



EARTH DAY



► More than 300 kids attended the Department of Environmental Protection's annual Earth Day celebration on April 15 at the Clay Center in Charleston. Earth Day is officially April 22 but the DEP moved its event up to avoid many schools' spring break. **See page 10 for more photos.**

Oak Hill office continues to grow

■ **Editor's note:** This is the sixth in a series of stories on DEP offices around West Virginia.

By Tom Aluise

OAK HILL — It is the only Department of Environmental Protection field office with a penthouse.

Well, at least that's what the DEP folks in Oak Hill like to call the new addition to their building.

And considering it was once used for storage, the roughly 4,500-



What once housed a rebuild shop, now serves as the DEP's Oak Hill office. Close to 100 employees work out of the facility.

square foot section, now newly carpeted and brightly painted, cer-

tainly feels more like a penthouse than a musty attic.



More important, it is providing much-needed space for the close to 100 Oak Hill employees, who make up the agency's largest field office.

"It's hard to be efficient and effective if

See OAK HILL, Page 3

Bill was long time coming

There is no greater gift to any family than to have their children healthy and happy.

It's the goal we all share as parents and grandparents. The First Lady and I feel this way about our son, and I know parents across our beautiful state feel the same way about their children.

It is because of their love and commitment to ensuring that their children not only receive the best possible care, but also receive the specialized care that they need, that I am proud to have signed HB 2693. This bill requires insurance companies to offer autism related insurance coverage for families.

Among the hundreds of pieces of legislation that passed and that I signed into law this year, this bill truly puts the needs of



Message from Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin

our young, vulnerable West Virginians first. With my signature, West Virginia is now the 25th state to require autism-related services covered by insurance for qualifying families. This has been a long five-year journey in the making.

During the 2011 Legislative Session, I received several dozen letters from grandparents, aunts, uncles, and parents of children with autism.

These letters tugged on my heart with statements

such as:

► “My 2-year-old son is smart, funny, and the light of our lives. He can be a fully functioning member of society if he is given the therapy that he so desperately needs.”

► “My son has been paying thousands of dollars for ABA therapy out of his pocket each year. This family is not rich, but my grandson needs all the help he can get. Since he has been having this therapy, he can communicate, play with other children and is learning to read.”

► “My son is a different person since starting ABA therapy. Although we can only afford to pay for six hours a week, these children need 40 hours a week. With your help in signing the bill, we can finally give him the therapy he needs to be able to function in our world.”

► “We struggle every

day financially, emotionally and physically trying to provide his much needed treatment because insurance companies are being allowed to discriminate against our child based on his disability.”

These are just some of the heartfelt letters I have read over the past few months. I feel these families' pain and am happy to be a part of improving their lives.

I want to thank all of the families who wrote to me and shared their touching, personal stories.

I am so pleased to say that insurance coverage for autism related services is now a reality. It is my hope that this legislation will bring opportunities for a better life to our children with autism and their families who strive to provide the best lives for them each and every day.

DEP legislative recap

Two of the four pieces of legislation introduced by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection passed the recently completed Legislative session and were forwarded to Gov. Tomblin for his consideration.

Following is a summary of those bills, along with bills introduced by others that passed the Legislature and have an effect on the DEP.

Introduced by the DEP:

■ **HB 2955 – DMR Funding:** The purpose of this bill is to maintain state primacy of the coal program by retaining the ability to match federal dollars. This bill proposes to increase and create new fees on certain permit applications and to propose an annual fee on each inspectable unit. These fees replace the revenue stream from an expired tax on synthetic fuels. This bill was signed by the governor on April 5 and becomes effective on June 16, 2011.

■ **SB 366 – UST Administrative Fund:** This legislation raises from \$500,000 to \$1 million the balance allowed to

be in the Underground Storage Tank Administrative Fund at the beginning of each year. This bill was signed by the governor on March 30 and becomes effective on June 10, 2011.

■ **SB 121 – DEP Rules Bundle:** The purpose of this bill is to authorize the DEP to promulgate seven Air rules, one Solid Waste rule, three Water rules, and the Surface Mining Rule. This rule was signed by the governor on March 30 and becomes effective on June 18, 2011.

Introduced by others:

■ **SB 245 – Chesapeake Bay Funding:** The purpose of this bill is to establish a program to provide financial assistance to wastewater treatment facilities in the Chesapeake Bay (and Greenbrier River) watersheds that are required to install expensive technology in order to meet stringent nutrient standards imposed by the U.S. EPA.

This bill was signed by the governor on March 30 and becomes effective on June 10, 2011.



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OAK HILL

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you've got people sitting on top of each other," said Keith Porterfield, an assistant director in the Division of Mining and Reclamation and Oak Hill's building coordinator.

The DEP's two-story, 26,000-square foot Oak Hill facility began serving the state in 1986 when much of what is now the DEP was under the then Department of Natural Resources. Offices in MacArthur and Summersville were merged at Oak Hill in a former rebuild shop that sits just on the outskirts of town. The building has been renovated five times since 1986.

The newest addition opened less than a year ago and houses 18 employees, including DMR personnel and others. Jennifer DuPree, a Division of Water and Waste Management staffer, who serves as the state's Southern Basin coordinator, also has an office in the new section.

"I like that it's quiet most of the time," she said.

In all, the Oak Hill facility is a maze of disjointed hallways that can be confusing to the first-time visitor. The building houses a potpourri of different DEP programs, including DMR permitting, inspection and blasting. There are more DMR employees at Oak Hill (53), than any other division.

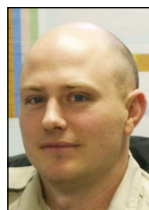
Five mining inspector units are based out of Oak Hill and cover 950 permits in McDowell, Wyoming, Mercer, Kanawha, Raleigh, Fayette, Summers, Greenbrier, Nicholas, Monroe and Mason counties.

Five people work out of Oak Hill's satellite office in Welch.

The Oak Hill facility also is providing temporary office space to personnel from the state Office of Miners' Health Safety and Training in its ongoing investigation of the Upper Big Branch mine disaster.



Top, Patty Keys reviews mining permits and acts as the safety coordinator at the Oak Hill office. Left, Keith Porterfield, an assistant director in DMR, is the facility's building coordinator. Right, Tom Wood is in charge of Article 3 permitting for the DMR out of Oak Hill.



Bandy

In addition to mining, Jeremy Bandy oversees a staff of five inspectors from Environmental Enforcement who work out of Oak Hill.

"One guy does nothing but inspect construction storm water in a 12-county region," Bandy said. "We divide the other four inspectors among the 12 counties. We have 1,200 permits for five inspectors."

Oak Hill's coverage region is a hotbed for environmental issues relating to mountaintop mining and a home base for environmental groups opposed to different aspects of the mining industry. Their members have been known to chain themselves to

equipment or climb trees in protest of certain surface mining operations.

"We've had more than our fair share of controversy," said Grant Connard, an inspector supervisor for DMR out of Oak Hill and a 32-year agency veteran.

"Everybody is so environmentally conscious and the environmental groups have become more vocal."

Connard believes his inspectors are some of the best in the state.

"Because of the quality of their work," he said.

Porterfield said his staff understands the passion on both sides of the surface mining issue and maintains respect for all.

"Obviously there are different opinions in this region as to whether it's appropriate," Porterfield said. "There has always been some opposition to

mountaintop mining. It's fair to say that its momentum has grown."

Tom Wood, who's in charge of the DMR's Article 3 permitting out of Oak Hill, worked as a mining inspector for many years in the region. His job philosophy now is the same as it was when he was an inspector with an office "behind the steering wheel."

"I attempt to address every request in an unbiased, respectful, responsible way, always using the established regulations and laws as a basis for all decisions," Wood said.

One of the more vocal environmental groups in the Oak Hill region is Coal River Mountain Watch. As an inspector, Wood interacted with the anti-mountaintop mining group and its former

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OAK HILL

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director, the late Julia Bonds, on many occasions.

“I had the opportunity to become acquainted with a number of the original members of Coal River Mountain Watch through complaint investigations, public meetings and informal visits to discuss their concerns,” Wood said. “I always had a good relationship with them.”

In addition to being the largest of the DEP field offices, Oak Hill probably has the most experienced staff, Porterfield said. There are more retirement-eligible workers at Oak Hill than at any other field office. David Beal and Jim Shisler, from the Abandoned Mine Lands program, retired from their Oak Hill posts in March.

“I’m going to miss these people and I’m going to miss the work,” Shisler said. “I sure made a lot of friends over the years. I consider all of them my friends, and that’s special anymore.”

“There is a core group of people here who’ve been together a long time,” Porterfield said. “Not only do they work well together, they’re just good friends. People enjoy working here together. That makes a difference as far as being able to recruit people and retain them. Most of the people who start here generally stay on.”



Brooke Chambers, left, is an office assistant in AML at Oak Hill. Another AML employee, Jim Shisler, right, recently retired from the Oak Hill office.

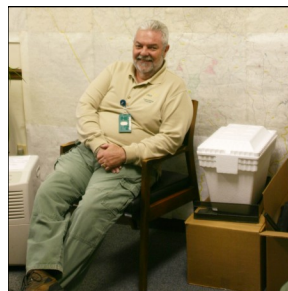


They’re the first to greet visitors to the Oak Hill office. Left is Malinda Toney. Dolores Thompson, right, actually worked in the Oak Hill office when it was a rebuild shop.

AML office assistants Brooke Chambers and Pam Ford thought their tenure at the DEP would be short.

Ford took her job as a temporary hire 16 years ago and never left. Chambers, who grew up in Oak Hill, is in her eighth year with AML.

“I really had no idea how state government worked and I never thought I’d be here this long,” Chambers said. “I just like it here. It’s productive and you see results. You see projects from start to fin-



Grant Connard is an inspector supervisor with DMR in Oak Hill. He has 32 years of state government experience.

ish and it’s nice to see that productivity.”

Patty Keys reviews mining permits and acts as Oak Hill’s safety

coordinator. She also is co-founder, along with the since-retired Phyllis Farley, of the Green Hat Society. The group of Oak Hill office women meets once a month for lunch, conversation and an occasional activity.

More inclusive functions at the Oak Hill office are the annual Christmas dinner, during which the entire building, plus outside guests, come together to spend time. There’s also an office-wide summer picnic on the building grounds.

“They’ll be 150 people in here (for the Christmas dinner) and we raise money through fundraisers to pay for it,” Porterfield said. “It’s quite a task to organize and feed 150 people.”

Keys said Oak Hill is not a perfect office but, because everyone knows each other so well, working out problems isn’t difficult.

“There are a lot of good, committed people here who want to do the job the right way,” she said. “Most of us have been together 18 or 19 years, especially in mining. We’ve gotten away from talking about our children to talking about our grandchildren.”

For DuPree, the basin coordinator who grew up in Florida, Oak Hill is her little piece of heaven.

“This is where I wanted to be in West Virginia,” she said. “I smile every time I drive over the New River Gorge Bridge. I am so lucky.”

SPRUCING UP FOR SPRING

The Department of Environmental Protection’s headquarters got more colorful recently with the planting of spring flowers in the front of the building.

General Services workers planted the tulips last fall and the other flowers a few weeks ago.



Carr takes on Ohio River basin issues

By Colleen O'Neill

The Department of Environmental Protection's Brian A. Carr has been named to represent the agency on a new water resources board.

Two well-respected boards, the Ohio River Valley Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) and the Ohio River Basin Water Resources Association, joined forces to create the Water Resources Committee.

Carr, of the Division of Water and Waste Management, will represent the DEP on the committee.

States that are touched by the Ohio River are part of the river's basin. Each of these states has a representative from the agency that is deemed to protect the water resources and deal with water quality.

By the Water Resources Protection



Carr

and Management Act, DEP is the state agency for West Virginia. "My 12 years of experience in geotechnical engineering geology and hydrogeology will be very useful during my participation on this committee," Carr said. "I am well-versed in the math and science behind many of the tools used in water resource management.

"My current job at the DEP, a geologist with the Water Use Section, puts me in a unique position to discuss the water resource issues facing our state because that is exactly what our section has been enacted to do.

"Not only will my position at DEP help make me a better representative on the Water Re-

sources Committee, I believe the committee will aid in identifying additional issues that need to be addressed by our statewide water resources plan," Carr said.

The newly formed committee is charged with studying, discussing and evaluating water resource issues that are areas of concern for ORSANCO and the basin states.

Carr will act as the liaison for DEP, conveying all information to DEP Cabinet Secretary Randy Huffman.

"I will be the eyes and ears on this committee for the secretary," Carr said. "As the committee identifies issues and poses potential avenues to deal with those issues, I will be there to relay the decisions made by Secretary Huffman and/or the appropriate division directors on those issues.

"So, there is the po-

tential to both identify various water resource issues affecting the Ohio River basin and its surrounding states, as well as to suggest alternatives to address the issues that are identified."

Carr will replace Lyle Bennett as the basin state representative for West Virginia.

Carr was nominated by his supervisor, Mike Stratton.

"Ultimately, I received a letter of nomination to the Water Resources Committee signed by Secretary Huffman, dated Jan. 26, 2011," Carr said. "A term of operation for the committee has not been specified."

Carr has been with the DEP since 2008.

He also serves on two councils — the West Virginia Water Gauging Council and the West Virginia State University Research Advisory Council.



Visitors to the ZeroLandfill event, sponsored in part by the DEP, sift through materials at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore.

ZeroLandfill event helps supply area art educators

By Tom Aluise

The national ZeroLandfill program's goals are to reduce pressure on local landfill capacity by turning engineering and design specification samples, traditionally disposed of as waste, into art and education supplies.

West Virginia's first ZeroLandfill offering did just that.

Hosted by Charleston's Habitat for Humanity ReStore and sponsored in part by the Department of Environmental Protection, April's ZeroLandfill event "upcycled,"

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Sons, daughters to visit DEP April 28

The average age of people walking through the hallways of the Department of Environmental Protection headquarters will go down a bit on April 28.

That's because the DEP will again be participating in National Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day.

On the 28th, daughters, sons, nieces, nephews, grandchildren and even neighbors of DEP employees will visit DEP headquarters for a day of learning and fun. Ages will range from 8 to 18.

Activities planned include interactive demonstrations and/or displays from DAQ and DWWM, a craft/activity sponsored by REAP, and a special guest.

The deadline to register a child was April 14 and in order to plan and properly prepare for events, no late registrations will be accepted.

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Familiar face in different role

Ex-DMR staffer returns to take over two REAP programs

By Colleen O'Neill

The new coordinator for the Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan's Adopt-A-Highway and Operation Wildflower programs is a familiar face around the Department of Environmental Protection.

Sherry Oldaker-Thaxton, a former employee of the Division of Mining and Reclamation, returned to the DEP on March 7 after a brief stint in the private sector.

She replaced Anna Shahan, who retired.

"I left to take a job at the Charleston Police Department," she said. "My mother retired from there, so I knew a lot of the officers and liked that it was a family atmosphere there. I was at the CPD a year, but was never truly happy.

"I missed the DEP."

One day while perusing the Department of Personnel's website, Oldaker-Thaxton saw the posting for her current position.

Because she longed for the sisterhood and comradery she shared at the DEP, she was immediately interested.

"I had heard nothing but praises about the REAP program," Oldaker-Thaxton said.

She explained that in the past when she had manned the DEP's booth for the West Virginia State Fair, she met the REAP crew, including Shahan and Make It Shine Coordinator Travis Cooper.

"When talking with Anna and



Sherry Oldaker-Thaxton is back at DEP as the coordinator of REAP's Adopt-A-Highway and Operation Wildflower programs, replacing Anna Shahan., who retired.

Travis while manning the booth, I found both of their programs very interesting," Oldaker-Thaxton said.

"Chris (Cartwright) and Greg (Rote) were both great hard-working guys who had a passion about their jobs and went above and beyond what was needed of them. I liked that."

Oldaker-Thaxton began her career at the DEP answering phones in mining in 1992.

"Over the 10 years I was there, I handled the bonding and insurance for the mining permits and worked with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits."

Oldaker-Thaxton said she's still learning the ropes in REAP.

"One aspect I'm looking forward to is dealing with the public. I love to sit and talk to folks.

"Everyone has a story ... and I want to hear them all."

AAH set for April 30

This spring's Adopt-A-Highway Statewide Cleanup is scheduled for April 30.

Volunteers supply the labor and the Department of Environmental Protection's Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan, in conjunction with the Division of Highways, will provide the trash bags, the litter grabbers, safety vests, work gloves, and will arrange for the trash to be hauled away.

Volunteers can adopt almost any state-maintained road, back road or main route.

To register, call 1-800-322-5530 or send an email to: dep.aah@wv.gov.

Spring is here, time for tires

By Tom Aluise

Spring is about collecting flowers — unless you're Greg Rote.

Come March, his focus is on collecting tires.

During the calendar year, the Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan (REAP) hosts at least one tire collection event in all 55 West Virginia counties. The majority of the events are staged in the spring and summer.

"In some counties we host more than



One of this spring's first tire collections netted 3,800 tires in Putnam County. At least one tire collection is scheduled for each county.

See TIRES, Page 8

Now, she can turn off TV captions

Xichun "April" Sun is in her sixth year as a programmer analyst for the DEP. She handles all computer-related (software side) tasks for the Office of Oil and Gas and REAP.



Sun

A native of central China (about two hours from Shanghai), Sun came to the United States when she was 21.

She is married with two daughters (Joy 11 and Faith 4) and is due to have another girl on May 5.

1. What brought you to America and are you here to stay?

My husband decided to come here, so I followed him. For now, I guess we're here to stay. We started a family here and it's still growing. But staying here was not our initial intention.

2. Coming from a communist country, what were your first impressions of the United States and its people?

I find it very interesting what people think about China these days. To me, China is more capitalistic than America. I will say the people



With Xichun Sun

here are more polite, the streets are cleaner and the supermarkets are bigger and cleaner.

3. What were some of the biggest obstacles you had to overcome when you arrived here?

The language. My generation began studying English in middle school. A regular college graduate from China will have eight years of English. And English is not a selective. It is a requirement in school, like Chinese and math.

So, with eight years of solid English study, reading comprehension, writing and grammar, my English was pretty good when I came to America.

Still, I had trouble speaking and understanding English, which we did not concentrate on in school. At first, I didn't open my mouth much and I couldn't understand what people were talking about. I needed to turn on captions when I watched TV.

But because I had a solid background in English, it began to get better in a few months. I would say after about six months, I could communicate freely with people.

To me, language has a life-long learning span. So, I am still learning and improving every day.

4. At the DEP, you go by "April" and not your Chinese name, "Xichun." What prompted the change, and why "April"?

Some people still prefer to call me Xichun instead of April. April is the English name that I came up with when I first had a job interview here at the DEP.

I think April is a lot easier for people to pronounce and to remember. My birthday is in April, so that is pretty much how I got the name.

5. How often do you return to China to visit family and do any of them hope to follow in your footsteps and move to America?

It depends. We don't go back that often because it is very expensive. But we are trying to go back once every two or three years.

Nobody from my family wants to come here since China is doing so well and full of opportu-

nities. Maybe a few of our next-generation relatives would like to come here for school in the future.

6. How environmentally conscious are China's citizens and leaders?

I would say very much. But are they doing enough to enforce the ideas? That, I don't know.

7. What do you like about working for the DEP?

The people are nice around here and my work schedule is flexible, which is good for a mom.

8. Are China's people more computer literate than Americans?

Generally speaking, people in China are not more computer literate than Americans. Computer access is still not available everywhere in China.

9. What do you miss most about China?

Family and food.

10. Who has the best Chinese food in Charleston?

No one. As far as I know, there is no real (I mean authentic) Chinese food in the Charleston/Huntington area. I consider the food you get from all the Chinese restaurants here as Chinese-American. Honestly, it is horrible.

Human Resources corner



Open enrollment with PEIA insurance and FBMC (Mountaineer Flexible Benefits) will continue through April 30.

Employees who do not wish to make any changes to their coverage are not required to take any action.

It is not an open enrollment period for life insurance, although employees can either drop or decrease their life insurance coverage during the period.

All open enrollment is done on line at www.peia.wv.gov (for health insurance) and www.fbmc.com/My-Benefits.aspx.

In memory

Del Glenn Gainer II, 37, died on April 4, 2011. Del worked in Special Reclamation out of the Philippi office.

He had five years of service with the DEP. Del lived in Quite Dell, Harrison County.

He is survived by his parents, Del Glenn Gainer and Janet Lee Marker Gainer and a sister, Janelle Paul.

Del was a 1995 graduate of West Virginia University. He was an instructor for the Aviation Program at Fairmont State, having been a charter pilot as well for USAir.

He also enjoyed skiing, trout fishing, dirt track racing and attending NASCAR events.

Del was a member of the National Ski Patrol, serving Canaan Valley and Timberline resorts.



DEP retirements

Thomas Gribben

DAQ
Last day: March 1, 2011
Years of service: 6

David Beal

AML
Last day: March 31, 2011
Years of service: 14

Jim Shisler

AML
Last day: March 31, 2011
Years of service: 18



Mike Johnson

DWWM
Last day: April 30, 2011
Years of service: 36

Johnson says: It is with mixed emotions that I end my public service of almost 37 years with

the Division of Water (first in DNR and now DEP) at the end of April. I gave a 14-month notice and it went so quickly. In fact, life in general goes quickly, including my years here, so it is true that we should live our lives like today is our last day.

During my tenure here I have been blessed with the staff I have worked with over the years. Hopefully, with our financial assistance programs of first grants, then low-interest loans, we have made a difference in helping to improve the environment. When I started here in 1973, the state had only 60 sewage treatment plants. Fairmont had the distinction of being the largest city in the United States that had no sewage treatment. That's right, the city dumped raw sewage into the Monongahela River. Today, we have over 200 sewage treatment facilities and 500,000

more citizens have sewage treatment for the first time. A lot has been accomplished, but much more needs to be done.

I started out at the Greenbrier Street offices which Bill Brannon, now retired, once described as the "worst office building in the whole of DEP." When our program expanded due to federal grants provided under the Clean Water Act of 1972, my program increased from three people to 30 and we were moved to a warehouse building on Broad Street, literally across the tracks from the Farmers Market (it used to be the old liquor storage warehouse for ABCC). Sorry Bill, this had to be the worst offices. We had cubicles made of wood, window air conditioners, smelly carpet, walls painted orange and visitors couldn't find the building. We were there 20 years until we moved to a house converted to an office building on the Boulevard close to the capitol. It was like going from the outhouse to the penthouse as far as offices go. We stayed there only a few years until this new DEP building was finished. I still miss those lunch time walks along the river!

As for my future, the only real plans I have made for retirement so far are to play more golf (I really, really mean that), get back into fishing and camping, spend more time with four grandchildren and do several home projects I have been putting off for a long time. If I get bored with all of this and I decide to get back into the sewer business on a part-time basis, someone please just shoot me.

In closing, I wish to acknowledge the entire staff of DEP, especially the Division of Water and Waste Management. I will be rooting for you guys from the sidelines. Now, I won't be shy about speaking my mind to any politician I see. Hey, there is an idea - politics. Thank you to everyone, past and present, for helping me during my career at DEP. I really could not have envisioned working anywhere else.

TIRES

Continued from Page 6

one collection," said Rote, program manager for REAP.

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's REAP program took over the task of collecting discarded tires from the state Division of Highways in July 2005.



Rote

Entering this spring, REAP had collected 1.9 million tires since 2005 and will hit the 2 million mark soon. Already this spring, tire collection events in Putnam County and Clay County have netted 3,800 and 4,300 tires respectively, helping to keep the unsightly clutter out of streams and off West Virginia hillsides.

Here are REAP tire collection numbers since 2005-06 fiscal year: 379,263 in 05-06; 278,618 in 06-07; 414,452 in 07-08; 420,866 in 08-09; and 345,279 in 09-10.

New Additions

Recent DEP hires

- ▶ Raymond Carroll, DMR
- ▶ Curtis DeLong, DMR
- ▶ Kimberly Maxwell, DWWM
- ▶ Steven May, DMR
- ▶ Gregory Morris, DWWM
- ▶ Randy Moss, AML
- ▶ DeWayne Nelson, DMR
- ▶ Nick Schell, DWWM
- ▶ Sherry Thaxton, REAP
- ▶ Derek Thompson, Administration



By Colleen O'Neill
 Nick Pahoundis, with the Youth Environmental Program, helped coordinate close to 100 volunteers during a cleanup at Mountwood Park in Wood County.

Making it shine

Two weeks in April mark time to tidy up our state

The final numbers are not in, but there's no reason to believe this year's Make It Shine Statewide Cleanup won't match or surpass last year's figures for litter removed.

In 2010, around 3,000 volunteers collected close to 190 tons of litter from the state's landscape.

In 2011, more than 4,000 volunteers signed up to complete 113 projects around West Virginia from April 1 through April 15.

The Make It Shine program is sponsored by the Department of Environmental Protection and the Division of Highways.

At least one cleanup was scheduled in each of the state's 55 counties this month.

The Kanawha Ski Club worked around Shawnee Park in Institute.

"We try to give back to our community whenever we can, and have volunteered for two or three years in a row helping to clean up our neighborhoods," ski club member Debbie James said. "It's fun, and it's a good thing to do!"



Members of the Kanawha Ski Club picked up litter around Shawnee Park in Institute as part of the Make It Shine Program.



Volunteers braved all types of weather to participate in the Make It Shine Cleanup. The St. Albans High Quarterback Club cleaned a stretch of Route 60 on a chilly day.

Intranet hidden treasure for employees

By Colleen O'Neill

The Department of Environmental Protection has many extras for its employees. A few of these are the great exercise room, complete with treadmills and other equipment; Corporate Cup,

"We are working on a lookup tool that will allow the employees to access all agency forms in one spot."

— Ken Stevens
 Webmaster

rate Cup, which allows employees to use their athletic skills and practice sportsmanship; and the annual employee appreciation picnic. Another helpful extra is the employee intranet, which allows DEP staffers to access forms and programs used in their jobs. It also provides a staff directory, and instructional documents for various employee programs and equipment.

"We are working on a lookup tool that will allow the employees to access all agency forms in one spot," said Ken Stevens, Webmaster for the DEP.

He manages the employee intranet, and DEP's public Website on the World Wide Web.

"The intranet can only be accessed by employees either in a DEP office or with a special connection," Stevens said. "It's on the DEP network."

At the top of the intranet homepage, there are four tabs that, when clicked on, grant access to programs for different employee needs.

One perk found under intranet applications is the employee bulletin board. Here, employees can advertise things for sale, to rent, for free, or if they want to spread the word about charitable items.

Employees can also use this tab to attain links to reserve conference rooms or vehi-

See **TREASURE**, Page 10

EARTH DAY 2011



Clockwise, from left: One Earth Day participant picked an unusual spot for her rub-off tattoo; kids show they aren't squeamish over squirmy creatures; DAQ's Laura Crowder operates a solar-powered racetrack; and Earth Day Coordinator Travis Cooper and Kirby, the talking trash can, speak with some kids.

TREASURE

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cles.

By clicking on the Conference Rooms or Fleet Management links, employees can gain access to the reservation function.

Under the Internet links tab, links to the West Virginia homepage, the DEP Web site,

and the State Pay and Holiday Calendar can be found. The ITO tab reveals links to various DEP programs, along with numerous instructional documents, including one regarding the posting of items to the DEP Web site.

It's also a great place to access Human Resources information. "Right now under

Benefits, there is a section for open enrollment that employees might find useful," said Melinda Campbell, Administrative Services manager for HR.

"If an employee needs basic instructions about ERIS time and activity, there are some videos about how to enter your time under that link.

"All new employees can go to the Employee Information section and click on the new employee checklist link to work through all their new hire paperwork," Campbell said.

Campbell said all of the HR information that was under the old HR link can be found on the main page, under the appropriate link.

EVENT

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or kept intact, 2,709 pounds of waste materials donated by area businesses and offered those materials for free to local artists and art educators.

Of those 2,709 pounds, only 18 pounds were landfilled. The rest were either taken by the art community, recycled, or donated back to the ReStore. Materials collected included 708 pounds of stone and brick; 528 pounds of vinyl wall covering; 483 pounds of carpet; 258 pounds of vinyl products; and 206 pounds of fabric.

"During our ZeroLandfill event we heard a lot of great ideas about what people were going to do with the over 1 ton of up-cycled items, from creating

art to jewelry to furnishing a doll house," DEP Sustainability Officer Greg Adolfsen said. "The vision of ZeroLandfill is to create a world in which waste does not exist — only items that can continually evolve into new things or that biodegrade back into nature."

Amy McLaughlin, director of the Habitat ReStore, said the event was perfect for teachers who are operating on low budgets.

"It was very satisfying to hear how appreciative the art teachers were to be collecting the sample materials," she said. "With their very low budgets, they never have enough materials to keep the kids busy and creative. ZeroLandfill helped them fill up their rooms with lots of art project goodies."



EPA recognizes Fisher

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently honored Tom Fisher (left) for his assistance over the years to the EPA's Criminal Investigation Division, which prosecutes hazardous waste cases at the federal level. Fisher retired from the Department of Environmental Protection's Hazardous Waste Program in October 2010 but continues to work part-time for the agency. Pictured above with Fisher are CID agents Nick Gillespie and Regina McIntyre.