



A Newsletter For West Virginia State Government Employees

January 2000

Volume 11 Number 1

James Jeffers Named to Head State Workforce Investment Office

Take from a press release issued by the Governor's Office.

On January 4, 2000, Governor Cecil Underwood named West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) Director James Jeffers as Chief of the newly-created Governor's Workforce Investment Office.

"Jim Jeffers has been an outstanding director at the Division of Rehabilitation Services, and I am delighted that he has agreed to accept this critical new challenge," Governor Underwood said. "He is knowledgeable about our workforce and recognizes the importance of giving the people of West Virginia every opportunity to prepare for the emerging employment opportunities as we diversify and strengthen our economy."

Established in December 1999 by executive order, the Governor's Workforce Investment Office will direct all State workforce investment initiatives, implement the Federal Workforce Investment Act, and coordinate activities among the Governor's Human Resource Investment Council and all State agencies involved in workforce investment activities. Jeffers has served on this Council for the past 2 years.

Janice Holland, Assistant Director for Program and Administrative Support Services at DRS, will serve as Acting Director until a permanent successor for Jeffers is found.



James Jeffers



Photo courtesy of the West Virginia Division of Tourism

Scenic Shepherdstown: Historic Past and Present

Located on a bluff overlooking the Potomac River, Shepherdstown recently found itself thrust into the world spotlight as the site of peace talks between Syria and Israel. The outcome of these talks could very well add to the already rich history of this small colonial-era community.

Originally named New Mecklenburg, the city was chartered by the Virginia General Assembly in 1762 and claims to be the oldest town in West Virginia. It was renamed Shepherd's Town in 1798 in honor of early settlers and leading citizens Captain Thomas and Elizabeth Shepherd, and in 1867 was chartered as Shepherdstown by the new State of West Virginia.

During the Revolutionary War, Shepherdstown had more soldiers per capita serve in the Continental Army than any other community in the original 13 colonies. The famed Bee Line March began in Shepherdstown with southern volunteers marching almost 600 miles in 24 days to aid George Washington's forces in Boston.

Although officially neutral during the Civil War, the residents of Shepherdstown – about a thousand, mainly women and children – rose to the aid of hundreds of injured Confederate soldiers retreating from the bloody battlefields of Antietam, less than 5 miles away. Most of the community's buildings were turned into field hospitals and many of Antietam's casualties are buried in the local cemetery.

The Rumsey Monument in Shepherdstown marks the spot where one of its most famous residents, James Rumsey, demonstrated a working model of a steamboat in the presence of George Washington and others. This demonstration took place in 1787, 20 years before Robert Fulton's first successful steam voyage!


Shepherdstown is just one of many historic spots you may want to visit in West Virginia.


Reserve Your Space for Women's Day at the Legislature


The West Virginia Women's Commission invites you to join women and girls from across the State at the 23rd Annual Women's Day at the Legislature. The event will take place on Tuesday, February 15, 2000 at the State Capitol Complex Cultural Center.


The day will begin with registration and a continental breakfast, followed by:




 Speakers from the League of Women Voters, Small Business Development Center, and the American Heart Association;


 Opportunities to watch the Legislature in session or visit with legislators (appointments necessary);

 Health screenings and assessments for blood pressure, non-fasting cholesterol (\$7 per person), body fat analysis, and heart attack/stroke risk assessments; and

 A performance of Women in Perspective – Past, Present, and Future by the Weirton Women's Club and students from West Virginia's schools;



 Workshops on diversity, grant writing, tobacco awareness issues, and physical fitness;

 A reception at the Governor's Mansion hosted by West Virginia First Lady, Hovah Underwood.

 **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2000** 

Anyone interested in attending should call the West Virginia Women's Commission at 304/558-0070 or fax them at 304/558-5167.

GOLDENSEAL Traditional Music Book Available Now in Bookstores

Contributed by Ginny Painter of the Division of Culture and History.

From heavenly harmony to devilish fiddling, West Virginia's folk music is a treasure unique to this mountainous region. For the past 25 years, the story of West Virginia's traditional life has been deftly told in the pages of GOLDENSEAL magazine. Now, the best of GOLDENSEAL is gathered for the first time in a richly illustrated volume, *Mountains of Music: West Virginia Traditional Music from GOLDENSEAL*, which will be available later this month in bookstores across the State.

The most complete book to date on West Virginia traditional music, *Mountains of Music* is a collection of articles taken from the pages of the popular magazine over the past 25 years. Detailing the lives and experiences of 25 critical folk artists from across the State, the book takes the reader into the backwoods, up the "hollers" and into the homes of those for whom music is part of an ancient heritage – one that includes hard work, strong faith, and a clear mountain identity. Through extensive oral accounts, a generous use of photography and the keen observations of some of the most respected folklorists in the country, the book reveals not only the music, but also the personal lives, cultural imperatives and family histories of these musicians. For devotees as well as newcomers to this infectious joyous and heartfelt music, *Mountains of Music* captures the strength of tradition and the spontaneous power of living artistry.

"The vibrant strands of this music and its colorful practitioners delineate a unique culture where music and music making are part of a treasured history," says John Lilly, book editor and editor of GOLDENSEAL magazine.

For more information, call the West Virginia Division of Culture and History at 304/558-0220 or TDD 304/558-0562.

Legislature

2000



LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

- 01/12/00 First Day of Session
- 01/31/00 Submission of Legislative Rule-Making Review bills due.
- 02/21/00 Last day to introduce bills in Senate. Does not apply to originating/supplementary appropriation bills or to Senate resolutions or concurrent resolutions.
- 02/25/00 Last day to introduce bills in House of Delegates. Does not apply to originating/supplementary appropriation bills.
- 03/02/00 Bills due out of committees in house of origin to ensure 3 full days for readings.
- 03/04/00 Last day to consider bill on 3rd reading in house of origin. Does not include budget/supplementary appropriation bills.
- 03/11/00 Sine Die adjournment at Midnight.

Is Your Agency a 2000 Well Workplace?

Have you formalized your organization's plans to apply for a Well Workplace Designation? Now that the new year is well under way, it's time to be thinking about the 2000 Well Workplace Application process.

While many of you have already made preparations for the application process (documenting your program, establishing goals and objectives, developing and implementing programs, and putting evaluation tools in place), others could benefit from a benchmarking session. Jo Beyer, the Wellness Council of West Virginia's (WCWV) Director of Worksite Programs, is currently scheduling benchmarkings with companies enrolled in Well Workplace University. If you're not enrolled and feel you would benefit from an on-site session, call Jo at 766-2686.

The schedule for submitting a new or renewal application for 2000 Well Workplace recognition is as follows:



01/01/00	Companies request a new or renewal application from the Council.
06/01/00	Applications for Well Workplace Designations must be received by the WCWV.
06/02 - 06/29/00	State review teams evaluate applications.
06/30/00	Applications returned to companies with suggested improvements.
07/01 - 07/17/00	Companies make suggested revisions to applications.
08/01/00	Companies return applications to Council for final review and Council then forwards on to the Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA).
To be announced	Notification of award by WELCOA and formal recognition of each company's achievements during the 14 th Annual Governor's Conference.

The WVWC is happy to assist government agencies and private industries in the development of well-researched and results-oriented wellness programs. They can be reached by calling 766-2686.

February is American Heart Month:

Take Charge! Take Wellness to Heart!

In 1963, the United States Congress mandated that the president issue a proclamation each year designating February as American Heart Month. The American Heart Association is urging you to take charge of your health and "take wellness to heart."

The message is more specifically targeting women, African Americans, and Hispanics. Statistics show that these groups may not be taking heart disease seriously enough, and many people don't realize that heart disease is the most common cause of death for women. One out of every 2 women who dies succumbs due to heart disease. In fact, one in 10 American women ages 45 to 64 has some form of heart disease; this increases to one in 5 for women age 65 and over.

Whatever your gender, age, race, or nationality, you should take the necessary steps to control heart disease.

DON'T WAIT
UNTIL FEBRUARY!



♥♥♥ HEART DISEASE RISK FACTORS THAT EVERYONE SHOULD CONSIDER: ♥♥♥

- ♥ **High Blood Pressure:** Only half of those with hypertension are being treated! Diagnosis is easy, and many drugs are available. There is simply no excuse for avoiding treatment!
- ♥ **Smoking:** Smoking increases the risk of heart disease many, many times over. Your doctor can provide you with advice on the best ways to quit, or contact the American Lung Association.

- ♥ **High Cholesterol:** For many people, a change in diet is all that's needed. For those with serious or continuing high cholesterol counts, there are drugs available. Save your life - lower your cholesterol.
- ♥ **Control Diabetes:** Diabetes is a leading cause of heart disease. It increases the risk between 3- and 7-fold. It is extremely important for diabetics to maintain a healthy

weight and to stay active. If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, work with your doctor to control heart disease risk factors.

- ♥ **Physical Inactivity:** A sedentary lifestyle greatly increases the risk of heart disease. Start walking now if you have been inactive! As always, begin any exercise program slowly and only after you've gotten your doctor's approval.

PEIA Online May Have the Answers to Your Questions

There's something new at the Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA)!

After months of development and testing, Executive Director Robert Ayers announced that PEIA had redesigned its website to bring you a user-friendly place to check your benefits, look for updates, make comments ... just about anything you need.

Ayers and the staff at PEIA urge employees to use this online resource as a first reference. Many of your questions can be answered by clicking on the appropriate category. As stated on the website:

This site was designed to help make sense of your ever-changing life and ever-evolving insurance needs. If you're a West Virginia State Employee, use this as your ever-present reference guide to your coverage. If you're eligible for coverage but aren't taking advantage of what PEIA can do for you, this guide may be able to relieve some of the insurance-shopping pressures by comparing coverage and co-payments, benefits, and premiums.



On your first visit to the site, you might want to scroll down on the first page to the link called "Take a Tour of PEIA Online." It's a quick little tour that will provide you with a good explanation of the site and what can be found on it. Many of the forms or other downloads require Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is a free program, and there are links provided so that it can be downloaded on your pc.

Take a few minutes and browse through PEIA Online at <http://www.peia.state.wv.us/>. It could be just what you're looking for to find fast, up-to-date answers!

Changes to State Travel Regulations Implemented

Effective January 1, 2000, the new business standard mileage rate for employees who drive their own vehicles for work purposes will be 32½¢ per mile, up from 31½¢ in 1999.

Also effective January 1, United Airlines will offer State travelers a 10% discount on unrestrictive fares. "United Airlines' connections via Washington, D.C. or Chicago are comparable with other carriers departing Charleston," said Catherine DeMarco, Travel Manager.

Beginning in mid-January, National Travel will be conducting seminars to instruct travelers on their new online booking system. We will highly recommend online bookings in the future; more details will be distributed as they become available. For more information, call Catherine DeMarco at 304/558-2613.

Pencil In ...

RECALL ALERT

The Pokémon phenomenon that has become so popular with children has produced a tragic downside. Burger King Corporation, which distributed Pokémon balls with its kid's meals has issued a voluntary recall of the balls because they pose a suffocation hazard to children 3 years of age. A 13-month old girl reportedly died when one-half of a ball became stuck over her nose and mouth.

The balls are 2-3 inches in diameter and pull apart to reveal one of 57 different Pokémon toys inside. You should immediately take them away from children under age 3, and either discard the balls or return both halves to a Burger King restaurant and receive a free small order of french fries in exchange.

The toys are safe for older children, and Burger King intends to distribute the balls with their Big Kid's Meals.



The above picture was taken from the following website: http://familyeducation.com/article/print/0,1303,1-11503.00.html?obj_gra. More information on the recall can also be found on this site.