

## Shepherd 'Trombone Day' a success

By JENNI VINCENT  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SHEPHERDSTOWN — Bob Werder may only be a freshman, but the Shepherd University music major already knows he loves the trombone and ultimately hopes to use his musical education by teaching at the college level.

His passion for the trombone is actually not new, since it began when he was just 9 years old. Now, however, he's in a position to be with others who also share this interest, which has been exciting, he said.

"In the beginning I just thought it looked cool with the slide, but I've come to really appreciate the quality of it now and how difficult it is to master. It's difficult to get a good tone and be in tune at the same time," Werder said as he smiled at fellow music major Jessica Pennypacker.

Pennypacker, who is a music composition major, agreed that the trombone has something special to offer.

"I like the interesting aspects that you can do on the trombone, things that you can't do on other instruments, such as sliding," she said.

Both students gave up most of their Saturday when they helped at the Frank Arts Center with the first ever "Trombone Day" sponsored by the Shepherd University Music Department.

Their enthusiasm wasn't lost on Dr. James Ryon, adjunct professor of trombone, who also went on to devote his career to this musical instrument — both personally and professionally — after having discovered it as a teenager, he said with a smile.

"I was 17 years old and they wanted someone in the high school band to go to a parade in Ocean City so I agreed, but my mother said I could only do that if I would also take trombone lessons. So they found a really good teacher. I started taking lessons and in six months, I

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Over 16 trombonists of all ages and skill levels signed up and participated in the Shepherd University Department of Music's Trombone Day free workshop program Saturday in the Frank Center. Ages ranged from middle and high school band students through senior citizens.



12-year-old Kaela Thomas, of Martinsburg, plays during an open reading session with assistance from Kristine Lusher, a trombonist at the Shepherd University Department of Music's Trombone Day Saturday afternoon in the Frank Center.



Dr. James Ryon, trombone and David Cole, piano perform during a Recital of Trombone Music by American and Russian composers Saturday afternoon in the Frank Center.

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thought it was a really cool instrument," Ryon said.

Since those early days, Ryon was an instrumental music teacher for Carroll County, Md., public schools for 31 years. As a professional trombonist, he has worked with a number of well-known performers including Tom Jones, Elvis Presley, James Brown and Barry Manilow.

In 1977, he co-founded the Chesapeake Brass Quintet, one of the first groups of its kind in the Baltimore area. He currently is principal trombonist for the Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra.

Although he's only in his second year at Shepherd, Ryon was eager to share his passion with not only his university students but other youngsters and "trombone enthusiasts," which is how this event got started, he said.

"I'm primarily a classical trombonist, but I also love to play jazz as well. And when you really get into this instrument, there is just so much to

share. One of the motivating factors in this event is to bring in area high school students as potential students here," said Ryon, who served as the event's coordinator.

"But overriding that was the idea to bring together all trombone enthusiasts — adults, children, students — and also people who don't play but enjoy listening. So the idea is to embrace everyone in the trombone world," he said.

Saturday's event featured a morning concert by the Shepherd University Jazz Band, followed by a clinic with Cam Millar, who teaches music technology.

A recital by Ryon kicked off the afternoon, which was followed by an "open reading session" where anyone who'd brought an instrument was invited to play along, he said.

The afternoon also featured a concert by the U.S. Army Field Band Trombone Quartet.

Even after decades of working in this field, the trombone never gets old and Ryon said he's happy to share his musical message whenever possible.

"I love its sound, how it is rich, full and clear — so full of passion and nobility. But at the same time it can imitate

all facets of life," Ryon said.

Martinsburg resident Becky Herdering, a second semester student who's also a first-year music major, said she'd been excited about bringing her 10-year-old daughter Molly to the event since she's also interested in the trombone.

"I thought I would bring her today to see what it's all about and maybe get her a little more enthusiastic," said Herdering, who is minoring in trombone. Herdering said this event is a good example of the quality performances offered at Shepherd.

"The concert was great, the jazz ensemble is awesome. One of the reasons I chose Shepherd is because there is so much opportunity for students since we start performing right from our very first semester," she said.

Professional musicians and performers, such as the Vienna Boys Choir, also visit the campus, Herdering said.

Additional information on upcoming events is available at [www.shepherd.edu/musicweb](http://www.shepherd.edu/musicweb) or by calling the Concert Line at (304) 876-5555.

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## Students to travel to Jamaica

**SHEPHERDSTOWN** – Students from Shepherd's nursing and education departments will be traveling to May Pen, Jamaica, over spring break to serve in hospitals and schools. This is the second time since 2008 that Shepherd has been represented in the Caribbean.

On Thursday, nine students will depart for Jamaica, and they will return March 21. While there, students will stay on the campus of Middlesex College.

During their stay, students will visit Port Antonio, Blue Lagoon and Blue Mountain Farm to see coffee plants; take a cruise to Pigeon Island; participate in teaching practicum and nursing clinicals; and take a trip to Ocho Rios, Dunn Rivers Fall.

Virginia Hicks, dean of education and professional studies, said the trip will provide an opportunity for students to receive international experience and global awareness and to help broaden their perspective in classroom teaching.

"This is an excellent opportunity for education students to see how schools in another country operate," Hicks said.

In 2008, Hicks traveled with eight education students to Mandeville, Jamaica, where

## Jamaica

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they stayed while working in schools in Spalding, Jamaica.

The International Teaching Practicum Experience seminar is open to all students who have been admitted to the teacher education program or nursing program. Students receive three credit hours and must attend five meetings, including a presentation to be given to the campus community upon return of the trip.

According to Hicks, the practicum started as a way to provide an international experience so students would be globally prepared. A \$15,000 grant was received from the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to help set up the program, which allows Shepherd to provide assistance to schools in third-world nations, such as Jamaica, to set up nursing programs.

Students participating in this year's practicum are Emily McCoy of Berkeley Springs; John Considine of Charles Town; Amber Galanos of Harpers Ferry; Candace Corbin of Hedgesville; Loria Webb of Mar-

tinsburg; Sarah Crickenberger of Philippi; Sarah Holland of Mercersburg, Pa.; Shannhan Elmore of Berkeley Springs; and Summer McClintock of Berkeley Springs.

To help underwrite costs of the trip, the students hosted a Jamaican dinner fundraiser that featured traditional Jamaican fare, including jerk chicken, conch soup and Jamaican fruit cake.

More information is available by contacting Hicks at (304) 876-5162 or [vhicks@shepherd.edu](mailto:vhicks@shepherd.edu).

— From staff reports

Pictured from left to right, top to bottom, are this year's Jamaica practicum students: Emily McCoy of Berkeley Springs; John Considine of Charles Town; Amber Galanos of Harpers Ferry; Candace Corbin of Hedgesville; Loria Webb of Martinsburg; Sarah Crickenberger of Philippi; Sarah Holland of Mercersburg, PA; Shannhan Elmore of Berkeley Springs; and Summer McClintock of Berkeley Springs.

Submitted photo

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## 'Roommate Click' to help students

**SHEPHERDSTOWN** – Shepherd University's Residence Life Office launched a new site recently to help students find roommates based on compatibility.

The site, Roommate Click, is in the midst of a soft launch, and it will be used for incoming freshman this fall.

According to Jonathan Calabretta, graduate hall director and assistant housing coordinator, the goal of the site is to provide better service to students. The new site allows students to find out if they are compatible roommate matches based on information they provide, such as favorite music, interests, activities they're involved with on campus and their major.

Students also answer questions about study habits, sharing personal items, cleanliness and personal schedules. Photos also can be uploaded to the site.

All information is private, and the site also allows students to send e-mails to one another and chat. Students can

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search for a roommate based on criteria that they specify.

Calabretta said that Roommate Click holds students accountable to find someone that they're compatible with and allows for less of a chance of misconceptions before they move in.

The site also will make room lottery and placement easier for the RLO office. Profiles can be updated at the end of each year, and the site will record the style of housing for which the student is eligible.

Calabretta said the site has the potential to build a better campus community among resident students and will allow RLO to better match the students' needs and preferences.

"It's something unexpected," Calabretta said. "It sticks with the concept of staying current, and this is a great way for us to step up to that challenge."

The page is available for students at <http://shepherd.roommateclick.com>.

## CATF Announces Lineup for 20th Festival Season

The Contemporary American Theater Festival (CATF) at Shepherd University has announced the lineup for their 20th season, which includes two world premieres. "Being in our 20th year, it is tempting to look back at our history, but this is not who we are," said Ed Herendeen, CATF Founder and Producing Director. "Theater people are always looking forward. My eyes are focused on our 2010 Festival through which our audience will witness the collision of stories, styles and voices that will lead us to a better understanding of ourselves as we attempt to navigate our future."

The 2010 CATF Season, running July 9 through August 1, will feature the following plays in rotating repertory:

The Eelwax Jesus 3-D Pop Music Show, a world premiere by Max Baker and Lee Sellers. Enter a socially isolated Group Home where the hapless residents are fed a daily dose of Eelwax Jesus hosted by the charismatic Mr. Shine. But this Nationally-Controlled Broadcast Show may not be enough to protect them from an outside world plagued with Superbugs, Human Cloning Experiments, Cameras in the Sky and a suspiciously miserable old man who lives down the hall. This CATF World Premiere combines original toe-tapping pop songs with offbeat characters and a variety of kitsch imagery. Max Baker and Lee Sellers' Alternative Musical event presents a wryly skewed vision of our very near future.

Inanaby Michael Lowe. On the

eve of the US invasion of Baghdad, one man, an Iraqi museum curator, plots to save the statue of Inana, Goddess of War, from destruction by the invaders. Fleeing to London with his young bride, he makes a life-altering deal to ensure the statue's preservation. Michele Lowe opens a window of hope and healing with her poignant love story amidst a background of international and personal intrigue.

Lidless, a first production by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig. Fifteen years after being released from Guantanamo Bay, Bashir walks into the shop of Alice, his former US interrogator. He's tracked Alice down and wants her to know the emotional and spiritual pain she inflicted upon him. With her past brought to light, how does she explain her actions to her teenage daughter? Can Alice protect her from the truth? Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig delivers an extraordinary portrayal of one woman's experience with the "War on Terror" and her struggle to find peace and healing.

Breadcrumbs, a world premiere by Jennifer Haley. Alida is a reclusive writer of fiction slowly losing her memories. Reluctantly, she has come to depend upon a young caregiver to complete her final book - an autobiography. Delving into the dark woods of her past, the two women wrestle over the nature of language, loneliness, and the essential self. In this CATF World Premiere, Jennifer Haley has created a poetic play resonating with wry humor, compassion and empathy.

White People by J.T. Rogers. Three ordinary Americans spotlighted during extraordinary moments in their lives. Martin, a high powered attorney in St. Louis, Missouri; Mara Lynn, a housewife in Fayetteville, North Carolina; and Alan, a young professor in New York City, wrestle with guilt, prejudice, and the price they and their children must pay for their actions. J.T. Rogers returns to CATF following 2008's highly acclaimed *The Overwhelming* with *White People*, a candid, brutally honest exploration of race and language in our culture.

The CATF Box Office will open March 15 with pre-season hours Monday through Friday from noon until 5:00 pm, with the online box office open 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Single ticket prices begin at \$25 with subscriber CAT Cards available to see four or all five plays at discounted prices. For information on Group and Organizational discounts available on groups of 10 or more, please call 304-876-3304.

The Contemporary American Theater Festival prides itself on producing and developing new American theater. Since 1991, CATF has produced 80 new plays, including 30 world premieres. Five plays, five playwrights, five unique theatrical experiences at the Contemporary American Theater Festival. For more information, please visit [www.catf.org](http://www.catf.org) or call 304-876-3473 or 800-999-CATF (2283) or follow CATF on twitter at [www.twitter.com/thinktheater](http://www.twitter.com/thinktheater).

## Horesmen's bill enters the stretch in Charleston

### The Doyle Report



By Delegate John Doyle

Early this week a bill to fix a couple of problems relating to horse racing was approved by the House of Delegates Finance Committee and sent to the House floor.

The bill, sponsored by Senator Herb Snyder, was passed by the Senate last week. Unless unforeseen circumstances befall us, it will be passed by the time you're reading this.

As regular perusers of this space might recall, there is a program called the "10-10-10 Fund" which gives extra money to West Virginia horsemen and breeders when their horses do well in regularly scheduled races at both the Charles Town Races and at Mountaineer Park (the state's other horse racing track, located in the Northern Panhandle). There is a similar program for West Virginia greyhound owners and breeders at the state's two dog racing tracks, one located in the Northern Panhandle and the other near Charleston.

This program is sometimes confused with our "breeders' fund." They are two different things. The Thoroughbred Breeders'

Fund provides money for special races designated for West Virginia bred horses only. The Greyhound Breeders' fund does the same for the dog racing industry. The 10-10-10 Fund provides extra money for those owners and breeders of West Virginia bred horses who do well in races open to all horses or dogs.

Here's how the program works. Let's say you have a horse entered in an "open" race for which the purse is \$10,000. Let's further say you're a West Virginian and you bred the horse in West Virginia. Let's even further say that you owned the sire of that horse. Your horse wins the race, and takes home the 60% winner's share (\$6,000). In addition, you will get \$600 (10%) for each of those three categories (hence the moniker "10-10-10"). You get an additional \$1,800 for a total of \$7,800 from that purse.

This program is woefully underfunded. No horseman has been paid from it for almost two years. There is some money in the fund, but the West Virginia Racing Commission, which administers the fund, has been given an opin-

ion by the state's attorney general that says they shouldn't pay anybody anything until they have enough money to pay everybody everything they owe.

Now, attorney general's opinions are just that, opinions. They have no force of law. But state agencies tend to obey them as though they do have force of law.

Senator Snyder's bill will put enough money into the fund to pay those owed money from it and will restructure the fund to make it permanently solvent.

After Senator Snyder introduced his bill in the Senate, Delegate Terry Walker and I introduced

the same language as a House bill. The Senate acted sooner, so Senator Snyder's bill is the one moving. Senator Snyder and I have both been working on this issue for some time.

Initially we wanted to take money from the Workers' Compensation Fund to pay the debt owed by the 10-10-10 Fund. The Legislature five years ago tapped \$11 million per year from Racetrack Video Lottery money dedicated to the purse fund to pay off the unfunded liability in our Workers' Comp program. We did that so we could privatize Workers' Comp, which I thought we needed to

do. I'm glad we did. I'm not glad we took the money from the purse fund - that was unfair to horsemen.

Taking the necessary funds from Workers' Comp would have extended by less than a month the date when the unfunded liability is paid off (now estimated to be around 2016). But the West Virginia Department of Revenue staunchly opposed taking even a penny from Workers' Comp. So Senator Snyder agreed to change the bill so that the necessary money comes from the Excess Video Lottery Fund.

The bill also changes the distribution of the

portion of money dedicated to purses from table games at the two horse racing tracks. Presently the total from the two tracks is divided equally between them. Since Charles Town is estimated to bring in about twice the money from table games as Mountaineer, this formula is unfair to horsemen at Charles Town. Senator Snyder's bill let's each track keep all the money it generates for purses.

— Delegate John Doyle  
D-Jefferson, represents the  
57th District in the West  
Virginia House of  
Delegates

# Two Rivers orchestra performs Saturday

Friends of Music presents West Virginia's newest and much acclaimed Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra in its first concert of 2010. On Saturday, March 13, at 8 p.m., the curtain will go up at the Frank Center, on the campus of Shepherd University. The major sponsor of the evening is BB&T.

The Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra is under the direction of Dr. Mark McCoy, chairman of the Shepherd University Music Department.

"This will be our most exciting concert to date," said McCoy. "The Shostakovich Festive overture sets the stage, The Mozart Clarinet Concerto is one of the most perfect pieces ever written and the Márquez Conga del Fuego Nuevo (the New Fire Tango) is

an exciting way to close the first half. David Drosinos, our clarinet soloist for the Mozart, is one of the most brilliantly sensitive musicians anywhere. The second half of our concert is Beethoven's towering Seventh Symphony. Richard Wagner called this work 'the apotheosis of the dance' and dance we will. This is one not to be missed."

Founded by the Friends of Music in 2007, 2RCO is comprised of the finest musicians in the Baltimore-Washington area, including many faculty members of the Shepherd University Music Department. West Virginia's newest professional orchestra has been serving the region the best in orchestral concerts and accomplishing a bold mission of chang-

ing the way people think about "classical" music.

Other upcoming Friends of Music concerts this season are:

- Chopin Celebration, Friday, March 26, at 8 p.m.
- REBEL Baroque, Wednesday, March 31, at 8 p.m.
- A German Requiem—Masterworks Chorale, Sunday, May 2, at 7 p.m.

On Friday, March 12, the public is cordially invited to "Lunch with Friends" at the Bavarian Inn, Shepherdstown. Dr.

Mark McCoy, chairman of the SU Department of Music and conductor of the Two Rivers Chamber Orchestra, will present highlights of the upcoming concert.

— For ticket, luncheon and concert information, and to learn more about the Friends of Music, please visit [www.sufom.org](http://www.sufom.org) or call (304) 876.5765

## the NEURON

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### On the Cover

## ASTROPHYSICS AT SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY AIMS FOR THE SKIES

This is the second in an ongoing series of features on scientists and science educators from institutions across West Virginia.



#### Contributions from Shepherd University

With Dr. Jason Best leading the charge, the Shepherd University Observatory is helping students reach new heights in their scientific ambitions. Construction of the observatory began in 2005 – the World Year of Physics – with funding from the state's Innovation Grants Program.

Perched atop the Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies, the observatory has provided many far-reaching opportunities for students, with projects and demonstrations in astronomy, physics and physical science courses.

"The observatory enhances classroom learning by providing field activities in a real-world scientific setting," says Dr. Best, professor of astronomy and astrophysics and observatory director. "The hands-on nature of observational work reinforces material learned in the courses and helps students to develop a fuller appreciation of the challenges and joys in scientific endeavors."

These students, like Ben Bisher, agree that the facility has enhanced their learning experiences. "Astronomy I and II were two of the best classes I have taken here at Shepherd. Using the observatory, I learned many things about space and had a lot of fun while doing it," Bisher said.

The observatory is home to a computerized Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope with a 14-inch diameter mirror, several research cameras used to acquire digitized images, a spectrograph for analysis of starlight, a pier to mount the telescope, and a 15-foot diameter dome that permanently houses all of this equipment. A number of smaller telescopes also are housed in the observatory.

This scientific equipment leads to promising research opportunities for the university and its students.

"The new instrumentation in the observatory creates on-site observational research opportunities for our students that were not possible before," says Dr. Best. "Numerous projects have been presented and published by a number of our undergraduate students, which is very satisfying to see."

Senior Adam McBride adds, "We have an opportunity to make real scientific contributions right here from campus."

In addition to the boosts in undergraduate coursework and research, the observatory also serves as a remarkable community outreach and K-12 educational tool – hosting activities such as the annual Washington Gateway Junior High Academy.

"Science is a public enterprise in the United States, now more than ever," says Dr. Best. "By extending access to K-12 students and others, we hope to maintain the public's appreciation for science, while reinforcing the importance of scientific endeavors to the general public."

For additional information on the observatory, visit: [www.shepherd.edu/astronomy/](http://www.shepherd.edu/astronomy/)

Photo Courtesy of Shepherd University Office of External Affairs