retirement
- ◆ Department Participates in Governor's Summer Internship Program
- ◆ Food Tax Drops to Total of 3 Percent
- ◆ COOP Update

# Remember that E-mail Talk is "NSFW" ... Meaning, *"Not Safe For Work"*



**THX** = thanks  
**K** = OK  
**U** = you  
**THRU** = through  
**LOL** = laughing out loud

In this age of multi-tasking and hurried scheduling, e-mail has often replaced phone calls or face-to-face meetings as a source of communication for many of us. But with that increased pace has also come an increased laxness in how we communicate, with a variety of abbreviations substituting for

the actual words.

What began as something in personal text messaging on cell phones has found its way into professional e-mail, said Lisa Moten, a Development Consultant with the Organization and Human Resource Development section of the Division of Personnel.

"Text messaging has gained its greatest popularity among the Millennial generation," Moten said, referring to the generation born from 1982 to 1997. Because it is a generation so accustomed to the speed and efficiency of text messaging, using quick abbreviations for longer words and phrases, that generation has begun to incorporate the same into work e-mail.

But Moten said many see the inclusion of text messaging abbreviations as part of a breakdown in corporate communication. Moten said she was once told by an executive from chicken giant Tyson that the biggest challenge in the business world was finding job candidates with strong communication skills, ranging from e-mails to letters.

Moten said e-mail is often used when the person should just be picking up the phone and making a call.

"E-mail should be used primarily when you are looking for quick, simple information," she said. Instead, it is often used for overly long messages. And because it is typed rather than spoken, it has a "universal tone" that often picks up whatever the reader is feeling at that moment. Sometimes that can be positive, she said, but if the reader is having a difficult or stressful time, it can reflect poorly on the intent of the e-mail.

Moten explained that the line between personal and business communication is a sharp one, and should rarely be crossed. She said all workplace communication should follow typical protocols of proper sentence structure and gram-

mar since e-mails, like any written piece of communication, is open and available to public scrutiny.

"At work, you are a representative of state government," she said. "When you show up in the morning, that is how you should behave."

## Eight Deadly Sins of E-mail

In the Division of Personnel program, **E-mail Etiquette**, Moten points out the "eight deadly sins of e-mail," according to David Shipley and Will Schwalbe, authors of "SEND: The Essential Guide to E-mail for Office and Home."

1. The e-mail that is unbelievably vague.
2. The e-mail that insults you so badly you have to get up from your desk and you pace and then you have to tell someone about it.
3. The e-mail that puts you in jail.
4. The e-mail that is cowardly.
5. The e-mail that won't go away.
6. The e-mail that is so sarcastic you have to get up from your desk.
7. The e-mail that is too casual.
8. The e-mail that is inappropriate.

**What may make for an easy and quick read in an e-mail message to friends makes for unprofessional and poor correspondence in business e-mails and corporate communications.**



**Celebrating Our Nation's Independence**

State employees will be able to enjoy Friday, July 4, as a state holiday, in observation of Independence Day.

# More Than 15,000 Switch Teacher Pension Plans

More than 78 percent of the participants in the Teachers' Defined Contribution (TDC) plan voted to transfer their pensions into the Teachers' Retirement System, surpassing the 65 percent needed to allow the process to take place.

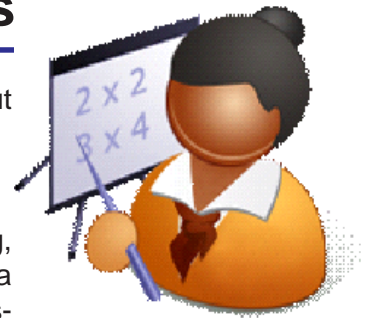
The final tally was 14,871 TDC members of nearly 19,000 eligible education employees, as well as 281 members who are no

longer employed in TDC-covered jobs, opted to move out of the 401(k)-style plans.

Because the percentage of transfers was more than 75 percent, a state subsidy will ensure that participants receive full benefits under the TRS plan. The funding, which will come as an appropriation by the West Virginia Legislature, was addressed during the recent Special Session of the Legislature.

The traditional pension plan requires members to contribute six percent of their wages, compared to 4 ½ percent for the TDC plan. The subsidy will allow transfers to pay only the difference in the contribution rates.

For more information on the teacher pension plan switch, visit the Consolidated Public Retirement Board's Web site at <http://www.wvretirement.com>.



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## Ride Share Program Continued from Page 1

Following a story in a Charleston newspaper, 11 people contacted Butler to find out more about joining, she said.

Butler said Ride Share is not responsible for assigning rides, but rather for having a database where participants can make arrangements to carpool with other state employees,

“Overall, people who do participate are very satisfied that they have somewhere they can find potential carpoolers,” she said.

Database information indicates that the Ravenswood/Ripley area is the most populated with carpoolers, Butler said. And a recent survey found participants are saving a combined \$1,200 in gas and other related auto expenses.

But an added value to the experience is social, Butler said. It offers participants a chance to interact with a new group of people they might not have ever met, despite often living and working in the same areas.

“They have made new friends, new contacts, and they enjoy having someone to ride with of the mornings and evenings,” she said.

That is a plus for the participants, Butler said, most of whom want to see the program and involvement grow. “That has been the hardest thing, to get the program out there and advertised,” she said.

With the increased attention to the program, Butler said she has been able to dispel myths about state employees. “A lot of people think if you work on the campus, you live close by, and that is not true,” she said. “We all do not live in Charleston.”

For additional information on the program, visit [www.energywv.org/rideshare.html](http://www.energywv.org/rideshare.html).



**Record-high gas prices has brought a renewed interest in the Ride Share program for state employees. State officials indicate that nearly 100 state employees participate in the Ride Share program. Pictured participants include (l-r) Mike Sheets of the Purchasing Division; Kim Walton of WorkForce WV; and Barbara Smith of the Division of Motor Vehicles.**

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

**Joe Manchin III**  
Governor

**Robert W. Ferguson Jr.**  
Cabinet Secretary

**Diane Holley**  
Communication Director/Editor

**Production**  
Tony O'Leary  
Chad Williamson

**Special Thanks**  
Kaye Parks

## Governor's Internship Program

# Internship Program Pairs State Agencies with State's Brightest College Students



The Department of Administration participates in the Governor's Internship Program. Some of our interns include (l-r) Casey Hill, Valerie Bevens, Jeremy Azevedo, Justin Kay, Nicola Barrett, Rebecca Wass, Ben Wood and Chris Bailey.

Each summer, the Governor's Internship Program pairs many of our state's best and brightest college students with state agencies, allowing the interns to gain valuable knowledge and networking opportunities in a real-world work environment.

Twelve program participants have been working in several of our department's agencies this summer and more are expected to begin later this month. "The 60-plus interns we have this summer in the Governor's Internship Program are West Virginia's most outstanding young citizens. We must give them the opportunities to excel and to pursue the goals that they have set for themselves and provide that here in our great state," said Ray Sanders, the program's director. "This program provides those opportunities."

Below is a brief introduction to our department's interns:

**JEREMY AZEVEDO**, a sophomore at West Virginia University (WVU) Institute of Technology working at the Office of Technology, assists in critical migra-

tions, specifically account management and storage. A first year intern participant, the Pinch native is majoring in computer science.

**CHRIS BAILEY**, a second-year student at the WVU College of Law with an undergraduate degree in accounting, is working for the Ethics Commission, writing memorandums, advisory opinions and doing research on the Ethics Acts.

**NICOLA BARRETT**, a native of Hanover, Jamaica and University of Charleston graduate with a degree in accounting and finance, works for the Consolidated Public Retirement Board. Her duties include calculating and reconciling pension calculations, prepare invoices and reconcile balance overtime pay.

"The Governor's Internship Program is a wonderful learning experience," she said. "I get to work with some

*Continued on Page 5*

## **FIRE! FIRE! Safety Training Prepares CPRB Employees**



Captain Kevin Robertson, center, of the Charleston Fire Department instructed the Consolidated Public Retirement Board employees on fire safety and proper use of fire extinguishers on June 11. The CPRB employees were given the opportunity to put out a controlled fire using a fire extinguisher as part of the instruction. Angela Long, right, an Account Tech IV with the Accounting Department, tests her fire-extinguishing skills in the CPRB parking lot.

## Changes in State Ethics Law Addressed in Publication

A newsletter recently published by the Ethics Commission addresses the most recent changes made to the state's Ethics Law. The **West Virginia Ethics Review**, which is available for download on the commission's Web site at [www.wvethicscommission.org/newsletter.htm](http://www.wvethicscommission.org/newsletter.htm), covers changes made effective by House Bill 4524, signed into law on March 27, said Lucy Suchy, a spokeswoman for the commission.

Changes include voting by elected and appointed officials, "revolving door" rules, accepting gifts, interests in public contracts, frequent traveler points and lobbyist training requirements. The newsletter is also mailed to more than 6,000 individuals from public service districts, cities, counties, and school boards, Suchy said. "We encourage people to print out the newsletter and share it," she said.

For more information, contact the Ethics Commission at 558-0664 or e-mail at [ethics@wv.gov](mailto:ethics@wv.gov).

## Internship Program Continued from Page 4

great people. There is nothing better than learning from the best."

**VALERIE BEVANS**, a senior at WVU majoring in accounting and minoring in Spanish, is working at the Office of Technology. She is responsible for entering and editing state telephone bill data in Excel format. A Charleston native, Bevans plans to attend graduate school after completing earning her undergraduate degree.

"I think the Governor's Internship is a good opportunity to gain work experience and make networking contacts within the state," she said.

**DREW BLAKE**, a Parkersburg native working for the Office of Technology, is assisting with technical support and inventory assignments.

"I'm grateful to be a part of the Governor's Internship Program," said the Marshall University sophomore majoring in computer and information technology, "because it allows me to see what I might actually be doing with the degree I am working toward by placing me in a related professional environment."

**KYLE HICKERNELL**, a junior at the WVU Institute of Technology, is also working for the Office of Technology. He provides desktop support to the end-users, which involves assisting with software or hardware problems. A St. Albans native majoring in computer

science, Hicker-nell is a first-year intern in the program.

**CASEY HILL**, a junior majoring in computer engineering at WVU, is working in the Purchasing Division. As part of his internship, Hill is assisting Web site maintenance, editing and updating mainframe data and providing technical support to the division's employees and customers. He is a resident of St. Albans and a first-year intern with the program.

**JUSTIN KAY**, a senior at Marshall University majoring in business management, is working in the Cabinet Secretary's office. The Cross Lanes native plans to work in a management position in the music industry upon graduation.

**REBECCA WASS**, a graduate school student in business administration at Marshall University Graduate College, is working for the Consolidated Public Retirement Board. She is currently creating procedural manuals for the loans, payroll and accounting departments. Wass plans to earn a doctorate degree upon completing her master's program. A native of North Tonawanda, N.Y., Wass currently resides in Dunbar and is a first-year intern in the program.

"The day that I interviewed for this position, the receptionist told me that this was a fun office and the people



working here were fun and easy to get along with. She was correct," she said. "While I've only been here a short time, I have really enjoyed the workers, the atmosphere, and the job itself."

**BEN WOOD**, a junior at the WVU Institute of Technology majoring in history and government, is working in the Cabinet Secretary's Office. Wood, a Beckley native and first-year intern in the program, plans to attend graduate school, upon completing his undergraduate degree.

**BERNIE WORLEY**, a second-year law student at the WVU College of Law, is working in the Cabinet Secretary's Office. A Beckley native, Worley is a first-year intern in the program.

"These interns represent the best and brightest from our universities and colleges. It is our sincere hope that their experiences this summer will lead some of them to a career in public service," said Cabinet Secretary Rob Ferguson.

The Department of Administration wishes these students the best of luck in their career pursuits.

## State Food Tax Drops to 3 Percent

As food prices climb, every penny counts. **But, there is good news!**



Effective July 1, the food sales tax drops to 3 percent. The decrease in the tax, spearheaded by Gov. Joe Manchin, has gradually been reduced by one percentage point from its original 6 percent since 2005.

"Putting food on the table is not a luxury, it is a necessity," said the governor. "Food prices across the globe are increasing. We can help lift the financial strain here at home by lowering the state's food tax to 3 percent."

The reduction provides a savings of at least \$75 million for West Virginians. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American family of four spends \$4,833 annually on groceries. By lowering the food tax from 6 percent to 3 percent, the average family saves \$145 a year.

More details may be found on the Tax Division's Web site at [www.state.wv.us/taxdiv](http://www.state.wv.us/taxdiv).

## COOP Completion Gets Closer



Agencies within the Department of Administration have reached their first milestone in completing the first version of a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), which will serve as a blueprint if an emergency were to disrupt daily operations.

Agency representatives have been meeting for several months to develop contingency plans and have submitted their first drafts for review to the Department of Administration COOP task force. "We were very pleased with all the COOP plans submitted by all the agencies," said Penney Hall, one of the task force members along with Director Chuck Jones of Board of Insurance and Risk Management and Tim Abraham of the Secretary's office. "We have taken all the first drafts and developed a checklist to identify areas that needed more detail with each agency. Each agency's COOP team is now in the process of modifying where needed."

Once the task force is satisfied with the plans, it will assemble all agency COOPs into one uniform overall plan for the department. Hall said the first COOP editions were completed at the end of May. "There is still much work to be done. It seems the more work we do, the more details we realize that have need addressed," Hall said.

One thing is certain, she said. The COOP will not be a "one-and-done" document. "It will always be a living document," Hall said. "The next big step for the COOP plan will be when the plan can actually be tested." More details will be forthcoming.

**Welcome!...**to our new employees: **Tim Graley**, **Ryan Jett**, **Michael Manning**, and **Robert Surface** (all of the Office of Technology), **Joseph Bolar** and **Bill Rheinlander** (both of the PEIA), **James Foster**, **Terry Parsons**, and **Jonathan Trout** (all of General Services) and **Kristy Hill** (CPRB).

**Time To Relax...**After years of hard work, the following employees are now ready to kick back and relax. Those employees who recently retired from our department include: **Robert Henry** of the Office of Technology, and **Bill Thaxton** and **Kenny Young**, both of the General Services Division.

**Best Wishes...**to our employees who recently resigned from our department: **Juan Haynes**, **David Johnson**, and **Tom Lambert** (all of General Services); **Jane Patterson** (Finance); **Rebecca Whyte**, **Pat Huffman**, **Michael Belcher** (all of the Office of Technology); and **Michael Cary** (Real Estate).

**In Sadness...**The Department of Administration sadly notes that **Robin Scruggs** of the Public Employees Insurance Agency passed away. Our thoughts are with her friends and family.

**WV Public Employees Day Care...**The day care located at 301 Jefferson Street in Charleston, near the Capitol, is now enrolling for 3- and 4-year olds. If interested, call 348-6580.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ... in July

- |    |                                   |    |                                  |
|----|-----------------------------------|----|----------------------------------|
| 1  | Jeff Bird ..... Technology        | 18 | Katherine Martin .... Technology |
|    | Patty Johns ..... Finance         | 20 | Brian Jeffrey ..... Technology   |
|    | Mike Riggs ..... Technology       | 21 | Heather Atkins..Public Defender  |
|    | Don Sanders ..... Gen. Svcs.      |    | Lee Ann Halstead ..... PEIA      |
| 2  | Teddy Thompson ..... Technology   |    | Dawn Mahan ..... CPRB            |
| 3  | Nathan Merritt ..... Technology   |    | Thadd Robinson .... Technology   |
|    | David Oliverio ..... Gen. Svcs.   |    | Stacey Shamblin ..... CHIP       |
| 5  | Priscilla Bickley ..... PEIA      | 22 | Earl Guthrie ..... Gen. Svcs.    |
|    | Lora Reese ..... Finance          |    | Rita Withrow ..... Purchasing    |
|    | Kristi Short ..... Technology     | 23 | John Gibson ..... Technology     |
|    | Paula Van Horn ..... CPRB         |    | Mike Michaelson ... Gen. Svcs.   |
|    | Roger Williams ..... Technology   |    | Crickett Powell ..... Grievance  |
| 6  | Debbie Anderson ..... Personnel   |    | Brian Pratt ..... Technology     |
|    | Tony Easley ..... Gen. Svcs.      | 24 | Lori Bailey ..... BRIM           |
| 8  | Tim Abraham ..... Sec. Office     |    | Yvonne Wilhelm ..... Personnel   |
|    | Robert Norvell ..... Technology   | 25 | Ray Jordan ..... Gen. Svcs.      |
| 9  | Martha Belcher ..... Finance      | 26 | J.C. Erby ..... Gen. Svcs.       |
| 10 | Theresa King ..... CPRB           |    | Delores Huffman .... Personnel   |
| 11 | Crystal Cunningham ..... PEIA     |    | Kim Long ..... PEIA              |
|    | Penney Hall ..... Sec. Office     |    | Lisa Moten ..... Personnel       |
|    | Kevin Kinder ..... Technology     | 27 | Lessie Chapman ... Technology    |
|    | Candy Moore ..... CPRB            |    | Kelli Doyle ..... Technology     |
|    | Kim Painter ..... Real Estate     |    | Joyce Kinder ..... Technology    |
|    | Bryan Ramsdell ..... Technology   |    | Sue McMinn ..... BRIM            |
|    | James Weathersbee .. Technology   |    | Denise Russe ..... Technology    |
| 12 | Jamie Cartwright ..... Technology |    | Mario Torres ..... Finance       |
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|    | Tina Holmes ..... Technology      | 28 | Tom Marchio ..... PEIA           |
|    | Jack Pullen ..... Technology      |    | Barbara Randolph ..... PEIA      |
|    | Ken Smith ..... Gen. Svcs.        |    | Ray Richardson .... Technology   |
| 15 | Mable Jones ..... Finance         |    | Rob West ..... Technology        |
| 16 | Suzanne Lopez ..... Technology    | 29 | Krista Ferrell ..... Purchasing  |
|    | Terasa Miller ..... CPRB          |    | Tammy Haynes ..... Technology    |
|    | Margo Perkins ..... PEIA          |    | Theresa Kline ..... CPRB         |
| 17 | Romona Allen ..... CHIP           |    | Mick Olah ..... Technology       |
|    | Bob Kilpatrick ..... Gen. Svcs.   |    | Shaun Pierce ..... Technology    |
|    | Philip Skeen ..... Technology     |    | Danny Sizemore .. Gen. Svcs.     |
|    | Stan Stewart ..... Gen. Svcs.     |    | Barry Williams ..... Gen. Svcs.  |
|    | Jacqueline West ..... Ethics      | 30 | Denise Spatafore .... Grievance  |
| 18 | Sue Lore ..... Technology         | 31 | David Mason ..... BRIM           |
|    |                                   |    | Shaun Neidlinger ... Technology  |

