



Stateline

A Newsletter For West Virginia State Government Employees

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Ready for a Vacation? Take a Sales Tax Holiday in August!

OK - school has recently ended. It's time to start thinking about sending the kids back!

In August, 2002, West Virginia families were able to purchase clothing, footwear, and other types of school supplies **TAX-FREE** over a designated three-day weekend. The Sales Tax Holiday was a huge success. Businesses sold around \$28 million in merchandise, and families saved approximately \$1.7 million in sales tax. The weekend even brought in shoppers from West Virginia's border states.

For 2003, Governor Bob Wise successfully urged not only the renewal of the program, but an expansion of it. Last year, individual items with a value of up to \$100 were exempted from the State's 6% sales tax. This included the items mentioned above plus computer accessories and calculators. This year, computers and computer equipment up to \$750 are added to the list of eligible items.

Families realized even more savings last year when merchants and retailers scheduled great sales and

special promotions to take place during the Sales Tax Holiday weekend. It's hoped that the addition of computers and computer equipment will spur deals on these items too, and boost shoppers' overall savings to as much as \$2.2 million.

Get ready now! Take out your planners and calendars to mark off Friday, August 1 at 12:01 A.M. through midnight on Sunday, August 3, and have your shopping lists ready! It's a great way to boost the economy and save money at the same time!



Did You Make It To Vandalia?



Whether they came to participate, watch, or work, anyone who attended the 27th Annual Vandalia Gathering (held May 23-25 on the Capitol grounds) thoroughly enjoyed the fun and music, which was complemented by the fantastic weather!

Check out our online photo album at the end of this issue: www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empcom/Stline/Jun03-02.pdf



Delivery of Services, Eligibility Determination Get Easier

Taken from a Department of Health and Human Resources press release.

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), along with other State agencies, is making the application for benefits and services much easier.

The Information Network for Resident Online Access and Delivery Services, also known as inROADS, is a new system designed to support self-service applications over the internet for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and other State services. The program is currently run as a pilot project in Ohio, Brooke, Hancock, Randolph, Tucker, Mason, and Mercer counties for CHIP, pregnant women, and children's Medicaid.

"This new program will allow for every West Virginian to apply for health services for children over the internet instead of taking time out of their busy day to make an office visit to apply," said Sharon Carte, director, CHIP.

Bureau for Children and Families Commissioner Fred Boothe said, "It will make our work more efficient. If a child isn't qualified for CHIP coverage, we can also determine Medicaid eligibility."

The new inROADS system will operate in conjunction with other DHHR programs to deliver client demographic information and retrieve applications. Once an application has been submitted via the internet, a case worker retrieves the application, determines eligibility and notifies the applicant of available services. West Virginia is one of the first states in the nation to adopt this system. Pennsylvania and California currently have similar systems in place. West Virginia's program will allow for other State agencies to utilize specific information from inROADS in determining eligibility for other State programs as well.

"United We Stand" Plate Available Now

On April 3, 2003, the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) released one of the State's newest license plates: United We Stand.

Governor Bob Wise was on hand to assist with the release. Wise praised West Virginia's patriotism, saying "West Virginians can con-



Graphic courtesy of DMV webpage

tinue to show their love of country with this new Patriotic plate."

The tag features an American flag over a picture of the State's outline, and contains the phrase "United We Stand." The plate is available to all registered vehicle owners in West Virginia at a cost of \$30 annually, with a \$10 new plate fee.

Released on the same day was the Certified Firefighter tag. Applicants for this tag must apply to the State Fire Service Extension Office, P. O. Box 6610, Morgantown, WV 25606-6610 (phone: 293-2106). A complete list of West Virginia specialty license plates can be obtained from your nearest DMV Office.

To find joy in work is to discover the fountain of youth.

~ Pearl S. Buck ~

Congrats to the Dept. of Agriculture, current holder of the Capitol Cup as winners in 2002



The Gold Dome Lions Club of Charleston recently donated a cup to the State Softball League. The cup has the names of past winning teams, with room for 15 more. Beth and Justin Southern (left) show off the recently donated "Capitol Cup." The Southern, who are married, are both State employees and both participate in the softball league.

The Gold Dome Lions Club is involved with, among other projects, helping folks in need of eyeglasses. They have a refurbished mail box located in the Capitol Cafeteria for your used eyeglass donations. Hearing aids are also accepted.

Photo courtesy of Jim McMillion

PERS ADVISES MOODY'S RATE CHANGE

Effective July 1, 2003, the interest rate for Plan Year 2004 will be 6.9%. This rate will be used for new Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) members who wish to reinstate previously withdrawn service and who begin payments during Plan Year 2004.

Don't Let "Skeeters" Bug You This Summer

The bugs of summertime can do some very nasty things like bite, sting, and make you sick. Mosquito bites, in particular, are a nuisance, causing swollen places that "itch like crazy." Unfortunately, they also cause illness.

Mosquitoes are the number one insect carrier of disease in the world, according to Jerome Goddard, author of *The Physician's Guide to Arthropods of Medical Importance*.

Luckily, two diseases carried by mosquitoes, malaria and dengue fever, are rare in the United States. On the other hand, West Nile Virus sickened many Americans in 2002 (often affecting the elderly), and predictions are that it may spread further. In addition, mosquitoes carry various types of encephalitis, including La Crosse encephalitis, which generally affects children. West Virginia sees approximately 50 cases of La Crosse encephalitis every year.

What can you do to reduce your chances of becoming a mosquito's main course? According to the Department of Health and Human Resources, you should:

- ✦ Empty standing water in items around your home where wrigglers and tumblers live, such as old tires, flower pots, buckets, plastic covers, toys, etc.
- ✦ Drain or fill temporary pools with dirt.
- ✦ Change the water in fountains, bird baths, rain barrels, plant trays, and wading pools once a week, but preferably more often.
- ✦ Keep swimming pools treated and circulating.
- ✦ Keep rain gutters and drains clean, unclogged, and in good repair.
- ✦ Make sure window and door screens are "bug tight."
- ✦ Wear head netting, long sleeves, and long pants if you're going to be in areas with high mosquito populations.
- ✦ Use a repellent containing DEET. Apply it sparingly on children before they go outside and wash them off with soap and water when they come back in. Don't apply it to their faces or hands because they may rub it in their eyes. **FOLLOW LABEL DIRECTIONS AND PRECAUTIONS CLOSELY.**



Another source recommends products that contain up to 30% DEET for adults and 10% for kids. They recommend applying it to clothing as well, but be sure to remove your clothes immediately upon coming in and wash the items as soon as possible thereafter.

TREATING AN INSECT BITE/STING

- ✦ Wash the area thoroughly with warm water and soap to get rid of bacteria and/or venom.
- ✦ If stung, remove the stinger as soon as possible by either scraping it out or pulling it out. Just be sure to get the entire stinger.
- ✦ If needed, apply a pain-numbing product such as Sting Eze or After Bite. If it really hurts, take an over-the-counter pain reliever such as aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen.
- ✦ To relieve itching, try calamine lotion, or a single pill of antihistamine can help.

PREVENTION TIP:

You might prevent yellow jackets from ruining your picnic by setting a plate of food and soda away from your table area. They like meat and sweet drinks.

ENCEPHALITIS SYMPTOMS:

High fever, bad headache at the base of the skull and neck, stiff neck, possible vomiting and/or muscle weakness.



A sunny, mid-spring drive to Calhoun County provided us with images of a peaceful country field (left) and patriotism shown with yellow ribbons displayed by Calhoun County High School (right).



Cool – An Archaeological Site! Can Ya Dig It?

Adapted and rewritten from an article by Andrea Keller which appeared in the Winter/Spring 2003 edition of *DETAILS*, a publication by the Historic Preservation Office of the Division of Culture and History.

Plain and simple – it’s illegal to dig, loot, or otherwise disturb an archaeological site in West Virginia. The *West Virginia State Code*, specifically §29-1-8a, states that:

“No person may excavate, remove, destroy, or otherwise disturb any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological site, or human skeletal remains, unmarked grave, grave artifact or grave marker of historical significance unless such person has a valid permit issued to him or her by the director of the historic preservation section.”

Archaeological sites are repositories of history that, when properly excavated, can be preserved and passed down between generations and made available for study. This history belongs to everyone. When historical artifacts end up in private collections, the possibility of loss is great. Artifacts can be damaged or stolen, or even lost by legitimate sale. They can be exported out of the area ... and even out of the country.

Once an archaeological site has been excavated, whether legally or illegally, it can’t be put back together again. Once artifacts have been removed from their original resting place, it means they’ve been removed from their original context and the context is part of the story. Like evidence at a crime scene, artifacts are evidence of past human activities, and specialized training is required to fully interpret what they mean.

Archaeologists collect plant remains, animal bone, and even soil to get the full story. When unauthorized digging takes place, artifacts generally end up separated from these tell-all clues. Not to mention that the artifacts themselves often end up cracking, breaking, or completely disintegrating due to improper handling.

Failure to take proper precautions can also cause site walls to collapse, causing not only damage to the site and artifacts, but injuring or even killing people. Even if the walls don’t collapse, open pits can injure or kill people or animals. In addition to physical injury, untrained individuals can unleash dormant diseases. For example, some sites contain historic privies. These may harbor diseases like tuberculosis that can lie dormant for years and be revived upon being disturbed.

Are there penalties for looting an archaeological site? You bet. Looters can face fines and imprisonment. There’s a good chance that any archaeological site will contain human burial sites and human remains.

When those are disturbed, the fines and prison terms are more severe, and if the site happens to fall on federally owned land, you’re looking at even higher stakes.

No matter how tempting it might be to take a souvenir of West Virginia’s history, let’s leave the excavating to the professionals so we can all enjoy the results in our museums.

Want to know more about West Virginia’s historic preservation activities and archaeological sites? Log on to the Historic Preservation Office’s website at www.wvculture.org/shpo/index.html.

Pencil In ...



The Joint Standing Finance Committee of the Senate and House of Delegates advises that you can obtain a copy of the entire **FY 2004 Digest of the Enrolled Budget Bill** at the following website: www.legis.state.wv.us/legishp.html.




The **Travel Management webpage** has been updated with the new MasterCard information. Users can access a Guide to Benefits which explains insurance coverage and other available card programs. Also included is a link that will allow users to check and pay their accounts online. The internet address is: www.state.wv.us/admin/purchase/travel/.



On **Independence Day**, take a few moments to be especially thankful for your freedom, and if possible, thank someone who has helped keep us safe and free.



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Bob Wise, Governor
Tom Susman, Acting 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/

27th Annual Vandalia Gathering



May 23-25,
2003

Contests
Crafts
Dancing
Food
Music
Stories
and
More



State Capitol  *Charleston, WV*
Sponsored by the
WV Division of Culture & History

Layout and photographs by Jane Fouty, Assistant Editor, *Stateline* Newsletter;
photograph of Mack Samples courtesy of the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

Mack Samples



**2003
Vandalia
Award
Recipient**

The Vandalia Award, West Virginia's highest folklife honor, was presented to Mack Samples of Duck, WV on Saturday, May 24, 2003 as part of the 27th Annual Vandalia Gathering.

The award is presented annually to a West Virginian who has made outstanding contributions to the continuation of the State's folk heritage. It recognizes lifetime achievement in the performance, creation, and perpetuation of West Virginia traditional arts.

Samples is a native West Virginian and is well known in Appalachian music and literature circles. He has traveled the folk festival circuit for many years as a singer, guitarist, fiddler, and square dance caller. He performs as a soloist and as a member of The Samples Brothers Band, in addition to having authored four books set in West Virginia and a number of newspaper columns and magazine articles.

Samples is the 23rd recipient of the Vandalia Award.

Information and photograph
courtesy of the
West Virginia Division of
Culture & History

Something for Everyone ...

Contests







Something for Everyone ...
Crafts





Something for Everyone ...

Dancing







Something for Everyone ...

Food – Yum!





Something for Everyone ... **Music**

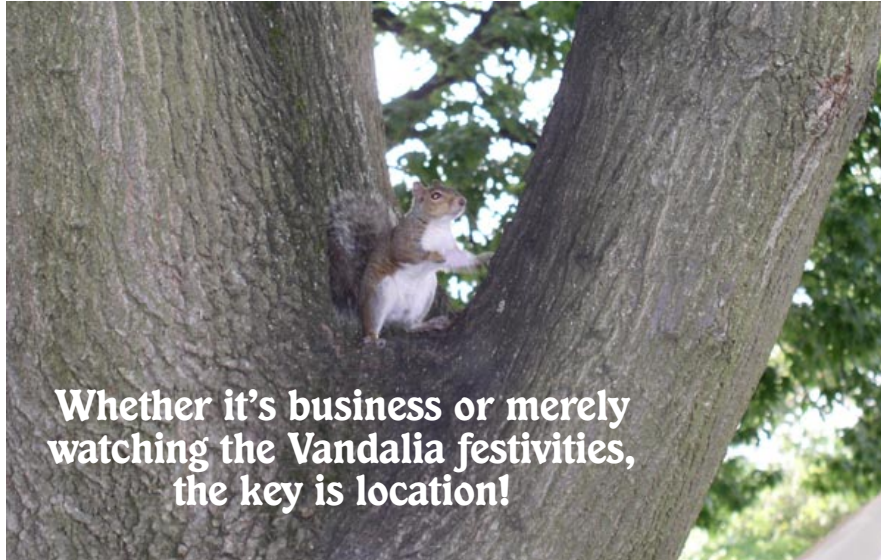






Something for Everyone ...

Work & Fun



Whether it's business or merely watching the Vandalia festivities, the key is location!



Taking a hint from the squirrel



You Never Know Who You'll Meet at Vandalia



**Strongman Competitor
Phil Pfister**



**Protective
Services
and
General
Services
helped
keep
things
running
smoothly**



**Holy Dulcimer!
It's Batman!**

