

In Celebration of West Virginia Day ...

Governor, First Lady Introduce New Online Exhibit

Article and photo contributed by Ginny Painter of the Division of Culture and History.

In celebration of West Virginia Day, Governor Joe Manchin III and First Lady Gayle Manchin introduced the Division of Culture and History's new online exhibit, *A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia*, during an event held in the Cultural Center's Great Hall on June 19, 2006. (West Virginia Day is celebrated each year on June 20, which is the anniversary of the State's creation in 1863.)

"I am very excited about this online addition to our State's Division of Culture and History," Manchin said.

"West Virginians truly understand the importance of family and community. We are so proud of our heritage, and this exhibit showcases our State's past – highlighting the work of our forefathers as well as the important events that make West Virginia and West Virginians what we are today."

The online exhibit tells the story of the formation of the State of West Virginia in the words of the statehood leaders, from the early differences between eastern and western Virginia through the establishment of the new



Fred Armstrong, Director of Archives and History, demonstrates for Governor Joe Manchin and First Lady Gayle Manchin the new online exhibit "A State of Convenience: The Creation of West Virginia" during a ceremony celebrating West Virginia's birthday at the Cultural Center.

The exhibit can be viewed at Culture and History's website (www.wvculture.org) and the Governor's official website (www.wvgov.org).

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Get a Jump-Start on Your Child's College Funding

Planning for the cost of your child's college education is both important and tricky. Need a good starting place? Check out the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's 2006-2007 Tuition Summary. The report provides a breakdown of tuition and other fees for West Virginia's public colleges and universities. You'll find it on the web at:

www.wvhpc.org/finance/tuition_fees0607.pdf

What's your next step? See the box at the right.

Check out West Virginia's Smart 529 Program on the State Treasurer's website:

www.wvsto.gov/sites/smart529/index.html

If you're a West Virginia resident and are comfortable with making your own financial decisions, you can invest directly in SMART529 WV Direct. SMART529 WV Direct is a "no-load" plan that offers a simplified set of Investment Options with no sales or distribution charges.

How much will you need? Use the handy calculator at www.smart529.com/common/calculator/calc.html

Open Government Meetings More Accessible to Public

Contributed by Ben Beakes of the Secretary of State's Office.

Secretary of State Betty Ireland has announced a new online program that makes registering government meetings under the West Virginia Open Governmental Proceedings Act much easier and more readily available to the public.

West Virginia Code §6-9A-3 mandates that government agencies file meeting notices with the Secretary of State to be published in the state register for at least five days prior to the date of the meeting.

"The new online meeting notice system will make notices of government meetings available in real time now," Secretary Ireland said. "With the click of a button, the citizens of West Virginia can view what government meetings are taking place at any given time."

The West Virginia Veterans Council of the Division of Veterans Affairs is the first to utilize the new online system. Its meeting notice can be found at www.wvsos.com/meeting-notices/index.aspx, then choose the month of July.

In the past, the Secretary of State's Office received meeting notices either by mail or facsimile, and the information was not available until the publication of the state register, which is published each Friday. **Agencies may still file meeting notices via mail and/or facsimile; however, Secretary Ireland plans to make the use of the new online meeting notice system mandatory by September.**

"We will utilize the next three months as a test period for the new

online notice system and give agencies enough time to get used to it," Secretary Ireland said. "If all goes well, I plan on making the online system mandatory for use. The citizens of West Virginia deserve a more efficient method of participating in their government."

"I made increasing the use of technology in the Secretary of State's Office a top goal of my administration," Secretary Ireland said. "I hope to bring about more technological change to make the office and government run more efficient."

NOTE:

The state register will continue to be published, as it is mandated by West Virginia State Code.

How are YOU feeling?

"I was feeling great, so I don't even know how long I had had Type 2 Diabetes. I have no family history of Diabetes whatsoever." Della Reese, actress/singer

Teens Now Prohibited from Using Cell Phones While Driving

Contributed by Mary Jane Lopez of the Division of Motor Vehicles.

As of June 9, 2006, teenagers holding either a Level 1 (instruction permit) or Level 2 (intermediate) Driver's License are prohibited from using a handheld cell phone or text messaging device while operating a motor vehicle.

According to an article in the National Safety Council's (NSC) *Family Guide to Teen Safety* magazine, a cell phone by itself combines all four types of distraction: manual (using your hands), auditory (using your ears), visual (using your eyes), and cognitive (distraction to thought and concentration).

HANDS-FREE IS NOT RISK-FREE!

That's why the NSC recommends that drivers not use their phones for any non-emergency call when driving. Teen drivers, especially, do not need another distraction. Driver distraction contributes to 20-30% of all crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Violations of the new law will count toward the "two ticket" rule, as well as eligibility for advancement to the next graduated driver's license level. The law does not apply if the driver is using a cell phone for contacting a 911 emergency communication center.

Motorcycle/Scooter Ride to Work Day



Information provided by Mary Jane Lopez of the Division of Motor Vehicles.

The 15th annual motorcycle and scooter **Ride to Work Day** is scheduled for Wednesday, July 19.

The West Virginia Motorcycle Awareness Program will be participating at the State Capitol in what is a worldwide event. State employees who want to ride their bikes and scooters to work can park in front of the stage located between Buildings 3 and 5 at the State Capitol Complex. An employee choice award will be given to a motorcyclist participating in this event.

Ride to Work Day is held to advocate and support the use of motorcycles for transportation, and to provide information about transportation riding to the public.

New West Virginia Office Addresses Minority Health

Contributed by Charlene Hickman of the Dept. of Health and Human Resources.

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources is addressing the disparities in health status and access to quality medical care for racial and ethnic minority populations with the development of the West Virginia Office of Minority Health (WVOMH). The purpose of this office is to serve as a resource to community organizations, health care providers, and government agencies in efforts to decrease death and illness in minority populations.

The WVOMH works closely with the federal Office of Minority Health within the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Rural Health Policy, within the Health Resources and Services Administration.

An advisory council for the office has been established and is chaired by Charleston cardiologist Dr. Ronald McCowan. Dr. McCowan has a personal and professional interest in minority health care issues.

A disproportionate rate of West Virginia's minority populations suffer from health disparities associated with heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, HIV, and chronic kidney disease.

“Cultural competence could go a long way in shortening the gap in health disparities,” said Charlene Hickman, Manager of the West Virginia Office of Minority Health. “Cultural competence embraces principles of equal access and non-discriminatory practices in service delivery, and organizations must develop, adopt, and incorporate cultural knowledge into policy making, infrastructure, and practice in order to close these gaps.”

For more information about the West Virginia Office of Minority Health call or e-mail Charlene Hickman, Manager, at charlenehickman@wvdhhr.org or 558-0644.

PERS/TRS Retirees Receive Increase

Resulting from the passage of House Bill 4846, specific retirees under the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) and the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) will receive an increase of three percent, beginning with their July 2006 annuity payment.

Retirees eligible for the increase are those who are at least age 70 and who have been receiving retirement benefits for at least five consecutive years. The same applies to beneficiaries if they have been receiving an annuity for at least five consecutive years and if the deceased member would have been at least age 70.

In making the announcement, Governor Joe Manchin praised the dedicated work and service of the retirees. “These retired citizens have served our State well, and it is with great pleasure that we could offer

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Executive Privacy Team Meets to Further Protections

Contributed by Michael Harmon of the Public Employees Insurance Agency.

The West Virginia Executive Branch Privacy Program held its first privacy management team retreat April 24-25, 2006. This year's theme was “Privacy is a journey, not a destination ...” The retreat featured nationally recognized privacy experts including the United States Postal Service's Chief Privacy Officer, Zoe Strickland.

A few years ago, a comprehensive privacy team was developed in State government. The Team's activities are based upon a set of globally recognized privacy principles. The following Executive Branch agencies have representatives participating on the team:

Governor's Office	Dept. of Environmental Protection	Dept. of Revenue
Dept. of Administration	Dept. of Health and Human Resources	Bureau of Senior Services
Dept. of Commerce	WV Health Care Authority	Dept. of Transportation
Dept. of Education and the Arts	Dept. of Military Affairs and Public Safety	Boards and Commissions

One of the primary goals of the privacy program is to promote protection of personally identifiable information and other confidential information, such as social security numbers and credit and debit card information. This protection is fundamentally balanced with the need and right to know while concurrently realizing the benefits of information flows within and across State agencies, consistent with State and federal laws.

The State Privacy Office plans to provide ongoing training and professional development for all WV Executive Branch Privacy Officers, Privacy Coordinators, and other interested parties. Please contact the State Privacy Office at 558-7000 for more information on the program.

Lottery Expects Record Sales of \$1.5 Billion

Lottery Director John Musgrave is confident that the West Virginia Lottery expects the end of the fiscal year report will show a record sales of \$1.5 billion.

Musgrave provided a report to the Lottery Commission stating that the Lottery will definitely see an increase in sales for 20 consecutive years.

Setting record sales means also that the State will realize a record net profit, expected to be \$616 million – an increase of nine percent over the previous fiscal year. By the end of June 2006, the Lottery will have transferred \$407 million into State programs for education, seniors, parks, tourism, and economic development. Any realized profits above the estimates will be transferred in July toward the Lottery's 2006-07 fiscal year budget.



Retailers will also benefit. Those selling scratch-off games and online games such as Powerball may earn \$15 million in bonuses and commissions; the State's four licensed racetracks and other related entities may see \$510 million; and limited video lottery establishments have the commission potential of up to \$195 million.

The final audits of the report are expected to be completed in late July.

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state of West Virginia in 1863. Featuring photographs and documents from the collections of the West Virginia State Archives, the exhibit will be available on the Division's website at www.wvculture.org as well as the Governor's official website at www.wvgov.org.

Exhibit highlights include images of more than 60 statehood leaders; statehood letters, documents, and speeches, including a broadside for the order of ceremonies for the inauguration of West Virginia and the election ticket of Arthur Boreman, the State's first governor; and transcriptions of the proceedings of the statehood conventions, the debate in the U.S. Senate regarding admitting West Virginia to the Union, President Abraham Lincoln's written opinion on the admission of West Virginia, Boreman's inaugural address, and the first State constitution. Many items in the exhibit have never been available on the internet before now.

Items will be added to the online exhibit on an ongoing basis. Anyone with statehood-related memorabilia who is willing to donate those items to the Archives is encouraged to contact Fredrick Armstrong, Director of Archives and History, at 558-0230.

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them this addition to their benefits while still continuing to honor our commitment to ensuring the financial responsibility and stability of our State and its retirement systems."

Annuity checks and direct deposits are issued on the 25th of each month, so retirees/beneficiaries will notice the increase on their July 25 payment. Those affected will also be notified by a letter which will be sent to them during the month of July.

If you have questions or need additional information, call the Consolidated Public Retirement Board at 558-3570.

Pencil In ...



No more under-scores for web links in *Stateline*! Generally, if we list a link, it'll be an active link that will take you to the site when you click on it, so the need to underscore is no longer necessary.



The Division of Personnel has a new main fax number. The new fax number is 558-1399.



Did you know that you can **ride your bicycle, motorcycle, or scooter to work at the Capitol Complex anytime?** There are designated parking spots for these vehicles. Contact your agency parking coordinator for locations or more information.




A reminder that *Stateline* is available in **text-only format** for visually impaired persons. E-mail Asst. Editor Jane Fouty at jfouty@wvadmin.gov to receive this version.

STATELINE
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"It's never crowded along the extra mile."
Dr. Wayne Dyer
Self-help Advocate





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