

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

A Monthly Employee Newsletter Published by the Department of Administration

September 1999 • Vol. 7, Issue 8

Employee of the Month

Personnel's Bonnie Walker Shares Knowledge with Others

Bonnie Walker, a Secretary II for the Staffing Services Section of the Division of Personnel, has been selected as the Department's **Employee of the Month** for September.

For nearly 12 years, Bonnie has worked in state government. In her current position, she assists employees, applicants and other agency personnel with their questions and concerns relating to personnel issues. Her duties in-

clude preparing correspondence, answering the telephone, serving as the contact person for the section's computer problems and ordering supplies.

According to one of her co-workers, "Bonnie has a vast knowledge of state government and is always willing to go the extra step to ensure that people have the correct answers to their questions. She performs her duties with the patience of Job and a willing heart."

In her spare time, Bonnie enjoys spending reading, going to movies and spending time with her family and friends.

Please join Cabinet Secretary Joseph Markus at a special **Employee of the Month** presentation at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, September 3 on the second floor lobby near the State Training Center in Building 6.



Bonnie Walker
September Employee
of the Month

You're Never Too Old to Learn!

"Back to School Fair" Gives State Employees Information on Educational Opportunities

The Division of Personnel conducted a "Back to School Fair" on August 11 at the State Training Center in Building 7. Representatives from 13 colleges, universities and vocational-technical schools offered information to state employees on a variety of educational opportunities.

Several Department employees have chosen to further their education. Look inside to learn about their experiences and the state's tuition reimbursement plan.

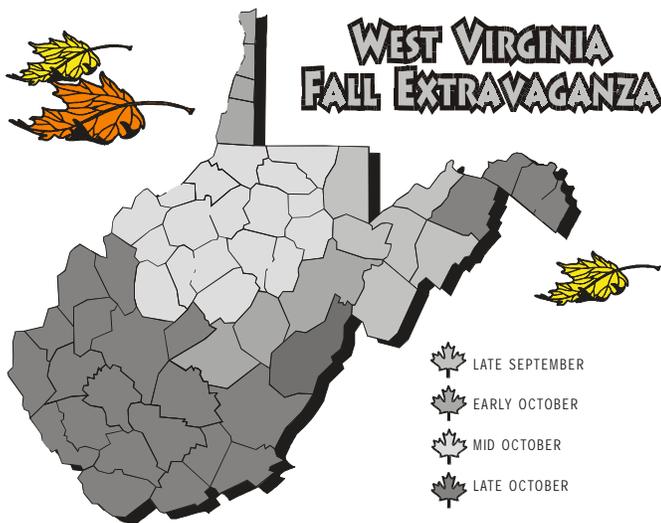


Over 200 state employees attended the "Back to School Fair" to learn more about educational opportunities.

Sneak Peek INSIDE...

- ♦ Fall Foliage Serves as State's Natural Tourist Attraction
- ♦ **Planning to Go Back to School?** Personnel's Fair Provided the Information
- ♦ New Pay-for-Space Parking System to be Installed
- ♦ Check Out the Department's Newsletter Online!

State's Fall Foliage Catches the Eye



Source: West Virginia Division of Tourism

By Jim Morris
Communication Intern

One of West Virginia's most popular natural attractions will unveil early this fall. According to state foresters, leaves from our state trees will change color earlier this year due to the summer's drought; however, the beauty will remain consistent with that of past years.

The drought has had effects on the state's forests other than an early change

in color of the leaves. Trees now have fewer leaves than usual from the lack of rain.

During the last two years, there has been optimal rain, leading to heavy foliage and a beautiful view of color on our hillsides. But foresters point out that factors in the environment *before* the leaves turn do not have as much bearing on the foliage as do those occurring in the midst of the color change.

Heavy rain and wind remove dying leaves, and the foliage falls to the forest floor prematurely. The drought, barring such other external factors, will not have an effect on the peak seasonal period, which should occur in early Octo-

ber but may vary throughout the state.

Consider going for a hike or a drive to see for yourself the beauty of the fall foliage. You may want to combine your sight-seeing with events being held throughout the state this fall, including: Stonewall Jackson Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival: The festival is scheduled for September 3-6 in Weston and will offer music, food and other activities.

Bridge Day: Witness parachuters jumping off the New River Gorge Bridge in October.

Trip to Hawk's Nest: Take in the amazing view of the fall foliage from its scenic overlook.

For a list of events or for information about fall driving tours, check out the Division of Tourism's website at <http://www.callwva.com>.

Pay Grade Revision Made to Selected Job Classifications

Pay grade scales for several job classifications were revised by the State Personnel Board. Many classifications within the Office Support, Administration and Fiscal Services Occupational Group were affected by these changes, which went into effect August 1, 1999.

In many cases, the pay scale was increased; however, this does not necessarily result in the employees within these classifications receiving a salary adjustment.

According to the Division of Personnel, the plan of implementation provides that employees whose salaries are below the new mini-

mum be adjusted to the new minimum. Employees whose salaries are within the ranges of the new pay grades will remain at the same rate of pay.

Many of the classifications involved data processing, financial reporting, personnel, administrative services and storekeeping.

The State Personnel Board has been reviewing and, in some cases, adjusting job classifications throughout state government.

For more details on the revised pay grades and those affected by this change, please call Personnel's Tari McClintock Crouse at (304) 558-3950, ext. 202.

BUSINESS

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Saying Good-bye in an E-mail

Closing words in e-mail messages are becoming more unusual as people demonstrate their individuality. While most workers use traditional sign-offs like "regards," a new wave of electronic good-byes are being used. Linguistics professor Gregory Ward at Northwestern University says these are some new closings for casual letters being seen: "peace," "easy," and "keep it smooth." Ward says he's had e-mail "hugs" from people he's never touched, because people want to convey warmth in their closings. A University of Pennsylvania survey says the most popular sign-off is still "bye-bye."

More State Employees Pursue Educational Goals

**By Jim Morris
Communication Intern**

On August 11, the Division of Personnel organized a "Back to School Fair" at the State Training Center in Building 7 for state employees who are considering furthering their education. This event showcased various opportunities available at 13 colleges, universities and vocational-technical schools.

Through the state's tuition reimbursement policy (see article below), full-time state workers may take courses and, if certain requirements and approvals have been met, tuition and other fees are reimbursed.

Though the event was intended for "adult" state employees, fun and light-heartedness with a carnival-like atmosphere were

on the agenda. A clown was on hand making balloon animals. Games, such as wheel of fortune and ring toss, were offered and refreshments were served.

The logistics for the fair were coordinated by Jayson Cabell, an intern through the Governor's Internship Program who worked for the Division of Personnel this summer. Majoring in finance and marketing, Jayson returned to Concord College this fall. "I came in for the interview and they explained that I would be working on the "Back to School" project. I think it really turned out bigger than we all expected," he said.

Many state workers have taken advantage of subsidized education through the state's tuition reimbursement program. "Going back to

Check Out the State's Educational Reimbursement Policy

... and How it Can Work for YOU!

What's stopping you from going back to school...the money? Good news! Under the Educational Expense Reimbursement and Leave Policy (EERL), tuition and other expenses for full-time state employees may be covered with agency approval under certain conditions.

A letter of request must be submitted to the agency head along with an *Application for Tuition/Expense Reimbursement* form. If the worker meets the eligibility requirements and is granted a tuition subsidy, the Department will reimburse the expenses if a grade on the undergraduate course is a "C" or higher, or

The cost of materials and programs is very high... knowing that these costs may be eliminated is very encouraging and motivates one to try and accomplish their goals.

Jennifer Paxton
Accounting Section

Continued on Page 4



school has been a great experience for me. The tuition reimbursement program makes it even better," said Dan Miller of the Purchasing Division. "To me, it sends a message that the Department cares about its employees. It tells me that my employer will do its part as long as I do mine in the area of professional growth."

Some state employees have not pursued their educational goals for fear of being able to juggle their career and family responsibilities with the rigors of school work.

However, most adults who have gone back to school have found the value of knowledge is well worth the juggling act. According to Joe Perks of IS&C, "It does get tiring, especially late in the semester, but that makes passing the class and getting the degree all the more worthwhile."

With information on a variety of educational opportunities available to state employees, the "Back to School Fair" demonstrated that kids aren't the only ones who can hit the books and make the grade!

Come on down and spin the wheel! The Division of Personnel incorporated fun prize-winning games at its "Back to School Fair". Pictured is Personnel's Mark Isabella (l) and Jayson Cabell (r), an intern through the Governor's Summer Internship Program who played a major role in coordinating the event.

Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes

is Published by the Department of Administration

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Special Thanks
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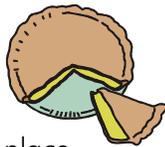


Several months ago, we announced that **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes** was accessible online...in color! Many Department employees have expressed that they enjoy reading the electronic version of the newsletter. If you have not checked it out, go to www.state.wv.us/admin. Under the hotlink to the Secretary's Office, click onto **Quotes, Notes & Anecdotes**.

On this page, you may choose which issue of the newsletter to view. Please note that you will need to download Adobe Acrobat in order to view the online issues. There is a link on this page to download this **free** software.

Another Delicious Winning PSRW Recipe to Share

This month, let's check out another winning recipe from the 1999 Public Service Recognition Week's bake-off. Below are the *secret ingredients* of Nancy Corrie's (Governor's Office) first-place entry in the pie category.



Chocolate Caramel Cheese Pecan Pie

Combine 2 cups of vanilla wafer crumbs and 6 tablespoons of margarine (melted) and press onto the bottom of a 9-inch spring form pan. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes.

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| 1-14 oz. bag caramels | 1/2 c. sugar |
| 1-5 oz. can evaporated milk | 1 t. vanilla |
| 1 c. chopped pecans (toasted) | 2 eggs |
| 2-8 oz. pkg. cream cheese (softened) | 1/2 c. semi-sweet chocolate pieces (melted) |

In a 1 1/2 quart saucepan, melt caramels with milk over low heat, stirring frequently until smooth. Pour over crust. Top with pecans. Combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla, mixing at medium speed until blended. Add eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Blend in chocolate and pour over pecans. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes. Loosen pie from rim of pan. Cool before removing. Chill. Garnish with whipped cream and pecans, if desired.

Feeling Unappreciated?

Here's Some Tips to Get Noticed

You think you are doing a good job, but your boss doesn't seem to notice. Below are a few ways to raise your profile:

Be available. It's fundamental. When others can't make it because of snow or rain, you can. If you find the boss comes in early or stays late, arrange your schedule so you are there to help if needed. If others leave early on Friday, stay until the boss leaves too.

Volunteer outside of work. Make a name for yourself outside of the organization, and the prestige will trickle down. You will gain leadership capabilities.

Get it done. Meet deadlines that other people can't. There are always people who can do what "can't be done." Be one of them.

Be a star among co-workers. Give information, cooperate, help. The word will soon get back to your boss that you are the one others ask to work on a project with them.

Solve your own people problems. Bosses don't like when the staff doesn't get along or rivalry exists. If you are tempted to ask your boss for help, don't do it.

Build good relationships with co-workers. Ask people to go to lunch or initiate breakroom conversations. Ask if you can help when they are overloaded.

Ask the boss what else you can do when you finish a project early. Showing bosses that their needs are important to you is a good way to become important to them, and gives you the *right* kind of attention.



A Salute to the American Worker

On Monday, September 6, Labor Day will be celebrated in honor of the American worker.

State offices will be closed in observation of this special day.

Tuition Reimbursement Continued from Page 3

a graduate course a "B" or higher. If this requirement is not fulfilled, or if a copy of the final grade is not submitted, then the employee is responsible for payment of these expenses.

The state's reimbursement policy covers such costs as tuition and registration fees, and must be authorized in advance of the employee

enrolling in a course. GED application and testing fees may also be covered by this program.

An employee may also be granted paid leave if needed to complete educational courses relating to the job.

For the complete Division of Personnel EERL policy, check out this website: www.state.wv.us/admin/personel/emprel/POLICIES/Dopp16.htm

Pay-by-Space Parking Machines Tested for Future Use throughout the Capitol Complex

■ Big Changes in Capitol Parking to Take Place with Next Month's Opening of the New Garage

The lack of adequate parking has been a complaint of both visitors and state employees at the State Capitol for years. But things are beginning to change.

The opening of the new Capitol Parking Garage is expected in October. Located at the northwest corner of the Division of Motor Vehicles' parking lot adjacent to Piedmont Road near the Greenbrier street overpass, the garage will offer 788 spaces for public and employee parking.

The Carlton Company of Charleston was awarded the \$5.6 million contract to build the facility. The responsibility of parking at the State Capitol Complex falls under the jurisdiction of the Purchasing Division of the Department of Administration.

In addition, changes are being made to the metered parking areas. Pay-by-space machines will soon be installed which will eventually replace nearly 200 parking meters at the Capitol Complex.

According to Cabinet Secretary Joseph Markus, safety and economy were the driving forces in the decision to convert to this new system. This "state of the art" plan will provide locked vault-type collection points.

The first machine will be installed at the public parking area at Laidley Field, according to State Parking Manager Janice Boggs. Here's how it works:

Approximately 80 spaces at this site will be numbered with



a machine centrally located on the lot. When a visitor parks his car, he will indicate on the machine his numbered space and the amount of time he will be parked in that space. He will then enter the appropriate amount of money for that parking term and receive a receipt.

The guards will continue to monitor the spaces in that area to determine if the time on any vehicles has expired. Parking tickets will be issued for all vehicles with expired time.

This system is also expected to be used in public spaces in the new parking garage and other areas throughout the complex. "We have chosen to implement this high-tech system for security in our collection process," said Capitol Parking Manager Janice Boggs. "We want to avoid any problems which may potentially occur in the collection of parking funds."

Last year, two parking attendants plead guilty to stealing money from Capitol Complex meters.

The Capitol Parking Garage which is scheduled to open in October will offer 788 spaces for visitors and state employees. A parking reallocation plan is currently being finalized to handle these changes.

10th Annual Multi-Cultural Event Takes Place at the State Capitol



Drawing crowds of up to 35,000 for the event's concerts, this year's Multifest celebration at the State Capitol was one of the biggest and best, according to organizers. People from West Virginia and surrounding states attended. Pictured (l-r) are General Services' Chuck Strickland and summer employee Jamie Harrison, who assisted with electrical needs for the festival held August 6-8.

Problems create opportunities. Use adversity as a learning experience and turn a crisis to your advantage by fashioning an unusual or surprising solution.

Richard Jenrette
The Contrarian Manager

TALKBACK

Here's what some of our employees said about their educational goals in response to this month's electronic mail survey on the GroupWise e-mail system:

As a West Virginia State College student, I feel that education is a growing experience, no matter what age you are.

Graduating in May, I will have finally gotten my four-year degree and it took only 18 years!

Institutions of higher learning do not offer workshops in areas of interest to people with advanced skills, nor can you receive certificates of advanced training by completing courses you feel are valuable to your career goals or interests.

I'm still in school, but I fear that I'm never going to get to the end. I have been working on it since my boys were just babies; now, they have both graduated.

I have made many new life-long friends and hope to graduate with them in May 2000.

Going back to school makes you a more well-rounded and interesting person.

Since I was in college, technology has changed the way my work is accomplished. I'd like to know that I've kept up with it.

Adults usually make better students because they try harder. They know why they are in class; they are spending their own money; and they bring a wealth of experience to the classroom.

Going back to school is important for future advancements in my career with the state.

I am afraid that I will never get the loans paid off that I used to pursue my schooling!

Welcome...to our new employees: **Darla Blackmon** (General Services); **Sherri Reveal** (Ethics); **Charlene Good** (IS & C); Joshua Frazier (CPRB); **Teresa Martin** and **Jennifer Harvey** (Personnel).

Good Luck...to those employees who recently retired from our Department: **Brenda Erwin** (Finance); **Roger Emerson** (Personnel); **Kara Brown** (Leasing); and **Dawn George** (IS&C).

Division of Personnel Announces Classes for September ...[September 2] Dealing with Upset and Angry Customers; [September 16] Preventing Loss and Litigation; [September 20] Bouncing Back from Burnout; [September 21-24] Train the Trainer; [September 27] Personal Accountability; [September 28] Managing Strategically; [September 28-29] Stress Management; [September 30] Workplace Safety. For more information or to register, please contact the Division of Personnel at 558-3950, ext. 508.

1999 Agency Purchasing Conference...The Purchasing Division will be conducting its annual agency conference on September 27-30 at Canaan Valley State Park. For more details, call Diane Holley at (304) 558-0661.

PEOPLE TALK

Congratulations!...Shelley DuKate, daughter of General Services' Pam DuKate, had a baby boy, Caylor Daniel, on August 5, weighing in at 6 lbs. 6 oz. Shelley previously worked for the Secretary's Office.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY... in September

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Connie Byrne Finance Curt Curtiss Purchasing Ada Lewis Personnel 3 Gay Ellis Finance 4 Kim Huffman IS&C 5 Jane Fouty Personnel 6 Lewis Brewer . Grievance Board Dick Estill Purchasing 8 Janet Shelton Secretary's Office 9 Philip Adams IS&C Charlotte Belcher Personnel Erline Davis CPRB Chuck Walker IS&C 11 Preston Clark IS&C Diana Davis CPRB Nancy Lynch PEIA David White Purchasing 12 Craig Cotsmire IS&C Tom Lambert General Services 13 Connie Maxwell Finance Evan Williams Purchasing 14 Raymond Prozzillo . General Services Jerri Rucker Finance 16 Brian Jones Purchasing Kathy Thomas Personnel 17 Katheryne Flenner Personnel 19 Cathy McClung IS&C 20 Bill McClanahan IS&C | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 Valerie Roberts Purchasing 21 Sharon Horn Personnel 22 Donna Bilyeu Personnel Sharon Gill PEIA Sarah Long BRIM 23 Barbara Jarrell Personnel Teresa Siders Public Defenders Tammy Williams CPRB 24 Shawn Carper Finance James Farmer Purchasing Dan Pauley IS&C Deidre Thompson Rainwater ... IS&C 25 Stephanie Chafin IS&C Becky Hughart Purchasing Bryan Michaels Finance David Wolfe Purchasing 26 Al Hugar Finance 28 Stan Chambers Personnel Joan Chapman Finance Cathy Kushner IS&C Diana McGinnis .. Secretary's Office 29 Karen Copeland BRIM Charles Curry General Services Jerry Gladwell BRIM Greg Hutchinson IS&C 30 Janet Atkins CPRB John Wagner IS&C |
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