

Back... **ON THE AIR**

TV show returns with new look

By Colleen O'Neill

It's back ... with a twist.

The Department of Environmental Protection's monthly television show, mothballed for the past four years, has a new name — "Environment Matters" — a new format, and a new look. No longer an interview question-answer program, it is now a compilation of stories spotlighting environmental news.

The new-look show debuts the week of March 19 on the Library Television Network.

"It's like a news magazine, but with environmental news," said Mike Huff, Public Information Specialist with the DEP.



DEP Public Information Specialist Mike Huff will roll out the agency's updated TV show, "Environment Matters," beginning the week of March 19 on the Library Television Network.

Huff is responsible for putting together the show. A veteran broadcast journalist who joined the DEP in

August, Huff spent 30 years in the news media, where he worked as a videographer, editor, and producer for WOWK-TV

and WSAZ-TV in Huntington. His last stint in TV news was

See **BACK**, Page 8

Legislative recap: Five DEP bills pass

All five 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:

2012 West Virginia Legislature

■ HB 4320 — Relating to the settlement of the Hazardous Waste Management Act by consent agreements:

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Secretary of the DEP to propose legislative rules to settle violations of the Hazardous Waste Management Act by consent agreements, as an alternative to instituting a civil action in the circuit courts of the state. This bill is

awaiting the governor's signature, and will become effective 90 days from passage.

■ SB 496 — Modifying DEP requirement of greenhouse gas emissions' inventory:

The purpose of this bill is to modify the DEP's requirements to inventory emissions of greenhouse gases and eliminate unneeded provisions of the Code. It allows reporting of greenhouse gases under

the USEPA's *Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gases Rule* to satisfy greenhouse gas reporting requirements in West Virginia. This bill is awaiting the governor's signature, and will become effective 90 days from passage.

■ SB 497 — Awarding attorney fees and costs for administrative proceedings under the West Virginia Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Act:

See **RECAP**, Page 8

Computer skills honed at early age

Nathan Merritt is an IT Client Analyst with the state Office of Technology and has been the DEP's computer issue go-to person since December 2007.



Merritt

His chief duties include resolving technical issues with DEP computers, mobile devices, GPS systems, etc.

Merritt, 26, grew up in Hinton and lives in Charleston. He is single.

1. What sparked your interest in the technical side of computers?

My father had one of the first home computers in Hinton and I remember playing games on it when I was 4 or 5 years old. This was in the days of DOS (Disk Operating System), so I learned how to enter in DOS commands to play games before I really learned to read. That helped me become



With Nathan Merritt

proficient and I was fortunate to have the Internet relatively early due to my father's interest, so I've always been at the leading edge of technology. When I was getting ready to go to college, I had to decide what career I wanted to go into and it was down to either history or something with computers and I chose computers just because the job environment was so much better. So, you can say that the reason I'm here now is because of King's Quest.

2. What specific issue or issues do you get called about the most?

I'd say the most common issue is people just needing to install a

program, an update, or a new device. Since they don't have rights to install anything, I have to do that for everyone. The thing I'm spending more and more of my time on now, compared to just a year or so ago, is working with iPhones and iPads with people. This went from something I never helped people with here to something that probably takes 25 percent of my days now. That is the biggest change with my work for quite some time here. Long term, I think the need for my help will decrease as people become more experienced with computers and computers will be easier to use.

3. Do you spend much time on a computer at home?

I really don't spend that much time on my computer at home. I'll check some Web sites, but I'm not someone who likes to tinker with my computer for hours. Most of my technical expertise has just grown

from experience and figuring out problems at work. Once someone has a problem, it is likely to be experienced by many people. So, once I initially figure something out, I am good to go.

4. Do all of your friends ask you to fix their home computers for free?

My friends really don't ask me that many questions about their computers. They are pretty computer savvy. Now, my family members, on the other hand, will ask me for help quite often. If I go home for the holidays or something I will be asked many questions.

5. Is there an office in DEP headquarters in which you haven't been?

I don't think an office exists in the DEP building that I haven't been in, at least any room with a computer. I haven't been on the roof at least. I've been in the different labs and other

See SKILLS, Page 5

Boy Scouts Jamboree prompts call to action

By Tom Aluise

Southern West Virginia is expecting a lot of company in 2013. So, what do you do to get ready for visitors? You clean house.

In preparation for the 2013 National Boy Scouts Jamboree in Fayette County, the DEP's Pollution Prevention and Open Dump (PPOD) Program, at the request of the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, is helping coordinate extensive litter sweeps in the southern part of the state.



Close to 70,000 Boy Scouts, leaders and other visitors are expected to travel West Virginia's scenic highways to Fayette County's still-under-construction Summit Bechtel Reserve for the July 15-24 Jamboree.

The DEP's Sam Stalnaker, a PPOD project manager, said cleanups actually began last spring in seven counties and will kick into high gear again in April. The seven counties are Nicholas, Fayette, Raleigh, Summers, Greenbrier, Mercer and Wyoming.

Last year, more than 2,000 volunteers collected close to 45 tons of trash during litter sweeps in those seven

See ACTION, Page 3



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ACTION

Continued from Page 2

counties. This spring's sweeps, collectively called the "Mountain Pride Litter Sweep," are scheduled for April 14 in Fayette and Mercer; April 21 in Greenbrier, Raleigh and Summers; and April 28 in Nicholas and Wyoming.

In addition to the litter sweeps last year, Community Cleanups were conducted along Route 129 and Route 39 in Nicholas County; in the Whipple, Scarbro and Glen Jean areas of Fayette County; along Route 20 in Summers County; and in the Shady Spring and Beaver areas of Raleigh County.

**Stalnaker**

"During the Community Cleanups, we take law enforcement out, knock on doors and ask people to clean up their yards and spruce up," Stalnaker said.

"We'll haul away their trash for free. It gives law enforcement a good image and it gives us a good image."

Roll-off dumpsters also are set up around the areas to allow people to drop off waste.

Close to 40 tons of trash were collected during last year's Community Cleanups.

"We're going to try and do seven this spring, one in each county," said Stalnaker, who relies on VISTA workers for much of his help organizing litter cleanups. "We haven't nailed down specific locations yet.

"I have the support of all the counties," he added. "Everybody has been great to jump in and do whatever needs to be done."

In addition to serving as the Boy Scouts' Jamboree site every three years, the 10,000-acre Summit Bechtel Reserve will also be a permanent home to one of four Boy Scouts' high adventure-based camps that are located around the country.

Because of that, Stalnaker thinks Community Cleanups and enhanced litter sweeps in the region will continue well beyond this year.

"I believe we'll continue this long term," he said. "Sure, we want to get things looking better before the Scouts get here, but we want to maintain it from now on and get people interested in cleaning up."

Annual blasting conference scheduled for April 3-4

The president of Blasting Analysis International (BAI) will be among the speakers at the upcoming 12-Hour Blaster Refresher Training Conference, sponsored by the Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Explosives and Blasting.

In addition to serving as president, R. Frank Chiappetta has been the explosives applications engineer with BAI for the last 22 years. He'll participate in the April 3-4 Blaster Refresher Training Conference at the Holiday Inn & Suites in South Charleston.

The purpose of the conference is to provide certified blasters with a review of current technology, safety practices and regulatory issues.

Chiappetta has worked on major projects, including the first expansion and deepening of the Panama Canal between 1994 and 2002.

He is one of four authors of the textbook entitled "Explosives and Rock Blasting" and received the Distinguished Service Award from the International Society of Explosives Engineers in 1990 for his technical contribution to the mining/explosive industry.

DEP helps team move into World competition

A partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection is paying off in big ways for the Charleston Catholic High School robotics team.

After finishing 15th out of 23 teams in a tournament in January, the Charleston Catholic students took their robot to another February event in North Carolina and finished first, qualifying for the FIRST Tech Challenge World Championships in St. Louis next month.

FIRST stands for "For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology."

It is a national program that strives to inspire youth to be leaders in science and technology and encourages mentor-based programs to build those skills.

Charleston Catholic's team, called the "Prototype Posse," has been building and modifying its robot since September, with the help of several mentors, including the DEP's Neil Chakrabarty, Laura Crowder and Mike Rowe.

Chakrabarty, from the Information Technology Office, has helped write the software that makes the robot go.

Crowder and Rowe, from the Division of Air Quality, have played roles in the robot's construction.

During competitions, robots score by gathering and sorting balls, as well as manipulating crates. They have to work autonomously, in addition to being driver controlled.

During February's tournament, the Prototype Posse's robot benefitted from a lifting mechanism that was added following the January competition.

At North Carolina, it beat out 33 other robots to finish in first place.

Annual kids at work day April 26

By Tom Aluise

The Department of Environmental Protection will take part once again in the annual Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day, scheduled from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on April 26.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the national program, which is sponsored by the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation.

Last year, 30 kids participated in the day at DEP headquarters. The day was part educational, part fun, and included a visit from Mountaineer Brock Burwell.

Carolyn McKecuen, president of the Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Foundation, writes on the foundation's Web site that her program goes beyond just

shadowing an adult.

"Exposing girls and boys to what a parent or mentor in their lives does during the work day is important," she writes.

"But showing them the value of their education, helping them discover the power and possibilities associated with a balanced work and family life, and providing them an opportunity to share how they envision the future and begin steps toward their end goals in a hands-on and interactive environment is key to their achieving success."

The theme of this year's day is "Build Opportunity: 20 Years of Education, Empowerment, Experience."

According to the foundation Web site, it is a "celebration of the renewed success of the

program year after year, and the encouragement each of you has provided to make that happen. It is also a chance for us to mark what has become a very special contribution to the American workforce and students by educating and empowering youth and providing them with experiences they might not have had otherwise.

"In looking ahead, 'Build Opportunity: 20 Years of Education, Empowerment, Experience' suggests that an even bigger and brighter future is ahead for all our nation's daughters and sons."

For more information about the DEP's Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day, contact Barbara Miles at Barbara.A.Miles@wv.gov or 304-926-0499, ext. 1566.

Earth Day event set for April 20 at Clay Center

The Department of Environmental Protection will stage its annual Earth Day celebration on April 20 at the Clay Center in downtown Charleston.

Earth Day in 2012 is officially on Sunday, April 22.

The DEP celebration will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the plaza in front of the Clay Center, with the option of moving indoors in the event of bad weather.

Last year, more than 300 area elementary school-aged children

attended the DEP's successful Earth Day celebration.

For more information about this year's event, call:

Travis Cooper, at 304-926-0499, ext. 1117 or email him at: Travis.L.Cooper@wv.gov.



Cleaning up an eyesore



The Department of Environmental Protection's REAP program, along with the city of Huntington, began the two-day process on March 13 of cleaning up an open and illegal dump near downtown Huntington. Greg Rote, program manager for REAP's Pollution Prevention and Open Dump Program (pictured above), said dumps like the one in Huntington start out small but quickly grow into major eyesores and become health and environmental issues. Waste from the site was taken to Sycamore Landfill.

New Additions Recent DEP hires

- ▶ Sarah Alford, Administration
- ▶ Charles Driver, OLS
- ▶ Christopher Harvey, DMR
- ▶ Robert Mullins, DAQ
- ▶ Jonathan Neal, AML
- ▶ Natalie Paynter, OOG
- ▶ Curtis Phillips, DLR

SKILLS

Continued from Page 2

out-of-the-way offices. I've worked on laptops that are mounted in state vehicles during rainstorms with the door propped open. I also support some other areas in Kanawha County, so I've been to the DEP Elkview office as well.

6. Do you deal with fewer problems now than you did five years ago, or are they just different ones?

I definitely have fewer tickets for problems now compared to when I started. Maybe it just seems that way since most of the problems I have dealt with before I can now resolve faster. On the other hand, now people have more devices that I have to support, so that creates extra work. All in all, it's probably about the same as it was when I started, just different issues. I also know now what kind of problems can arise with various programs or devices and try to prepare people on what to do and look out for. If I have time, I like to give people as much of a tutorial as I can. Of course, if I've never seen the program before, I can't be very helpful.

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

Free and convenient

parking would be up there, but the number one thing is that the people at DEP are very good to deal with, for the most part. Most DEP employees have been very patient, regardless of whatever problem they are having, and it is much easier to resolve a problem when someone isn't ripping your head off or telling you how to fix the problem. DEP also has a very nice building compared to most state agencies and a nice infrastructure to work with. That also makes a world of difference to have reliable equipment to work with. I've also been with the DEP long enough where I now can differentiate between the different divisions and I have an idea of what each employee will probably need to effectively do their job. So, another good thing about the DEP is just that I have a good amount of experience dealing with the agency and its specific needs.

8. You're much more personable than the condescending IT guy, Nick Burns, the old Jimmy Fallon character on Saturday Night Live. Does Nick Burns give computer guys a bad rap?

That character is just a stereotype of the typical "IT guy" but like most stereotypes, it is

somewhat based in reality. Many people in this line of work do not have the greatest personalities and this job takes an extraordinary amount of effort to stay positive. Whenever someone calls, they are having a problem, so you are never dealing with people at their best. It's also easy to become jaded since just walking down the hall you can get stopped for many different problems. You just have to keep in mind that the most important part of the job is your camaraderie with your co-workers, not any technical expertise. Most people will give you leeway on a problem if you are pleasant to deal with. So, no, I don't think Nick Burns really gives us a bad rap since I have seen many people in the field who are even more gruff with people than him.

9. Are you technically on call 24/7?

My hours are 8 to 4. The only time I'm actually on call after those hours are a few weekends a year. On those weekends, I have to cover all the state agencies OT supports in Kanawha County. I've had to go to the Governor's Office before on one of those weekends, so things do happen. Normally if

someone calls and I'm not in, it can wait until the next morning. Plus, we have several technicians in our group, even though they may not be located in this building. If something happens and I am off and they are on the clock, they can help with the problem. If the problem is major enough, I will have to come in after hours and work, but I do get paid overtime. Normally the only time I work after regular hours is for a large project like a move or new software setup for a large number of users.

10. Do a lot of DEP employees troubleshoot their home computer and electronics problems through you?

I have people ask me about home computer issues quite a bit at work. I don't mind telling people what I think the solution is, but I won't actually work on the problems myself. For one thing, I can't work on personal equipment during work hours and another thing is I have no desire to work on computers after hours. I've had several people tell me I should have my own PC repair business, but when I leave the office, the last thing I want to do is work on more computers.



Randy Moss, left, who works for AML out of Oak Hill, and the DAQ's Doug Hammell practice a technique to help choking victims.

AED/CPR class provides another way to help others

By Colleen O'Neill

What do a volunteer firefighter, a new mom, and a former Marine all have in common?

Besides being employees of the Department of Environmental Protection, they all thought it was important to attend a recent training in AED/CPR, offered by the DEP in the Coopers Rock Room.

The training instructs employees on the life-saving skills of using an Automated

External Defibrillator and the techniques of Cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

As each person is created by their own experiences, the reasons for taking the training reflected each person's priorities.

"I chose to take AED/CPR training so that, God forbid, if the situation arises, I would be able to help someone in trouble," said Dennis Stottlemeyer, an Environmental

See CLASS, Page 6

DEP Safety Committee

Take steps to avoid CO poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death.

CO is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by cars and trucks, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, burning



charcoal and wood, gas ranges and heating systems. CO gas can build up in enclosed spaces such as garages, sheds or porches. People and animals in these spaces can be poisoned by breathing it.

The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. At high levels, it can cause loss of consciousness and death. Since symptoms mimic other illnesses, it can be difficult to diagnose. People who are sleeping can die from CO poisoning before ever experiencing symptoms.

Take Action To Prevent CO Poisoning:

- ▶ Have your heating system, water heater and any other gas, oil or coal burning appliance serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- ▶ Install a battery-operated CO detector in your home. Check and replace the battery each spring and fall.
- ▶ Test your detector regularly. Plan what your family will do if the detector sounds. **If the alarm ever sounds, leave your home and then call 911.**
- ▶ Seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed or nauseous.
- ▶ Keep flues open when fireplaces are in use. Never use an unvented stove or fireplace.
- ▶ Do not heat your home with a gas range or oven.
- ▶ Generators, charcoal grills and camp stoves should not be used inside your home or building.
- ▶ Never run a car or truck inside an attached garage, even if you leave the garage door open.

— From the National Safety Council

CLASS

Continued from Page 5

Resource analyst with the Office of Environmental Advocate. “When I was in the Marine Corps, we were all trained in CPR and First Aid.”

Work and family life is a strong motivation. “Emergency training is a valuable skill set that one may use throughout their life,” said Don Martin, an Environmental Resource program manager with the Office of Environmental Remediation.

Martin is on the Banks District Volunteer Fire Department at Rock Cave.

“I have used my training not only on runs as a firefighter, but with our children as they were growing up,” he said.

Jennifer Paxton, a new mom, took the training so she could learn what to do in an emergency. Although children and infants are not the focus of the training, Paxton still learned some valuable skills.

“Being a new mom has made things like this more of a priority for me,” said Paxton, who works in Accounting and Financial Reporting for the Office of Administration.

Martin said knowing and understanding the techniques used in an emergency situation help keep emotions out of the equation.

“I have found that when I’ve had to apply the skills in an emergency situation, the training provides the process to focus on the task at hand,” Martin said, “and postpones the emotional effects until the emergency has passed.”

Overall, the training has helped with the participants’ confidence.

“The AED is a great tool for saving lives and I thought that since we had several in our office, I really ought to know how to use one,” Stottlemeyer said. “I had heard that there had been some modifications to the CPR procedure.”

For further information or to request future sessions, contact Charles Carl at ext. 1664 or e-mail him at: Charles.W.Carl@wv.gov.

Shoe drive nets close to 300 pairs

The Department of Environmental Protection’s Charleston and Logan offices together donated 285 pairs of shoes to charity.

The Logan Mining and Reclamation Office sparked the collection efforts when it decided to participate in the Soles4Souls shoe drive. Soles4Souls is a non-profit organization that has donated more than 16 million shoes to people worldwide.

The collection of shoes from Logan-area businesses and churches, along with the DEP’s donations, yielded more than 6,000 pairs of shoes.

The Logan office’s Kathie Thacker, Phyllis Jeffrey and Kelli Adkins spearheaded the drive.

It is estimated that Americans have 1.5 billion pairs of unused shoes in their closets.

DEP retirements

David Wolfe

DWWM

Last day: Feb. 24, 2012

Years of service: 19

Roger Norton

DMR

Last day: March 30, 2012

Years of service: 26

Thomas Ferguson

DWWM

Last day: March 30, 2012

Years of service: 21

Volunteer numbers on the rise

By Colleen O'Neill

The Make-It-Shine Statewide Cleanup, which is scheduled for the first two weeks of April, already has an impressive number of registered volunteers and projects.

"This year has already shown an increase in interest," said Travis Cooper, coordinator for Make-It-Shine, a statewide cleanup program that is part of the Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan.



"In 2011, we had about 110 projects. This year, we already have 128 projects registered. And, based on the number and scope of the projects' sizes, our numbers, in relation to the areas cleaned up and the amount of trash removed, will increase."

The number of volunteers has increased from last year's total of 3,801.

"We already have 4,900 registered," Cooper said. "I believe we'll have 5,000 volunteers, and I want there to be at least one project in every county. The project registration is still coming in."

Last year's Statewide Cleanup removed more than 144 tons of litter and 4,203 tires. More than 125 miles of roadway, 52 miles of trails, 2,241 acres of parks and 160 miles of stream were cleaned up.

The REAP program will supply volunteers with bags, gloves and trash grabbers, and will work with the Division of Highways to take away the collected garbage. However, projects must register to receive supplies. To register, please contact Cooper by phone, 304-926-0499 ext. 1117, or e-mail, Travis.L.Cooper@wv.gov.



Debbie Pickens (left) and Sheri Richardson, from Human Resources, represented the Department of Environmental Protection at Marshall's Spring Career Expo.

Job fairs help agency build for the future

By Tom Aluise

College job fairs are an important recruitment tool for the Department of Environmental Protection.

"I wish we could do more," said the DEP's Debbie Hughes, who manages the Staffing Services Unit for Human Resources.

The DEP typically staffs job fairs at West Virginia University and West Virginia University Tech in Montgomery. Marshall University was added to the list this spring.

On March 7, Sheri Richardson and Debbie Pickens, from Human Resources, along with Benny Campbell, who heads up the Division of Mining and Reclamation's Logan office, attended Marshall's Spring Career Expo in Huntington at the school's Memorial Student Center.

Richardson said the trio handed out about 30 informational packets to students.

Those numbers are down compared to when the DEP attends WVU's job fair in Morgantown, Richardson said, but she also noted that the WVU event is for engineering students.

"At Marshall, it was all majors," Richardson said. "There were a lot of business, marketing, journalism and medical majors who, of course,



The DMR's Benny Campbell also took part in the job fair earlier this month at Marshall.

weren't interested in the DEP."

A handful of Environmental Studies students did stop by to chat, Richardson said.

"They wanted to work out in the field, so we talked to them about Environmental Inspector-In-Training jobs and Environmental Resource Specialist I jobs," Richardson said.

They also instructed the students on how to get on the Division of Personnel's register to take exams for those positions and discussed the Governor's Internship Program.

Hughes said the DEP plans to participate in a DOP-sponsored state government job fair at the Cultural Center on May 7. The fair is open to the public.

RECAP

Continued from Page 1

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the Surface Mine Board or the reviewing circuit court to award attorney fees and costs in administrative proceedings that arise under the West Virginia Surface Coal Mining and Reclamation Act. This bill is awaiting the governor’s signature, and will become effective 90 days from passage.

■ SB 562 — Establishing DEP procedure for biologic component compliance with narrative water

quality standard:

The purpose of this bill is to establish a procedure by which the DEP is to measure compliance with the biologic component of the narrative water quality standard. This bill is awaiting the governor’s signature, and became effective upon passage.

■ SB 579 — Increasing the special reclamation tax on clean coal mined:

The purpose of this bill is to raise the special reclamation tax from 14.4 cents to 27.9 cents per ton of clean coal mined. The entirety of

the increase will be dedicated to the Water Reclamation Trust Fund. This bill is awaiting the governor’s signature, and becomes effective on July 1, 2012.

■ SB 253 — DEP Rules Bundle:

The purpose of this bill is to authorize the DEP to repeal one Air Quality rule and promulgate nine Air rules, two solid waste management rules, and the voluntary remediation and redevelopment rule. This bill is awaiting the governor’s signature, and became effective upon passage.

Introduced by others:

■ SB 615 — Conforming the West Virginia Water Pollution Control Act with the federal Clean Water Act:

The purpose of this bill is to clarify that compliance with the effluent limits contained in a NPDES permit is deemed compliant with the West Virginia Water Pollution Control Act and to make the NPDES program in West Virginia consistent with the federal Clean Water Act. This bill is awaiting the governor’s signature, and became effective upon passage.

BACK

Continued from Page 1

with WSAZ as an assignment editor and producer for the 11 o’clock news.

Huff said the DEP’s TV show will give the agency a different outlet for sharing news.

“We already have our YouTube and Vimeo channels. This just allows us to reach a different and potentially broader audience,” he said.

DEP Communications Chief Kathy Cosco brought in Huff with the idea of reviving the agency TV show.

She also brought back InDEPth, the agency monthly newsletter and launched the DEP into the world of social media with its presence on YouTube and FaceBook.

Cosco and Huff changed the TV show’s format to be more dynamic, appealing to watch, and informative.

“I believe this new format will increase viewership,” Cosco said.

“When Kathy hired me, it was with the idea that we would be reviving the show, but taking it in a different direction — more of a ‘newsy’ feel, highlighting some of the programs here at DEP and giving

“Each program will feature several stories that are topical. There will be a cover story — that’s our lead story and the one we’ll focus the most attention on.”

— Mike Huff

DEP videographer on new-look TV show

members of the public a chance to take a closer look at what we do,” Huff said.

Seeing that it was a new show with a different format, it was only appropriate that its title change as well.

“I came up with the name ‘Environment Matters’ because, well, environment matters,” Huff said.

“Each program will feature several stories that are topical. There will be a cover story — that’s our lead story and the one we’ll focus the most attention on.

“From month to month, there will be different recurring types of stories — we call them franchises — things like Sustainable West Virginia and an in-depth interview segment. But, they won’t appear in every show.

“Our format has a lot of flexibility.”

The first show’s cover

story will deal with horizontal drilling and the Marcellus Shale.

“Kathy and I usually decide on which stories we’ll do and how much weight to give each one,” Huff said.

“With all the attention on the increasing gas production in West Virginia and the new rules from the Legislature, we felt like the gas drilling story was a natural for our first cover story.”

Because the show will air on the Library Channel, there won’t be any paid sponsors or commercials.

Instead, the breaks will be filled with DEP Public Service Announcements.

“It’s a half-hour show, with breaks just like a regular newscast,” Huff said.

“We’ll have Public Service Announcements in the breaks. That offers us the opportunity to produce some of our

own PSAs, which we’ll use to promote upcoming events and programs, like REAP’s Statewide Cleanup, some of the Youth Environmental Program events — things like that.”

Why the Library Channel?

“The Library Channel allows us to reach a different and potentially broader audience that we don’t get through traditional media,” Huff said.

The Library Television Network can be found on most cable systems across the state.

Suddenlink Media carries the Library Network on Channel 17 to its subscribers in Kanawha, Putnam, Cabell and Fayette counties.

“Environment Matters” will air on Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m., 3:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.; on Thursdays at 4 a.m.; and on Saturdays at 3:30 p.m.

Huff will produce 11 shows a year.

“We’ll also offer the program on-line through our Web site and YouTube and Vimeo channels,” Huff said.

“Web-based, on-demand media is the future of how we deliver information, and this provides us with a great opportunity to do that.”