

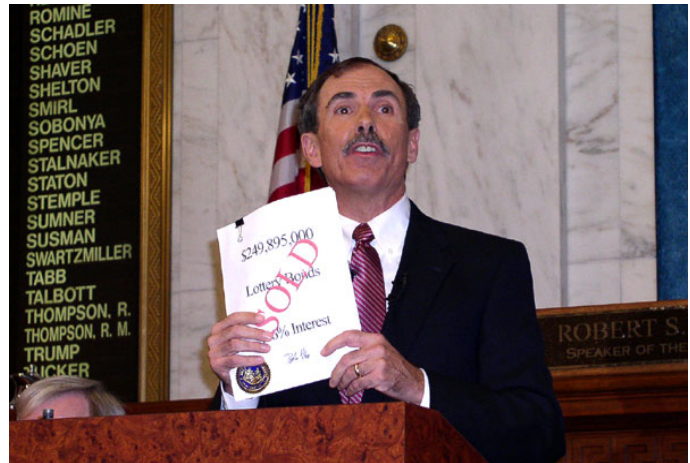
State of State Address Stresses More Hard Work

On January 14, 2004, Governor Bob Wise presented the last of his term's State of the State Addresses to the citizens of West Virginia and to a packed house consisting of members of the State Legislature, the Board of Public Works, our Supreme Court Justices, U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller, U.S. Congressman Alan Mollohan, and a number of guests.

The Governor began with remembrances and thankful acknowledgments – among them, former PFC **Jessica Lynch**, West Virginia Air National Guard representative **SSgt. Marlon Leftwich**, and WV Army National Guard representative **Benjamin Gentry III**, all of whom were present and introduced. He spoke of honoring all soldiers, and included remembrances for all veterans as he reminded us of the groundbreaking in Clarksburg last October for the first Veterans Nursing Home in the State. Wise then asked for a moment of silence for three well-known public servants who passed away recently: **Delegate A. James Manchin**, **ABCA Commissioner Tom Keeley**, and **Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Tony DeRaimo**.

As he delved into the meat of his speech, Wise reassured his audience that West Virginia was strong by telling them that even though 21 states in the country had subjected public employees to furlough, layoff, or early

retirement, West Virginia has avoided financial disaster by ad-



Governor Bob Wise proudly announces during his State of the State Address the release of over \$235 million in grant money to help fund 47 job creation projects

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New in Stateline!

We're Using Links to Keep You Connected

Beginning with this month's issue of *Stateline*, you'll notice an improvement – we've added internet links at appropriate places in our online version. Anywhere you see underscored text (i.e., a web address or word like www.wv.gov or [PEIA](#)), it will more than likely, but not always, link to a webpage or document. Don't worry about the color of the text; the underscoring is the key indicator.

With this improvement, we hope you'll find reading and using our newsletter, and retrieving information, much easier.

Glenville State College Has New President

Photo from Glenville State College's webpage (www.glenville.wvnet.edu).

Last month, after an extensive search that drew numerous applications, the Glenville State College (GSC) Board of Directors named Dr. Robert N. Freeman as the college's 22nd president. His appointment was announced in early December 2003, and he officially took the position on January 1.



Dr. Robert Freeman


Freeman was serving as interim president prior to his appointment. He also served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Glenville. Prior to his arrival at GSC, he held faculty and administrative positions at Augusta State University and Georgia Southern University in Georgia, Bowling Green State University in Ohio, and the University of Tennessee (UT) in Tennessee. He earned a doctorate in special education from UT.


Freeman and his wife, Sandy, reside in Glenville.


Tips for a Safer Working Environment


Contributed by Jay Smithers of the Division of Protective Services.


The Division of Protective Services is progressing with the implementation of enhanced security systems/services at the State Capitol Complex. Electronic door locks and card readers on external doors have been installed in 15 buildings around the complex. In a continued effort to provide a more safe and secure working environment, the Division offers the following:


 When at the Capitol Complex, always have your employee photo ID physically available and preferably visible. Encourage coworkers to do the same.


 Take care of your proximity (access) card as if it is a key to your home. **Do not lend your card to anyone for any reason.** Once card readers were installed and access cards were issued, the traditional keys were rendered useless and should no longer be carried.


 Many of the doors and door frames in the buildings are antiquated and subject to changes in the weather. **When you enter or leave, please ensure the door closes behind you and is properly secured.**

 Know the hours for which your access card has been programmed to unlock doors. For example, if your supervisor did not indicate that you work after public hours, weekends, and/or holidays, your card may not allow you to enter buildings during non-public hours. Protective Services officers and contract security guards are not authorized to let individuals enter buildings without proper access cards and employee photo IDs.

 When entering a secured building using an access card, **do not let others enter with you.** Although it's common courtesy to hold a door for someone, failure of the individual to submit his or her card to the reader may trigger an alarm in the Division of Protective Services' Command Center and subsequently cause an officer to unnecessarily be dispatched to investigate. If someone attempts to or actually does follow you into a building, contact a Protective Services Officer immediately at a Public Access Point or call 558-9911 to report the incident. If possible, please pay particular attention to the physical attributes of the individual such as hair color, height, a description of his or her clothing, etc.

 If you park in the State Parking Garage or on a State parking lot, be aware of your surroundings. If you sense or see something unusual, or observe someone you believe is behaving in a peculiar manner, report it immediately to a Protective Services Officer at 558-9911. During inclement weather, indigents and other less fortunate individuals seek shelter from the elements in unsecured areas. If you encounter this situation, please contact Protective Services so an officer can investigate the situation and offer assistance to the individual.

 Use extra caution when you carry a purse, briefcase, or laptop computer.

 If an emergency alarm sounds, evacuate the building immediately in an orderly fashion and report to your designated gathering area.



Officers in Building 6 check in visitor Alan Selip of the Mountaineer Race Track and Gaming Resort

DHHR's inROADS Eases Application Procedures

For the past few weeks, the Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) has been using an online application procedure for citizens needing food stamps, Medicaid, or WVCHIP benefits.

The Information Network for Resident Online Access and Delivery of Services (inROADS) allows potential clients to screen themselves for eligibility and complete the application forms. Giving citizens access through the internet has reduced time and effort for both DHHR and individuals, and alleviated congestion at county DHHR offices.

Those who don't have a home computer can access inROADS through computers at a local library. For more information or to make application, visit www.wvdhhr.org and click on the [inROADS link](#) on the right side of the page.

Wanna get away from the winter doldrums or the rat race in general? Consider a trip to Hawks Nest State Park in Ansted, West Virginia!



Hawks Nest has an internet special through February 29

**Valid Sunday thru Thursday
\$39/night, double occupancy
Includes a 10% restaurant discount**

You must use the online reservation system

<https://reservations.hawksnestsp.com/igreservations/>

to get this special rate.

Wanna view the facility before deciding. Visit their online virtual tour. The [tour link](#) is on the same webpage as the special rate information above.

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addressing the problem early with difficult choices and spending reductions. Wise projects a \$120 million shortfall for this year and in response, asked State agencies to prepare budgets for 2004-2005 with a 9% decrease. He praised the work of employees who have made suggestions to help the State reduce its cost of operations, and introduced **Andy Jensen** of Workers Compensation as a successful example. (Andy's observation of mail room procedures and his idea to expand a cost-saving procedure has saved the agency a great deal in mailing and postage costs.)

Wise told lawmakers that the budget he presented to them included ways to both reduce spending while invest in health care, jobs, and education. In the tradition he established his first year in office, Wise submitted his entire legislative agenda on the first night of the legislative session. The Governor proposed more than 30 pieces of legislation – more than any previous governor. Among his objectives are requests for:

- A 20¢ per pack increase in the tax on cigarettes and a 20% increase on the smokeless tobacco tax. Wise called these increases “modest” and indicated they would generate \$36.5 million to assist funding our Medicaid Program and double programs to help smokers quit and keep young people from starting.
- Lowering the legal limit for drunk driving to .08. West Virginia is one of only five states without this law, and because of that, we lost \$2.6 million in federal highway funds last year. By passing this law, we can regain the lost \$2.6 million and prevent the loss of an additional \$10 million. Equally as important, if not more so, passing this law will save lives.
- Requiring all ATV riders under age 18 to be required to wear helmets, and all riders under age 16 to take a State-approved safety and training course. Last year, 27 people died as a result of ATV accidents, and eight were children.
- Implementation of a one-time, 60-day tax amnesty period during which all penalties would be waived and the delinquent taxpayer would be required to pay only the tax owed plus half the interest. Wise estimates that this incentive will generate \$6-10 million which could be used to make desperately needed repairs to our State Capitol.
- Creation of a statewide tracking system to keep dangerous, expelled students from enrolling in other schools; increasing the bonus teachers receive when they achieve national certification from \$2500 to \$3500; and approval once again for the Sales Tax Holiday for parents buying back-to-school items. In addition, the Governor asked that school construction funds be made more accessible to small schools and rural districts, and that time limits for students who ride busses be lowered. Wise stated emphatically, “You and I both know that no elementary student should ride a bus more than 30 minutes one-way.”

DOP IMPLEMENTS SICK LEAVE PILOT PROGRAM

To assist in combating the flu epidemic, the Division of Personnel has implemented a **pilot program** in which employees are required to provide a physician's statement after **five consecutive working days** instead of after three days. This pilot program is in effect from January 15 through February 29, 2004. It's hoped this temporary program will reduce the spread of the flu virus. Agencies will be providing the DOP with data regarding flu absences during the pilot program period so the effectiveness of the effort can be evaluated.

For more information, contact your agency personnel/payroll office.



Wise discussed jobs at great length, calling on legislators to create a landmark research program to allow West Virginia to compete for jobs in the future. He urged the creation of a fund to expand the Research Challenge Grant Program so we can hire highly qualified faculty and researchers, and purchase cutting-edge equipment. He also called for granting university status to West Virginia State, Concord, Fairmont State, and Shepherd Colleges. Earlier in his speech, Wise announced that over \$235 million in grant money has been released, to combine with \$500 million in private investments, for the funding of 47 job creation projects statewide. In addition, reforms in Workers Compensation are making the State more attractive to business and industry, while still allowing injured workers to be compensated. These efforts, combined with others, prompted Wise to say, “We now are able to create jobs that could not have been created three years ago.”

Many other successes and initiatives were also addressed, including retirement for State Troopers, disabilities, the PROMISE Scholarship Program, tourism, and the use of tobacco settlement funds.

The Governor ended by reminding lawmakers about the importance of continuing to make tough decisions and take action. He also expressed his pride and gratitude in serving his term as governor. “I thank you for allowing me to serve as your governor – it is the highest honor. ... In the next year, I pledge to work every day to continue to provide affordable health care, protect and increase the number of good-paying jobs, and to provide every child the opportunity to get a quality education.”

For the entire text of the Governor's speech, or to watch a video of it, visit www.wv.gov/stateofstate2004/.

Leap Year Provides Needed Jump

This calendar year, 2004, is a leap year, but what exactly does that mean? A leap year occurs every four years in years divisible by the number four. In a leap year, an extra day is added to the end of February – February 29 – in order to synchronize the calendar year with the seasons and the Earth’s movement around the sun. A true solar year is actually 365.242190 days long (or if you really want to get technical, 365 days, five hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds), so adding one day every four years balances out the calendar year with the actual seasonal year of the Earth.

Leap year was first decreed by Julius Caesar and appeared in the Julian calendar around 46 B.C. At that time, the Roman festivals had gotten out of line with the seasons. Caesar extended that year to 445 days and then instituted the leap year practice. Sometime around 10 B.C., leap years ceased being added because priests who were responsible for calculating the calendar had been erroneously adding them every three years instead of every four. The practice resumed in 8 A.D. and continues today.

So, a leap year occurs every four years – well, almost. It occurs every four years when the year is divisible by the number four, **except for those which are evenly divisible by 100, but not by 400.**

Huh?

This expanded rule for leap years involves century marks and is an additional correction designed to adjust for the fact that the traditional leap days added amount to a bit more time than is actually needed. Basically, it means that, for example, although the year 2000 was a leap year, the years 1900, 1800, and 1700 were not. The year 1600 was, because it is evenly divisible by both 100 and 400. We can thank Pope Gregory XIII, who, in 1582, ruled that only century years evenly divisible by 400 would be leap years.

If you’re a single woman steeped in tradition, then February 29 may be the day for which you’ve been waiting! Original tradition has it that leap day is the only day on which a woman can ask a man to marry her. The earliest reference to this dates back to Ireland in the 5th century, when St. Bridget complained to St. Patrick that her nuns were unhappy with the time it took for men to ask them to marry (current day practices were not in effect at that time). St. Patrick responded by granting them permission to propose to men on this one day during leap year. Legend has it that St. Bridget proposed to St. Patrick on the spot, but he refused and had to give her a silk gown and a kiss to soften the rejection. Later, in 1288, Scotland passed a law allowing women to propose marriage to the man of their choice during the year. Any man who refused had to pay a fine. These time-honored traditions have evolved into what we know today as Sadie Hawkins Day.

The chance of being born on leap day is one in 1506 (statistics vary somewhat, but all are “in the neighborhood”). There are about 187,000 leap babies in the U.S., and over 4 million leap babies worldwide. And make no mistake that most of us enjoy having leap day added ... we get to remain a year younger for one more day!

Pencil In ...



State employees who work in Charleston noticed a \$2.16 deduction on their January 16 paychecks. The newly instituted **Charleston City Service Fee** is being deducted, and will continue unless and until the fee is overturned. See www.cityofcharleston.org/documents/cityservicesfee/bill7002.pdf for details.



The **standard reimbursement rate** for use of a vehicle for business purposes increased to 37.5¢ per mile, effective January 1, 2004.

25th
ANNUAL

WOMEN'S DAY at the LEGISLATURE

Join the West Virginia Women's Commission for the 25th Annual [Women's Day at the Legislature](#) on February 17, 2004. The day begins with registration and continental breakfast at 8 A.M. in the Capitol Complex Training Center (Building 7). Seminars offered include:

Pay Equity, conducted by Del. Barbara Fleischauer
Voting, conducted by Becky Cain
How to Talk to Legislators, conducted by Susan Subkoviak
The Legislative Process, conducted by Elaine Harris

Participants will have an opportunity to watch lawmakers in action and end the day with a reception which will also be attended by various State legislators. Registration fee is \$20 for adults, \$10 for students. Call 558-0070 to register or for more information.



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