



## The state's fish thank you

REAP Program Manager Greg Rote loads a tree during the Department of Environmental Protection's annual Christmas tree recycling event earlier this month at the Capitol Market in Charleston. The Division of Natural Resources takes the collected trees and sinks them in lakes across the state to improve fish habitat. More than 600 trees were collected this year. See story page 3.

## Mining review underway

By Tom Aluise

The Division of Mining and Reclamation (DMR) is undergoing an internal program review in an effort to better adapt to a changing future for coal.

"There are changes that need to be made for a variety



**Clarke**

of reasons," said DEP Cabinet Secretary Randy Huffman, who ordered the review. "We need to prepare for a future that will be very different from the way it's been in the past. The opportunity to get revenue back, which we need to operate the program, and sustain it at the levels it has been for many years, is slipping away from us."

Continued policy shifts on

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## Carico won't get too far removed from field

By Tom Aluise

Much of Mike Carico's career with the Division of Mining and Reclamation (DMR) has been spent in inspection and enforcement.

In his new role as an assistant director in DMR, Carico will be required to spend more time in the office.

But he doesn't plan on being tied to his desk.

"I still intend to maintain a presence in the field," said Carico, who recently replaced Brent Wiles as the head of the DMR's Philippi office. Wiles retired Oct. 31.

Carico has close to 34 years of experience as a state mining inspector, inspector specialist and supervisor. He will guide a crew of about 42 DMR employees in Philippi, including inspectors, permit reviewers and clerical and administrative staff.

Carico's inspectors should get used to seeing him out on the job. "I believe it's crucial that I spend time, as the opportunity allows, with



Mike Carico now oversees the DMR's Philippi office.

inspectors and field personnel," Carico said. "I don't want to get too far removed from those who represent the agency on the front lines and I want

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# Moving West Virginia forward

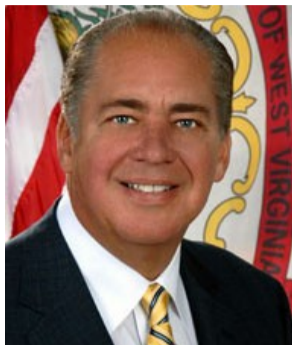
**T**hroughout my years in public service, I've worked hard to create a brighter future for West Virginia, and I've approached every decision, every challenge, and every opportunity with one goal — West Virginia First.

As your governor, I will continue to work hard for the families of this state.

I understand the importance of good-paying jobs that keep food on the table and a roof overhead — the significance of safety in our communities and workplaces — and I know the value of putting money back into the pockets of West Virginia families and businesses.

I've said time and again, I'll go anywhere, do anything, and leave no stone unturned to bring jobs to West Virginia.

I've met with company leaders across the



Message from Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin

country and I have traveled as far away as Japan to encourage business investment in our great state. I'm proud to say we have secured billions in new business investments and thousands of new jobs — all of this is a testament to our world-class workforce and positive business climate.

My administration has worked hard to create a productive business climate with a series of pro-growth tax reforms. While other states are raising taxes, we are reducing them. We are

in the process of phasing out the business franchise tax and the food tax will soon be history.

By reducing the tax burden, we've put more than \$92 million back in taxpayers' pockets in just two years — all while maintaining good fiscal responsibility.

Today, West Virginia's finances are strong. We've developed a plan to address long-term unfunded liabilities, our rainy day funds are some of the most robust in the nation, and our credit rating is the best it has been in decades. I truly believe our forward thinking has positioned us well.

Looking to the future, I want to make sure we make the most of the opportunities before us, whether it's investing in the education of our young people, the development of the infrastructure needed to make natural gas-fueled vehicles a reality, or making travel on our

highways safer and more affordable.

Making our communities safer has always been one of my top priorities.

Through new legislation, I've made it a crime to text while driving, signed landmark mine-safety legislation, and helped crack down on West Virginia's growing plague of drug abuse.

Together, we've worked hard to achieve success. And together, we will work through new challenges. I will always put West Virginia First so our families and seniors can continue to enjoy a quality of life only found in West Virginia and so our business partners can see firsthand what we already know to be true — our state is a great place to do business.

Please know I am extremely grateful for your support and I look forward to working together to move West Virginia forward.

## DAQ employee Boehm is running for a special cause

By Tom Aluise

The Boston Marathon, first run in 1897, is arguably the most famous road race in the world.

For most runners to secure a highly coveted spot in the 26.2-mile race, they must meet a challenging qualifying time in their age group.

Other runners are fortunate enough to be invited into the field as fundraising guests. Around 1 percent of the 27,000 runners who will participate in this year's Boston Marathon on April 15 fit into that category, including the DEP's Rich Boehm.

Boehm, who works in the Division of Air Quality, earned an invited fundraising spot in the marathon through a connection his wife had in



Rich Boehm and his mother, Judy.

her job.

"It kind of fell into my lap," said Boehm, who lost his mother to cancer last November and knew immediately for what charity he would raise funds.

Boehm, 38, will run in honor of his mom, Judy, while raising money for the non-profit National Foundation For Cancer Research.

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# Christmas tree recycling still growing in popularity

By Colleen O'Neill

Although the tinsel and ornaments are now a memory, that thrown-away Christmas tree keeps on giving by providing a habitat for the state's aquatic life.

Outside the Capitol Market in downtown Charleston normally isn't a bustling place in the dead of winter. But, one Saturday every year in January, the outdoor market comes to life when the Department of Environmental Protection hosts its annual Christmas tree recycling event.

This year's collection occurred on Jan. 5 and close to 650 trees were dropped off for recycling.

Sponsored by the DEP's Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan (REAP) program and the Division of Natural Resources, the tree collection event continues to grow.

"This is the eighth year that REAP has



Cars line up at Capitol Market in downtown Charleston to drop off Christmas trees for the DEP's annual tree recycling event. At right, participants sign up to win trips to West Virginia ski resorts.



participated and every year we see an increase," said REAP's Lisa Facemyer.

The DNR places the Christmas trees in lakes across West Virginia to improve fish habitat. The submerged trees provide hiding and feeding areas for fish and other aquatic creatures.

Recycling trees also saves space in public landfills, which is where some trees end up after a short stay on the side of the road.

West Virginia lakes scheduled to receive trees this year are: Stonecoal, Sutton, Tygart, East Lynn, Beech Fork, and Mount Storm.

## DEP selects name for system

"IRIS" it is. DEP Cabinet Secretary Randy Huffman has selected "Integrated Regulatory Information System," or IRIS, as the name for the agency's replacement for its outdated ERIS and EQUIS computer systems.

The name was selected from a list of 30 suggestions submitted to the DEP's Information Technology Office by agency employees.

IRIS will be phased in over a four-year period, starting with the Office of Oil and Gas in the coming months. It will replace everything ERIS currently does, such as compliance, permitting and billing in the program offices. And it will replace the functions of EQUIS, as well, the agency's chemistry database.

CGI Technologies and Solutions has been contracted for the upgrade. It will result in a totally integrated system that addresses the needs of all DEP offices and produces more accurate, complete and accessible data that better allows the agency to make important decisions.

ITO Information Systems Manager Rick Doneghy said his office wanted a name that defined the new data system's mission.

"IRIS describes what the system is all about," he said. "It's about keeping a watchful eye over all environmental issues."

Four CGI staffers will be stationed at DEP headquarters for the duration of the project. Doneghy is managing DEP's end.

### CARICO

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to help them keep in mind what we're here to do — what we're all about; enforcing the mining laws to achieve high quality reclamation of land after responsible mining and to preserve our water resources."

A Wayne County native and West Virginia University graduate, Carico said he was content in his role as an inspector supervisor.

"But when this opportunity came up, I felt like it would be worth consideration," he said. "It's a different type of work than what I've been doing most of my years here, so it will be a new experience."

"Right off the bat, it seems like I've been working more with DEP personnel issues than mine inspection issues, but I expected that."

As far as challenges ahead, Carico said Mining's NPDES program is requiring more and more attention and affecting every permit. There are also continuing issues with employee turnover in DMR.

"We're constantly hiring new people and training new inspectors," he said.

"Our most important resource as an agency is the people who work here."

### Mike Carico

Assistant director, DMR

While those challenges are division-wide, the Philippi office has its own quandary that's been ongoing for years.

There's simply not enough room to comfortably accommodate the roughly 60 DEP employees who work there.

"The guys in permitting need space to do their job; review maps, have meetings and conduct private conversations," Carico said. "It's hard to do here."

Despite the space crunch, Carico said he will strive to focus on the DEP's most important resource — its workers.

"It's important to create a work environment that is conducive to everybody doing their job effectively and efficiently," he said. "Our most important resource as an agency is the people who work here."



Three new kiosks were recently erected in Clay County as part of the Elk River Water Trail project. The DEP is partnering in the project and the agency’s Ed Hamrick, far right, helped with the kiosk installation. Others in the photo are (from left) Mitch DeBoard and Greg Wagner, Buffalo Creek Watershed Association; Amanda Moore, Clay Economic Development Authority; and Mike Shamblin, West Virginia University Extension Service.

## Elk River Water Trail is beginning to take shape

By Tom Aluise

Progress is being made — and seen — on the Elk River Water Trail project.

Recently, three informational/educational kiosks were erected in Clay County at Division of Natural Resources’ public access sites on the river. Kiosks are now located at Mary Chilton Roadside Park, King Shoals and Villanova.

“Each kiosk includes a map of the river’s access sites, information on its history and biology, and information about recreational opportunities,” said Mike Shamblin, who works for the West Virginia University Extension Service, one of the partners on the Elk River project.

Other partners include the Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation, DNR, Braxton County Convention and

Visitors Bureau, Clay Economic Development Authority, Central Appalachia Empowerment Zone and the town of Sutton.

Sponsors are hopeful the Water Trail designation for a 70-mile stretch of the river from the Sutton Dam to Charleston will increase tourism-based recreation and boost local economies.

The recently installed kiosks were funded through a public service grant from the WVU faculty senate.

A modified version of Braxton County High School student Kayla Cowen’s design was used to construct the kiosks.

Future plans associated with the Elk River Trail project include establishing highway and river signage to assist water trail users; developing a Web site to promote the trail; and securing additional access sites.

## Annual DEP Day at Legislature scheduled for Feb. 26 at capitol

The annual DEP Day at the Legislature is scheduled for Feb. 26 on the upper rotunda of the state capitol building.



The event is for state lawmakers, who will be in session, and other state government workers to learn more about the Department of Environmental Protection and the people who work for the agency. This year’s event is scheduled from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will feature informational

displays of the various programs at DEP.

For more information, please contact Annette Hoskins at 304-926-0499 ext.1659, or e-mail [Annette.L.Hoskins@wv.gov](mailto:Annette.L.Hoskins@wv.gov).

# Agency generous to Combined Campaign

By Colleen O’Neill

“People are more inclined to help if the outcome is noticeable,” Cher Szerokman said. “And if their efforts affect those in their daily lives — like their neighbors — they know they are making our communities better.”

Szerokman is the DEP coordinator for the Combined Campaign, a program that allows state employees to donate to various charitable organizations. It is administered by the United Way of Central West Virginia.

“State employees can give to a particular ‘partner agency,’ such as the Kanawha Dental Health Council, or have their contribution benefit all agencies through the Community Impact Fund,” Szerokman said. “The theme for this year is ‘Give Where You Live.’ Our donations stay within our communities.”

Szerokman said the DEP has very generous employees.

“There were three options available to them from which they could choose to donate,” she said.

One was payroll deduction.

“We had payroll deduction pledges totaling \$5,784,” Szerokman said.

The other two options involved employee activities. Each Friday, DEP had a jeans day, where employees could wear jeans for a \$1 contribution. As this is a year-long option, money collected from July through December goes to the Combined Campaign.

Money collected from January to June, goes to the employee appreciation fund.

“The jeans day is a perk with a reward,” Szerokman said.

“Employees get the plus of wearing jeans and being comfortable. The reward is that, through their actions, they are helping the less fortunate. In 2012, we started the jeans’ day collection in September and went through December, raising \$300.”

Another fundraiser is the Office of Administration’s Christmas auction. An enjoyable

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# Changes are ongoing in Fairmont, Philippi

By Tom Aluise

The DEP's Fairmont office is getting a facelift.

Meanwhile, the agency's Abandoned Mine Lands' Philippi office is getting a whole new face.

The 23-person AML staff in Philippi is scheduled to move into a new building in Bridgeport soon.

In Fairmont, workers are busy re-carpeting and painting the interior of the building, which houses around 30 DEP employees.

Tammy Thornton, from the DEP's Office of Administration, said the project should be completed by mid-February.

The DEP has been in its current location in Fairmont for about 15 years.

The office, which the DEP leases, is located just off Interstate 79 on Pleasant Valley Road.

The Philippi AML staff should be in its new location in Bridgeport by Feb. 5, Thornton said.

"We are leasing a facility that is located in an office park," she said.

"It is a unit that will house two businesses. So, we will be in one end and the other end is vacant at this time."

Because of space



Hallways have become temporary storage areas for the Fairmont DEP office as workers paint the interior of the building. The office also is getting new carpet.



issues, AML personnel moved out of the main Philippi office, located at 105 South Railroad St., in the spring of 2010 and began operating out of another building in town.

"It was always meant to be a temporary location for the DEP," Thornton said, "and lasted longer than we ever anticipated."

Problems with the facility's heating, ventilation and air conditioning system prompted the agency to begin looking for

another location for AML.

The staff moved out of the building in early December and has been working from different locations, including their homes, the Fairmont office or the main Philippi office for the past two months.

The new location in Bridgeport covers 4,960 square feet.

Thornton said a search for other locations in Philippi for the AML office didn't produce any suitable sites.

## Oak Hill office contributes to needy

The holiday season makes people want to spread the yuletide cheer. DEP employees brightened the lives of some fellow West Virginians.

The Oak Hill office collected four boxes of new toys, plus \$91.06, for area needy children. The Christmas project was headed up by Tina White and Alyce Lee.

Charleston headquarters took a different approach.

Working with the Mountain Mission, employees filled three bins with non-perishable food to be used for Christmas baskets for the area's less fortunate.

"It was kind of last minute — an employee mentioned it, so I checked it out and we collected food," said Denise Truman, a manager within Human Resources. "I was pleased with the outcome."

## CAMPAIGN

Continued from Page 4

event, the auction in December brought in \$227.

"The really cool thing about giving to the Combined Campaign is that the United Way works with different charity and service organizations to help many different needs that our fellow West Virginians of Central West Virginia may have," Szerokman said.

"The Combined Campaign makes extending a helpful hand more convenient and relevant ..."

### **Cher Szerokman**

DEP Combined Campaign coordinator

The choice of program or service the employee can donate to is not limited to just food or shelter.

Employees can choose to partner with an agency that provides housing, food, and literacy training to homeless veterans. They can partner with an agency that provides dental care and another that offers medical care to those without insurance. Other agencies offer services such as shoes to those without; addiction counseling for those needing help with kicking alcohol or drugs; and domestic abuse shelters for women and children.

"The Combined Campaign makes extending a helpful hand more convenient and relevant, as it stays here in Central West Virginia."

## CAUSE

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This will be Boehm's second marathon. He ran the Columbus Marathon in 2009.

Compared to Columbus, the Boston Marathon will, no doubt, be more emotional for Boehm on many levels.

Already, there is more of a purpose to his training.

"This is definitely more of a personal commitment, not that the last marathon wasn't," Boehm said. "But this one hits home for a lot of reasons."

Last year, fundraising runners at Boston raised just under \$6,800 per person for their respective charities.

To donate to Boehm's cause, click [here](#) or email him at [Richard.A.Boehm@wv.gov](mailto:Richard.A.Boehm@wv.gov).

# Mingling weekend

*DWWM spreads its message at outdoors show*

By Colleen O'Neill

Earlier this month, both kids and adults were wowed and educated at the same time about the state's aquatic life, specifically fish and bugs.

The DEP's Division of Water and Waste Management had a booth at this year's West Virginia Hunting and Fishing Show, which ran from Jan. 18-20 at the Charleston Civic Center. This is the sixth year the DWWM has taken part in the show, sharing its knowledge and tips about the environment with 14,000 of



The Division of Water and Waste Management manned a booth at the recent Hunting and Fishing show at the Charleston Civic Center. Pictured at top are Megan Grose, Kevin Coyne and Director Scott Mandirolo. Bottom from left are Jason Morgan, Glenn Nelson and Mike McDaniel.

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## MINING

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the federal level that often result in uncertainty in the state permitting process, and decreases in Appalachian coal production are forecast for the industry. When coal production diminishes, so too do the financial resources available for the DMR to effectively do its job.

During a recent meeting with Mining personnel, Huffman stressed that the program review is not being done because something is broken in the division.

"This has to be viewed as something that's going to benefit the Mining program," he said.

"It's intended to be an enhancement of the Mining program. We have to make some fundamental changes in the way we're doing business in order to approach the new future."

The review is focusing on three areas within the DMR: organizational structure; processes and procedures; and performance metrics (numbers).

"We've always been an efficient organization,"

DMR Director Tom Clarke said. "But with the challenges facing us down the road in terms of declining coal production and a different kind of industry, we're going to have to refocus and be more efficient doing what we've done in the past, because we're going to have diminishing resources to do it with.

"We have to take a hard, internal look at all of our processes and how we're organized, so that we're doing things properly," Clarke said. "And we have to effectively measure what we're doing so that we can demonstrate to ourselves, and anybody outside who cares to look, that we're wisely spending public funds.

"We constantly have people looking at what we're doing. The time has come for us to take a look at ourselves," Clarke said.

DEP Deputy Cabinet Secretary Lisa McClung, who orchestrated a successful review of the Office of Oil and Gas that led to positive changes amid a tumultuous time in the state drilling industry, has been tasked by Huffman to coordinate the Mining review as

well.

"I thought this was a really good time to take what Lisa learned in her assistance restructuring the Oil and Gas program and apply those techniques to the Mining program," Huffman said.

The review is expected to take six to 12 months and McClung told DMR staffers she is fully committed to helping facilitate meaningful changes in the division.

"I will try to see organizationally if there is anything we can do differently that will help us do our job more efficiently and more timely because we don't have the money to add additional resources," McClung said. "One of the big things we'll look at is: 'Are we set up to succeed?' A lot of times people come together, use each other as sounding boards, and come up with great ideas."

An initial focus of the review is the DMR's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program. Organizational changes are being implemented to streamline the program, which has a significant number of pending permits.

"Clearly, the permit

backlog was created by the stagnation caused by our inability to understand what the EPA wanted in these permits," Huffman told DMR staffers. "That has prevented us from making decisions.

"To your credit, 2012 was the best year, as far as numbers go, that we've had in six or seven years in getting permits issued. But what we really need to do is put an organizational structure and processes and procedures in place that allow us to continue to work, regardless of what outside forces are put upon us."

Whether it's limited funding or an EPA decision that affects the water program, "We still need to get the work done," Huffman said. "We can't let those kinds of decisions freeze us up and stymie us for years."

Another focal point of the program review is performance metrics, or how the DMR measures progress.

"All this bean counting is meaningless if we don't use that information to drive our decision making and to drive processes and procedures," Huffman said. "We're going to try and simplify and learn to use our numbers."



**WEEKEND**

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the state’s outdoor enthusiasts.

“The people who attend this event are generally interested in outdoor activities, as well as learning about the diversity of life that’s in the streams they see all of the time, but don’t have the chance to see up close,” said John Wirts, who heads up the DWWM’s Watershed Assessment Branch.

The WAB is responsible for sampling state streams for possible violations of water quality standards or biological impairments.

Steve Young has been coordinating the WAB’s participation in the Hunting and Fishing Show from the beginning.

“We were there because of the audience we can interact with at the show,” Young said.

“Hunters and fishermen have an appreciation for the land they hunt on and the health of the streams they like to fish; so DWWM thought this event was a good opportunity to reinforce or educate the outdoorsmen about our role at DEP.

“We wanted the public to get a better understanding of what the Watershed



**Don Wang, from the DWWM, chats with visitors during the Hunting and Fishing Show earlier this month at the Charleston Civic Center.**

Assessment Branch does throughout the year in the way of gathering stream data, as well as discuss what types of fish and bugs live in West Virginia streams.”

With fishing, and even hunting, the health of the state’s rivers and streams is essential. If impaired, the aquatic life suffers.

On that note, the wildlife would also be affected.

“The show gives us a chance to explain a little about how we use the presence of different fish and benthic macroinvertebrates to judge the health of a stream,” Wirts said.

“These communities can tell us more about

the water quality of a stream than a one-time direct analysis of select water quality parameters because their composition reflects the effects of all water quality issues they’ve encountered over the time they’ve been in the water.”

An annual highlight of the show is the kids’ reactions to the DWWM’s fish tanks, Young said.

“Children really enjoy the fish tanks and learning about the fish, as well as the bug display,” said Young.

“They really love the fact that they can see up close the different types of bugs and in many cases hold them for the first time.

“Many of the older

adults like coming by and naming the various fish in the tank, and many tell stories of how they gathered bugs in the stream to use as bait when they were kids learning to fish.”

An addition to Wirts and Young, DWWM employees who worked the event included Division Director Scott Mandirola, Susan Rose, Jeff Ginger, Jeff Bailey, Ken Holliday, Ann Baldwin, Jim Laine, Jake Harrell, Megan Grose, Don Wang, Mike Whitman, Kevin Coyne, Ryan Pack, Sarah Kuhn, Glenn Nelson, Mike McDaniel, Danielle Stephenson, Nick Murray, and Jason Morgan.

## Make It Shine Statewide Spring Cleanup applications available

Applications are now available for West Virginians to sign up for this year’s Make It Shine Statewide Spring Cleanup. Volunteers have until March 1 to register with the state



Department of Environmental Protection. The annual event is jointly sponsored by the DEP and the state Division of Highways.

During the first two weeks of April, the DEP’s Make It Shine program will provide resources such as cleanup materials, waste hauling and landfill fees to citizens volunteering to remove litter from the state’s landscape. Cleanups must be conducted on public lands. Community drop-off sites,

household garbage collection and cleanups on private property do not qualify.

Last year, more than 4,800 volunteers participated in the spring cleanup and removed roughly 220 tons of litter.

To obtain a Make It Shine application, contact Travis Cooper at 1-800-322-5530, or click [here](#).

## New Additions Recent DEP hires

- ▶ **Sebastian Donner**  
Division of Water, Waste
- ▶ **Candy Green**  
Administration
- ▶ **Tara Harman**  
Division of Mining
- ▶ **Elizabeth Rutherford**  
Division of Mining
- ▶ **Jerry Williams**  
Division of Air Quality