No 'Golden Age' for W.Va.
State missed out on much of post-war prosperity, new book says
By Paul J. Nydes

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Many West Virginians missed the generation of national prosperity after World War II and faced new economic, social and environmental problems.

As the coal industry mechanized, tens of thousands of West Virginians lost good-paying jobs and benefits. Many left the state. Others remained, but faced economic difficulties, even while the Mountain State provided coal and other resources spurring national prosperity.

But during the 1960s, John F. Kennedy's "New Frontier" and Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" programs helped spark the growth of grassroots movements that began to challenge major economic interests, seeking to improve life in the mountains.

These are the themes of "An Appalachian Reawakening: West Virginia and the Perils of the New Machine Age, 1945-1972," by Jerry Bruce Thomas, a professor emeritus of history at Shepherd University in Sheperdstown.

Between 1950 and 1953 alone, coal employment dropped by 23 percent, while other employment dropped by 17 percent.

"West Virginia's woes derived from dependence on a resource-based economy highly sensitive to the whims of the national and global markets, the overweening power of out-of-state economic interests and their local agents," Thomas writes.

During the 1950s, agricultural employment also fell in West Virginia, from 120,000 to 75,000, contributing "mightily to the poverty of the region." Thousands of people working for glass factories, textile plants and railroads also lost their jobs.

Problems facing African-Americans are explored in one of the book's most engaging chapters. After World War II, the areas with the most blacks were the Eastern Panhandle, where many were descendants of slaves, and the southern counties, to which thousands of blacks migrated from the Deep South to work in the mines, in places like McDowell County.

But with the technological advances made during the 1950s, African-American miners were the first to lose their jobs.

The number of black miners in West Virginia fell from 22,089 in 1930 to 14,623 in 1950 and 1,685 in 1970. They dropped from 23 percent of all coal miners to just 4 percent 40 years later.

In 1954, after the historic Brown v. Board of Education ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court found school segregation unconstitutional, West Virginia Gov. William C. Marland was one of the very first political leaders in the South to back integrated schools.

But ending segregation was not immediate. In 1963, McDowell County still had 28 all-black public schools. The last all-black high school in West Virginia, in Bluefield, closed in 1969.

Ironically, school integration also had one very negative impact. When West Virginia schools were finally integrated, hundreds of black principals, teachers and coaches lost their jobs.

Laws discriminating against women also changed. In 1956, women were finally allowed to sit on juries. West Virginia was the only state that still had all-male juries.

Thomas explores the impacts of innovative federal social programs during the 1960s. McDowell, Logan and Mingo counties were the very first counties in the whole nation to get food stamps.

But by late 1965, the increasing costs of the escalating Vietnam War began siphoning money away
from social programs.

Reforms never did much to change the "real problems" facing the state, Thomas argues, including abject ownership of coal and other natural resources, a tax structure manipulated to help wealthy out-of-state investors, few environmental controls on coal and timbering, as well as poor health and hospital care for the poor.

Places such as Mingo County lost population - 16 percent in the 1950s and another 18 percent in the 1960s. In 1960, 46 percent of all Mingo County residents were living below federal poverty levels.

Groups such as the Appalachian Volunteers and VISTA workers worked to bring more equality to the state, and sometimes, helped create new community action groups.

At the time, many political leaders, inducing the late Sen. Robert C. Byrd, were not supportive of many of these efforts. Byrd specifically criticized federal anti-poverty programs, Thomas writes.

Thomas also tells the stories of movements promoting greater mine safety, giving miners Black Lung benefits and controlling strip mining, particularly after the Farmington mine explosion killed 78 miners in November 1968.

"In the turbulent setting after Farmington, one of the most effective grassroots labor movements in the history of the state and of the country emerged in the coalfields," Thomas writes.

An Appalachia Reawakening tells the stories of Miners for Democracy and the Black Lung Association, which fought the majority of West Virginia's medical professionals who denied that Black Lung existed.

The dramatic 1969 Black Lung strike, which closed down 95 percent of the state's mines, convinced legislators to pass new legislation and forced a reluctant Gov. Arch Moore to sign it. It was "biggest political strike in the nation's history," according to Thomas.

National rank-and-file efforts within the United Mine Workers replaced the union's corrupt and undemocratic leaders in a 1972 election ordered by the federal government, in the wake of the death of UMW reformer Jock Yablonski, planned by then UMW President Tony Boyle, who ended up in prison.

But ultimately, Thomas concludes, many efforts at progress failed, especially efforts to control strip mining.

"Money and the imperatives of the new machine age trumped ideals, the environment and concerns of small property owners and residents of strip-mining areas."

The coal industry also continued to pass huge costs to the public, including costs to clean up polluted streams, acid mine drainage, landslides and scenic degradation - costs which have risen with the recent explosion of mountaintop removal mining.

Thomas devotes a chapter to the tragic flood in Buffalo Hollow in Logan County in February 1972, which killed 123 people and left 4,000 of 5,000 local residents homeless. Government regulatory agencies routinely ignored evidence suggesting such tragedies could take place.

An Appalachia Reawakening also challenges myths like the widespread claim that strip mining promotes the development of new industries and building projects by creating flat land.

Only 3 percent of West Virginia's surface-mined land has ever been used for anything else, Thomas points out.

Between 1985 and 2001, mountaintop removal mining polluted 67 miles of streams and cut down 7 percent of all Central Appalachian forests.

An Appalachia Reawakening is the 12th volume in the "West Virginia and Appalachia," series from West Virginia University Press.

The series also includes "An Appalachian New Deal: West Virginia in the Great Depression," also written by Thomas.

Reach Paul J. Nylen at pjny...@wvgazette.com or 304-348-5164.
Shepherd hosts annual festival

By MEGAN FISHER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

SHEPHERDSTOWN — The Frank Center at Shepherd University rang with jazz music Saturday during the annual Jazz Festival for regional bands. Fifteen middle and high school bands performed in the event and hoped for a Superior rating.

Jefferson High School Band Director JP Lynch said it was the biggest festival in more than 20 years. "Tomorrow, they'll have the state festival. If a band gets a Superior rating here, they'll get the recording of their performance today sent to judges for the state competition. The judges will choose a Jazz Band Honors Finalist," Lynch said.

Jeff has won eight Jazz Band Honors Finalist titles in the past.

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"This festival's not about picking a state champion though... Every band has the potential of earning a Superior rating," he added. "It's more about education."

Three judges reviewed the bands and provided feedback about each band's strengths and weaknesses.

Mark Albright, Hedgesville Middle School band director, said his band performed earlier that morning.

"The kids did an excellent job and worked really hard," Albright said. "They've been pushing really hard all week and have definitely shown improvement in their work ethic."

The HMS band received a Superior rating for its performance.

During the award ceremony for middle school bands, high school students waited to play. Martinsburg High School junior Jacob Greenfield said he wasn't nervous.

"Last year we were the Jazz Band Honor Finalist for West Virginia, so we're hoping to get that again this year, but if not, we'll still be happy with a Superior rating," Greenfield said.

Fellow band member Alex Wesson said the MHS band received a Superior rating last weekend at Hedgesville High School.

"We have a really good show," Wesson said. "With last week's rating, that's a confidence booster, of course."

Shepherd University hosted the festival, and the university's band closed the event with its own performance.

Shepherd University Band Director Kurtis Adams said the festival was a musical success.

"We've seen a ton of really good, young jazz musicians out there playing," Adams said. "They're having fun and they sound great."

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Shepherd professor is tops in W.Va.

By RICHARD F. BELISLE
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SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va. — Around the Shepherd University campus, Ed Snyder is known for his ability to teach theory and how to apply it in real life.

His windmill and “veggie van” are examples of how he reaches out to his students.

Snyder, 62, of Shepherdstown, professor of environmental studies, has been named West Virginia professor of the year. The award is given by the Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia.

A $20,000 check goes with the honor.

“I knew I was up for it, but I was surprised when I got it,” Snyder said. “When I saw the quality of the other four finalists, I knew I could have voted for any one of them. I was proud to be in such good company.”

He said he is pleased that the five finalists came from small liberal-arts schools across the state.

“Dr. Snyder truly cares about and is interested in his students,” said Amy Joy Hess, a first-year student. “He teaches us how to learn and to take charge of our own education.”

Snyder joined the Shepherd faculty in 1986 to teach physics and physical science. In 1994, he led the effort to develop the school’s environmental studies program. It was expanded to a major in 1997.

In 2000, it evolved into the Institute of Environmental and Physical Sciences, and Snyder became its chairman.

He describes the program as one that allows students to develop academically and with hands-on field skills which can lead them to successful employment or into graduate school.

Many of his students, because of the extensive field work he puts them through, end up working in industry, government agencies.

Some of his students serve internships at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department’s National Conservation Training Center outside Shepherdstown.

NCTC also sends staffers to Shepherd as adjunct professors.

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Snyder

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“They bring in incredible credentials and backgrounds,” Snyder said.

His students learn about the developing science of sustainable energy through such sources as wind and solar power. Snyder believes the “tipping point” from existing coal, oil and gas technology to sustainable energy will come in five to seven years.

One of his most popular classrooms is a renewable energy lab set up in a small, fenced-in yard outside his office building. He used grant money to install a 30-foot-high windmill that generates electricity. Photovoltaic-cell technology is also in place. And then there’s the veggie van, an aging GMC diesel van that runs on vegetable oil.

Previous professor of the year winners from Shepherd were Sylvia Shurburt in 2006 and Linda Tate in 2004. Two local finalists for the award were Scott Beard in 2009 and Jerry Thomas in 2007.
Survey looks at hindrances to college in W.Va.

CHARLESTON (AP) — Many of West Virginia's high school seniors planning to attend college say they will seek part-time jobs to help cover the cost of obtaining their four-year degrees, according to a poll conducted by the state's Higher Education Policy Commission.

In all, 4,592 12-graders responded to the survey. That represents almost 25 percent of the 18,472 high school seniors across the state's 117 high schools.

About eight out of 10 students said they planned to attend college. A similar number said they would work, at least part time, to help pay for school. More than four in 10 said college costs too much.

Commission researchers estimated that six out of 10 high school graduates in 2009 enrolled in college.

The survey marked the third time the commission has polled high school seniors about their plans after school.

"Part of our challenge is, how do we take this information to ensure we increase our college-going rate?" state higher education Chancellor Brian Noland told the Charleston Gazette.

More than half the students who plan to attend college expect to stay in West Virginia and attend a four-year school. Some of the students surveyed said they did not plan to attend college in the fall after they graduate. Almost half of those students said they need a break from school.

About seven out of 10 students from low-income families said their choice of college is influenced by concerns about affordability, compared to five in 10 students from higher-income families.

"Affordability is a key player in a student's choice," said Kathy Butler, the commission's senior director of academic affairs. A legislative audit released last November said the total cost to attend a four-year college increased by 34 percent between 2004 and 2009. The audit also said financial aid is not keeping pace and only about one-fifth of low-income students attend college.

Legislative auditors said higher education officials should take steps to determine how much a college education should cost in West Virginia. The commission and the state Department of Education are developing a data system that will track West Virginia's students from pre-kindergarten through their postsecondary education. The system, which is to go online in September, is expected to give state educators a better understanding about where they're losing students, and where they're going to college.

In the meantime, Noland said he will share the results of the commission's latest survey with the state Department of Education and officials from colleges and universities.
TODAY IN PACHANDLE HISTORY

Today is Tuesday, March 8, the 67th day of 2011. There are 298 days left in the year.

40 YEARS AGO — 1971
Assessments in Jefferson County for 1971 rose to an all-time high of $85,686,510, up $8,151,340 from last year’s total.

25 YEARS AGO — 1986
Data not available

10 YEARS AGO — 2001
Mountaineer Raceway owners will have to follow permit and planning requirements before they can renovate or build any more structures at the raceway, Berkeley County commissioners said.

5 YEARS AGO — 2006
The showdown over a Whiting’s Neck subdivision may soon make its way to the state’s supreme court.

1 YEAR AGO — 2010
Students from Shepherd’s nursing and education departments will be traveling to May Pen, Jamaica, over spring break to serve in hospitals and schools.

To submit photographs to The Journal’s Flashback features, contact Matt Burdette at mburdette@journalnews.net.
Senators propose Groh for federal position

Gina Groh

TON MILBOURNE Spirit Staff

CHARLESTON — Both Senator Jay Rockefeller and Joe Manchin, III, have advocated for Judge Gina Groh to be named to a federal judgeship. The nod comes for Groh to fill a seat on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia that has been vacant since 2006 following the death of Judge W. Craig Broadwater.

"Judge Groh is an extremely strong candidate for this position who would carry on Judge Broadwater's tradition of treating all litigants with respect and deciding cases in a fair manner," Rockefeller said in a recent press release.

He expounded on Groh’s legal career citing her 21 years that include four years as judge, nine years in private law practice and eight years as an assistant prosecutor for Berkeley and Jefferson counties.

Groh was appointed to serve as the 23rd Judicial Circuit Judge in 2006 and was elected to that post in 2008. She has a law degree from West Virginia University College of Law and a bachelor’s degree from Shepherd University.

She is admitted to practice before the West Virginia Supreme Court, the Maryland Court of Appeals, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and the U.S. District Courts of West Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia.

If appointed, Groh would be the first Eastern Panhandle resident to be appointed to a federal judgeship.

Manchin issued a release in support of Groh saying, “I was extremely proud to appoint Judge Groh to the circuit court when I was Governor of West Virginia and I join Senator Rockefeller in recommending her for the federal bench.”

“As a former prosecutor, she’s fair-minded, has impeccable standards and will be an excellent addition to the court,” Manchin continued.

Groh has expressed her appreciation for the recommendation of the West Virginia senators. Humbled and honored, she indicated that she would see the position as a change to “learn and grow.”

Groh resides in Charles Town with her husband, Steve and two young sons. She is active in her community, participating in a "Robes to Schools" program that helps children learn about the judicial process as well as volunteering with the Meals with Love Ministry in Charles Town.
Dr. Ed Snyder is joined by his wife Nancy Snyder (L) and President Suzanne Shipley at Professor of the Year ceremony.

Snyder named W.Va. Professor of the Year

Dr. Ed Snyder, chair of the Institute of Environmental and Physical Sciences and professor of environmental studies at Shepherd University, was named the West Virginia Professor of the Year by the Faculty Merit Foundation of West Virginia at a ceremony held at the state Culture Center in Charleston on March 1.

Dr. Snyder, a member of Shepherd’s faculty since 1986, led efforts to develop the environmental studies program at Shepherd in 1994 and expand the program to a major in 1997.

He has served on the Shepherd University Honors Program committee since its inception in 1991 and has served as a faculty member with the Washington Gateway Academy, Shepherd’s weeklong pre-college summer program for middle schoolers, since 1991.

Dr. Snyder serves as chair of the West Virginia Environmental Quality Board, which examines issues associated with statewide water quality.

Each year, the Faculty Merit Foundation honors an outstanding faculty member at a West Virginia college or university. The award winner receives a $10,000 cash prize. Smaller awards are given to four other finalists.

United Bank provides financial support for the Professor of the Year Award. The Faculty Merit Foundation is affiliated with the West Virginia Humanities Council.

Dr. Snyder joins four other Shepherd faculty members who have been honored by the Faculty Merit Foundation - Dr. Sylvia Shurbett and Dr. Linda Tate, who were winners of the Outstanding Professor of the Year award in 2006 and 2004, and Dr. Scott Beard and Dr. Jerry Thomas, finalists in 2009 and 2007.
Professor to speak about rainbows

SHEPHERDSTOWN — Dr. Jeff Groff, assistant professor of physics at Shepherd University, will present “Deconstructing Rainbows: Aesthetics and Scientific Mindset” at 7 p.m. today at Shepherd’s Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies. The presentation will be followed by an audience discussion. The presentation and discussion are free and open to the public.

Groff will explore such questions as: Why do most people find natural phenomena like rainbows and sunrises beautiful? Does knowing how rainbows are created make them less beautiful?

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Region

Do the reductionist tendencies of scientific inquiry make the world look sterile through the lens of science?

“Along the way observations will be made on fascinating aspects of the audience’s aesthetic sense,” Groff said.

The lecture is sponsored by the Shepherd University Common Reading and One Book, One Community programs. This year’s book is “Survival of the Prettiest.”

More information is available by contacting Judi McIntyre at 304-876-5396 or jm McIntyre@shepherd.edu.
Shepherd University Teacher Named WV Professor of the Year

SHEPHERDSTOWN, WV - A teacher from Shepherd University has been named West Virginia's professor of the year.

Dr. Ed Snyder was awarded West Virginia's professor of the year by the Faculty Merit Foundation to honor his work in developing Shepherd's Environmental Studies Program.

He received a $10,000 cash prize with the award. Each year the foundation honors an outstanding faculty member at a West Virginia college or university.

Dr. Snyder leads the Institute of Environmental and Physical Sciences at Shepherd University.

"The universities have a faculty member from from each school, basically apply, or sort of competes for this, but I was just overwhelmed and kind of astounded that I was actually selected," says Dr. Snyder.

Dr. Snyder is the fifth Shepherd professor to be honored by the Faculty Merit Foundation.
Pseudophedrine and meth

Just over a week ago the House of Delegates passed a bill that would make 15 cold medicines that contain pseudoephedrine available only by prescription.

"Sudafed" is the most familiar of these medicines. To save space I will refer to all 15 of these drugs collectively as "sudafed" (not capitalized).

I received more negative emails and phone calls from Jefferson County about this bill than on any issue (other than a heavily Eastern Panhandle one) in some years. Yet I voted for it. Why?

While sudafed is a very good drug for colds, it is also a necessary ingredient in the manufacture of methamphetamine ("meth"). Meth is a highly addictive narcotic that is extremely dangerous to make. Meth is also quite lucrative on the black market, and for that reason it is often manufactured in private homes.

Many neighborhoods have seen housing values plummet when the residents of one home turn it into a "meth lab."

Often the product explodes during manufacture, destroying the home or apartment building and killing or maiming residents (some of whom may not have been involved in making meth).

We in Jefferson County do not have a great deal of this activity in our community (although we do have some). But in much of the state it has become an epidemic.

In recent years the sale of sudafed has been moved from "over-the-counter" to "behind-the-counter" in pharmacies. That was done in an effort to cut down on the number of meth labs. That strategy has not worked.

In 2006 Oregon restricted the purchase of sudafed to prescription-only. Mississippi followed last year. Both states have seen a dramatic decrease in the number of meth labs operating within their boundaries. In Oregon the number of meth lab incidents was cut almost in half in a year. Mississippi saw a drop of 68 percent in six months! Treatment admissions for meth addiction also fell dramatically in both states. That's why I voted for the bill we passed to make sudafed a prescription-only medicine.

Some people were worried that criminal gangs might move into Oregon to import meth. It hasn't happened. In fact Oregon's crime rate is lower than at any time in the last 40 years. Other folks feared that health care costs would increase dramatically, because people would be going to doctors for sudafed prescriptions. That hasn't happened either, because there are about a hundred good cold medicines available that do not contain pseudoephedrine.

Oregon's statewide Medicaid costs for cold medicine went up by less than $3,000 the first year of its bill being in effect. That's less than the cost of cleaning up one meth lab or the cost of a single day of care in a burn unit.

Many of the folks who contacted me from back home offering about the bill wondered why in the world we would want to restrict such a good medicine to prescription-only purchase. I think it's because as I mentioned above Jefferson County does not have this problem to nearly as great an extent as much of the rest of our state.

I'm sorry we're going to need a prescription for these medicines in the future. Hey, I take the stuff, too, when I have a cold. My vote would have been a lot tougher were all those other good cold medicines not still available over-the-counter.
Music scholarship benefits students

The Shepherd University Foundation has created the Walker Horton Shipley Music Scholarship, funded by Mary Jane Shipley in memory of her late husband. Funds will be used to provide financial assistance to Shepherd students pursuing music studies.

Born in 1922 in Hillsboro, Texas, Walker Horton Shipley attended Baylor University as a music major until 1942, at which point he interrupted his education to serve as an Air Force navigator in World War II. Shipley went on to work in personnel management with a focus on leadership motivation and organizational development, eventually founding Man Alive, a human resources development firm specializing in the needs of small- and medium-sized organizations. He served as president of Man Alive until his death in 2000.

Mary Jane Shipley was inspired to honor her husband’s memory with a named fund after recalling his efforts to make scholarships available to young people in need through his civic work. Mr. Shipley enjoyed many hobbies but was always happiest when playing or listening to music.

Shepherd President Dr. Suzanne Shipley and her brother, Wes, share their father’s love of music and his belief in the inherent worth of the individual.

For more information about this scholarship, or to establish a named fund through the Shepherd University Foundation, contact Monica Lingenfelter, Shepherd University Foundation, P.O. Box 5000, Shepherdstown, WV, 25443-5000, 304-876-5397, mlingen@shepherd.edu, or visit www.shepherd.edu/fndtnweb.
Shepherd to host engineering innovation summer program

Shepherd University will host the Johns Hopkins University Engineering Innovation program this summer. The program, designed for high school juniors and seniors, is a five-day-a-week, monthlong course in engineering offered July 5 through 29.

EI is an intensive summer program that gives high school students an opportunity to explore the field of engineering through college-level lectures, hands-on labs, individual and team projects and practical application of math, science and engineering concepts.

Students who pass the course will receive three college credit hours from Johns Hopkins University that will transfer to Shepherd or other approved higher learning institutions.

The EI course at Shepherd will be taught by Reza Mirdamadi, chair of the Department of Computer Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering. Shepherd is the first institution in West Virginia to collaborate with Johns Hopkins.

Students should have completed the following prerequisites: Algebra II

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and knowledge of trigonometry, as well as a successful completion of biology, chemistry or physics.
Knowledge of a spreadsheet application, such as Microsoft Excel, is also recommended.

The application fee for the program is $55 and tuition is $2,000. Need-based scholarships are available.
Applications are available online at http://engineering-innovation.jhu.edu.