

West Virginia Office of Technology Improves Customer Service with Consolidation

Contributed by Tony O'Leary of the Department of Administration.

Although the word “consolidation” may not always invoke a positive reaction, at the West Virginia Office of Technology (WVOT), the consolidation of information technology (IT) personnel within State government over the last several months is proving to be quite constructive and viewed as a positive step in efficiency and cost-savings.

To date, approximately 94 employees have joined the WVOT team from four State agencies. Additional outside hires have also been made to fill vacancies in the organization. The four agencies are the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Health and Human Resources, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Commerce.

The consolidation means an increase to approximately 11,000 customers for which the WVOT now serves. Four additional agencies which will be brought into the WVOT organization in the upcoming months are the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety, the Department of Education and the Arts, the Department of Revenue, and the Department of Administration.

“There were perceived negatives that response times would take longer and the quality of service would suffer,” said Kathy Moore, WVOT’s Director of Client Services Delivery. “Our survey responses show this is not the case. Our collaborative approach is working well.

The Service Desk staff is able to resolve a large number of problems during the initial call. They now have the ability to use remote access tools so they can work interactively with the users to resolve technical problems.”

[See CONSOLIDATION – Page 4](#)

West Virginian Receives Adoption Award

Article and photo contributed by Marsha Dadisman of the Department of Health and Human Resources.

A West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) employee will be recognized for her exemplary work in adoption and foster care placement. **Lakawanna Sawyers, regional adoption specialist in Mingo County, has received the 2007 Adoption Excellence Award in the Individual Contributions category.** She has made extraordinary contributions in providing adoption and other permanency outcomes for children in foster care.

This year, the Adoption Excellence Awards were presented to 15 recipients at a ceremony on December 12, held at the Marriott Crystal Gateway Hotel in Arlington, Va. The ceremony took place during a luncheon at the Childrens Bureaus “Fresh Perspectives on Child Welfare Partnerships” conference. This conference focuses on bringing together key leaders to strengthen the partnerships that support successful practice with children and families.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services established the Adoption Excellence Awards program in 1997 to recognize outstanding accomplishments in achieving permanency for American children waiting in foster care. These awards honor states, child welfare agencies, organizations, courts, businesses, individuals, and families. To learn more about the program, visit www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/current_initiatives/aeawards.htm.

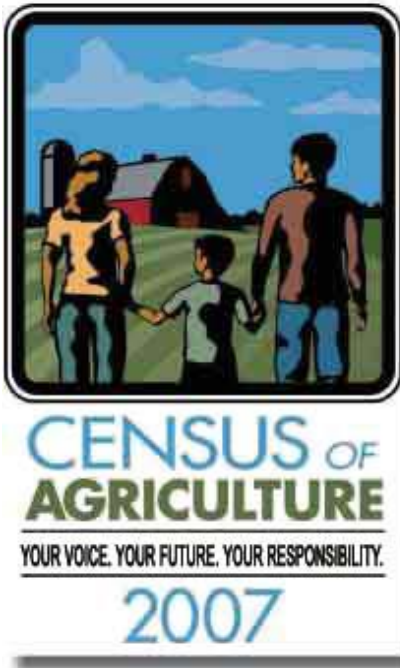
During the 10 years that Ms. Sawyers has been employed as a regional adoption specialist, she has successfully placed 151 children. For more information about West Virginia’s adoption program, call 304-235-4680.



Lakawanna Sawyers

WV Agriculture Commissioner Urges Farmers to Respond to AG Census

Edited and reprinted from the Dept. of Agriculture's website: www.wvagriculture.org/news_releases/2007/12-19-07-a.html.



West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Gus R. Douglass is urging State farmers to watch their mailboxes for Census of Agriculture forms, which should arrive sometime in early January 2008. The completed forms are due back by February 4, 2008.

“West Virginia was number three in the country in terms of response rate in the last Census in 2002, and I encourage all our farmers to reply this year,” said Commissioner Douglass. “The Census gives all farmers a voice, regardless of the size of their operation, and provides decision-makers at all levels with valuable information about the state of agriculture throughout the United States.”

The states with higher response percentages than West Virginia in the last Census were Alaska, with 600 farms, and Rhode Island, with 800. **West Virginia has 21,200 farms, leading the U.S. in the percentage of family-owned farms.**

“To have that level of response from a comparatively large number of operations really says something about the farmers in West Virginia,” said Dale King, Director of USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service – West Virginia Field Office, located at the West Virginia Department of Agriculture’s (WVDA) headquarters at Guthrie.

King stresses that census data has a multitude of uses: Government leaders use it for decisions concerning agricultural and rural programs; companies may use Census data when determining where to locate their operations; and farmers themselves look at Census data to formulate their own production strategies.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Census is a complete count of the nation’s farms and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, and other topics. It provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every county in the nation.

Producers can return their forms by mail, but for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online via a secure website.

For more information about the 2007 Census of Agriculture, or if you are a farmer and did not receive a Census, call the West Virginia Field Office at 800-535-7088.

Eight Governor’s Portraits Restored and Returned to State Capitol

Contributed by Terri Marion of the Division of Culture and History.

The West Virginia Division of Culture and History has announced that Page Conservation of Washington, D.C. has completed restoration on eight more governor’s portraits. The restored portraits were re-hung this month on the hallway walls of the State Capitol Building’s main floor. This is the second group of portraits the company has restored. When this group of oil paintings were delivered, the final 10 were picked up.

The portraits returned include Ephraim Morgan, Emanuel Wilson, Matthew Neely, Okey Patteson, William McCorkle, Aretas Fleming, Clarence Meadows, and Jacob Jackson.

Page Conservation specializes in restoring paintings which are in distress because of dirt, yellowing varnish, cracks, and support problems that can cause distortions. The restoration project began last year after Division of Culture and History staff began noticing loose canvas, discoloration, environmental changes, and blanching. The company has, in some cases, had to do inpainting in areas of damage or missing paint.

Upon completion, 30 governor’s portraits will have benefitted from the restoration process. The restoration project is a collaboration between the Division of Culture and History and the Department of Administration.

For more information, contact Culture and History Deputy Commissioner Jacqueline Proctor at 558-0220, ext. 120.

For Worry-Free Paydays, Sign Up for Direct Deposit Today!

Did you know that over 4 million paper paychecks are lost or stolen each year? Don't be included in the statistics. Join Direct Deposit today!

What are the advantages of Direct Deposit?

No more waiting in lines at your financial institution! Your money is deposited into your account, on time, no matter where you are.

What happens if there is a problem at my bank or I change financial institutions?

Problems will be researched and corrected immediately. Simply contact the State Auditor's ePayments Division at 558-2251 or 1-800-500-4079.

If you change financial institutions, contact your payroll office to complete the necessary forms. Forms can also be downloaded at the State Auditor's website (see below). Changes must be received by the Auditor's Office no later than six days prior to the pay date; therefore, you should contact your Payroll Office at least 10 days prior to the pay date to ensure ample processing time.

How safe is Direct Deposit?

Completely safe. There are no lost/stolen checks, and your payment can't "get lost."

Can I split my paycheck between two or more accounts?

Absolutely. On the sign-up form, list your primary account first, then any other institutions and amounts for each pay period. Attach a voided check or deposit slip for each account.

What are primary and secondary accounts?

The primary account is the financial institution to where you want your net pay sent each pay period. Secondary accounts are financial institutions to where you want specific amounts sent each pay period.

I travel on State business. What exactly is a Travel Primary Account?

This is the financial institution to where you want your travel reimbursements deposited.

For forms or more information, visit the State Auditor's website at www.wvsao.gov/epayments/dirdep.asp.

Medicaid Bureau Partners with WVU School of Medicine

Contributed by Shannon Riley Landrum of the Department of Health and Human Resources.

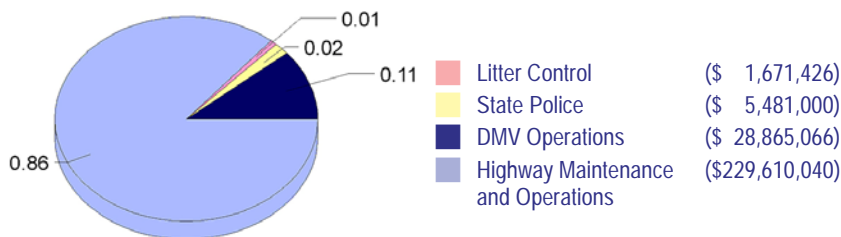
The West Virginia Bureau for Medical Services (the Bureau) and the West Virginia University (WVU) School of Medicine have entered into an agreement for project management services for a set of federal grants known as transformation initiative grants and Mountain Health Choices, the State's new Medicaid program.

The Bureau has been in the process of redesigning the Medicaid program since 2005 with the ultimate goal of improving the health of low-income West Virginians.

West Virginia received five Medicaid transformation grants totaling \$13.8 million from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for the purpose of transforming the program. Dr. Jeffrey H. Coben, professor of emergency medicine and community medicine at the WVU School of Medicine will serve as the project manager of the transformation grant project. Coben and his team will assist the Bureau in promoting health through personal responsibility and through improvements in the health care system.

HERE'S WHERE YOUR DMV FEE MONEY GOES:

Did you know that your Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) title, license plate, and driver's license fees go to the State Road Fund to support the WV Department of Transportation's mission to maintain and construct the bridges and highways that you drive on everyday?!



Information from the Division of Motor Vehicles's website:

www.wvdot.com/6_motorists/dmv/downloads/DMVShowCard.pdf

FEB. 6, 2008

WOMENS DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

Anyone interested in attending West Virginia Womens Day at the Legislature should routinely check The West Virginia Womens Commission's website for information. Details will be posted as they become available.

www.wvdhhr.org/wvwc/

CONSOLIDATION – Continued from Page 1

Moore said when problems cannot be resolved at the WVOT Service Desk, queries are resolved through on-site visits or are assigned to teams working in specialized support areas.

“When high impact outages occur, our Service Desk handles the communications with both customers and management so the troubleshooting and response staff can focus on the situation at hand,” Moore said. She estimated that since the consolidation began, the WVOT averages 6,000 telephone calls and e-mails each month from State agencies. Since June of 2007, a satisfaction survey is sent monthly to a random 20 percent of customers asking questions about their experience with the WVOT service and staff. With approximately 20 percent of the recipients responding, Moore said WVOT is seeing favorable results.

On questions relating to WVOT staff being knowledgeable, courteous, able to resolve issues in a timely manner, and their overall satisfaction, responses have consistently rated in the 92-97 percent range for the combined “strongly agree/agree somewhat” categories, with a small fraction of responses falling in the combined “neutral,” “disagree somewhat,” and “strongly disagree” categories.

Even with the outstanding reviews, Moore is taking nothing for granted.

“When we receive less than favorable ratings from our customers,” Moore said, “we follow up and determine if there is something we can improve upon, or that we can use to enhance our service. Our goal has always been and always will be to constantly improve our customer service.”

Moore may be reached at 304-558-8109 or by e-mail at Kathy.A.Moore@wv.gov.



DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE STATE EMPLOYEE INFO LINE

For emergency & general information
affecting State employees, call

Locally: 558-9117

Toll-free: 1-888-558-9117

GET A JUMP ON YOUR 2007 STATE TAXES

Available on the State Tax
Department's website are
tax forms for the 2007 tax year.
Download them at [www.state.wv.us/
taxrev/forms.html](http://www.state.wv.us/taxrev/forms.html).

Enjoy Some Time Off in 2008

Below is a list of State holidays for the 2008 Calendar Year:

JAN.	01	New Year's Day
	21	Martin Luther King Day
FEB.	18	President's Day
MAY	13	Primary Election Day**
	26	Memorial Day
JUN.	20	West Virginia Day
JUL.	04	Independence Day
SEP.	01	Labor Day

OCT.	13	Columbus Day
NOV.	04	General Election Day**
	11	Veteran's Day
	27	Thanksgiving Day
	28	Day After Thanksgiving
DEC.	24	½ Day Christmas Eve
	25	Christmas Day
	31	½ Day New Year's Eve

**** EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE!**

Pencil In ...



Happy Birthday to the West Virginia Lottery, which celebrates its 22nd year on January 9. Since the first ticket was sold in 1986, the Lottery has seen cumulative sales of \$11.5 billion.



January is National Soup Month.

The first soups were actually broths served with bread, called “sop” to soak up the broth. “Sop” later became “soup.” Enjoy steaming hot bowls your favorite soups! In the market for some new soup recipes? Try www.cooks.com/rec/ch/soups.html.

People are so worried about what they eat between Christmas and the New Year, but they really should be worried about what they eat between the New Year and Christmas!

Anonymous

New Year's Day is every man's birthday.

Charles Lamb



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

Joe Manchin III, Governor

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

**Tari McClintock Cruise
Acting Director/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@wvadmin.gov

www.state.wv.us/admin/personnel/empcom/