



A Newsletter For West Virginia State Government Employees

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Governor Wise Extends Greetings and Best Wishes

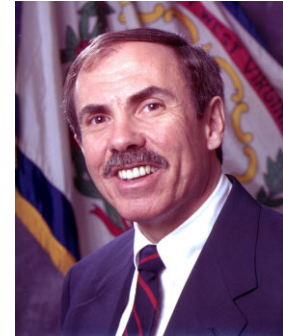
The holidays are a special time of year ... a time to spend with family and friends, to reflect on the year past, and to give thanks for all our blessings.

Let us appreciate what we have been blessed with and extend our thoughts and prayers to all of humankind, here at home and throughout the world. Please remember those in our armed forces who are working to ensure the peace we celebrate during the holidays.

This is a joyous time of year for many faiths, and it is important to recognize the many attributes of each of them. As we celebrate in our own way, let us remember the true meaning of charity and the reward of giving to others.

To honor the hard work and dedication of West Virginia's State employees and to allow additional time with your families, I am declaring Friday, November 26 as extra time off. This day will be granted without charge to annual leave.

I extend, to each of you and your families, my best wishes for a safe holiday season and a very happy New Year.



Very truly yours,

Governor Wise's allowance of additional time off for State employees does not create a legal holiday within the definition of the West Virginia Code, nor does it create a legal holiday for private businesses or local governments.

Equal Pay Commission Announces Upcoming Salary Adjustment

Contributed by Priscilla Gay of the Equal Pay Commission.

Continuing in its efforts to equalize the salaries of State workers, the Legislature's Equal Pay Commission, co-chaired by Senator Randy White (D-Webster) and Delegate Barbara Fleischauer (D-Monongalia), is set to implement the third pay equity salary adjustment. Effective November 1, 2004, \$635,616 will be distributed to approximately 1,300 State employees in 11 job classes that have been targeted as having salaries well below the expected amounts.

The Equal Pay Commission determined that employee salaries substantially lower than expected earnings, which are based on job require-

ments, needed to be targeted for the adjustment. As a result, the four classes with salaries more than 35 percent below the expected amounts will receive a monthly pay increase of \$50. The remaining seven job classes, which have salaries that are 30-35 percent below the expected salaries, will take in an additional \$36 each month.

The West Virginia Legislature earmarked \$250,000 in General Revenue funds for the Fiscal Year 2005 effort, with the remaining amount provided by federal matching funds or special revenue funds. This brings the total amount of State funds appropriated since the adjustments be-

gan to \$700,000 – which, in conjunction with federal and special revenue monies, has resulted in approximately \$1.7 million in salary increases for West Virginia State employees.

“We still have a long way to go, but this is a significant improvement in rectifying a past inequity.” Senator White said, “And while we certainly haven't been able to provide everyone with an increase, I'm glad we were able to address those with the greatest disparity.”

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DHHR Receives Performance Bonus for Food Stamp Accuracy

Contributed by Joe Thornton of the Department of Health and Human Resources.

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), Bureau for Children and Families, will receive nearly \$1 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for its timely and accurate processing of food stamp applications.

West Virginia was one of only six states nationwide to receive a performance bonus for its measure of customer service that supports one of the Food and Nutrition Service's primary goals for improved program access.

"As I have said in the past, and continue saying today, West Virginians are lucky to have such a dedicated public workforce," said DHHR Secretary Paul Nusbaum. "It's more often than not a thankless job meeting the needs of our residents, but it's one that the employees of the Bureau for Children and Families strive daily to meet with continued success."

The performance bonus is authorized by Section 4120 of the Farm Bill to recognize and reward states that demonstrate high or improved performance in administering the Food Stamp Program (FSP).

The FSP provides support to needy families and to individuals making the transition from welfare to work. The program enables households to purchase nutritional food, and is the first line of defense against hunger.

TIP:

Carry only one credit card for holiday shopping - it's easier to report if its lost or stolen, and all charges are in one location.

Think You Know the Rules of the Road?

Most people spend their early teen years itching for the day they can get a driver's license. Once all tests are passed, we rarely think about or review the driving rules we had to learn. Being a responsible driver means not only paying attention, but knowing what the regulations are ... not what we think they are.

Think you're a good driver? Think you know the rules of the road? Answer the following questions with true or false (answers appear in the *Pencil In* column on Page 4).

- A)** It is against the law to drive a car with your shoes off.
- B)** On the interstate, it is against the law to pass on the right.
- C)** The speed limit in a school zone is 15 mph.
- D)** Motorcycles are entitled to only the right half of the lane.

How'd you do? For an even better assessment of your knowledge, take the WV State Police online practice driving test:

www.wvstatepolice.com/test/driver.shtml

Veterans Day: A Day to Honor All Who Have Served

There are heroes among us.

In war and in peace, they defend our ideals, and on November 11 each year – Veterans Day – we have the chance to thank them.

People often confuse Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Memorial Day is a day for remembering and honoring military personnel who died in the service of their country, particularly those who died in, or as a result of wounds suffered in, battle.

While those who died are also remembered on Veterans Day, the holiday was established to thank and honor ALL who serve or have served honorably in the military, whether during wartime or peace.

Veterans Day is largely intended to thank *living* veterans for their service, to acknowledge that their con-



Faces on the soldiers of the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D.C. show the strain of war. The Korean War was one of the most hard-fought in our history. The memorial honors all 5.8 million Americans who served, including the 103,248 who were wounded and 54,246 who died.

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New Classes Starting at the Technology Learning Center

Contributed by Marilyn Padon of The Technology Learning Center.

The Technology Learning Center is offering a series of new classes

STARTING IN DECEMBER 2004:

Microsoft Word 2003 Level 1 – the basics of working with Microsoft's latest Word Processing program.

Microsoft Word 2003 Level 2 – intermediate features of word processing

Excel 2003 Level 1 – the basics of working with Microsoft's spreadsheet program

Access 2003 Level 1 – the basics of working with Microsoft's database program.

PowerPoint 2003 Level 1 – the basics of working with Microsoft's business graphics program

STARTING IN JANUARY 2005:

Access 2003 Level 2 – form techniques in database work

PowerPoint 2003 Level 2 – intermediate features and using graphics in Microsoft's business graphics program

Microsoft Publisher 2002 – how to tackle desktop publishing with Microsoft's fun and easy to use publishing program

WordPerfect 12 Features – users upgrading to WordPerfect 12 from previous versions can spend the day exploring the new features offered in the current release of WordPerfect

STARTING IN FEBRUARY 2005:

Crystal Level 2 – intermediate features of Crystal's powerful database reporting tool

Access 2003 Level 3 – query work in the database

WORKSHOP WEDNESDAY:

For Microsoft users of Office 2000 or 2002 (XP) who are interested in learning only the new features of Microsoft Office 2003, the Technology Learning Center will be offering **Workshop Wednesday** sessions covering the changes in the latest Office release. Covered in the individual sessions will be such topics as:

Excel 2003 New Features:

- ☞ Watching a formula
- ☞ Drawing a border
- ☞ Creating a list
- ☞ Using the Insert Row
- ☞ Creating a Total Row

Word 2003 New Features:

- ☞ View a document in the Reading Layout View
- ☞ Apply formatting using a Task Pane
- ☞ Comparing side by side documents
- ☞ Opening the protect document Task Pane
- ☞ Restricting document editing
- ☞ Creating restriction exceptions
- ☞ Using the research Task Pane

PowerPoint 2003 New Features:

- ☞ New Pens
- ☞ Research Pane
- ☞ Thesaurus
- ☞ New Slide Show Navigation Features
- ☞ Ink Annotations
- ☞ Using the Office Picture Manager

Visit the TLC website at www.WVTLCCCLASSES.com for class calendars and other software tips and tricks.

To register for any class or workshop session, contact the Technology Learning Center at 558-6384



Make Plans to Visit the Oglebay Park Festival of Lights

OPEN
Nov. 1, 2004
thru Jan. 2, 2005

One of West Virginia's premiere attractions is the annual Festival of Lights at Oglebay Park in Wheeling. This holiday tradition began in 1985 and has expanded yearly so that it now covers over 300 acres over a six mile drive. Each year, some displays are retired and new ones erected to replace them. In addition, downtown Wheeling features dozens of homes, shops, and businesses that light up the area. These events have earned a permanent place on the American Bus Association's Top International Events. For more information, visit www.oglebay-resort.com/homepage.htm.

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The 1999 State Employee Pay Equity Study concluded that there exists a consistent pattern of underpayment for female-dominated jobs in comparison to equivalent male-dominated jobs. Updates are being made this year to target the most affected job classes. In making the determination, the Equal Pay Commission charged the Division of Personnel with rerunning the study using the most current information.

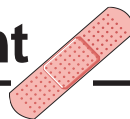
The new study evaluated current salaries, tenure data, changes in job classifications, and other salary adjustments that occurred because of specific problems. Additionally, it was concluded that low pay accounts for a portion of the turnover rates. Therefore, the job classes receiving salary adjustments have turnover rates that range from 13.8 percent to 75 percent. Among those classes are Social Services Coordinator, Child Protective Service Supervisor, Economic Service Worker and Employment Programs Specialist.

The Equal Pay Commission was created by the State Legislature in 1998 in an effort to provide State employees with equitable earnings in comparison to jobs with comparable prerequisites and duties, without regard to gender.

Delegate Fleischauer said, “The State should set the example when it comes to ensuring that wages are fair and equal and I am very pleased that the Legislature, through the Equal Pay Commission, is moving us closer toward that objective.”

If you need more information, contact Priscilla Gay at (304) 340-3201.

News From the Medical Front



After tracking more than 700 people for a period of two years, studies by the European Society of Cardiology show that heart attack risk doubles when temperatures drop below 39.2°F. Cold temperatures constrict blood vessels and thicken blood, making clots more likely. They also found that people with high blood pressure are at greater risk. These revelations partially explain the high number of heart attacks among people while they are shoveling snow. Cold temperatures add to the exertion of shoveling snow, which significantly increases the risk. The bottom line: use care and pace yourself when participating in any outdoor activity during cold weather.

HONOR - Continued from Page 2

contributions to our national security are appreciated, and to underscore the fact that all those who served have sacrificed and done their duty.

November 11 was originally called Armistice Day, honoring the veterans of World War I on the anniversary of the war’s end. In 1954, considering the tremendous number of veterans of World War II and Korea, November 11 became a day to honor American vets of all wars.

On October 8, 1954, then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first *Veterans Day Proclamation*, which stated, “In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans’ organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose.”

To all our veterans of the military, we say an enormous “Thank You.” We sincerely appreciate and recognize your sacrifices and your service.

Pencil In ...



BAH!

Humbug Day is December 21. On that day, people preparing for the holiday season can vent their frustrations. Twelve “humbugs” are allowed.

Answers to the **driving quiz** found on Page 2:



A) False C) True
B) False D) False

The Division of Highways has installed **TTY devices** for the hearing impaired at all **inter-state rest stops**, with the exception of I-81. Signs advising that the devices are available aren't installed yet, but DOH is working on it. For questions, call 588-8912.



Watch for fraud on Ebay. Avoid paying for an item and not receiving it. Check the seller’s feedback rating and comments. Consider an escrow service for expensive items. You pay the service, the seller ships the item, and you get a few days to make sure you get what you paid for.

