



Dawnell Sears, an LPN at the Braxton County VA Medical Clinic recently received the prestigious DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses.

## Braxton VA Medical Clinic Extraordinary Nurse Recognized

Dawnell Sears, License Practical Nurse of Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center, Braxton County Community Based Outpatient Clinic, was recently presented with The DAISY Award® For Extraordinary Nurses. The award is part of the DAISY Foundation's programs to recognize the super-human efforts nurses perform every day.

The nomination submitted: "The staff at the VA Outpatient Clinic is outstanding!! We had a minor emergency visiting the area. My stepdad who is an Army Veteran did not bring enough insulin to last the weekend. I called and spoke with Tracy at the Call Center, and she suggested we come to the Sutton Clinic. Dawnell greeted us at the car and helped my stepdad get inside. Amber was very efficient in getting his PA info pulled over into their system. Dr. Troy was able to call in a prescription to

the local CVS for pick-up. Dawnell walked us back outside to the car. Excellent experience and quality care!! Thank you!!"

The not-for-profit DAISY Foundation is based in Glen Ellen, CA, and was established by family members in memory of J. Patrick Barnes. Patrick died at the age of 33 in late 1999 from complications of Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP), a little known but not uncommon auto-immune disease. The care Patrick and his family received from nurses while he was ill inspired this unique means of thanking nurses for making a profound difference in the lives of their patients and patient families.

Bonnie Barnes, FAAN, CEO and Co-Founder of The DAISY Foundation states, "When Patrick was critically ill, our family experienced first-hand the remarkable skill and care nurses provide patients

every day and night. Yet these unsung heroes are seldom recognized for the super-human work they do. The kind of work the nurses at [hospital] are called on to do every day epitomizes the purpose of The DAISY Award."

John Anderson, Chief Nurse of Outpatient Services, stated, "The DAISY Award has been at the Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center for a year now and has been awarded to 6 nurses that go above and beyond every day just like Dawnell does, here at the Braxton CBOC. We are grateful to have such nurses at our facility that care so much for the Veterans. The DAISY Award allows us to slow down and let nurses know that their hard work is not going unnoticed, and that the VA would not be in the place it is without nurses like Dawnell. We are grateful to have the DAISY Award program at our facility."

## Sutton Fall Festival to Return

The Sutton Fall Festival returns to Downtown Sutton, after a two-year absence because of the COVID-19 pandemic, on Saturday, October 1, 2022. The festivities will begin with the opening ceremony at 9:30 a.m. and lasting until 5:00 p.m., at which time there will be live music and axe throwing contest at the Bad Axe Bistro on Main Street.

The 2022 Sutton Fall Festival is orchestrated by Pageant Master and member of the Board of Directors of the Sutton

Community Development Corporation Gary Beamer, best known for staging beauty pageants, the 2021 Town of Sutton Christmas Parade, and the Braxton County Fair.

Gary and the 2022 Sutton Fall Festival Queens will be present all day at the festival, where they will assist with the dozens of activities within the event, which will include the Kids bicycle show and other activities for kids, the Howling Hooties Puppy Pageant, the Pretty Baby Contest,

the Rubber Ducky Regatta, and the Scarecrow Competition.

Many foods as well as arts and crafts vendors will make their wares available on the streets and at the Courthouse Square. In addition, the Story Booth Characters will be there to allow children to become part of their fairy tales. A face painting station will be open to decorate the children's faces.

Other activities include: a Cornhole Tournament, sponsored by the Bad Axe Bistro, a Petting Zoo, a kids' bike safety demonstration by the Sutton Police Department, story time with Diamond Diva at the Sutton Public Library, the Out of the Ashes Fire Show, a great Car Show, sponsored by the Sutton Moose Lodge, and the Rubber Ducky Regatta, where one can win cash prizes. Music and sound will be provided by Larry Jones and Robert Jarrett, better known as the Karaoke Kowboyz, and Josh Oldaker.

Mark your calendars! There will be many fun somethings at the 2022 Sutton Fall Festival for folks of all ages. Come out and support one of the Town of Sutton and Braxton County's major events!



The 2022 Sutton Fall Festival will feature a host of fun activities for area children, like face painting.

## Shirley Hyre named to Envirothon Hall of Fame

NCF Envirothon recently bestowed the 2022 Envirothon Hall of Fame award on Shirley Hyre at the competition event held at Miami University in Oxford Ohio.

This award recognizes the achievements and dedication of outstanding NCF Envirothon program representatives who have directly influenced, impacted and promoted Envirothon.

Envirothon is a national competition for teams of high school students in an outdoor setting with testing stations in forestry, soils, wildlife, aquatics, and a current environmental topic. Shirley was instrumental in bringing Envirothon to West Virginia, and is assisting in organizing WV's 25th Celebration



this fall. This Celebration event will bring together past committee members, team members, advisors, sponsors and many others who have helped shape the WV Envirothon program into what it is today.

WV Envirothon Committee's nomination stated "Shirley is quite liter-

ally the face of the WV Envirothon, not just because she has been there from the beginning, but because she is also the program's biggest cheerleader. Dedicated, passionate, persistent, and a voice of reason."

Involved with WV Envirothon since it's infancy, she's mothered the program to what it is today, and also claims a title of grandmother to the program as children of original students are competing today. Many can say they've grown up in the WV Envirothon, and Shirley was there every step of the way. She stresses the importance of Envirothon, and understands that it's more than a competition, "it's a life experience."

## Braxton Memorial Among 11 WVU Medicine Hospitals Recognized by Donate Life West Virginia

Eleven of WVU Medicine's member and managed hospitals were recognized on Friday, September 9 at the Donate Life West Virginia Hospital Challenge Awards Luncheon held at Stone-wall Resort in Roanoke. Braxton County Memorial Hospital was among the honorees.

DLWW's Challenge encourages West Virginia hospitals to increase organ donation awareness and donor designations within their hospital and community. The awareness and designation activities are captured on a scorecard for participating hospitals to achieve levels based on point totals. The levels – from highest to lowest – are Ti-

tanium, Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze.

WVU Medicine hospitals recognized in this year's Hospital Challenge include: Titanium Level – Braxton County Memorial Hospital, Camden Clark Medical Center, Grant Memorial Hospital (managed), J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital, Reynolds Memorial Hospital, Summersville Regional Medical Center, United Hospital Center, and Wheeling Hospital. Platinum Level – Potomac Valley Hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital, and Thomas Health. Camden Clark Medical Center was also recognized for having successfully recovering the first placenta for tissue donation

in the state.

"We are so grateful to our hospitals for spreading awareness of the vital importance of organ donation," Michael Shullo, Pharm.D., WVU Medicine associate vice president for transplant services, said. "Heart disease and kidney disease are among the leading cause of death for West Virginians. By encouraging people to register as organ donors, we can provide life-saving transplants for all West Virginians right here at home."

The awards were presented on the same day that the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), the private, non-profit organization

*Continued on Page 2*

## Local City National Bank Rank 1st in Customer Satisfaction

The local City National Bank branches are ranked

first in Customer Satisfaction for Consumer Bank-

ing in the North Central Region of the country in J.D. Power 2022 U.S. Retail Banking Satisfaction Study. City claimed the top honor on their region for the fourth time in five years, scoring higher than all other banks in West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana and Michigan.

The U.S. Retail Banking Satisfaction Study measures satisfaction across seven factors: Trust; People; Account offerings; Allowing customer to bank how and when they want; Saving time and money; Digital Channels; and Resolving problems or complaints. In addition to ranking highest overall in our region, City also fared the best in factors of Trust, People and Account offerings.

Local Branch Manger Lisa Conant said that she was extremely proud of her team and the commitment to customer service that the award recognized.

The J.D. Power U.S. Retail Banking Satisfaction Study is based on responses from 101,587 customers of the largest banks in the United States.



City's Sutton Office (L to R) Awards presentation joined by Sutton Mayor JD Hoover, Lisa Conant, Natasha Hoffman, Tiffany Cartwright and Marcey Greene.



Flatwoods Office (L to R) Trey Clohan, Cheryl Hamrick, Robin Bragg, Stacy Buckhannon and Lisa Conant.



Gassaway Branch (L to R) Kristina McBrayer, Krisley Riley, Cassandra Denuzzo and Misty O'Dell.



# Legislative Update

By Delegate Brent Boggs

In preparation for Legislative meetings at the Capitol this week, my mind has drifted often to the events of twenty-one years ago as the terrorist attacks unfolded in Washington, DC, New York City, and Shanksville, PA. It remains difficult and troubling for those old enough to recollect the events of that infamous day personally. On that day, 9/11 joined other dates in infamy, such as Pearl Harbor; the assignation of President Kennedy; the fateful loss of the Space Shuttle on takeoff, to name a few.

The coverage of those horrific 9/11 events: the cowardly attack by murderous terrorists on innocent civilians; the heroism of our first responders and citizens; the sadness at the unthinkable loss of life in NYC, at the Pentagon, and in Shanksville; the disbelief of all Americans that such an attack occurred on our soil; all of this and more brought back the churning, sickening feeling, overwhelming sadness, and anger that roiled in each American old enough to watch the attack unfold on live television. The weeks and months of recovery efforts took a toll on the health of those responders and volunteers desperately searching for victims and later, the recovery of remains. Even today, first responders are dying from working the debris at Ground Zero. We remember. We indeed will always remember.

Out of the tragedies, one memory that I long to keep is the national unity, collective sense of purpose, and bipartisanship that the 9/11 attacks brought about immediately to our nation. Congress rallied behind President Bush. Political differences were set aside for the national good.

There were no republicans, democrats, independents, or no party Americans on September 12, 2001. There were only Americans. Flags were flying across our nation. We had a collective national purpose.

What has happened in the last twenty-one years? Sadly, and almost without notice, we've watched this country lose our sense of unity. Political one-upmanship rules the day. Still, others use the circumstance to sow discord, lies, and violence. Social media has provided the ability for anyone from anywhere to say anything with no regard for the truth and no penalty for outright lies, deception, and misinformation. Our adversaries recognized this vulnerability years ago and have capitalized in ways that are both frightening and the consequences yet to be fully understood. Our enemies now see a segment of our nation that thrives on conspiracy theories and a distrust of everyone that doesn't agree with their point of view.

America desperately needs to regain the unity we experienced after 9/11. Moreover, we remain in a still-dangerous global pandemic that continues to claim hundreds of lives each day. Thus far, we've lost over 1 million nationwide; 7,300 in WV. I pray we return to a unified nation and a time where we can agree to disagree in a respectful manner, seeking consensus whenever possible, but always putting God and country first.

To our first responders, my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for what you have done, what you're doing today and what you will continue to do for us in the weeks and years to come. You are our first defense in times of crime, emergency,

distress, and need. You are and will always be in my prayers for safety, strength, and perseverance. It's easy for the public to become complacent in their appreciation for what our first responders do for us and the sacrifices they and their families make to serve our counties and communities. Whether paid or volunteer, the risks and dangers are real. But the unspeakable tragedy of September 11, 2001, brought to the forefront of a shaken nation what first responders do... to protect and serve.

Finally, I appreciate Governor Justice agreeing to my request to immediately name the bridge across Elk River beside the Braxton Co. Senior Center "John D. Forbush Memorial Bridge". John lost his life in responding to an emergency call in May when a mother drove into Elk River from the Senior Center parking lot. As naming resolutions often get caught up in political bickering between the House and Senate, this was one that I believe needed to occur immediately. The bridge naming will be a permanent reminder of his bravery and a shared reminder to everyone that our police, firefighters, and emergency medical personnel have dangerous jobs that can never be taken for granted.

If you need assistance, please contact me at my home office at: 151 Park Street, Gassaway, WV 26624. The phone number is 304-364-8411. For those with Internet access, my legislative email address is: Brent.Boggs@WVHouse.gov

Thank a Veteran every day for their service and remember our troops - at home and abroad - and keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Until next week, take care.

## Judy's Garden Club September Meeting

Judy's Garden Club, Appalachian District, held its regular meeting on September 10, 2022 at the Sutton Public Library. Regular business was discussed and various reports were read and approved.

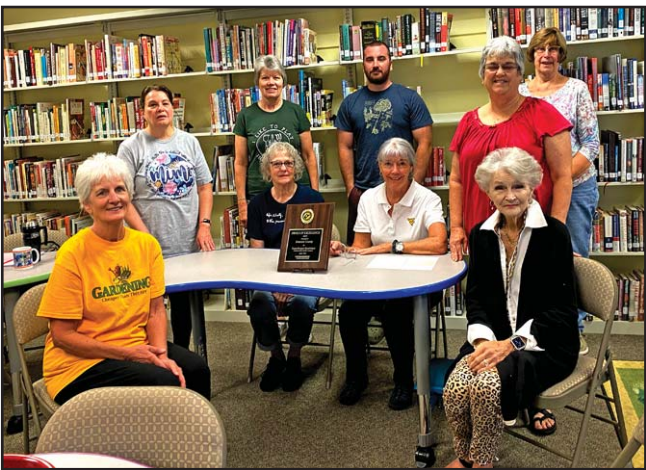
At this meeting, Mr. Logan White, Corp of Engineers representative, joined in with discussion on various projects. Mr. White invited the group to participate in the upcoming National Public Lands Day on September 17, 2022. This event is also open to the public. There will be tree plantings at the area below Sutton Dam. If you are interested, please gather at the picnic area below the Dam at 1:00pm.

Mr. White also discussed the positive comments coming from the Gerald R. Freeman Campground visitors regarding the various garden projects that are ongoing by Judy's Garden Club. Club member, Karen Huffman, is heading this committee of dedicated and active members.

Judy's Garden Club conducted four raffles during summer activities. The last raffle was a flower quilt which was won by Maria Magaua, on September 3, 2022. Judy's Garden Club appreciates everyone's support.

On October 1, 2022, the Sutton Fall Festival will be happening. During this event, Judy's Garden Club will have an activity for children involving plants. The activity will be free of charge and will be located at the Sutton Public Library. The Library will also be having a book sale that day. Hope to see you there.

The next scheduled meeting of Judy's will be October 8, 2022. You are invited to follow Judy's Garden Club on their Face-



The flower quilt raffle was won by Maria Magaua. Everyone would love to meet you. Judy's Garden Club thanks you for your support.

## Town of Flatwoods Council August Meeting

The Town of Flatwoods Council held a meeting on August 16, at the Flatwood Municipal Building. Mayor Dale Ball called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance was said by all. Opening Prayer was led by Councilman Dennis Miller.

Members present: Mayor Dale Ball, Treasurer/Recorder Lisa Hamrick, Police Chief Shawn Brown, Council Members: Brenda Ball, Jake Hamrick, Dennis Miller, Luke Malensek, and Keith Long by phone.

Citizens present: Linda James, Lorie Brown, and John Hoffman, Braxton County EMS Director.

Lisa Hamrick read the minutes from July 19, 2022, meeting. Brenda Ball made the motion to approve the minutes as read. Jake Hamrick seconded. All were in favor, the motion carried.

Lisa Hamrick read the Treasurer's Report. Dennis Miller made the motion to approve the report as read. Keith Long seconded. All were in favor, the motion carried.

Citizen's Concerns: Complaints about the noise tractor trailers are making were

heard. The noise would fall under a noise ordinance and a decibel meter would have to be furnished and calibrated.

John Hoffman, Braxton County EMS Director addressed the council about the flooding occurring in Flatwoods. According to FEMA, Flatwoods is not in a flood plain. The Corps of Engineer is convening a study for an emergency action plan for all of Braxton that will show the flooding issues and response to flooding. Mr. Hoffman stated that flood plain management falls on the mayor unless an Administrator/Manager is appointed.

Update on Doctors Lane/Miracle Street, a map from Department of Highways states that all of Doctors Lane is owned by the state. Mayor Ball spoke to Trevor Harper from State Road. Mr. Harper said that he would speak to his supervisor about fixing it.

Lisa Hamrick read the bill list; Luke Malensek made a motion to approve the bill list as read. Dennis Miller seconded. All were in favor, the motion carried.

No action taken on street repair since the state has

been contacted.

Dennis Miller made a motion to spend \$2000 from American Plan Rescue Act Funds for Fall and Winter events combined with dates to be determined. Brenda Ball seconded. All were in favor, motion carried.

Jake Hamrick made a motion to sign an Inter-governmental Agreement that would allow Braxton County EMS Director, John Hoffman, to act as Flood Plain Manager for the Town of Flatwoods. Keith Long seconded. All were in favor, motion carried.

Luke Malensek made a motion to table UTV estimate. Dennis Miller seconded the motion. All were in favor, the motion carried.

Dennis Miller made a motion to approve the second and third reading of Special Events Ordinance. Luke Malensek seconded the motion, the motion carried.

Jake Hamrick made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Brenda Ball seconded the motion. All were in favor, the motion carried.

## Hospital...

Continued from Page 1 that manages the nation's organ transplant system under contract with the federal government, announced that the U.S. has achieved its 1 millionth organ transplant, more than any other country in the world.

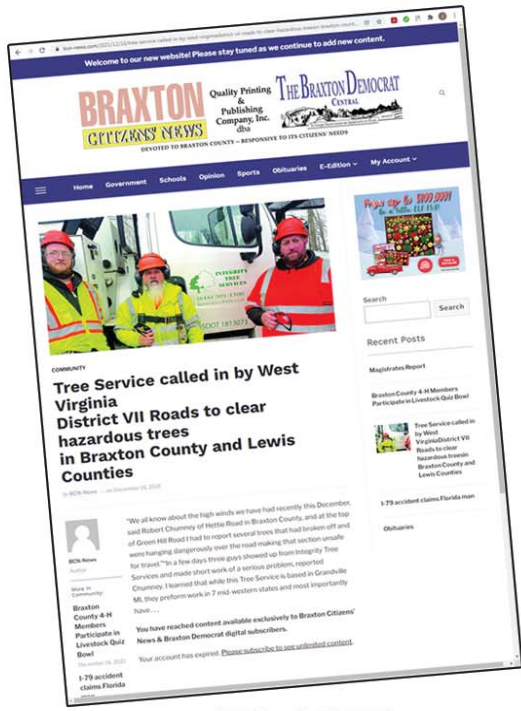
The WVU Medicine Transplant Alliance at J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital is West Virginia's first and only multi-organ transplant center, offering heart and kidney transplant for people across the state and region.

For more information on the WVU Medicine Transplant Alliance, visit WVU-Medicine.org/Transplant. To register as a donor, visit RegisterMe.org/WVUMedicine.

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### The Braxton Democrat-Central

Published every Thursday by  
**Quality Printing & Publishing, Inc.**  
DBA/ Braxton Democrat-Central  
501 Main Street  
Sutton, West Virginia 26601-1349  
USPS 063-480

Ed Given  
Janet Six  
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Phone: (304) 765-5555 Fax: (304) 765-2754  
e-mail: editor@bcn-news.com; jennifer@bcn-news.com  
Subscription rates for 1 year in county, \$17.00; Out of county, \$23.50; Out of state, \$35.50; Cannot accept subscription for less than six months. Senior Citizens with Golden Mountaineer Cards may deduct \$1.00 from yearly rates.  
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# Obituaries

## Mary Jo Browning

Mary Jo Browning, 87, of Birch River passed away Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at the Hubbard Hospice House in Charleston, WV.

She was born December 21, 1934, the daughter of the late Carmel and Mabel Lloyd Johnson. Also preceding her in death was her brothers John Johnson, Glen Johnson, William 'Bill' Johnson, and sister Anna Mae Murphy.

Mary was a homemaker, enjoyed canning, gardening, and spending time with her family. She was a Christian by faith and attended Birch River Baptist Church.

Left to cherish her memory are her husband, Hershel 'Fred' Browning, son, Jeff (Robin) Browning, daughter, Jill (Matt) Fowler, and grandsons, Ryan Browning and Justin Browning.

Graveside services were held Saturday, September 10, 2022 at Keener-Wood Cemetery, Birch River, WV with Rev. Jim Murphy officiating. Friends called from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Friday, September 9, 2022 at Greene-Robertson Funeral Home, Sutton, WV.

Greene-Robertson Funeral Home is honored to be serving the Browning family.

Online condolences may be sent to: [greene-robertsonfuneralhome.com](http://greene-robertsonfuneralhome.com)

## Thelma (Dempsey) Sims

Thelma (Dempsey) Sims, 85, of Cowen, went home to be with the Lord on Friday, September 2, 2022 at Peyton Hospice House, Lewisburg.

Born September 25, 1936 in Tioga, she was the daughter of the late Cecil and Emma (Culvert) Dempsey. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Junior Sims; and siblings: Martha Knapp, Darrous Dempsey, Cora Selman, Robert Dempsey, and Donzel Dempsey.

Thelma was a Christian and enjoyed attending church whenever possible. She enjoyed singing hymns and spending time with her friends and family.

Left to cherish her memory are her daughters: Mary Ann (husband, Glen) Bragg, Brenda (husband, Rex) Ware and Helena Chaney; her son Robert Sims; sisters: Barbara Mathis, Mary Sims, and Helen Carpenter; five grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; six great-great-grandchildren; and a host of other relatives and friends to mourn her passing.

Services to celebrate Thelma's life were held 2pm on Friday, September 9, 2022 at Adams-Reed Funeral Home, Cowen. Burial followed at Odd Fellows Cemetery, Cowen. Friends joined the family for visitation one hour prior to the service time.

In lieu of food and flowers, the family requests donations be made to: Peyton Hospice House, 1265 Maplewood Ave., Lewisburg, WV

24901.

Online condolences may be sent to the family at [www.adamsreedfh.com](http://www.adamsreedfh.com)

Adams-Reed Funeral Home is honored to be serving Thelma's family.

## John Stephen Baker

John Stephen Baker, 54, of Gassaway, West Virginia passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday, September 6, 2022.

John was born in Wellsboro, Pennsylvania on December 29, 1967 to the late Arthur William Baker and Dorothea Mildred Breuer Baker.

John was the youngest of eight children. He graduated from Wellsboro Senior High in 1986. Most recently, he was a para-professional driver who transported clients to their supervised visitations. Before that, John worked at Braxton County Memorial Hospital for 14 years in the Housekeeping Department. He took much pride in his work.

John was a Philadelphia Eagles superfan, enjoyed working with his model trains, and spent much time growing his coin collection. John was a fantastic uncle who loved all his nieces and nephews. Watching his nephew Adam Smith play football was one of the greatest joys of his life. Before he passed away, John also loved watching his great niece, Jane, and great nephews, Noah and Emmett, while their parents worked. His entire family will deeply miss making new memories with him.

John is survived by his brothers, William Baker and Arthur Robert Baker; sisters, Kathleen Talada, Brenda Badmone, Johanna Shelmire, Dorothea Shuster, and Alice Smith; nieces and nephews; and several great nieces and nephews. John lived with his sister Alice, her husband Stephen Smith, and her children Elyse Kopp, James Dwight Pierson, Shyloh Lusk, Hannah Mireles, and Adam Smith for many years.

John will be cremated, and his services are pending.

Words of comfort and fond memories may be extended to the family at [www.roachfuneralhome.com](http://www.roachfuneralhome.com).

Arrangements by Roach Funeral Home, Gassaway, WV.

## Tammy Hinkle-Wood

Tammy Hinkle-Wood, 48, of Buckhannon, passed away on Friday, September 9, 2022 at Saint Joseph's Hospital, Buckhannon.

She was born in Gassaway on February 8, 1974 to the late Calvin and Jean Frame Burge.

In addition to her parents she was preceded in death by her brother, Jimmy Aaron Burge and her first husband, Daniel Hinkle.

Tammy was a 1993 graduate of Braxton County High School. She was a homemaker but also worked out of the home as a custodian. She loved to decorate her home with primitives. She was a good cook and her family

will remember her two favorite meals, meatloaf and lasagna.

She will be forever remembered by her husband, Mitch Wood, of Buckhannon; and son, Joshua Hinkle (Corina) of Sutton; and stepson, Jerod Andrew Wood of Buckhannon. She is also survived by her unborn grandson, Asher Hinkle.

Tammy's visitation was from 5 to 7 P.M. Monday, September 12, 2022 at Roach Funeral Home, Gassaway.

Her funeral was 11 A.M. Tuesday, September 13th at the funeral home.

Words of comfort and fond memories may be extended to the family at [www.roachfuneralhome.com](http://www.roachfuneralhome.com).

## Robert A. "SpongeBob" Hudson

Robert A. "SpongeBob" Hudson, 35, of Gassaway passed away on Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at WVU Medicine Ruby Memorial Hospital, Morgantown, WV.

He was born March 23, 1987 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Preceding him in death was his infant niece, Pamela Fisher and his cousin, Dale Hudson.

Spongebob, as most knew, him had a helping heart. You would often see him driving a side by side, hauling a trailer down Bluefield road. He mowed and split wood for people. He liked to tinker on cars and machines. Hunting and fishing were his favorite pastimes. He also worked for the town of Burnsville for some time. Interestingly, Spongebob gained his nickname from Tom Shuman who coached him during his freshman year of football. He went on to be a 2007 graduate of Braxton County High School. He had many friends who knew him. He will be missed. The family finds comfort that he was a CORE organ donor and will continue to be helping others.

He will be forever remembered by his mother, Joelle Hudson Greathouse and stepfather, Doug Greathouse of Burnsville; Robert Dobbins, who was like a father to him, of Gassaway; son, Karson Cunningham of Ohio; brothers, Joseph Dobbins of Gassaway, and Bradley Dobbins and wife, Josie, of Gassaway; sisters, Madonna Collins and Freda Fisher both of Buckhannon; maternal grandmother, Dale Lee of Burnsville; nieces, Katelynn, Malina, and Brooklynn; nephews, Clayton, Landon, Walker, David, Anthony and Jonathan. He is also survived by several aunts, uncles and many cousins.

A gathering of family and friends was from 5 to 7 P.M. Sunday, September 11, 2022 at Roach Funeral Home, Gassaway.

He was cremated following services.

In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to Roach Funeral Home, 708 Braxton Street, Gassaway, WV 26624 to assist with funeral costs.

## Timothy Michael Johnson

Timothy Michael Johnson, 41, of Sutton, formerly of Oak Hill, passed away on Friday, September 9, 2022 at WVU Medicine United Hospital

Center surrounded by his family.

He was born on February 16, 1981 in Raleigh County to Edward Merle and Sharon Kay Morton Johnson of Oak Hill.

Tim was a kind hearted guy that enjoyed going on outdoor adventures with his wife. He loved to fish.

In addition to his parents he is survived by his wife, Michelle Myers Johnson of Sutton; sons, Caleb Michael Johnson and wife, Nautica, of Oak Hill, Payton Nottingham and Kaden Nottingham both of Sutton; daughter, Vivian Johnson of Oak Hill; brothers Edward Johnson II and wife, Yun, of Ft. Worth, TX; sisters, Angela Johnson and companion, Jason Gravley, of Oak Hill and Chrystal Reller and husband, Josh, of Las Vegas, NV; four nephews and one niece; several aunts, uncles and cousins; and his loving dog, Riley.

Tim's funeral will be 5 P.M. Tuesday, September 13, 2022 at Roach Funeral Home, Gassaway. Burial will follow in the Sugar Creek Cemetery, Gassaway.

Visitation will be two hours prior to the service at the funeral home.

Words of comfort and fond memories may be extended to the family at [www.roachfuneralhome.com](http://www.roachfuneralhome.com).

## Desper Lee Lemon "Tex"

Desper Lee Lemon "Tex", 87, of St. Albans, passed away peacefully at home on August 12, 2022 surrounded by family.

He was born on July 30, 1935 to Thomas and Susie Lemon and raised in Sugar Creek, WV. He was a 1954 graduate of Gassaway High School and moved to St. Albans in 1956 to work for Union Carbide where he continued to work for the next 39 years until retirement. On a weekend trip home to visit family his best friend and soon to be brother-in-law, Roland Wilson, introduced him to the love of his life, Mary Lou Mollohan. They were married on March 14, 1959, and had their only child and light of his life, Tonya Lemon several years later.

He was an active member of the St. Albans community for 65 years and served at City Councilman for 11 years. Desper was a member of St. Peter's United Methodist Church for many years and cherished his time spend with his church family. He was a brother of Washington Lodge #58 for 59 years and was very proud to be a Mason. In 2021 for his extensive work in the community, the City of St. Albans honored Desper with his very own holiday and August 2nd officially became Desper Lemon Day. In July 2022, the SAPD honored Desper with a memorial flower garden in front of their new police station for many years of support they received from him.

Desper loved spending time with his family at the family farm in Braxton County. At the farm he enjoyed four-wheeling and sitting on the front porch waving at those passing by and listening to the whippoorwills.

Desper was a one-of-a-kind, charismatic, hard-working family man who will be greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. He is

survived by his wife of 63 years, Mary Lou Lemon of St. Albans, daughter, Tonya Lemon of Charleston, sister, Sharon Loyd of Gassaway as well as several beloved nieces and nephews, and honorary grandsons, Cayden and Silas Cooper of St. Albans, who are missing their adored Popaw so very much

A celebration of Life will be held October 1, 2022 at the Green-Robertson Funeral Home, Sutton. Visitation will be from 12-2pm, service at 2pm.

There will be another Celebration of Life to be held at St. Peter's United Methodist Church, October 22, 2022. Visitation will be 1-2pm with the service at 2pm.

In lieu of flowers, please make a memorial contribution to St. Peter's United Methodist Church, St. Albans, WV.

## John Franklin Myles

John Franklin Myles, 86, of Sutton, went home to be with his Lord on Thursday, September 1, 2022 at Lewis A. Johnson VA Hospital, Bridgeport.

He was born November 30, 1935 in Erbacon, WV, the son of the late Ralph & Mamie Rose Miles. He is also preceded in death

by his son, Troy Myles; daughters, Diane Lane, Donna White; great grandchild, Maddi Lane, brothers, James Harold "Gib", Doy, Herbert, Jr. & Jearald Miles; sisters, Waneta, Wanda, Wilma.

Frank worked as a Coal Miner and also was a Contractor. He served his country as a Army Veteran and was a member of Stump Chapel Baptist Church, Tesla, where he served as a Trustee at the church.

He is survived by his loving wife, Mary Holcomb Myles; grandchildren, Lori Stover/Williams, Brandi Huffman, Scott Lane, Serina Myles, Michael Gibson; great grandchildren, Troy Stover, Cameron Huffman, Caylee Huffman, Aiden Wright, Ali Wright, Landon Wright, Coen Lane; brother, Jack Miles of Cottle, WV; sisters, Ruth Toler of Flatwoods, Wilda Evans of Akron, OH.

Upon Frank's request the body will be cremated and there will be no service.

Greene-Robertson Funeral Home is humbled have served the Myles family.

On line condolences may be sent to: [greene-robertsonfuneralhome.com](http://greene-robertsonfuneralhome.com)

## Memorial service for Morton

A memorial will be held for Peter "Pete" Morton on Sunday, September 18 at 2:00 pm at the Wayside Church in Sutton. He went to his

heavenly home on September 18, 2020. He did not have Covid. Friends and family are invited to help us celebrate his life.

## Martin Memorial Service

A memorial service for Lena J. Martin will be held on September 17 at 12:00 pm at Holly Gray Park.

Lena passed away on June 8, 2022.

Rodney England will be officiating.

## Central West Virginia Aging Services and C.A.R.E., Inc. hosts Annual Veteran's Day Parade and Reception

Central West Virginia Aging Services and C.A.R.E., Inc. is pleased to announce that we will be hosting the Annual Veteran's Day Parade and Reception this year.

We are currently looking for participants for the Annual Veteran's

Day parade which will be held in Gassaway on Friday November 11th.

If you or your organization would be interested in participating, please contact Shelly by calling (304)765-3271 or e-mailing [sflint@frontier.com](mailto:sflint@frontier.com)

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I am sure many of you shed tears as you watched the English and whole world sadness at the death of the amazing Queen Elizabeth. I decided amid my tears that I would tell you just one incident in my life regarding the Queen. When as a teenager, just graduated from Burnsville High School, I worked in Washington, D.C. in the office of Senator Matthew M. Neeley who, after being governor of West Virginia, became a Senator from West Virginia. Not long after I began working there, Queen Elizabeth and her husband visited the Senate Office Building. All of us office staff were encouraged to go to the Senate chambers and sit in the balcony to watch their entourage explore the Senate floor. When the Senate is in session, the Vice President sits in a huge chair to lead out. As the group of visitors explored, the Queen got close to the large chair. Her minute figure was almost lost from sight. I heard Prince Philip teasingly say, “Try it for size?” I am sure I saw a small smile on her face. That experience endeared her to me. I have forgotten many things over the years, but not that. I, along with the rest of the world, had witnessed the life of a really elegant lady as she maintained a watch over her country. I loved her.

Our Church had a Celebration of Life in honor

of Fred Seeley who died recently. Randy Dustin, one of our Elders, somehow amid his obligations as Elder, teacher, part time preacher, provider of special music for many services, caretaker of his mother, husband to his wife, Susan, and father to his grandchildren, plus managing his trucking business and drove five days a week himself, made time to prepare for the Memorial for Fred and perform the many obligations entailed with becoming the executor of Fred’s will. God blessed him and the service was marvelous.

If you would like to see some of the program so well recorded and played for us by Barry Scott, go to The Seventh-day Adventist Facebook site and enjoy the sights and sounds of it.

I want to share with you a bit of our Sabbath School lesson for that day, taken from Steps to Christ, pp. 121, 122. “The psalmist says, ‘Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.’ Psalm 37:3. ‘Trust in the Lord.’ Each day has its burdens, it cares and perplexities and trials. So many borrowed troubles intrude, so many fears are indulged, such a weight of anxiety is expressed, that one might suppose we had no pitying, loving Saviour ready to hear all our requests and to be to us a present help in every

time of need.

“Some are always fearing, and borrowing trouble. Every day they are surrounded with the tokens of God’s love; every day they are enjoying the bounties of His providence; but they overlook these present blessings. Their minds are continually dwelling upon something disagreeable which they fear may come, or some difficulty may really exist which, though small, blinds their eyes to the many things that demand gratitude.”

“In every trial we have strong consolation. Is not our Saviour touched with the feeling of our infirmities? Has He not been tempted in all points like as we are? And has He not invited us to take every trial and perplexity to Him? Then let us not make ourselves miserable over tomorrow’s burdens. Bravely and cheerfully carry the burdens of today. Today’s trust and faith we must have. But we are not asked to live more than a day at a time. He who gives strength for today will give strength for tomorrow.

“Nothing wounds the soul like the sharp darts of unbelief. When trial comes, as it will, do not worry or complain. Silence in the soul makes more distinct the voice of God. ‘Then are they glad because they be quiet.’ (Psalm 107:30) Remember that underneath you are the everlasting arms. ‘Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him’ (Psalm 17:7) He is guiding you into a harbor of gracious experience --- In Heavenly Places, p. 269.”

Maranatha

# Thousand Springs Quilt Club hosts 12th Annual Quilt Show

The Annual Thousand Springs Quilt Club will be hosting their 12th year Quilt Show on Saturday October 1, 2022 from noon till 2:00. All quilts to be judged need to be there by 11:00 and there is a \$2.00 entry fee per quilt to be judged. You may feel free to bring any quilt for display only, if you like.

Judging will take place at 1:30. Tickets are on sale now for a sewing

assessory filled basket as well as a Singer Sewing Machine. There will be a ‘fat quarter’ game and you will need to bring 4 fat quarters to play. There is also a paper piecing class being organized, so if you’re interested in the class you will need to pre-register by Sept. 23rd for preparations for the class to be made.

Refreshments will be available, and due to

high water the rd. could be impassable and the show will be held on Sat. October 8th at the same time. For road conditions or any information you would like to have, feel free to contact Jo Gerwig @ 304 364 5561 or Donna Moore @ 304 462 5394

This is located on the left fk. of Riley Run Rd. between Gassaway (Approx. 14 mile) & Norman-town ( Approx. 6 mile). There will be signs.

## A Hawaiian Shirt

**By: Joseph J. Mazzella**

The first time I met Kai she was sitting in my front yard petting my dog, Harley. Harley was a big black Lab and Husky mix and his bark was intimidating but Kai had turned him into a little puppy wanting only to be petted by her. She seemed to radiate a loving-kindness that rippled out to touch us all. She and her husband Sean had just moved into our neighborhood and in no time Kai had befriended everyone. She played with and encouraged the neighborhood children, she rescued a stray dog that had been wounded by a bear, she laughed and gave and shared and loved us all unconditionally.

In no time Kai and Sean had become fixtures in our neighborhood. My daughter, sons, and I visited them often. Kai always seemed to have a piece of cake ready to eat and a heart to heart talk ready to share. Kai

also loved the Hawaiian culture and embraced the “Aloha Spirit”, even though she wasn’t native to Hawaii. She had been a former Hula dancer in her youth and gave me a Hawaiian shirt as a gift. Even though it was too small for my big belly I wore it often when I visited her and Sean.

Kai also encouraged my writings about life, love, spirit, and God. She didn’t have the internet so I would bring her a printed copy of each new thing I wrote. Often she asked me to read it to her while she closed her eyes and soaked in the words. I was always happy to do so.

Through all this time, though, Kai was battling Cancer. She had told me the first time I talked with her that she was terminal. That made her even more determined to live all her days here to the fullest, shining her light, seeding her love, and sharing her joy. In time her health declined, she slept more and

grew weaker. I visited less often not wanting to tire her but when I did no matter how bad she felt Kai always shared her kindness and her smile.

Kai died on a cold, winter’s day. I walked through the heavy snow to her home to tell Sean how sorry I was and how much she would be missed by us all. Sean moved away soon afterwards and all of us were left a little emptier without Kai’s presence in our lives. Whenever I looked at that Hawaiian shirt, however, I would remember Kai and smile. That is why these days I only wear Hawaiian shirts be it Spring, Summer, Winter, or Fall. Wearing them makes me feel closer to Kai and the love she shared while she was here. I look forward to meeting her again one day in God’s Paradise. Maybe we can share a little “Aloha Spirit”, have a heart to heart talk and a piece of cake. And I’m sure she will smile seeing my Hawaiian shirt.

## Take a Cattle Truck ‘Ride to Mt. Nebo

**By: Jeanette Riffle**

My friend, Susie Cook, of Braxton Co. calls me every week to check on us and see if we are alright and this past week she called and was telling me some of her good memories. I might have already written about she and some of her cousins going to the State Gospel Sing in the back of her uncle’s cattle truck, I can’t remember for sure, but that was one of her stories and she got me so tickled. She said that her grandpa wanted to go to Mt. Nebo to see Ralph Stanley, as that was his favorite singer. They didn’t have a car but one of Susie’s uncles had a big cattle truck. He offered to take everyone in the family, in the back of his truck. Susie, her sister, and several cousins were so excited to get to go. She said they had so much fun and the weather was warm. They didn’t get rained on or anything. It was a long trip

there and back home. I think they took food and water. Her grandpa had his picture taken standing beside Ralph Stanley and he put it in a frame and hung it on the wall to show everyone. He was so proud of that picture. I got so tickled just picturing this big cattle truck pulling in at that sing, loaded with kids instead of cattle. Get there one way or the other. I bet that really got the attention. Then she was telling me about a family reunion at her grandparent’s house and about 40 people showed up. They only had one bedroom and like a lot of homes back then, there was a bed in the living room. Everyone spent the night there. The men slept outside on the ground. The women and kids slept in the house on the floor. She said they just threw down quilts, blankets or whatever they could round up to sleep on. I wondered how they fed

all those people. Her grandma must have had to make a lot of biscuits and gravy the next morning. My husband was telling me about taking a field trip in the back of a cattle truck when he was in Rosedale Grade School. They took sack lunches and something to drink. They went to Holly River State Park and to the State Game Farm as those were both in the same area. The Game Farm has a new name now. It has been changed to WV Wildlife Center. Dad took us there when I was growing up. Mom fixed picnic food fit for a king and my parents put it in boxes in the trunk of the car. They had a Styrofoam cooler for things that had to be kept cold. I have good memories of going on picnics when I was growing up.

Until next time, continue to be safe and take care.

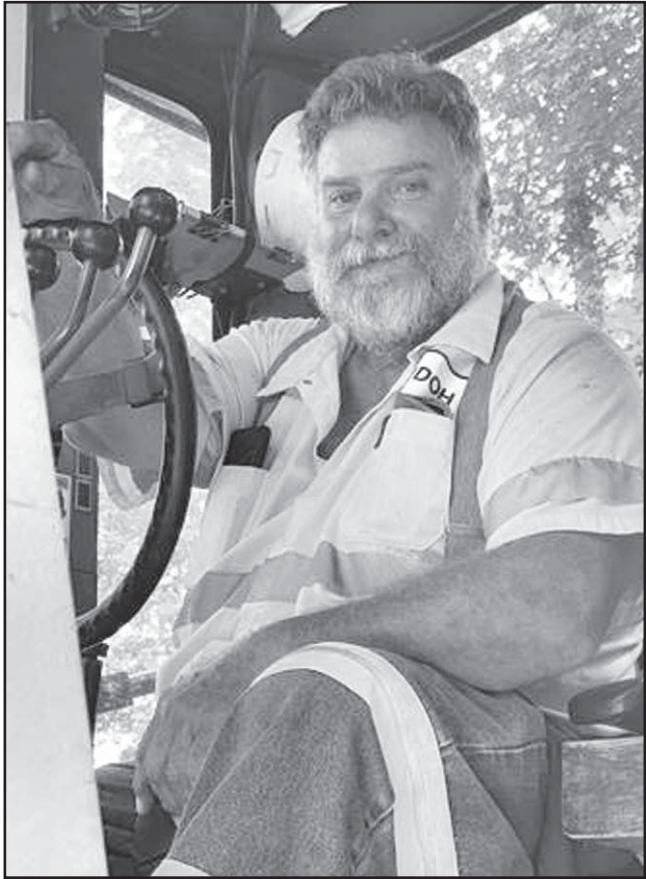
God bless and keep you in his care!

## WVDOH is out getting the gravel roads in Braxton County winter ready

Here’s Jeff Johnson out of the Heaters Sub Station for the Roads Department working the roads in Northeastern Braxton County, he’s operating the County Grader to fill in potholes and clear gullies and culverts before Winter hits.

Jeff said, “I have been with the WVDOH for 12 years and usually operate the Brush Tractors cutting our right of ways of filth and overgrowth, but today my Crew Boss Matt Helmick told me to run the grader.”

“Today we are working Green Hill Road, Hettie Road, and Pleasant Hill Road over to the junction of Painter Fork Road and next we will work Falls Run Road all in preparation for Winter.”



Jeff said, he lives in Exchange on Trace Run and graduated in 1981 from Braxton High School in Flatwoods/Sutton and enjoys his work as you get to operate all kinds of different big equipment.

“Today I have Jeff Carpenter and Shane Clutter hauling gravel covering the soft spots after I the “Scar Fire” the potholes. With all the rain

we have had the potholes dominate along these gravel roads and we need them ready for safe travel with the coming freezing and thawing that Winter brings.”, said Mr. Johnson. We ran into Brandon Jones with his wife Barbara and son Fabian who just moved to 806 Hettie Road this May from Clearwater Florida. Bran-

don said, “He was happy to see the gravel road, that runs within 30 feet of his front door, being graded and new Crush n’ Run gravel spread as with all the rains this year the erosion in spots was hard to travel over. Yep, my neighbors told me the Braxton Road crews would be here before Winter.”



Gassaway Public Library hosts Davis Elementary School teachers to a surprise picnic at the library.

## Gassaway Public Library Welcomes Davis Elementary Staff Back to School

Gassaway Public Library welcomed Davis Elementary staff back to school with a surprise picnic lunch at the library. Our local Walmart at Flatwoods furnished sub

sandwiches with plenty of fresh toppings. The library furnished sweet tea and chips. There was a brief meeting after lunch to discuss library time for Davis Elementary stu-

dents.

The staff at Gassaway Public Library is excited to have the students return. We are prepared and have many new children’s titles to choose from.



**Get the most up to date sports coverage. Check out the Citizens’ News for Braxton County High School Eagles sports**

**and the Democrat-Central for Braxton County Middle School Knights stories, stats, and photographic coverage!**





# BCMS varsity soccer team wins first match of the season

**By Shirley Shuman**  
On Sept. 7, the Knights soccer team played Summersville and came away with a 3-1 win. Braxton’s goalies had a total of 14 saves. Blaine Hines stopped 8 of the Bear’s shots and Joal Ransbottom 6. Zack McQuain scored two of Braxton’s goals and Ransbottom scored the third.

Knights’ coach Lindsey Casto said that the team’s mid defense “played with aggressiveness and determination.” She noted that the back defense “overlapped and covered the ball with strength, giving offense back possession.” The coach continued to compliment the offense for “hustling for the ball” and added, “The team

stayed calm under the hard pressure that the Bears were bringing and was able to communicate clearly with each other to dominate the outcome of the game.” Braxton’s junior varsity lost their game 7-3, but their coach emphasized they “worked extremely hard and can hold their heads up high for their

determination.” For the jv team, Bella Rollyson had three shots on goal, Holden Lloyd had two, and Zoey McQuain 3. Lloyd scored all three Braxton goals. Goalie Joseph McCollum had 5 saves, and Athena King 3.  
“The junior varsity worked together and held their own,” Coach Casto said. At halftime, the

score was tied 3-3, and the Braxton coach noted that her jv team “worked through their tiredness and carried on” even though they had only one sub.  
“Players were put in different positions they have never played before and are learning and developing with each game and practice,” the coach

said. She did add that she and Coach Harman “are extremely proud of their growth as a team and each player individually.”  
The varsity played Webster Monday night, and both teams played Philip Barbour Wednesday night. The varsity will host Ravenswood Saturday.



The Braxton County Knights soccer team “stayed calm under the hard pressure that the Bears were bringing and was able to communicate clearly with each other to dominate the outcome of the game.” noted Coach Lindsey Casto on the 3-1 win over the Nicholas County Bears.

# Lady Knights place second in Oak Hill XC Invitational

*Both BCMS teams had placer in Oak Hill meet*

**By Shirley Shuman**  
The middle school cross country team ran in two 3K meets last week. On Tuesday, they ran at Oak Hill, and Saturday they ran in Mineral Wells in a Chick Fil-A invitational. Several Braxton runners did well at Oak Hill, and the Lady Knights finished second behind Greenbrier West. Knights’ coach Ralph Lloyd commented that his runners “really enjoyed (the Oak Hill) course because it was actually a cross country course through the woods.”  
Four members of the girls’ team finished in the top 20 to earn medals. Leah Payne, who finished second, led the Lady Knights. Mackinzey Anderson placed sixth, Reece Carpenter eighth,

and Audrey Duffield 18th. Three of Braxton’s boys also earned medals. Joal Ransbottom crossed the finish line in fourth place while Holden Lloyd placed sixth and Ira Ransbottom 14th.  
Saturday, the Knights ran at Mineral Wells. At that meet, 31 schools were registered with 24 full teams. In the girls’ race, 180 runners competed, and 190 ran in the boys’ race. Coach Lloyd noted, “This course is very fast and flat. Some of our athletes did beat their times from last year as we look for small goals all the time.” Coach Lloyd pointed out that Leah Payne and Mackenzie Anderson finished in the top 40 in that race and said that was “an accomplishment as big as the field

was.”  
Tuesday of this week, the team traveled to Big Ditch Lake for a meet. Saturday, the Knights and the BCHS Eagles host a meet at Holly Gray. Coach

Lloyd said he encourages “the entire county to come out and support the BCMS Knights who have been working hard these last few years.” He also urged fans “to come out and support the #2 ranked Lady Eagles.”



BCMS Knights XC



BCMS Knights race towards the finish line in the race at Oak Hill.

Raiden Davis



Chelsea Payne



Emily Whitney



Jamie Spurlock

Braxton County Soccer Club September 16th - 23rd Schedule			
Sept 16th		Sept 18th	
5:30 U12 Young v Upshur Bennett		2:00 U12 Dever v Upshur Carpenter	
		3:30 U10 Cartwright v Upshur Garrett	
Sept 17th		Sept 22nd	
12:00 U8 Facemire v Williams		5:30 U12 Dever @ Upshur Harris	
1:00 U6 Denuzzo v Jackson			
2:00 U8 Facemire v Cyriacks		Sept 23rd	
3:30 U12 Young v Webster (W ref assist)		5:30 U6 Denuzzo v Jackson	
5:00 U10 Cartwright v Webster (W ref assist)		6:15 U8 Cyriacks v Williams	



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**HELP WANTED:** Braxton County Sheriff's Department is a seeking a part-time (potential full time) tax office employee. Applications and job description are available at the BCSD Tax Office, Braxton County Courthouse, 300 Main Street, Sutton, WV 26601. Deadline for applying is September 23, 2022. 9-13 9-20b

**HELP WANTED:** In search of person/s to provide home care for young adult during summer and school holidays in the Napier/Bulltown WV area. Drug & background check, First Aid & CPR required. Call 1-304-689-0096. 9-1 10-20p

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### MISC. ITEMS

**GARAGE SALE:** Thursday, September 15, and Friday, September 16, 9am to 6pm, and Saturday, September 17, 9am to 4pm. Drake residence on Big Run Hill on Wilsie Road, 2 mile off Rt. 4 from Frametown. 9-13p

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Braxton County Middle School Lady Knights prepare to take on South Harrison.

## BCMS girls' volleyball squads lose first two games

*Coach praises the teams for determination and hard work*



Hayden Johnson prepares to serve the ball.

**By Shirley Shuman**

The Lady Knights, varsity and junior varsity, lost to both South Harrison and Summersville last week. The varsity score against South Harrison was 2-0 and against Summersville the next night 1-2. Coach Leigh Copen explained the scoring.

"In middle school volleyball, each match played has a maximum of three sets. Each set is played to 25 or the first team to reach 25 with a 2-point lead. If one team wins the first two sets, the match is over. If each team has won one set, then a third set is played to name the winner of the

match," the coach said. South Harrison won in two sets while the match against Summersville took three sets.

With that explanation, it is easy to see that Braxton's varsity showed improvement when they played Summersville since they didn't win a set against South Harrison but won the first set against Summersville. Coach Copen noted, "Their teamwork and communication were better. They knew the mistakes they had made {in the match against South Harrison} and did what they could to correct them."

The top varsity scorer

against South Harrison was Amira Harper, and the Stand-Out was Ava Nettles. Coach Copen explained, "It is easy to see stand-out players that fight with just a little more push all night long. As a sixth-grader, Ava was new to the game and had just as many nerves as everyone else, but she did not let those nerves stop her from doing her job on the court."

Against Summersville, Harper once again led the Lady Knights' scoring. Stand-Out for the Summersville match "had to go to seventh-grader Nivaeah Flint," Coach Copen said. "From digging to one-arm passing, that girl was all over the court."

Although the Lady Knights did lose to South Harrison and Summersville, the coach says her girls are "fired up" for the games scheduled this week. They played George Washington Middle Monday and will play Spencer tonight (Thursday). Coach Copen said that her players would like to invite fans to come to the Knights' first home game on September 20 at 6 p.m. Since the bleachers have not been installed yet, fans need to bring lawn chairs.

## Knights lose by big margin to South Harrison to go 0-2

**By Shirley Shuman**

Discussing his team's 50-8 loss to South Harrison last week, Knights' coach James King said, "They played keep-away all night." He went on to note that the Hawks jumped out to a 24-0 lead and his team had to try to play catch-up all night. He stated that the Knights "had the ball for only four minutes in the entire game."

"They're good," Coach King said. "Their backfield is big, and they're fast. They're very disciplined and very athletic." He went on to say that South Harrison "didn't have a methodical drive all night." Instead, if the Knights' defense held them to short yardage in one or two downs, they would score on a 50 or 60-yard touchdown run.

Although the Knights were down 24-0 at half-time, their coach emphasized "we never quit playing. We just couldn't match their intensity." Braxton did have three opportunities to score but failed on each. Coach King emphasized that the Knights were going to have to go back to the basics. "We also need to work on special teams play and try to instill some confidence in our players," he said.

Braxton's only touchdown came in the second quarter when Brady Toler ran a kickoff back 60 yards. Trevor Edgerton ran for the two-point conversion. Coach



Coach James King discuss the next play in a huddle.



The Braxton Knights prepare for the play.



Braxton County Middle School Knight Cheerleaders. King said the only other highlight of the game was Aiden Pritt's 45 yard reception. The Knights have a home game tonight against Spencer. Kickoff is 6:30 p.m.

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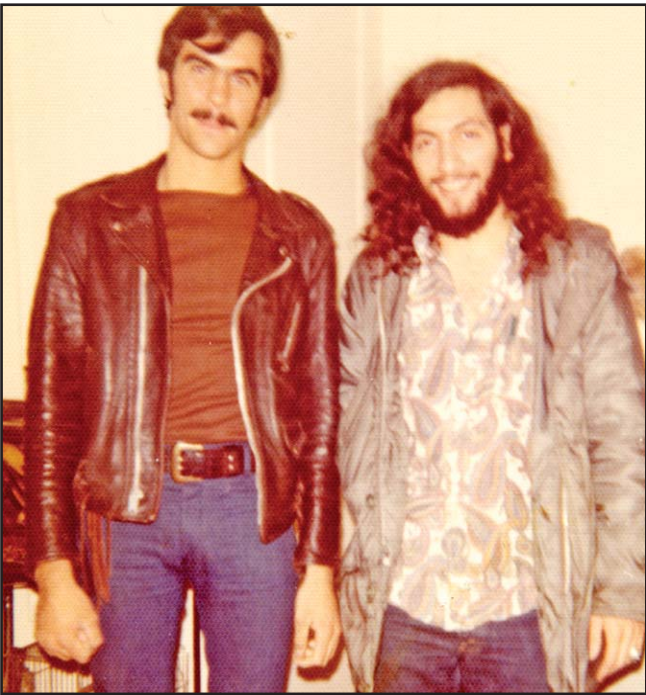
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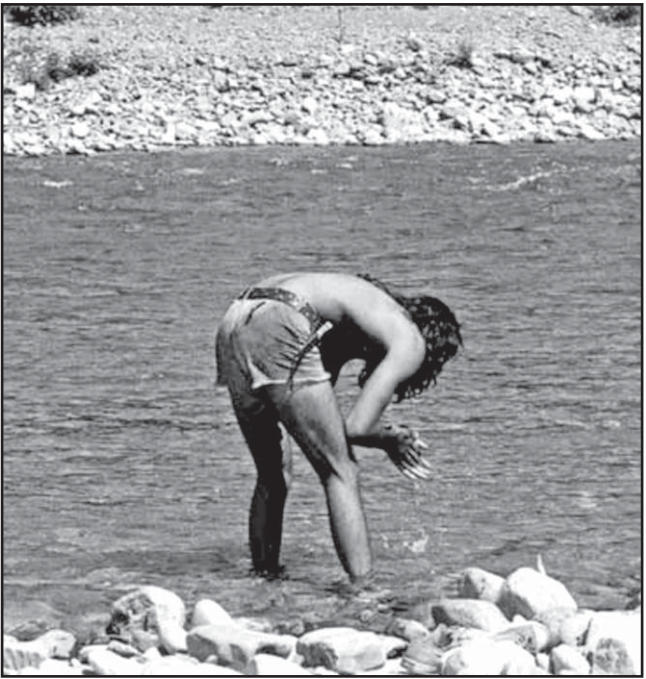
Mike and I before we bought our first motorcycles, circa 1969. Note the jacket I'm wearing. Still have it.



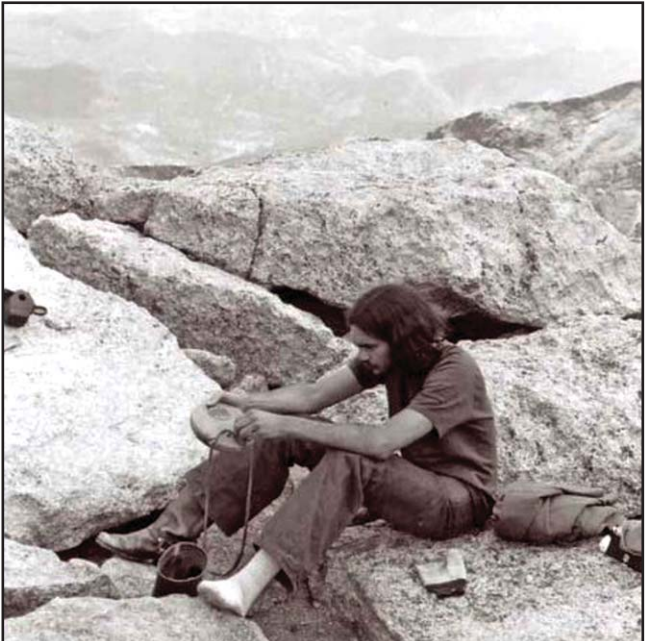
Mike and I at my uncle's house in Redondo Beach, California.



**Mike doing something at a campsite along the route.  
His 1971 Honda CB350 in the foreground.**



**Me cleaning up in the South Fork of the Flathead River at the Bob Marshall Wilderness.**



This is a picture from the 1970 car trip. Bill Hopen, Mike Gioulis, and I climbed Long's Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park. Check out the great hiking boots!

¡Hola! Welcome to the beginning of some of the best riding weather of the year. In this area, the days leading to the first day of Fall and the days after, usually through Thanksgiving, provide us with the best temperatures and most beautiful scenery to ride to. In addition, most folks are off the roads for one reason or another, making it a real pleasure to take a trip on your bike. So, get your bike properly maintained, plan your trip, and get on the bike and go!

I received an interesting question from a reader, (Yes! Email me!) and for me, it's a tricky question to answer, and I will explain why later. The question is: "what has been your favorite ride and what inspired you to go on that ride?"

Because I have been blessed with the ability to plan my life around my trips, make them happen, I am faced with the conundrum of answering the question. Pretty much all my trips are my favorite trips. What inspires me? The therapeutic process which allows me to de-stress, or clear my head is a good part of it. Motorcycle trips are beneficial for mental and emotional health, as well as physical health. The scientists will say "While riding a motorcycle, participants experienced increased sensory focus and resilience to distraction. Riding also produced an increase in adrenaline levels and heart rate, as well as a decrease in cortisol metrics – results often associated with light exercise and stress-reduction." I say, it feels rejuvenating, detoxing, clearing, therapeutic, and increases my gratitude for being



Photos include “Detective Casto” and Mr. Casto reviewing instructions for a math relay game.

## Isaac Casto Announced as September Teacher of the Month

Little Birch Elementary is pleased to announce Mr. Isaac Casto as the September teach-

alive. Also, I find riding through the beautiful scenery, God's work, inspirational, energizing, and humbling. You may find my words a bit poetic and philosophical, however, this is Why I Ride!

The trip from New York City to California, Montana, Vermont and back to NYC is in the top fifty favorite trips. In summer of 1971, Mike Gioulis and I packed up the bikes and set out to conquer the road on our (way too small) bikes. Inspiration? Very immature. On July 14, 1969, a film was released that planted the seed for what was to become a long bike-riding experience. This was the date when *Easy Rider* was released, a movie which I have watched dozens of times since its release. Substantial differences between Captain America and Billy, and Mike and me. We were not drug dealers or users, and we don't die in the end, not even close.

Unfortunately, on my way down to Florida, where my family had moved to while I was on the road, (this was planned BTW. Before I left, my dad and I had secured a place to move to in Miami), I experienced a number of flat tires, which led to the theft of my pack, my camera, and, most painful and debilitating of all, about three dozen rolls of film I shot during the trip. Mike has a bunch of pictures from that trip, someday we'll get together and do something with them.

At that time, Mike and I traveled and camped in places where no one had ever seen a long-haired man, and, on a motorcycle! Mike and I are featured in many a picture posed with residents of many localities. Mostly old ladies, I believe the younger women were afraid of us. LOL!

We were invited to break bread with campers occupying tents in the different campgrounds where we stayed. One evening, we teamed up with what I believe were camp counselors on a



The core route for our 1971 trip. We went off on a bunch of tangents along the way.



A partial collection of signs of places where I have been. See why it's hard to pick a favorite?

camping trip with young kids and sat around the campfire playing and singing. It was during this trip that we camped in the Bob Marshall wilderness in Montana for close to two weeks. We had discovered Bob Marshall during a 1970 cross-country trip (in a car) with Bill Hopen and Olga Gioulis, Mike's sister, and my partner. The Bob Marshall Wilderness consists of a million acres of forest, cut through by the south fork of the Flathead River. Only accessible by foot or on horseback. This place defines the meaning of beauty and shows why Montana is called Big Sky Country. An awesome and magical place. My ashes will be spread out there. We traveled close to 10,000 miles on this trip. The destinations along the route changed depending on weather conditions and whims.

Every trip I've taken has served as inspiration for the next one. The people I meet, the conversations, the scenery, it is what does it for me.

Oh yea, One tense moment of the trip. When we left the Bob Marshall Wilderness, after two weeks of eating fish and paella rice and other yummy foods, bathing in

glacier-cold water, and living in solitude, we decided to stop at the nearest package store-bar and get a bottle of wine. Well, it was Friday evening. The joint was rocking to a jukebox, and full of Paul Bunyan-looking dudes and their partners. Not sure, I was numb from fear, remember, Mike and I looked the Freak brothers' part, but I swear the jukebox went off as soon as we entered the joint, all was silent. I guess it was the adrenalin flowing together with the want of the wine that pushed me to the bar, and in my most manly voice I pointed at a bottle of wine on the shelf and grunted "give me that bottle of wine over there!" The barkeep gave it to me, I threw the money on the bar and said "keep the change," and boogied the heck out of there. Got on the bikes and tore out of the parking lot, nervously checking the rearview mirrors to see if we were being followed. Remember what happened in Easy Rider at the campsite? Just sayin.'

Do it now folks. Write the date you want to depart on the calendar and build your life around that date.



o reviewing instructions for a math relay game.

## Isaac Casto Announced as September Teacher of the Month

er of the month.

Mr. Casto joins the Pirate Crew after working for several years as a

special education teacher.

He brings a wealth  
of positive energy and

strategies to the 2nd and 3rd grade classroom. "Congratulations, Mr. Casto!"





Male black spicebush swallowtail



Fritillary



Monarch

# On the Other Side of the Mountain

It is pitch-dark in the morning when we get up, needing artificial light by turning on the light switch. I love the long days of summer and realize that we are just a few days away from fall equinox. We are not the only ones taking notice, the plants in the garden react to the changes too, as fewer hours of photosynthesis bring slower growth. The summer squashes are over, but the greens are doing well, lettuces, spinach and kale. I tried to cut back the diseased leaves of the bush and climbing beans to see if they would start new growth and they do.

The climbing types bloom as if it were July, but the harvest is greatly reduced. Still, we get to eat fresh beans on a regular basis. They don't look as pretty as the ones at the height of the season, but they taste fine. The workload has not diminished. We need to mow weeds on some pastures, fix fences, cut laurel bushes that have overgrown the fence wires and of course start thinking of getting in firewood for the winter.

I realize we are not too fond of bugs, be it garden pests, stinging insects, gnats, spiders, fleas on farm animals, but we do love some of them, especially the visually attractive ones like the butterflies, but let's not make any mistake,

the slow decline of the insect population should be a warning to us. Bees die at an unprecedented rate due to pesticides, diseases and sometimes habitat loss. Neonicotinoids are a major threat to our bee population. Honeybees are America's main pollinator. It is estimated that there are 2.8 million beehives in the US. Worldwide, bees pollinate 90% of all wild plants and 75% of the leading global crops, which means a third of what is on our plate depends on their work. Insects are at the bottom of the list of important species, yet if they go, we will go too, eventually. The first thing is never to use insecticides and poisons in your garden and backyard. Yet we do use Bacillus thuringiensis against brassica caterpillars, but we try to spray before bees or butterflies appear in the morning.

One of the most adored (due to their beauty) butterflies are the monarchs. Most butterflies need a specific host plant for their caterpillars to grow, monarchs need milkweeds as their nursery, common milkweed or swamp milkweed which does not need to grow in a swamp but it does like wet conditions. The Eastern Monarch spends its summers in the US and Canada, migrating from Mexico, its breeding grounds, where it spends its winter hiber-

nating in massive numbers in trees camouflaging the entire tree with its famous colors. The monarch needs the milkweed plant for food for its caterpillar, but once it reaches maturity and emerges from the chrysalis, it feeds on pollen and nectar of other flowers and plants.

This goes for all butterflies, they require a specific plant for the caterpillar stage, but then they seek out providers of nectar and pollen. Some examples of host plants are pawpaws, for the Zebra Swallowtail, parsley and fennel for the Black Swallowtail, Tulip Poplar trees for the Tiger Swallowtail, field thistles for the Painted Lady, mayapple and purslane for the Variegated Fritillary. If there are forest trees nearby, Tulip Poplar trees will be there, but maybe you might want to plant a pawpaw tree, even a Poplar tree, but not too close to any buildings. We built structures near big trees, and we know what can happen in strong windstorms or heavy snow fall. We have fixed enough damaged roofs, but the trees were there before we came.

It is very important to seed and plant annual and perennial flowers to feed butterflies and all kinds of bees and pollinators. If you have any white clover in your lawn, don't mow it down to nothing,

all kinds of insects visit its blossoms. Then there are sunflowers, Mexican sunflowers, butterfly bushes, verbenas (150 different kinds, very drought tolerant), milkweeds, butterfly weeds, boneset, coneflowers, mints, Joe-Pye and roses, dahlias, zinnias, cosmos, daisies, marigolds and the wild attractions like thistles, goldenrod, dandelions and ironweed. When we encourage the growth of these nectar and pollen producers, we create a favorable ecosystem for all insects. At the same time, when we invite pollinators to these plants, they notice the garden crops that need pollinating, like beans, peppers, squashes, cucumbers, eggplants, okra, and watermelons. The return of these crops will be better and more uniform with these hungry guests. Planting a garden or maintaining a yard with pollinators and insects in mind, makes the environment Eco-friendly.

There is of course the question of balance, balance being Goldilocks' golden rule. I do feel quite a bit of guilt when I talk about balance and enhancing the environment for Eco-friendliness, because I do interfere by spraying organically approved products against cabbage loopers, bean beetles, and scales on citrus trees. Even though I try to apply the pest controls



Tiger swallowtail males



Tiger swallowtail female.

when I think it will hurt beneficial insects the least, I still might kill some of them. Then I do burn out a yellow jacket nest that interferes with my daily chores. We forget how inter-related our natural world is. When we look closer, nature by itself can keep a perfect balance, has done so for million of years, but when we showed up, we managed in a relatively short time in Earth's existence to break the golden rule by any means possible. Humans evolved 300,000 years ago in Africa, followed by the modern Homo sapiens 200,000 years ago, and with a modern brain shape 100,000 years

ago. We have managed to deplete the oceans, to pollute them with plastic and chemical discharges. Many species have disappeared or are on the endangered list. We keep on burning fossil fuels, even though our whole planet and all its life are in jeopardy. The next inhabitable planet so far is at least a hundred light years away, not exactly next door. When looking at the photo of Earth Rising, ( a photo taken by Bill Anderson, an astronaut in 1968) this wonderful blue marble, our home, our only home, I ask myself, why we do treat it with so much disrespect?

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