

Good news, tough news, difficult decisions ...

Wise's State of State Address Tackles Major Issues

The good news: no general tax increases. The tough news: West Virginia is facing difficult times that require difficult actions.

In his third State of the State Address, Governor Bob Wise described and addressed a number of pressing issues the State faces, including our financial situation and the medical malpractice insurance problems confronting our health care providers.

Wise began his speech with remembrances and recognition for several special people. Remembered first was **former House Speaker Lew McManus**, who passed away in December. Next were **Adjutant General Alan Tackett**, who is recovering from heart surgery, and **Brigadier General Wayne "Speedy" Lloyd**, the first national guardsman in U.S. Air Force history to command an air expeditionary wing deployed overseas. Lloyd served as commander of an international air base in Kyrgyzstan, with troops from 8 allied nations. In addition, tribute was paid to **Staff Sergeants Gene Vance and Anissa Sherro**, who died in Afghanistan, and to **Troopers Robert Elswick and Scott Paul** who are recovering from serious injuries suffered in the line of duty.

"The budget I am presenting tonight will be balanced. It cuts spending. It contains no general tax increase." Wise insisted on presenting a balanced budget to the Legislature. "Just like the families in West Virginia, we've had to tighten our belts in these difficult economic times." The budget he presented con-

tains \$200 million in spending cuts to compensate for expected increases in outflow and shortfalls in revenue.

Wise stated that he intends to continue with the priorities of jobs, education, and health care. He reminded us that last year, our steel industry was nearing total shutdown. With an emergency loan to Wheeling Pittsburgh Steel, thousands of employees are today operating the company 24 hours a day to supply the increased orders, and retiree pensions are being paid. In a time of troubled economics, 4,500 new jobs have been created in West Virginia and we are investing \$200 million on new economic grants to generate more than \$1 billion in new and expanded projects to create employment for thousands more.

Education has been a top priority. Last year, 3,500 Promise Scholarships were issued, translating into 25% more of our best qualified students staying in West Virginia to attend school. Public school teachers received



*Governor
Bob Wise*

*Photo by
Steve
Rotsch*

See ADDRESS – Page 4



West Virginia Lottery's 17th Birthday Ushered in with Unexpected and Welcome Positive Sales

Edited from press releases issued by the West Virginia Lottery.

While nothing in the West Virginia Lottery's 17-year history could top Jack Whittaker's \$314.9 million win Christmas Day, Lottery Director John Musgrave said that the entire month of December leading up to the world record *Powerball* win was filled with multiple winners and unusual sales.

In addition to the record jackpot payment, Musgrave said \$800,000 was paid to seven \$100,000 *Powerball* winners and four \$25,000 *Cash25* winners. Included in the \$100,000 winners was a group of 31 employees from the Beckley Newspaper who missed the jackpot by one number on December 18 – only one week before Whittaker's hit – and Josh McClead, a 20-year-old pre-pharmacy student at West Virginia University who missed sharing Whittaker's jackpot on December 25 by one number.

Tina Sears, the newspaper Production Department employee who bought the group's tickets from Go Mart in McArthur, said not one person complained about missing the jackpot. "We're so excited. It's like all the holidays wrapped up in one around here ... the folks at Go Mart

are celebrating, and the folks here at work started celebrating the minute they hit the door and heard the news. I think all of Beckley and its surroundings are excited for us."

Production manager John Hart and another employee, Lisa Morrison, were chosen to pick up the check in Charleston. The winners, who ranged in age from 22 to 60, each received \$2,145.16 after taxes.

McClead claimed his \$100,000 prize in Charleston amid a flurry of activity unlike any he had experienced before. Surrounded by national news correspondents hoping to gain access to the record jackpot winner, McClead later said, "It was an experience of a lifetime. Not everybody gets to experience what I went through that day. I was absolutely stunned that it happened to me ... none of my friends believed me until they saw me on TV. As for Mr. Whittaker, he was a really nice guy"

Since the Lottery's first ticket was sold on January 9, 1986, lottery players have set a pattern of spending their discretionary funds on lottery tickets. In December, those extra dollars are generally used for holiday

gifts, and sales normally drop slightly compared to other months.

"The play we received last month from people who don't normally buy lottery tickets more than compensated for the usual dip," said Musgrave. Sales from the Lottery's traditional games average about \$15 million per month, with *Powerball* sales average \$3.5 million (depending on the size of the jackpot). This December, they totaled \$23 million, and of that, \$10.8 million was in *Powerball* sales.

Musgrave noted with cautious optimism that there is still a lot of time between now and the end of the fiscal year, and while he and his staff are greatly pleased with the December sales figures, they cannot predict activity for the remainder of the year. "We are, however, on solid footing for meeting our \$398.7 million obligation to the State for the year ending June 30."

SURE-FIRE STRESS REDUCERS:

Get 8 hours of sleep each night and in stressful times, take a brisk 10- to 30-minute walk.

Generic Antibiotic Copay Waiver Program Returns

This month, employees who carry the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) PPB Plan received a letter from Governor Bob Wise announcing the return of last year's extremely successful Antibiotic Copay Waiver Program.

During the months of January, February, and March 2003, when we are more prone to upper respiratory infections, PEIA will waive the copay on GENERIC antibiotics for PPB Plan members who have met their prescription drug deductibles.

Not all medications have generic equivalents; however, all generic drugs are required to have *the same active ingredients and be equivalent in strength and dosage as their corresponding brand name drugs.*

After instituting this program last year as a means of encouraging the use of generic medications, the use of generics increased 3% and saved the

State nearly \$2 million! The price difference is amazing. Last year, a brand name antibiotic sold for \$69.44; the generic equivalent was priced at \$16.46. This year, the average brand name antibiotic medicine costs \$80.12 while generic counterparts average \$16.58.

Anytime your doctor issues a new prescription for any condition, ask if a generic equivalent drug could be right for you. You'll save, and so will your health insurance program.



Governor Bob Wise (left) presents Division of Highways employee Molly Bevins (center) with her cash award from the State Employee Suggestion Program. Also pictured is State Senator Shirley Love (right).

DOH Employee Molly Bevins Receives Suggestion Award

When the Division of Highways' (DOH) District Two Headquarters in Huntington decided the time to relocate its Equipment Repair Shop had come, their first thought was to build a new facility. Bids went out, and the low bid came in at \$1.7 million. But some smart thinking by DOH Employee Molly Bevins ultimately resulted in a tremendous savings to the State ... and a cash reward for her!

Bevins formally suggested that the DOH purchase a building across the street and renovate it rather than construct a new facility. Her suggestion was investigated and accepted. The DOH gained a much-needed larger facility and saved more than \$1 million in the process.

In mid-December 2002, Governor Bob Wise presented Bevins with a check for a whopping \$10,000 at a ceremony held in the Governor's Reception Room.

Congratulations Molly!

**Governor's
Summer
Internship
Applications
Available**



The Division of Personnel will process applications for the 2003 Governor's Summer Youth Program. The deadline to apply is March 14, and applications are available on the internet at www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel. Contact Frank Chambers at 558-3950, ext. 260 for more.

DOP Opens Exam Center in Moorefield

Effective January 15, 2003, the Division of Personnel (DOP) opened an examination center at the South Branch Job Service Office in Moorefield, WV. Testing is offered the third Wednesday of each month at 5:15 P.M. and has a seating capacity of 25. At this time, performance (typing) and Correctional Officer 1 examinations will **NOT** be given at this location.

The facility is located on the second floor of the Harco Building at the Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College. The facility is handicap accessible.

For more information, call the Division of Personnel at 558-3950, ext. 503.

Governor's Executive Order Waives Annual Leave Carry-Over Cap

Subdivision 14.3(a) of the Division of Personnel's *Administrative Rule* defines the maximum number annual leave hours that State employees can carry over from one year to the next. Because certain employees who provided relief efforts during the year would be unfairly affected, Governor Bob Wise signed Executive Order 11-02, exempting certain employees of the Public Service Commission, the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety, the Department of Health and Human Resources, and the Division of Highways from the carry-forward provision until February 28, 2003.

The order does **not** apply to **all** employees in these agencies. Affected employees should have already been notified; however, if you think you should have been included, please contact your supervisor or agency head.

ADDRESS – continued from Page 1




one of the largest pay raises in the State's history, and in fact, the second highest percentage in the U.S. But Wise's commitment to education isn't solely monetary. West Virginia students are now required to have a mandatory 180 instructional days and they must take character education classes, because knowing right from wrong is as important as reading and writing.

The Governor was very proud to announce that after having made covering children for health care under the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) a priority, 36,000 children were covered and **for the first time, the State will not turn back any federal funds.**

As his attention turned to the medical malpractice issue, Wise distinctly addressed the struggles of our physicians and medical practitioners. "My number one commitment is to the health and safety of the citizens of West Virginia," he said, and then continued, "We must guarantee that every West Virginian has access to the doctors he or she needs and every West Virginia doctor has access to reasonably priced medical malpractice insurance." His plan includes proposing legislation that will, among other things, set reasonable caps on awards for pain and suffering that vary with the severity of the injury, hold people responsible only for their share of injuries they cause, and protect the trauma care system with a \$500,000 liability cap on providers, including doctors and emergency.

Another initiative involves establishing a \$20 million fund, supported by the tobacco settlement, to offset 3 years of continuing insurance coverage for doctors who have been forced to switch coverage to that provided by the State's Board of Risk and Insurance Management (BRIM). Creating this fund will also allow BRIM to open coverage to additional doctors as well as provide assistance to those who remain with private insurers.

Referring to the State's financial situation, Wise unveiled several proposals. He had already asked every branch of State government to review their operations and find ways to reduce their budgets by 10%. The Governor's Office was included and will cut its budget by the requested 10%. Other measures either planned or already introduced include:

-  Eliminating the post of Commerce Commissioner; and combining the Cabinet Secretary positions for the Department of Administration and the Department of Tax and Revenue into one post, then consolidating these Departments into one to eliminate overlapping functions.
-  Merging the Governor's Office of Technology and the Information Services and Communications Division to coordinate the State's technology, and combining the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families with the Bureau of Children and Families so families have one place to go to meet the needs of their children.
-  Signing an Executive Order to reduce the State's vehicle fleet by 15% as of March 31, 2003. In a serious, but lighthearted statement, Wise said, "So West Virginia – get ready – for the largest surplus car sale ever! Bob's easy terms – drive in today – don't delay – drive it away!"

A crucial endeavor to help with both the State's financial situation and one of our major health issues involves increasing the tax on cigarettes from the current 17¢ per pack to 55¢ per pack, which is the average paid in other states. Every penny of the tax will go toward health care, and if applied to programs with federal matching funds, will alleviate an expected \$300 million health care shortfall.

To view a video of the speech or read the text, visit www.state.wv.us/governor/stateofstate2003/index.htm on the internet.

Pencil In ...




A new State Travel Card contract has been awarded. United Bank (MasterCard) has been awarded the statewide contract for travel card services, which was previously serviced by Diners Club, according to Catherine DeMarco, State Travel Manager. A spring implementation is anticipated. Additional details will be provided to agency travel coordinators soon.



Join State Park Photographer Ron Snow March 24-26, 2003 for a **photography workshop at Cacapon State Park** and learn professional techniques. This workshop is great for beginners or intermediates. Package includes 2 nights lodging, meals, photography instruction and film processing. Cost is \$115.81 per person based on double occupancy. Call Kelly Smith 304-258-1022 for more information.



 is a publication of the West Virginia Department of Administration, Division of Personnel

Bob Wise, Governor
Gregory A. Burton, Cabinet Secretary
Nichelle D. Perkins, Director of Personnel

Tari McClintock Crouse, Editor
Jane S. Fouty, Assistant Editor

State Capitol Complex, Building 6, Room 416
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0139
Telephone: 304/558-3950, ext. 206
E-Mail: jfouty@gwmail.state.wv.us
www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empcom/