Shepherd groups to perform at gala

December 2, 2011
Shepherdstown Chronicle

The Shepherd University Wind Symphony, Chamber Singers and Camerata Singers will perform at the Annual Holiday Concert at the Frank Center on Saturday, Dec. 3 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 4 at 3 p.m. (submitted)
Snowflake Queen
Shepherd University student wins pageant

December 2, 2011
By Samantha Cronk - Journal staff writer (scronk@journal-news.net), journal-news.net

MARTINSBURG - While every snowflake is unique and individual, at the 2012 Snowflake Queen Pageant one snowflake became a queen.

Thursday night, 18-year-old Ana Lopez competed against two other contestants and was crowned the 2012 Snowflake Queen. The pageant, hosted at the Apollo Civic Theatre, was the kickoff event to the city's weekend holiday activities.

Lopez is the daughter of Jamie and Lesley Lopez and attends Shepherd University majoring in mass communications and minoring in photography.

"It's actually my first pageant," Lopez said. "I'm not really the one to do this. My mom is the pageant girl, but it's actually really cool. It's a little overwhelming."

Two judges presided over the pageant, Lisa Wilt, of Winchester, Va., and reigning Miss West Virginia, Spencer Wempe.

The contestants modeled professional wear and formal evening wear. Judging criteria included overall appearance and impression, facial expression, smile, eye contact with judges, appropriateness of hair, voice control, sincerity and vocabulary.

Each contestant received gift bags containing items donated from downtown stores and certificates of participation.

During the pageant, the 2012 Snowflake Princess and Prince also were elected.

Six-year-old Olivia Travis, daughter of Daniel and Michelle Travis, was crowned Snowflake Princess. Three-year-old Mallina Ruppenthal, daughter of Maryann Velez, was named the princess runner-up. Five-year-old Brian Johnson, the son of Chera Cole, was named Snowflake Prince for 2012.

Travis and Johnson each received a $100 savings bond from MidAtlantic Farm Credit.

Additional awards of the night included photogenic winner, gown winner and essay winner. Lopez received the certificate for photogenic winner. Contestant Carrie Arvin was recognized for her gown, a strapless gold and white dress with a sweetheart neckline. She also won the essay component.

"Since the theme of the festival is "I'll Be Home for Christmas," each contestant was asked to write an essay titled, "What I'll Be Home for Christmas Means to Me." These were read and critiqued, said Marilyn Blaylock, executive director of the Snowflake Queen Pageant and the emcee for the ceremony.

Becky Linton regional vice president of City National Bank presented Lopez with a $500 award toward furthering her education.
Lopez said being named the 2012 Snowflake Queen was "awesome," and during the pageant she felt confident she would win.

"I think I spoke well in my interview. I was just open and honest. I guess they like me for me," she said.

- Staff writer Samantha Cronk can be reached at 304-263-8931, ext. 132 or scronk@journal-news.net
Around the Region - December 3

December 3, 2011
journal-news.net

Shepherd hosting several concerts

SHEPHERDSTOWN - The Shepherd University Wind Symphony, Chamber Singers, and Camerata Singers will perform at the Annual Holiday Concert at the Frank Center today at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m.

Today’s performance will be followed by the annual Friends of Music reception at the Cress Creek Country Club.

General admission for the concert is $22 in advance and $27 at the door, $22 for faculty, staff and seniors, $15 for children 18 and under, and free for Shepherd students.

Tickets to this evening’s reception are available for $10 to the general public.

Friends of Music Concert Series subscribers and Gold and Silver MAC cardholders are invited to attend the reception for free.

For tickets and information, visit www.sufom.org or call 304-876-5765.
NPR's Rehm to speak at Shepherd commencement; university renames two dorms

7:17 AM EST, December 5, 2011

SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va.

Public radio talk show host Diane Rehm will receive an honorary degree at Shepherd University’s 139th commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 5.

The resolution was approved during an executive session of the Shepherd University Board of Governors on Nov. 17. Rehm also will deliver the commencement address.

The Diane Rehm Show, produced at WAMU 88.5 FM in Washington, D.C., is distributed by National Public Radio and is heard by more than 2.3 million listeners on 160 stations nationwide.

The program also is broadcast in Germany, Japan, and Finland and on U.S. military bases worldwide by the Armed Forces Network.

Rehm began her radio career in 1973 as a volunteer producer at WAMU. She was then hired as an assistant producer and six years later became the host of the morning talk show Kaleidoscope, which became The Diane Rehm Show in 1984.

The author of three autobiographical books, Rehm received a Peabody award in 2010 and was named a fellow by the Society of Professional Journalists. She received the Excellence in Journalism Award from the American News Women’s Club in 2011.

In other business, the board approved the renaming of Birch and Maple residence halls in honor of David L. Dunlop, former Shepherd president, and the late Charles F. Printz, professor emeritus of business administration and Shepherd alumnus. A dedication ceremony is planned for the spring.
Shepherd biology and chemistry depts. receive grant

Two Shepherd University professors received instrumentation grants totaling nearly $40,000 from the Division of Science and Research of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission. Dr. Dan DiLella, professor and chair of the department of chemistry, received an $18,234 grant for the upgrade of high performance liquid chromatography and electrochemical capabilities, and Dr. Carol Plautz, assistant professor of biology, received a $19,755 grant for a multimode microplate reader.

The purpose of the instrumentation grants program is to encourage undergraduate students to continue in careers in science, math, and engineering by allowing the purchase of modern instruments for laboratories and encouraging submission to National Science Foundation research. Dr. DiLella and his co-contributors, Dr. Ruth Conley, associate professor of biology, and Dr. Peter Vila, assistant professor of environmental and physical sciences, submitted a request for a detector that can be interfaced to a high performance liquid chromatography system to add new capabilities to the instrument to test and detect very low levels of pharmaceuticals and environmental pollutants. DiLella said that the new detector will impact students’ coursework and serve as a supplement for ongoing and new projects in upper-level chemistry and biology courses that cannot be done without the instrument upgrade.

The multimode microplate reader will allow students and faculty the ability to detect and quantify samples in a multi-well plate and detect fluorescent intensity and determine absorbance of samples across a spectral range. “This is exciting new technology and will give us the ability to analyze and quantify very small sample amounts,” Plautz said.

Plautz said the equipment will allow students to detect quantities in their research and also will be used in biology labs.

Co-contributors on the grant include Dr. Adam Parks, assistant professor of biology; Dr. David Wing, assistant professor of biology; and Dr. Burt Lidgerding, associate professor of biology.

“We all have exciting things for students to try using this instrumentation and have research students who will benefit from it and will be able to test luminescents, absorbents, and fluorescents,” Plautz said. “It demonstrates our commitment to providing the best technology as we work with our students in teaching lab and research,” said Plautz. “It shows that every year we’re going out and seeking new pieces of technology that will keep our students up-to-date.”
Museum details Shepherdstown’s history

By Cecella Mason

December 7, 2011 - Shepherdstown is celebrating its 250th anniversary and much of the town’s history is highlighted in a museum on the town’s main street.

Shepherdstown was founded in 1762 and parts of the Entler Hotel are nearly as old. The property at the corner of German and Princess Streets is made up of several contiguous buildings that, over the years, served as houses, stores, hotels and college dormitories.

Historic Shepherdstown now owns the Entler. Member Betty Lowe grew up in town and remembers when it was a dormitory owned by Shepherd College.

“And the GI’s that came back from the second world war war the college gave it to them for rooms and then after that it was turned into faculty apartments, and following it became condemned because it did not have the right kind of fire protection I guess and the college put it up for sale and the town bought it,” Lowe said.

Vicki Smith serves on Historic Shepherdstown’s museum committee. She said the two large rooms on the ground floor were parlors. They are now full of donated furniture to resemble what they would have looked like in the hotel’s heyday, the 1840’s. Only three items are left from the original hotel.

“One is this little surround for the desk which has the names of shop owners in town so it was an advertisement,” Smith said.

“The key board there was original and the little piece of wallpaper down below it.”

Photos lining the staircase tell the story of the legislature turning the building over to the town. There are also pictures showing the building was in poor shape before it was renovated into a museum and public meeting space.

One upstairs room is set up as it would have been when travelers stayed in the hotel, with two rope beds, a hip bath and table with a chamber pot.

“As I understand it they would have rented out essentially a space in the bed rather than the whole hotel room and I found an 1821 town council minutes where it said that the rent would have been 12 and a half cents a night,” Smith said.

The museum owns two clocks made in Shepherdstown by Jacob Craft, one of many local craftspeople who once lived there.
"They are both beautiful examples of the craftspeople who worked here who not only made functional things but made beautiful things," Smith said.

Lowe said Craft made 33 clocks in all.

"And I've been trying to trace where some of them went because a couple have been sold and I can't find out who bought them," Lowe said.

Other Shepherdstown-made articles in the museum include rifles, pottery, copper kettles, metal door locks, quilts and cross-stitched samplers.

Some artifacts pre-date Shepherdstown's founding. A display case shows a collection of American Indian arrowheads, the oldest dating to 7,800 B.C. One room tells some stories of the Civil War era and yet another focuses on the town in the post Civil War years.

"Which tells a bit of the story of the flooding of the river because the river obviously is an important part of the history of Shepherdstown," Smith said. "There's a picture of the ferry at one of the points when the floods had taken out the bridges and a little bit about the C&O Canal which made a huge difference in this town and the railroad."

The Historic Shepherdstown Museum is open April through October and by appointment during other times of the year. The Museum will be open this Saturday and December 17 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. as part of the town's annual Christmas celebration.
Shale session on tap

December 9, 2011
Delegat John Doyle - Columnist, Shepherdstown Chronicle

As of this writing (several days before publication), it looked like Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin was poised to call the legislature into special session to adopt laws governing drilling for natural gas.

The session would take place between Dec. 11 and 17. Legislators are already scheduled to be in Charleston for interim committee meetings Dec. 12 through 14.

The Marcellus Shale natural gas field underlies western New York, central and western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio and most of West Virginia (all but Jefferson and Berkeley counties). It may (we’re not sure yet) also lie under portions of far southwestern Virginia, eastern Kentucky and northeastern Tennessee. It’s over a mile deep in the earth (two miles at some points) and getting this gas requires a much more aggressive form of drilling than has yet been done in this region of the country. Most people believe we need stronger gas drilling rules on the books before a large number of wells are begun.

But what rules do we need? I’m not sure. There is much we don’t know about the effects of what is called “hydraulic fracturing” (“fracking” to folks who pay regular attention to it). This involves charging chemically treated water at speeds beyond hypersonic into the earth to “fracture” layers of rock to get to the gas.

How fast is the water sent into the earth? What are the chemicals involved? What happens to the water (and the chemicals) after the rock is fractured? I don’t know. The industry says that this kind of drilling is safe, as long as the wells are properly constructed. Even if that’s true, what constitutes "proper construction?" Again, I don’t know.

Compounding the environmental issues is the tragic fact that in West Virginia owners of the minerals are in many cases different than the owners of the surface of the land. Mineral rights were bought (in many cases many years ago) for little more than a song from folks who had no understanding of their value. The law gives owners of minerals the right to get those minerals, even if it requires disturbing the surface.

So the question of surface owners’ rights is a major consideration in the debate over Marcellus.

An interim committee has been working since early summer to come up with a proposed bill to regulate Marcellus drilling. Our Sen. Herb Snyder is a member of that committee.

The committee voted on a recommended bill during the November interim committee meetings. The bill passed 11-1, the one dissenting vote coming from Sen. Karen Facemeyer of Jackson County. Sen. Facemeyer said she thought the rules in the bill were too strong for the industry. I disagree. I think that the rules need to be stronger.

For example, the bill prohibits drilling within 625 feet of an existing water well. That was a compromise between 250 feet (desired by the industry) and 1,000 feet (desired by environmentalists). I believe in
compromise, but I think in this case we should err on the side of caution, at least until we know more about how these wells are going to work.

The bill calls for a permit fee of $10,000 for the first well drilled on a given piece of property and $5,000 for each additional well. The industry says that's too high. I think it's too low. Fees from drilling permits are where we will get the money for the many additional inspectors the state will have to hire and train to make sure wells are drilled and operated properly.

Having said all this, I'm prepared to vote for the interim committee's bill. While I would like it to be stronger, we need as much regulation we can get as soon as we can get it. Our failure to pass a bill will not slow down the rush to drill. It's better to have some regulation on the books than none at all. We can always try to make the regulation stronger later.

If we cannot get a bill passed I think we should declare a moratorium on Marcellus drilling. But there is little support for that in the legislature. About a dozen legislators (myself included) signed a call for a moratorium last March. But that's all the signatures we could get.

Clearly we need to be able to get this gas. Natural gas is, while not as pristine as solar power, much cleaner than oil or coal. But we need to get it without damaging the environment or unduly interfering with the ability of the owners of the surface of the land to use their property.
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