Shepherd announces news, tuition increase

University unveils iPad admissions application for prospective students

SHEPHERDSTOWN — Shepherd University’s Office of Admissions is revolutionizing student recruitment marketing efforts.

Randall Friend, director of admissions, and Ana Manzano and Brian Grant, members of the Student Ambassador Association, unveiled the new admissions iPad application at the April 14 meeting of the Shepherd University Board of Governors.

The new application will take the traditional viewbook and revolutionize it with an interactive and engaging experience, according to Friend. “Prospective students will be able to experience Shepherd in a unique and exciting way through video and touch,” he said.

Grant told the Board of Governors that he is excited about the iPad app, adding, “Students will be able to experience a classroom lecture, on-campus living and the spirit of Shepherd. They will be able to Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, or Tweet their friends all over the country with what gets them excited about Shepherd. How cool is that!”

The iPad app is pending approval from the Apple app store but is slated for a June release.

Emeritus status was granted to retiring faculty member Barbara Maxwell Maxwell, retiring after 45 years of service at Shepherd, received the title Associate Librarian Emerita.

To be eligible for appointment to emeritus status, retiring faculty must have completed at least 10 years of service at Shepherd.

The board approved academic program reviews for five programs—art, English, history, modern languages and music. The five programs were examined by the program review committee and an external reviewer from another school. The board authorized President Suzanne Shipley to submit the program reviews to the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

Fees for the 2011-12 academic year were presented to the board by Rick Staisloff, acting vice president for administration and finance. The fee increases will be invested in the hiring of more full-time faculty, enhancing wireless technology and the advising center, and increasing bandwidth.

The board approved a tuition increase of $160 for in-state students, to $2,777 per semester, and $186 for out-of-state students, to $7,209 per semester. In-state graduate tuition per credit will increase by $30 to $335. The tuition increases will be submitted to the Higher Education Policy Commission for final approval.

Fees for traditional residence hall rooms will increase by $115, to $2,216 per semester; suite-style rooms by $133, to $2,551 per semester; and apartment-style housing by $28, to $2,786 per semester. Dining plans per semester will increase by 5 percent, to $1,849 for the basic 19-meal plan, $1,819 for the flex plan, and $1,779 for the upperclass plan.
Rob Hoxton Launches
The Rural Financial Planning Project to Support Shepherd University Certificate Program Approved by CFP Board of Standards

May 14th, 2011

The Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. approved a Shepherd University certificate program entitled Major in Business Administration with a concentration in Financial Planning. The program is supported by the Rural Financial Planning Project, which was launched by Rob Hoxton, CFP®, and comprises a group of professional advisors. The Rural Financial Planning Project's mission is to "improve the lives of rural Americans through the promotion of financial literacy and the delivery of financial planning by well-trained and ethical financial planning professionals."
Donald E Kidwell III of Clear Brook was named to the dean's list at Shepherd University. He has accepted an internship at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal for the summer.
Shepherd University Adds Certified Financial Planner Concentration

The first class of students could graduate as early as December.

SHEPHERDSTOWN — The Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards recently granted approval to Shepherd University for a major in business administration with a concentration in financial planning.

Students who successfully complete the program will be eligible for the certified financial planner certification exam.

According to Gordon DeMeritt, chairman of the business administration department, Shepherd students could graduate with the degree as early as December.

The program is supported by a group of local professional advisers that make up the Rural Financial Planning Project, which was launched by Rob Hoxton of Hoxton Financial in Shepherdstown.

The goal of the project is to improve the lives of rural residents through financial literacy and education.

"The idea is to train well-educated professionals and that they will want to find work in their hometowns and improve the lives of rural Americans," Hoxton said.

He said that starts with education and promoting the certified financial planner career path.

"Many Americans, especially in rural sections of the country, need help with financial literacy in areas such as understanding retirement savings and mortgage obligations," Hoxton said. "The Rural Financial Planning Project will offer assistance to those willing to help their communities in providing this financial guidance."

The RFPP will provide tuition assistance, professional mentorship for Shepherd students, as well as internships.

"It's important as academics to know what the professional world requires," DeMeritt said. "The RFPP will help the department stay current along with providing the students with internship opportunities."

Monica Lingenfelter, executive vice president of the Shepherd University Foundation, said the project is a great partnership between business and education leaders.

"The Rural Financial Planning Project advisory board, brings together a dynamic group of professionals to mentor our CFP students," Lingenfelter said. "... All of this translates to outstanding career opportunities for our graduates in a highly respected and lucrative profession."
Shepherd program reaccredited by council

“NCATE accreditation affirms Shepherd’s high standards for and commitment to teacher education.”

From staff reports
The PyroBots, First Lego League robotics team No. 2512 from Shenandoah Junction, take part in the 2011 ShepRobo Fest robotics competition at Shepherd University.

Students take part in robotics competition

SHEPHERDSTOWN — The PyroBots, First Lego League robotics team No. 2512 from Shenandoah Junction, competed in the 2011 ShepRobo Fest robotics competition on March 26 and 27 at the Butcher Center at Shepherd University.

The team and its robot "Little Pyro" won second place in the First Lego League competition. The PyroBots is a community team comprised of students in public school and home school from fifth, sixth and seventh grades.

Seung-yun Kim, assistant professor of computer and information sciences and the Department of Computer Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering at Shepherd University, hosted the competition. It included three events for various age groups. The first event, the Firefighting Robot Contest, was held for students in middle school through college. Event two, the Mech-Warfare Contest, was open to participants of all ages. And event three, the Lego League, was held for students in grades four through eight.

Part of the funding for the competition came from an Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research grant recently received to promote the department.

— Submitted by Anne Barrat
Durang’s ‘Why Torture is Wrong’ comes to D.C. to stoke the firestorms where the news was made

By Jane Horwitz, Published: May 17

Playwright Christopher Durang can still build up a head of steam over the administration of President George W. Bush — the war in Iraq; domestic wiretapping; curtailing tax-supported stem cell research; Terri Schiavo’s protracted final weeks.

Those sore subjects and the political polarization they stoked all figure in Durang’s 2009 off-Broadway hit “Why Torture Is Wrong, and the People Who Love Them.” The play will have its Washington area premiere at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop from May 26 through June 11 in a production by American Ensemble Theater.

Durang says he doesn’t usually write while fuming. He’s created some of the darkest, most pain-laced American comedies of the past 30 years, including “The Marriage of Bette and Boo,” “Laughing Wild,” “Baby With the Bathwater,” “Beyond Therapy,” “Betty’s Summer Vacation” and “Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You.”

“Even though I sound angry as we’re speaking, I have to say, weirdly, I wasn’t angry writing it,” Durang says of “Torture.”

“I made a decision early on that I wasn’t going to mention Bush or [former Vice President] Cheney’s name. It was just where the country was,” the playwright says. The play “reflects back in a comic way, the polarization in the country,” he adds.

“It reads funny, but it plays funnier,” says Martin Blank, artistic director of American Ensemble Theater.

An acting coach, playwright and founding artistic director of Theater J in the early 1990s, Blank launched American Ensemble in 2010. He wanted to do just one or two plays a year on a shoestring, charging only $8 a ticket but delivering strong performances. “I’m trying to put on substantive plays that are first fun and entertaining but do have something to say,” Blank says.

In “Torture,” a possible terrorism suspect spouts wildly misleading information when tortured. “The person wants one particular answer, and he basically tortures the guy until he gets that answer. Which seems to me within the realm of possibility,” says Durang.
CATF season

The Contemporary American Theater Festival in Shepherdstown, W.Va., will offer two world premieres in its five-play rep July 8-31 as well as two recent works by theater icons Sam Shepard and David Mamet. The festival, held on the campus of Shepherd University, features Equity actors in new or recently premiered plays. For its 21st season, artistic director Ed Herendeen has chosen:

• “From Prague,” a world premiere by Kyle Bradstreet, in which three lost souls encounter one another in a ghostly Prague church. Herendeen directs.

• “The Insurgents” by Lucy Thurber, the second world premiere and a play that was commissioned by the festival. Thurber explores the lives and views of history-making insurgents John Brown, Harriet Tubman, Timothy McVeigh and Nat Turner. Lear deBessonet directs.

• “Race,” by Mamet, which ran on Broadway for 297 performances in 2009-10. Two lawyers defend a white man accused of raping a black woman, and racial feelings combust. Herendeen directs.

• “Ages of the Moon” by Shepard, which ran off-Broadway in 2010. Two men in their 60s at a Kentucky fishing cabin knock back some bourbon and look back at their lives. Herendeen directs.

• “We Are Here” by Tracy Thorne, which will have its second-ever production at the festival. The drama focuses on three generations of a family dealing with the loss of a child. Lucie Tiberghien will direct.

Follow spot

• A passel of Washington-based actors — among them Jennifer Mendenhall, Sarah Marshall, Chris Henley and Craig Wallace — will take part in a “24-Hour Dramathon” Friday, starting at 11 p.m. at Theater J. It’s a fundraiser for the Theatre Lab acting school’s Send a Kid to Theatre Camp program. Eight local playwrights have contributed new 10-minute plays, which they had to create in 24 hours. The actors are allowed one rehearsal. The goal is to raise $63,000 to cover scholarships for those whose families can’t afford the tuition.

Horwitz is a freelance writer.
President Obama Nominates
Three to the United States
District Court

The White House

President Obama announced today
that he has nominated Judge Andrew
L. Carter, Jr., James Rodney Gilstrap
and Judge Gina Marie Groh. Carter is
a nominee for the Southern District of
New York, Gilstrap for the Eastern
District of Texas and Groh for the
Northern District of West Virginia.

"Throughout their careers, these
nominees have displayed unwavering
commitment to justice and integrity," said
President Obama. "Their records of
public service are distinguished and
impressive, and I am confident that
they will serve the American people well from the United States District Court bench. I
am honored to nominate them today."

Judge Andrew L. Carter, Jr.: Nominee for the United States District Court for the
Southern District of New York Judge Andrew L. Carter, Jr. is a United States Magistrate
Judge for the Eastern District of New York, a position he has held since 2009. From
2005 until his appointment to the bench, Judge Carter worked for the Federal
Defenders of New York, first as a staff attorney and then as a supervising attorney.
From 1996 until 2005, he was an attorney at the Legal Aid Society, working in the
Federal Defender Division from 2000 to 2005 and in the Criminal Defense Division from
1996 to 2000. Judge Carter was a program assistant at the Ford Foundation from 1994
to 1996. He received his J.D. in 1994 from Harvard Law School and his B.A. in 1991
from the University of Texas at Austin.

James Rodney Gilstrap: Nominee for the United States District Court for the Eastern
District of Texas James Rodney Gilstrap has been a partner at the law firm of Smith &
Gilstrap in Marshall, Texas, since 1984, where his practice is broad and covers a wide
range of issues, including oil and gas, real estate, and probate law. From 1989 until
2002, Gilstrap also served as County Judge in Harrison County, Texas. Prior to
founding Smith & Gilstrap, Gilstrap was an associate at the law firm of Abney, Baldwin
& Searcy from 1981 to 1984. Gilstrap received his J.D. in 1981 from Baylor University
School of Law and his B.A. magna cum laude in 1978 from Baylor University.

Judge Gina Marie Groh: Nominee for the United States District Court for the Northern
District of West Virginia Judge Gina Marie Groh has served as a Judge on the 23rd
Judicial Circuit Court of West Virginia since 2006. Prior to her appointment to the bench,
Judge Groh was an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney in West Virginia for approximately
eight years, first in Berkeley County from 1998 to 2002 and later in Jefferson County
from 2002 to 2006. Before entering public service, Judge Groh worked at the law firm
of Semmes, Bowen & Semmes from 1995 to 1996, at the law firm of Mell, Brownell &
She received her J.D. in 1989 from West Virginia University College of Law and her
B.S. summa cum laude in 1986 from Shepherd University.
Past Recipients of The State Journal's "55 Good Things About West Virginia" Honor

Posted Friday, May 20, 2011; 04:24 PM

Over the years, The State Journal has highlighted more than 1,400 people, places and businesses that make West Virginia unique.

Below is a list of previous stories featured in The State Journal's "55 Good Things About West Virginia" since the section started in 1988.
Shaffer, Gary and Jennifer – 2003
Shaffer, Robert
Shanghai Parade – 2003
Shahrazade's Exotic Tea Room – 2007
Shea, Teddy – 2003
Shenandoah Clinic
Sheng, Shao Fang
Shepherd College ★
Shepherd's Herbal Shop
Shepherdstown Bakery
Shepherdstown Crier
Shepherdstown Opera House (Theatre) – 2003
Shibori West – 2005
Shoney's
Shott Foundation
Showcase West Virginia – 2003
Shreve, Anne
Siegrist, Joann Spencer
Silling Associates
Silver Creek
Simonton Windows
Singleton, Robert – 2005
Sink's of Gandy
Sino-Swearingen
Sisters Coffee House – 2009
Sistersville Ferry – 2003
Sistersville Tank
Skidmore's Bait Shop
Skidmore, John
Skiing
Small Business Development Center
Small Businesses
Smith, Brad – 2008
Groh nominated to U.S. judiciary

MARTINSBURG (AP) –

President Barack Obama named a West Virginia circuit judge on the state's federal bench.

The president nominated Berkeley County Circuit Judge Gina Marie Groh on Thursday to West Virginia’s northern U.S. District Court. Groh currently serves in the 23rd Judicial Circuit.

Groh was appointed to the circuit judgeship in 2006 by then-Gov. Joe Manchin III. She was elected in 2008 to serve a full term on the bench. Now a U.S. senator, Manchin and his fellow West Virginia Democratic Sen. John D. Rockefeller III recommended Groh to Obama in March.

"When I was governor of West Virginia, I was extremely proud to appoint Judge Groh to the state circuit court, and I am pleased that a jurist of her caliber has been nominated for the federal bench," Manchin said. "As a former prosecutor, she's fair-minded, has impeccable standards and will be an excellent addition to the court."

"Judge Groh has always been a fair and compassionate judge and a leader in the legal community, and I'm confident those traits will serve her well as a federal judge," Rockefeller added.

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Groh

"She has extensive legal knowledge and experience, and has spent over two decades honing her legal skills and building a distinguished resume. I intend to work to make sure that the full Senate confirms her for this position."

If confirmed, Groh will fill the vacancy left by the 2006 death of Judge Craig Broadwater. Congress recently voted to name the federal building and courthouse in Martinsburg after the longtime jurist.

Former state Democratic Chairman Nick Casey had been recommended for the Broadwater vacancy in 2009, but the president did not act on the nomination.

Groh earned her Juris Doctor from the West Virginia University College of Law and a Bachelor of Science from Shepherd University. She is admitted to practice before the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals, the Maryland Court of Appeals, the District of Columbia Court of Appeals and the U.S. District Courts of Maryland, the District of Columbia and the Northern and Southern Districts of West Virginia.

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From staff and wire reports
Statehood commemoration panel is a house divided
By Phil Kabler
CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Like the country during the Civil War era it is meant to commemorate, the
West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission has become a house sharply divided—with several
commissioners resigning in protest over the panel’s direction.

At issue is whether the commission should focus on educational efforts to expand the public’s
understanding of events leading up to the state’s creation in 1863—or emphasize tourist-friendly
Civil War re-enactments, parades and festivals.

Shepherd University professor Mark Snell was vice chairman of the commission until he and other
members resigned earlier this year over what they regard as the commission’s misuse of $100,000
in state funds.

“The whole purpose of the commission was basically to educate, to organize events to educate the
public about the founding of West Virginia, the causes of the war, and the conduct of the war,”
Snell said.

Instead, he said, state officials on the commission—primarily Education and Arts Secretary Kay
Goodwin, who serves as the commission’s chairwoman, and Culture and History Commissioner
Randall Reid-Smith—turned it into a grant-awarding agency to fund re-enactments, parades and
other Civil War-themed festivals around the state.

As a historian, Snell said he believes it’s wrong to turn the 150th anniversary of America’s bloodiest
war—a war that killed more than 600,000 Americans—into a celebration.

Snell, director of Shepherd’s George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War, said he
envisioned the commission sponsoring at least one major educational event each year, leading up
to the state’s sesquicentennial, or 150th anniversary, in 2013. The events would have started with a
symposium this summer, at Davis and Elkins College.

However, he said, that concept was shot down.

“Commissioner Reid-Smith was fighting that tooth and nail,” Snell said. “He thought we shouldn’t
be doing academic stuff. We should be having pageants, fairs and parades.”

Snell said the issue came to a head over a vote on whether to award a grant for a Civil War battle
re-enactment. It came down to a tie vote, with Goodwin breaking the tie and voting to award the
grant.

Four of the eight citizen members of the commission resigned after that: Snell, Shelia Coleman-
Casteel, president of Sargha Consulting Inc.; West Virginia University professor Connie Rice; and
Beth White of Dunbar, president of the Kanawha Valley Civil War Roundtable. The commission, as
named by then-Gov. Joe Manchin, includes four other citizens and five state officials, including
Goodwin and Reid-Smith.

As of Friday, the events calendar on the commission’s website listed at least four re-enactments
through July, but no symposiums or academic programs.

Inquiries about the commission were referred to Goodwin, who was out of town Friday and
unavailable for comment.

Senate Majority Leader John Uager, D-Berkeley, represents the Legislature on the commission,
and was instrumental in getting lawmakers to create and fund the panel.

Uager said he was aware of the divide on the commission, but has been preoccupied with the
legislative session and with public hearings around the state on redistricting.
"I know there's been a big divide over using grant money for re-enactments," Unger said, "but I don't know enough about it to know whether they should or shouldn't."

Unger did note that, under the 2009 law creating the commission, the panel is supposed to provide a report to the Legislature each session, giving an update of the programs and events it is sponsoring. To date, he said, the commission has failed to provide the annual report.

"That's something they should have done, they're supposed to do, but they haven't done yet," he said.

Snell said the dissention is unfortunate, since the sesquicentennial is a once-in-a-lifetime event.

"It's really a shame," he said. "We had such a wonderful opportunity to do the right thing, and I just feel it's turning into a dog-and-pony show."

Reach Phil Kabler at phil@wvgazette.com or 304-348-1220.
Teacher looks for her own classroom
Originally published May 22, 2011

By Blair Ames

Frederick resident Bethany Stevenson has boxes full of books, posters and other decorations sitting in her basement waiting for the day she gets her own classroom.

She is currently a resident substitute teacher with Frederick County Public Schools, filling in wherever needed.

"It's very exciting to know that I'm that much closer," she said.

Working primarily at Catoctin High School, she teaches a variety of subjects, including art, math, music and science. She also teaches special education students.

Stevenson graduated from Shepherd University in West Virginia in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in secondary education social studies and teaching certifications in high school social studies, special education and middle school math.

Ever since she graduated from Gov. Thomas Johnson High School, Stevenson knew she wanted to be a teacher. While in college at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, she was a double major in elementary education and special education, while participating in the honors program.

But she didn't graduate from Slippery Rock. After getting married and having children, she moved to Idaho. After her divorce, she moved back to Frederick and began to work at a bank before remarrying.

Her husband suggested that she be a stay-at-home mom rather than working. So she did, but during that time opened a day care center out of her house. At any given time she had six children under her care.

With her background in teaching, she conducted the day care like a preschool, gearing subjects toward the student's age in the program, including taking them on field trips.

She continued to home-school her children until they reached high school.

"That was so much fun. I just loved doing that," she said.

Stevenson operated her day care program from 1996 to 2006, then changed course. It was time for her to go back to school. After three more years as a full-time student at Shepherd, she graduated in 2009.

Stevenson has come full circle, pursuing her childhood dream of becoming a teacher. She said it's exciting to be back on track.

"It'd be so much more exciting if I had my own class," she said.

Stevenson said her teaching style is to engage students by using interactive lessons in class.

"That way the kids feel there's some connection between them, so it's not just some dumb class you have to pass to graduate," she said.

Interested employers may contact Stevenson at bethany.stevenson@fcps.org.

On the web
For a look at the stories, videos and re?sume?s from others featured in our Work Wanted series, go to fredericknewspost.com/workwanted.

Are you unemployed? Have you recently been laid off? Let The Frederick News-Post help with your job search by being featured in our "Work Wanted" series. The series will profile unemployed people in the community and showcase their skills and talents. It will be printed Sundays on the front page of the Business section. Contact Blair Ames at bames@newspost.com or call 240-215-8623.
Main Street needs attention

By Jack Norris | Posted: Sunday, May 22, 2011 1:00 am

Westminster is a city in transition. Will our county seat be governed by absentee landlords or become a college town with an exciting downtown business and entertainment district?

As a community, we must be concerned about the Pennsylvania Avenue and Main Street corridors leading to McDaniel College. Low income rentals with multiple tenants, drunks on the sidewalks and two pawn shops dot the landscape and present an unsettling atmosphere for anybody walking the streets late at night. On occasion one may even witness a drug deal.

Let's compare that horrific scene to the safe trek that Gettysburg College students traverse to the town center and the beautiful Majestic Theater. Or better yet, the straight line shot from the Shepherd College campus to the Shepherdstown, W.Va. downtown area represents a pleasant pathway for pedestrians 24 hours a day.

Hopefully, McDaniel's administration will recognize that a problem exists on the north side of town and will take a more active political role in this community. From an economic viewpoint, the college on the hill has the most to lose financially with any further deterioration of Main Street. This entire scenario presents a real challenge to the newly inaugurated President Robert Casey.

Carroll Community College must also get involved as Westminster becomes known throughout Maryland as a two college town and a tourist destination. A recent joint activity by the two student bodies to beautify and clean up our streets and landscape certainly is a step in the right direction.

The Westminster Symphony Orchestra, started by Professor Elijah Wirth from CCC, is a major breakthrough to make our city an acceptable cultural destination. A recent meeting with Thomas Falkner, Provost at McDaniel, and James Ball, executive vice president at CCC to discuss the coordination of music activities between the two schools is very much appreciated and will lead to numerous concerts and programs.

The Chamber of Commerce's decision to relocate to the building vacated by Locust Books will bring additional people to the existing retail establishments and wonderful restaurants. Also, the library continues to bring walk-in traffic into the business district. The Carroll Theater is another premier attraction in this county.
In my opinion, our city could be a major destination in this geographical area, but we must address some major concerns raised in this discourse. Hopefully my letter will wake up our local politicians and college executives to create a positive transition to a more prosperous Westminster without slum landlords who continue to violate the Maryland State Livability Code for rental properties.

Jack Norris

Westminster
Statehouse Beat: Capitol security plan stays murky
By Phil Kibler
Page 2 of 2

After nearly 2 1/2 years, and at a cost of nearly $900,000, the new Capitol complex master plan has been like the Loch Ness monster of state government, taking on mythical status, with rumored sightings -- but no real proof it actually exists.

Thanks to a couple of FOIA requests, I'm now holding in my never-nicotine-stained fingers a copy of the preliminary plan (the final plan won't be published until the governor's office signs off on the document -- something that has yet to occur in 30 months under either the Manchin or Tomblin administrations).

So what does the long-elusive plan say about enhancing Capitol complex security?

Did it call for installation of ugly concrete bollards around the campus, or propose construction of a 10-foot-tall wrought iron fence around the governor's mansion?

Does its landscaping proposals call for cutting down all the trees around Building 3, as outlined in the landscaping plan for the renovation of the old DMV building?

Does it at long last come up with a solution for the lack of sufficient parking spaces around the Capitol complex?

Sorry, I can't tell you.

It's not that I don't want to. Unfortunately, out of the 50-page document, the Department of Administration redacted 25 pages in their entirety, and redacted portions of seven other pages, on the grounds that those pages "contain information related to security or utilities."

(I haven't seen so many redactions since reading the Watergate transcripts as a wee little boy ...)

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Speaking of which, Administration had tentatively planned an announcement Tuesday that the 56 bollards around the complex are going to be given to the state National Guard, to be used for security around various armory locations, with the Guard removing the 1,100-pound structures at no additional cost to taxpayers.

That sounded like a win-win, until the plan got put on hold over concerns from higher-ups in the administration about leaving the campus "unsecured" if the bollards are taken out.

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Also on hold are plans to renovate Building 3.

Plans are being re-evaluated, I'm told, since the low bid of $33.6 million was more than $6 million over the amount budgeted for the project. I suspect the re-evaluation will include nailing back some of the more extravagant features of the renovation plan, including the high-tech conference rooms featuring wall-sized video screens for "telepresence" teleconferencing.

***

Is Culture and History Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith the Charlie Brown of state government, i.e., everything he touches (with the possible exception of the state museum) gets nixed?

Now, his latest fracas is over how the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission is to spend $100,000 of taxpayer funds.
At RR-S's urging, the commission has been transformed from its mandate to educate the public about the state's founding some 210 years ago, into a grant-writing scheme to fund tourist-friendly Civil War re-enactments, festivals and parades.

Ex-commission member and Shepherd University history professor Mark Snell says such re-enactments are offensive on many levels, one of which being that the re-enactors tend to be overweight middle-aged men, whereas in reality, most Civil War soldiers were in their teens or early 20s, and frequently were malnourished.

***

Finally, the new, unseen Capitol complex master plan is the fourth the state has paid for since 1966.

The 1966 plan is particularly fascinating, not only for its proposals that came to fruition, but those that unfortunately did not.

It envisioned the Building 5, 6 and 7 office towers, in exactly the location where the buildings now stand.

It also called for eliminating Washington Street, which bisected the campus -- an improvement that occurred some 22 years later.

The plan also envisioned a new building housing the archives library and state museum, to be located to the west of the West Wing of the Capitol, as well as a parking building in the northwest corner of the Capitol grounds -- albeit a much, much larger facility than what was actually erected in 1999.

It also saw Greenbrier Street as the access road to a yet-to-be constructed interstate highway to the north of campus -- but would have routed it considerably farther west of its current location. (It also envisioned a bridge taking Greenbrier Street across the Kanawha River.)

How much farther west? As proposed, Ruffner Memorial Church -- currently across the street from the Capitol complex -- would have been grandfathered in onto the expanded Capitol grounds.

Indeed, as proposed, what we now know as the Culture Center would have been located considerably farther to the west, with a large mall area between it and the West Wing. Long-term plans called for construction of office buildings at the north and south ends of that mall.

To the east, the master plan called for expanding the Capitol grounds all the way to Michigan Avenue. It also proposed a mall area to the east of the East Wing, anchored by Building 4 (the Corrections building) at the northeast corner, and yet another new office building at the southeast corner of that mall.

Coolest of all, 1966 being the height of the Cold War, the plan called for a network of tunnels linking all the Capitol complex buildings, to be used not only for Civil Defense, but for shipping and deliveries between buildings.

Reach Phil Kabler at ph...@wvgazette.com or 304-348-1220.
Editorial: The tragedy and horror of the Civil War

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Anyone who reads history or watches public television documentaries knows that the Civil War was a ghastly horror -- America's worst tragedy.

About 620,000 young Americans were killed, at a time when the U.S. population was barely above 30 million. Compared to today's population of 311 million, that's the equivalent of more than 6 million casualties. The loss was higher than the toll of all other U.S. wars combined.

Old Matthew Brady photos show soldier corpses littering battlefields by dozens, hundreds. The slaughter at major engagements like Gettysburg, Antietam and Cold Harbor was sickening, stunning, dismayling. A generation of young American men was ravaged. Families North and South were devastated. And economic losses were horrible. The South was left almost a wasteland.

All this butchery and misery occurred because of a doomed southern attempt to preserve human slavery. In retrospect, it seems almost insane -- a needless waste that should have been avoided. It ought to be remembered with shame.

We've never understood why West Virginians who fought for the South -- Stonewall Jackson, for example -- are honored today as heroes, with statues, schools and state parks. Whether or not they fully realized it, they were fighting for slavery. They fought against the United States and Old Glory. It's odd to hail them a century and a half later.

Now another strange situation has arisen. Four history-minded members of the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission have quit, claiming that other leaders are making the Civil War's 150th anniversary into a tourist party.

Shepherd University historian Mark Snell and his allies wanted academic lectures and programs to explain the bitter stresses that led to creation of West Virginia in 1863. But this strategy was shot down by Culture and History Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith and Education and Arts Secretary Kay Goodwin.

"Commissioner Reid-Smith was fighting that tooth and nail," Dr. Snell told Statehouse columnist Phil Kabler. "He thought we shouldn't be doing academic stuff; we should be having pageants, fairs and parades."

Prodded by Reid-Smith and Goodwin, the commission put $100,000 of taxpayer money into tourist-attracting events, especially West Virginia battle re-enactments by volunteers in blue and gray uniforms. Four such shows are set in the next two months, but no lectures. The historian commented sardonically that re-enactors tend to be middle-aged and hefty, unlike the hungry young soldiers who killed each other.

"It's really a shame," Snell said. "We had such a wonderful opportunity to do the right thing, and I just feel it's turning into a dog-and-pony show."

Reid-Smith is setting records for state fiascoes. He mostly caused the improper installation of concrete security pillars around the Capitol -- an expensive botch now requiring removal. And the Sesquicentennial Commission fractured largely because of him.

Ceremonies today cannot change the terrible reality of the Civil War. The time when thousands of young Americans killed fellow Americans should be recalled with deep sorrow.
PARKERSBURG - A division within the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission will have no real impact on local events to commemorate the state's upcoming 150th anniversary and local events commemorating the Civil War.

The state commission has been facing internal problems over a difference of opinion in how the state should commemorate its 1863 founding, succeeding from Virginia during the American Civil War.

Some felt the job of the commission was to educate, to organize events to educate the public about the founding of West Virginia, the causes of the war and how the war impacted the state, which had supporters for both sides. Others thought focus should be placed on tourist-friendly Civil War re-enactments, parades and festivals.

This division led to the resignation of Shepherd University professor Mark Snell, who was vice chairman of the commission. He and other members resigned earlier this year over what they regard as the commission's misuse of $100,000 in state funds used to fund to fund re-enactments, parades and other Civil War-themed festivals around the state. The others who resigned included Sheila Coleman-Castells, president of Sangha Consulting Inc.; West Virginia University professor Connie Rice; and Beth White of Dunbar, president of the Kanawha Valley Civil War Roundtable.

As a historian, Snell said he believes it's wrong to turn the 150th anniversary of America's bloodiest war - a war that killed more than 600,000 Americans - into a celebration.

Dave McKain, a local historian and director of the Oil and Gas Museum in Parkersburg, is part of the Civil War Roundtable, a local group formed to organize events to take place in and around the Parkersburg area during the anniversary.

McKain said he was not aware of the internal problems within the state body because the local roundtable has not had any real contact with them.

"We are doing our own thing here," he said. "We have not been contacted by those people."

McKain believes many areas of the state are organizing their own events and focusing on the history in their particular area.

"We are continuing on with our own stuff and hoping the people will come out and support us," he said.

Bob Enoch, president of the Wood County Historical and Preservation Society, agreed with Snell's assessment.

"You don't celebrate, you remember," he said. "You remember the battles and the people who died."

"You commemorate what happened. There should be more emphasis on the results from the Civil War, namely our statehood."

Enoch agreed with McKain in there has been very little contact with the state body and the local roundtable has taken up a lot of the responsibility in organizing and conducting local events. This Saturday, a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the first hostile invasion and occupation of Parkersburg at the outbreak of the Civil War will be put on by the roundtable, Wood County Historical and Preservation Society, Carlin's Battery and the Oil and Gas Museum at 1
p.m. at the Ohio Valley Rowing Club.

The Mid-Ohio Valley has a rich Civil War history that many people locally are just not aware of, but the roundtable has been organizing events to let the public know.

The Associated Press contributed to this story.
Panel denies funds over pro-Confederate speaker
By Phil Kabler

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — In its first meeting since half of its citizen members resigned in protest, the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission Tuesday awarded four community program grants totaling $11,160 — but tabled one funding request because of the event's controversial keynote speaker.

The Gaywadotte Civil War Days festival committee requested a $2,547 grant to help fund its annual re-enactment of the Nov. 10, 1861, Confederate raid of the Cabell County community.

Commissioners voiced concerns over the event's planned keynote speaker, H.K. Edgerton, a pro-Confederate author and lecturer who contends that large numbers of slaves "went to war with their masters" to fight against the Union.

Edgerton, who is black, headed a 2002-03 "March Across Dixie," defending the Confederate flag as a symbol of the South. He also contends that slavery was not a significant factor leading to the Civil War.

"This guy's been very controversial from time to time," Commissioner Rick Wolfe said Tuesday.

Victor Thacker, a dean at Davis & Elkins College, added, "The last thing we need to do as historians is give more bad history to our students."

Commissioners debated Tuesday whether to award the grant but exclude any funding for Edgerton's appearance.

However, since any events that receive commission grants are permitted to use the state sesquicentennial logo in advertising and promotional materials, there was concern that any sponsorship would appear to be an implicit state endorsement of Edgerton.

The meeting was the first since four of the eight citizen members of the commission, including vice chairman, noted Shepherd University historian Mark Snel, resigned over concerns the commission is emphasizing tourist-friendly festivals and re-enactments over educational and academic efforts.

Education and Arts Secretary Kay Goodwin, who serves as commission chairwoman, downplayed the divisiveness Tuesday.

"As you can see, this is a very talkative and opinionated group, and we're happy to have that," she said after Tuesday's meeting. "We were sad to lose those who resigned."

Later Tuesday, Goodwin issued a two-page statement defending the commission's decision to provide what she termed "much-appreciated support for local groups organizing their own events."

She stated, "A minority of the commission's original members disagreed with the decision to fund community programs, and, unfortunately, some members chose to resign because of that disagreement.

"There is no question, however, that assisting local sesquicentennial commemorations falls squarely within the commission's mission: to promote awareness, celebrate the unique creation of the state of West Virginia and the role of its people during the Civil War era, and its continuing effect on our people," Goodwin stated.

Culture and History Commissioner Randall Reid-Smith, who participated in the meeting via teleconference, commented, "We commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, and we celebrate statehood."
That comment was apparently directed at Snell, who in a Sunday Gazette-Mail article faulted Reid-Smith for the commission’s emphasis on promoting festivals and re-enactments. Snell went on to say he believes it is inappropriate to treat the 150th anniversary of America’s bloodiest conflict as a celebration.

Also Tuesday, the commission:

- Awarded a $5,000 grant to the Corricks Ford Battlefield Association of Parsons, for its 150th anniversary celebration, June 24-26, culminating with a re-enactment of the Battle of Corricks Ford.

- Awarded a $3,000 grant to the Wheeling National Heritage Area Corp. for a walking tour of historic Wheeling, with the narrative to be provided via smartphones.

- Awarded a $1,660 grant to the West Virginia State University history department for a historical narrative student project.

- Awarded a $1,500 grant to the Lost River Educational Foundation in Hardy County for a Civil War Auto Tour and Living History program, Aug. 12-14. The grant includes $750 to underwrite advertising costs, $500 for re-enactors, and $250 for artistic and technical support.

- Denied a $5,000 request from the Friends of Blackwater Canyon to help fund a "New Home for Liberty" project. Commissioners faulted the organization, whose primary mission is to protect the Blackwater Canyon from industrial logging, for failing to provide a budget narrative explaining how the state funds would be used.

- Discussed the possibility of issuing license plates and postage stamps commemorating the state’s sesquicentennial in 2015.

Senate Majority Leader John Unger, D-Berkeley, said the Legislature could pass legislation next session authorizing commemorative license plates, but said a stamp would have to be issued by the U.S. Postal Service, at the request of the state’s congressional delegation.

Reach Phil Kabler at ph...@wvgazette.com or 304-348-1220.
A former member of the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission says he is no longer part of that Commission because of how state money was being spent.

Mark Snell, Professor and Director of Shepherd University’s George Tyler Moore Center for Civil War Study, says the Commission should be focusing its efforts on education, not Civil War reenactments.

"It doesn't seem like a good use of taxpayer money," Snell said of the reenactments.

"They are portraying something that really can’t be portrayed. The horrific combat that occurred during the Civil War is not something to be made light of," Snell said on Wednesday’s MetroNews Talkline.

However, he says state funding for the reenactments is just one of the issues.

Snell says the Commission was created, with $100,000 in state money, to help support events focused on teaching people about the Civil War and the events that led up to the creation of West Virginia in 1863. The state’s 150th Anniversary comes in 2013.

Events were scheduled to be this Summer. But Snell says those events about the Civil War, which claimed the lives of 600,000 Americans, should not be celebrations.

"I don't think the state and the Commission, as the lead voice in the Sesquicentennial, should be pushing those sorts of events."

In all, four members of the Sesquicentennial Commission have resigned because of disagreements about what projects the Commission is backing.
Students named to Phi Kappa Phi honor society

Sixty-five Shepherd University students were named to the campus chapter of Phi Kappa Phi honor society at the 14th annual initiation on Sunday, April 3 at the Frank Center Theater.

Membership selections to Phi Kappa Phi is based upon academic achievement and exemplary character. Those eligible for membership are second semester juniors in the upper five percent of their class and the upper 10 percent of seniors.

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 and has chapters on the campuses of 282 colleges and universities in the United States, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. It is the oldest and most selective honor society dedicated to the recognition and promotion of academic excellence within all fields of higher education.

Berkeley County residents named to the honor society include Martinburg residents Gregory P. Fare, Brand Miller, Ives Nukke, Jessica Sal-fia, Sam Smith, Susan Sterner, Heather Webb, Elizabeth M. Altmair, Asabelle Aviles, Katrina Baerd, Hannah Carter, King Cer, Cynthia Kehlbaugh and Heather Cline; Hedgesville residents Carl Smith, Chris Basley, Amy Hess and Katherine E. Cooper; Falling Waters residents Alecia Doerr, Carol Hartle and Emily M. Stransky; Inwood residents Cindy Pugh and Hannah Williams; Hoones Hill residents Stephanie N. Brooks, Joy Kern and Jessica M. Pearson; and Rebecca Spero of Cerneysville.

Jefferson County residents named to the honor society include Hapers Ferry residents Alexandra Decker, Sisobhan Bellew, Kelly Powell, Roxanne Jack, Sarah Wall and Laine Reger; Jason Smith and Michael Smith of Kearneysville; Rebecca Perkey, Elizabeth Frawley, and Ryan Lapina-Carrige of Charles Town; and Olivia Sandstrom, Ramson.

Morgan County residents named to the honor society include Eric Morris and Mary Ross, Berkeley Springs and Brenda Hutchinson, Great Cacapon.

Other West Virginia residents include Charles Cota, J., Parkersburg; Michelle Kelley, Augusta; Nadine E. Riesel, Ridgeley; Zachary Grimes, Buckeye; Sara Karon, Morgantown, and Arielle Stafford, Bridgeport.

Washington County, Maryland residents named to the honor society include Anna Abbot, Sara M. Sandeen, and Christopher Olive, Hagerstown; Kacie Beaver, Smithsburg; and Ayes Brown, of Clear Spring.

Frederick County, Maryland residents named to the honor society include Paul Smith, Middletown, Maryland, Emily De-Troy, Martinsburg; and Catherine Tregoe, Brunswick.

Also named was Matt Richards, Cumberland, Maryland.

Virginia residents include Kristy Ray and Janey Chamberlin, Winchester; Brad Coleman, Leesburg; Ashley Wilmuth, Hamilton; Courtney Buick, Annapolis; and Brett Shaffer, Richmond.

Other students named include Amy Sultner, Yvari, Pennsylvania, and Jennifer Adge, Accra, Ghana.

Shepherd University sponsoring Civil War symposium

The George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War at Shepherd University will sponsor a Civil War symposium on June 4 and 5 on the Shepherd campus. In light of the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the American Civil War, events that occurred within the Eastern Panhandle in the early part of 1861 will be highlighted.

Dennis Frye, chief historian at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and 1979 Shepherd alumus, will offer a tour of the Ferry, focusing on the burning of the arsenal and occupation by Virginia troops.

Thomas Clemens, professor of history at Hagerstown Community College and expert on local Civil War history, will take the group to Falling Waters to discuss the July 1861 skirmish and to Martinsburg to take in General Thomas Jackson’s June 1861 capture of the Railroad Roundhouse.

Several recent Shepherd graduates of the Civil War and 19th century America concentration within the history major will speak during the seminar.

Nicholas Reddig of the Civil War Trust will speak on the Civil War in Shepherdstown and include a walking tour of the town with his presentation.

Richard Huévet, a doctoral candidate in history from West Virginia University will speak on the memory of the McNeill’s Raegers of Hardy County.

Kyle Pfalter of the Gettysburg Foundation will discuss and display early war uniforms and equipment.

The cost of the symposium is $125, which includes tuition, transportation, and Saturday dinner and Sunday lunch.

For more information, visit www.shepherd.edu/gtmcweb/seminars.html or call 304-876-5429.
Terry Kay Awarded Lifetime Achievement Award at the 47th Georgia Author of the Year Awards

Georgia Writers Association will host the 47th annual Georgia Author of the Year Awards (GAYA) awards ceremony on June 11, 2011, at the KSU Center, located at 3333 Busbee Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144. The banquet, which is by reservation only, begins at 6 PM. The awards ceremony, which is free and open to the public, starts at 7:30 PM. Sponsored by the Georgia Writers Association and KSU’s College of Humanities and Social Sciences, the event honors Georgia authors for books published during 2010. The Georgia Author of the Year Awards recognizes and acknowledges Georgia’s wealth of outstanding writers, and celebrates the state’s rich literary heritage.

All Georgia-resident authors who have been published during 2010 are eligible for the awards. There are 80 nominations this year in award categories including fiction, first novel, creative nonfiction, history, essay, biography, memoir, poetry, children’s mid-reader, and young adult literature.

Georgia author Terry Kay will be receiving the GAYA Lifetime Achievement Award for 2011. A 2009 recipient of the Governor’s Award in the Humanities and a 2006 inductee into the Georgia Writers Hall of Fame, Mr. Kay has been a sportswriter and film/theater reviewer (Atlanta Journal-Constitution), a public relations executive and a corporate officer. He is the author of eleven published novels, including The Book of Manie and his most recent novel, Bogmaadow’s Wish. His other works include, To Dance with the White Dog, The Valley of Light, Taking Little Home, The Kidnapping of Aaron Greene, Shadow Song, The Runaway, Dark Thirty, After Eli and The Year the Lights Came On, as well as a book of essays (Special K) and a children’s book (To Whom the Angel Spoke).

Three of his novels have been produced as Hallmark Hall of Fame movies: To Dance with the White Dog, The Runaway and The Valley of Light. An essayist and regional Emmy-winning screenwriter as well as a novelist, Mr. Kay’s work has appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies. Mr. Kay has received the Georgia Author of the Year award three times and in 2004 was presented with the Townsend Prize, considered the state’s top literary award. In October 2006, he received the prestigious Appalachian Heritage Writer’s Award from Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, WV. In March 2007, he was presented the Brooke Baker Award from Dunwoody Library honoring his career as a writer. Also in 2007, Mr. Kay was presented the Stanley W. Lindberg Award, named for the late editor of The Georgia Review and considered one of the state’s most prestigious literary honors, given for an individual’s significant contribution to the preservation and celebration of Georgia’s literary heritage.

Ms. Jessica Handler will emcee the awards ceremony. Ms. Handler wrote the book Invisible Sisters: A Memoir, which has been named one of the “Twenty-Five Books All Georgians Should Read.” In addition, Ms. Handler has received a Special Mention for the 2008 Pushcart Prize, a merit scholarship to the inaugural Writers in Paradise conference, an honorable mention for the Penelope Hiven Creative Nonfiction Award, and a fellowship at the Hambidge Center for Creative Arts.

The GAYA has grown in prestige and participation since its inception in 1964 by the Dixie Council of Authors and Journalists. The Awards changed hands in 1990 to Georgia Writers Association (GWA), a statewide literary organization sponsored by Kennesaw State University under the executive directorship of Dr. Margaret Walters. GAYA nominations are judged by prominent authors from across the country, and submissions are evaluated for their narrative quality, creativity, enduring message, and ability to evoke emotion.

The competition guidelines are revised each year to parallel the changing literary marketplace, and the GAYA honors both independently published authors and those whose books are published by traditional publishing houses. Additional information can be obtained at authoroftheyear.org/.
Shepherdstown theater festival goes for provoke

By Douglas Imbrogno

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- If the renowned music show "Mountain Stage," based in the western part of the state, is one of the crown jewels of West Virginia, you could say the Contemporary American Theater Festival is a crown jewel on the state's Eastern Panhandle.

Never been? Here are a couple of shorthand indicators of the festival's significance to the American contemporary theater scene as the 21st season unfolds July 8-31 in picturesque Shepherdstown.

First, two of American theater's biggest names -- David Mamet and Sam Shepard -- both bring new or recent plays to this year's season, with past festivals featuring such acclaimed writers as Joyce Carol Oates and Lessing.

Second, for two decades now the festival has been a fertile breeding ground and launching pad for a host of new American theater, with a contemporary, sometimes controversial edge.

"We're very proud of the fact that 11 of our plays that were originated in Shepherdstown had off-Broadway productions over the past 20 years. We've produced 86 new American plays, 33 world premieres and a handful of new play commissions," says Ed Herendeen, the festival's producing director since it began.

Launched in 1990 "on a wing and a prayer and a $90,000 budget," as a program booklet once described, the festival has a budget this year that tops $1 million. In line with the festival's mission, the works featured in the festival's five-play rotating schedule don't shy from sensitive topics.

Pulitzer Prize-winning Mamet takes on one of America's most contentious issues in "Race," in which two lawyers end up defending a wealthy white executive charged with raping a black woman. It's billed as "an incendiary drama" -- a Mamet specialty -- which explores "what is thought -- but never said -- along the vicious path to justice."

The festival also commissions new works, and hot-button topics are welcome. This year, Lucy Thurber's "The Insurgents" earned a $10,000 commission for a play that sits squarely in the CATF comfort zone. Or maybe one should say the festival's "discomfort zone," which is where Herendeen seems to like to see festival plays land.

"I interviewed four playwrights to take four pitches for an idea for a new work. Lucy's pitch was incredible. I had to sign on as soon as I heard it," he said on a recent fundraising trip to Charleston.

Thurber told him she wanted to write a play that featured fiery abolitionist John Brown, whose raid on an arsenal in Harpers Ferry was a signal event in the years leading up to the Civil War. But the play would also group Brown with some other fiery Americans -- Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman and Timothy McVeigh.

"And it's like, I've got to see that play. Yes, start writing it," Herendeen said. "She said what they all had in common: They were all deeply religious and heard voices from God; they were all deeply patriotic and loved their country; and they all believed in violence, if necessary.

"So, this sounded like a signature Contemporary American Theater Festival production -- a play with provocative issues, a play written today taking a look at the past and the recent past. And taking a look at four Americans who all had a very specific agenda in mind: are they terrorists? Are they insurgents? Would they be on a no-fly list today? It raises really, really great provocative questions."

The new season also features another world premiere, Kyle Bradstreet's "From Prague," as well as
the first American production of Sam Shepard's new play "Ages of the Moon."

"It was premiered in Dublin, but this'll be the first time that Sam will have the opportunity to see the production with American actors," said Herendeen, who'll direct both the Shepard and Mamet plays. "So we provide that niche for writers to see their work fully produced and also to see their play have continued life after it's been produced somewhere else."

The festival fills a niche as a safe haven in allowing playwrights to tinker and refine new works and to push boundaries in doing so, said Herendeen, noting that more than a few CATF plays have been overhauled in response to initial audience reaction.

"The festival operates outside the glare of the urban spotlight. So it allows the writer, the actors, the designers, the other artists to really take chances and risks without having to have that New York review. So it gives writers a chance to be risk-takers. It gives them a chance to develop the work in the rehearsal process.

"Our goal with a new play, with a world premiere, is that our playwrights leave Shepherdstown with a better play. And they know what changes they want to make before it gets a premiere, say, in New York City."

Such a process can raise adrenaline levels for playwrights, actors and directors.

A few years ago, CATF did a play by John Olive called "The Egoist of Saint Theresa," with Herendeen and others lobbying all during rehearsal for rewrites to the end of the play, he recalled.

"But John really wanted a chance to see the ending the way he'd written it with a live audience. So we went before the preview audience with his original ending. After he had a chance to see it with an audience -- which is actually a key ingredient with a new play -- he then decided to write 12 new pages and change the ending.

"We had five hours of rehearsal on the day of opening to put those pages of dialogue into the play and change the ending. And, of course, that changed sound cues, light cues, everything -- it's a domino effect.

"It was an exhilarating experience because we were going into this without a safety net at all. Very exciting."

Festival overview

Here is this year's Contemporary American Theater Festival lineup. For more on the festival, including costs and area lodging -- which often fills up in advance of the festival -- visit www.catf.org.

"From Prague" by Kyle Bradstreet: Prague -- the city of ghosts -- is the backdrop for three wounded voices, all clamoring to be heard and indelibly bound to each other. Samuel, an exiled patriarch and disgraced academic; his son, Charles, a zealot barely clinging to his faith; and Anna, the beautiful expatriate whose life has been upended -- find themselves in a crumbling church where memory and consequence collide.

"Race" by David Mamet: Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Mamet tackles America's most controversial topic in a new play on sex, guilt and accusation. Two lawyers find themselves defending a wealthy white executive charged with raping a black woman. Mamet turns his spotlight on the quest for truth in a world of lies.

"Ages of the Moon" by Sam Shepard: Old friends reunite over bourbon on ice to reflect upon the shadows of their lives. Fifty years of love, friendship and rivalry are put to the test at the barrel of a shotgun in a gritty new play by Pulitzer Prize-winner Shepard.

"We Are Here" by Tracy Thorne: Playwright Tracy Thorne braids the joyful past with the devastated present as three generations of a family endure unimaginable loss with compassion, humor and song. This is a story about a modern family coping with the death of a young son.

"The Insurgents" by Lucy Thurber: John Brown, Harriet Tubman, Timothy McVeigh, Nat Turner. Their stories and unique historical markers meld into a contemporary family's quest for
identity and survival. Playwright Thurber tackles the often fine line between martyrdom and terrorism.
Documentary to celebrate WWII's Rosie the Riveters
Originally published May 29, 2011

By Karen Gardner

The women's movement didn't begin in the 1960s. It began with Rosie the Riveter during World War II.

Rosie the Riveters, or Rosies, as they were called, were women who took jobs vacated by men who were serving in World War II. The surviving Rosies are in their 80s and 90s today and, until now, their stories haven't been told.

The West Virginia Rosie the Riveter Project is coming to Shepherdstown, W.Va., on June 10. The evening will include a reception beginning at 5 p.m. featuring some of the now elderly Rosies, and a movie about the women's efforts starting at 6:30 p.m. The free event will be at the Erma O. Byrd Auditorium at Shepherd University.

"Their whole mission was to do the best work they could so the boys wouldn't be killed, and to bring the boys home," said Anne Montague, executive director of Thanks Plain and Simple, an organization dedicated to preserving the history of West Virginia Rosies.

Since the end of World War II, Britain has been honoring those women who worked in factories and offices in the absence of their fathers, brothers and sons, Montague said. American and British women turned out airplanes, tanks, jeeps and weapons, and they kept the home front functioning.

"We've pretty much ignored these women for the past 60 years," Montague said. Montague, who lives in Huntington, W.Va., recalled her mother going off to work in a local factory and leaving her in the care of her grandmother each day.

"I believe we are on the verge of a national movement," Montague said. For a year and a half, Montague and other volunteers in the Thanks Plain and Simple organization have been seeking out women in West Virginia to tell their stories on film and in real life.

Some of these women worked locally; others traveled by train, usually in pairs, to Akron, Ohio, to work in factories there. They would leave their children in the care of other family members.

"The stories are fascinating," Montague said. The organization has little money, but the volunteers are dedicated to getting the story out.

"The movie shows not only the history of the work, but the history of different pieces of education," she said. The women needed to turn out high-quality goods that would not break down.

After the war, most of these women returned to lives as homemakers. "The women were quiet about what they did," Montague said. They returned home, but things weren't the same. "Many had husbands or brothers with what was then known as shell shock, now PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder)."

Americans tend to thank those who participated in the war more than those who helped the war effort, she said. She was told by a British Rosie, "In Britain, we have been thanking our women for 67 years, and you are just now getting around to it," Montague said. "To us, with so much emphasis on the veterans, who knows why we didn't look at it? Why didn't America look at these women until now?"

The National Park Service has the Rosie the Riveter Homefront National Historical Park in Richmond, Calif., and there are a few other organizations dedicated to honoring Rosies around the country, Montague said.

Thanks Plain and Simple has designed a quilt that tells the history of the Rosies, and one of the Rosies the organization interviewed also made a quilt about the Rosies.

The organization has also produced a children's book aimed at third- to fifth-graders.
SU named to President’s Community Service Honor Roll

Shepherd University was recently named to the 2010 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction, joining 113 colleges and universities around the country. This is the third year Shepherd has been named to the Honor Roll and the first year to the Honor Roll with distinction.

The award, given by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), honors institutions of higher education for their support of volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement. More than 800 institutions applied for the Honor Roll, which has been administered since 2006. A total of 641 colleges and universities were named to the Honor Roll for their impact on issues from literacy and neighborhood revitalization to supporting at-risk youth. Of that total, 511 were named to the Honor Roll, 114 received the recognition of Honor Roll with distinction, 11 were identified as finalists, and six received the Presidential Award.

Recipients of Honor Roll with Distinction display strong levels of institutional commitment and provide a compelling case for partnerships that produce a measurable impact in the community.

This year, Shepherd students completed a total of 34,745 community service hours with a reported 2,071 students participating. Last year, Shepherd students participated in 28,698 hours with 1,819 students participating.

"One of the most significant ways the institution and community can collaborate is on projects that serve the greater good," said Holly Frye, director of student community service and service learning. "Shepherd University is dedicated to creating a culture of service. This award demonstrates that commitment."

Frye said Shepherd students embrace the opportunity to get involved with social justice issues and are serving the most vulnerable populations.

“We've participated in community service projects without recognition, but it's nice to have the means that the institution and the students can be recognized,” Frye said.

The award is based on 2010 projects, which included Relay for Life to benefit the American Cancer Society (Shepherd raised more than $350,000 from 2003 through 2010); Alternative Spring Break experience where 38 students spent their spring break in locations working with a Habitat for Humanity affiliate in North Carolina and various non-profit organizations around the Eastern Panhandle; and 79 participants distributed more than 40,000 pounds of potatoes to 20 area non-profit agencies serving the Eastern Panhandle.

According to Frye, Shepherd is the only school in the state to be recognized for the award.

“We're very excited to move up a level,” Frye said.

Shepherd's Office of Student Community Services and Service Learning has as its mission to promote, organize, and assist in the coordination of campus outreach initiatives. This is achieved through effective placement of individual students and academic and social organizations in situations that embrace learning through service.

Student Community Services works directly with nonprofit agencies and initiatives, both locally and nationally, to create opportunities that are mutually beneficial to both the agency and Shepherd's students. By understanding the goals of the volunteers and the recipients, successful matches are made that create lifelong learning, leadership development, and a deeper understanding of diverse populations.

The Corporation oversees the Honor Roll in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact, and the American Council on Education.
Local artist Michael Davis links past with present

By Mary Stortstrom

Shepherdstown, rich in history and vivid with color and life, can be an escape from the rush of the big city for some. The town, with buildings from the 1700s, is a blend of the old and the new today.

Michael Davis, a local artist who specializes in painting and drawing, works in an old-fashioned classical style, an art form that many still appreciate today.

Davis was interested in art from an early age since his father was an art teacher. He said some of his earliest memories are of sitting at the table and drawing.

Later in life, Davis went to college with the intent to major in art education. Soon, he changed majors to pursue a fine arts degree.

Davis received his training at the Schuler School of Fine Art in Baltimore, Md. He described his teacher, Anne Schuler, as a breath of fresh air. Davis is grateful that Schuler supported his choice to pursue the classical realism style of painting, one that fades in and out of popularity over time.

"It was an enlightening experience to go to Schuler's. It was like walking into a 17th century Dutch artist's studio," Davis said.

The majority of his paintings are still-life arrangements of fruits and vegetables on simplistic table settings.

Davis, a West Virginia native, said that his geographic location influences his artwork. Currently, he is the only person on a 330-acre farm between Shepherdstown and Martinsburg. This allows him to work with little distraction in a peaceful setting.

"I've done a lot of paintings of dead birds, and they're birds my cats have killed," Davis said.
Titles like "Strawberries," "Salt and Tomatoes" and "Mice and Bread" serve as descriptions for the still-life paintings.

Davis learned other art forms while studying art in school but found he enjoyed painting most.

"When I visualize a piece in my head, I see it as a painting or a drawing. I think a sculptor would visualize a piece as a sculpture. That's just how I see it."

Davis enjoys creating art for a living and said that he has been able to live solely off of his art for eight years now. He said that the recent economic recession had an impact on sales, causing him to turn to teaching painting lessons as an alternate means of income.

Nan Broadhurst, one of Davis' students, said she is learning a lot about oil painting in the classical style from taking Davis' class.

"I enjoy learning the classical approach to painting. Now we're working with the direct painting approach," Broadhurst said.

Before the recession, Davis could rely on paychecks coming regularly. During the recession, Davis can recall months when he would not make any sales. Davis has noticed an improvement and his sales have increased since last year.

Davis' best-selling works are his still-life paintings.

"I've done a lot of still-life painting which is really good for sales. It's the bread and butter. It puts food on the table," Davis said.

Although his still-life paintings bring in the most sales, Davis' favorite subjects to paint are people.

"I'm really interested in portraiture and figurative work. I feel like people make more of an emotional connection to that."

Currently, Davis is producing paintings for "From Prague," one of the plays in the upcoming Contemporary American Theater Festival. The paintings have religious themes, and Davis is looking forward to working on these figurative pieces.

Davis' classical artwork allows viewers today to observe history in artwork the way that Shepherdstown allows visitors to observe history in architecture - combining the past and present.
Press Release: West Virginia Leads in Informing Families about College Affordability
Select a Common Standard to Provide Personalized Estimates of the True Cost of College

INDIANAPOLIS, IN – June 3, 2011 — West Virginia’s college-bound students and their families will soon have a clearer picture of their real cost of attending 16 of the state’s public colleges. The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WVHEPC) and the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education (WVCCTE) are the first state agencies in the country to support the implementation of sophisticated, online net price calculators (NPC) that will estimate merit and need-based aid for prospective college students before they apply.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 requires the nation’s 6,800 post-secondary institutions that receive federal student aid funds to post a net price calculator on their Web sites by October 29, 2011. Net price is an individual’s estimated education cost after subtracting the merit and need-based federal, state, and institutional grants that a student is eligible to receive from a college’s published cost of attendance, an amount also referred to as “sticker price.”

Student Aid Services, the nation’s leading provider of net price calculators, was selected in an open request-for-proposal process to provide advanced calculators customized for:

- Bluefield State College of Bluefield,
- Concord University of Athens,
- Fairmont State University and Pierpont Community and Technical College of Fairmont,
- Glenville State College of Glenville,
- Marshall University and Mountwest Community and Technical College of Huntington,
- Shepherd University of Shepherdstown,
- West Liberty University of West Liberty,
- West Virginia State University and Kanawha Valley Community and Technical College of Institute,
- West Virginia University Institute of Technology and Bridgemont Community and Technical College of Montgomery,
- West Virginia Northern Community College of Wheeling;
- Blue Ridge Community and Technical College of Martinsburg; and
- West Virginia University of Parkersburg.

Student Aid Services currently serves more than 360 post-secondary campuses nationwide. Its NPC technology provides more personalized and accurate cost information to students and their families than the minimum requirements of federal NPC mandate.

“Leaders at the Commission and the Council determined West Virginia will be a national leader in giving students and their families more and better early information about their cost of college,” said Jeff Whorley, president of Student Aid Services. “An education at these 15 colleges can be more affordable than many students believe. These net price calculators are especially effective at delivering the important message of education value at these institutions.”

A net price calculator tailored for each college’s financial aid policies will be available on each institution’s Web site by this summer. Whorley said the 16 public West Virginia colleges will be among the first in the nation to calculate Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for veterans and current service members. He also noted that West Virginia Northern Community College is likely to be the first public college in the nation to install a
federally-compliant calculator that fully provides cost estimates for non-traditional students, such as working adults who will attend college part-time.

All NPCs offered through the WVHEPC and the CTC Council initiative will calculate all merit and need-based student aid available at institutions including the West Virginia PROMISE Scholarship, the Higher Education Grant, the Underwood-Smith Teachers' Scholarship, all nine federal programs, the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Yellow Ribbon Program military education benefits, and each institution's grants, scholarships, and work-study student aid.

Last year, West Virginia University of Morgantown and Potomac State College of Keyser selected Student Aid Services as their custom NPC provider.

"West Virginia University and Potomac State were early innovators of user-friendly college cost estimation for prospective students and it's clear that the trend is continuing with other institutions in the state," Whorley said.

In addition, West Virginia Wesleyan College of Buckhannon, a private institution, recently selected a custom net price calculator created by Student Aid Services.

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About the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (WVHEPC) is responsible for developing, establishing, and overseeing the implementation of a public policy agenda for the state's colleges and universities. It is charged with oversight of higher education institutions to ensure they are accomplishing their missions and implementing the provisions set by state statute. For more information, visit http://wvhepcnew.wvnet.edu or contact Kevin Wallens, Ph.D., vice chancellor for administration, at 304-558-4016.

About the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education

The mission of the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia is to deliver affordable, accessible high quality education and training that dynamically advances the economic and social development of West Virginia. For more information, visit http://www.wvctcs.org/.

About Student Aid Services, Inc.

Student Aid Services, Inc. is the nation's leading net price calculator provider with more than 360 campus NPCs in use or being built nationwide. The company's advanced technology—the ThinkAhead™ Net Price Calculator—is customized to post-secondary institutions' needs and budget so those colleges and universities can offer prospective and current students accurate aid eligibility, net price, and out-of-pocket cost estimates. Student Aid Services is a private company with offices in Indianapolis, Indiana and Sacramento, California. www.studentaidservices.com

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Josephine School Community Museum Announces Scholarship Winners

The Josephine School Community Museum proudly presented its seventh annual scholarship awards to African-American graduates of Clarke County High School on Sunday, June 5 at 2:00, at the Museum. Cynthia Butler, Director, Policy Accountability at the US Department of Education gave special remarks. Ms. Butler also presented the Scholarship Certificates to the recipients. The scholarships are provided to all African-American graduates who have been accepted to an accredited four-year college/university. The scholarship will be paid directly to the recipient's university. This year, $1,000 will be given this fall to the educational institutions for each of the four African-American graduates of CCHS, class of 2011 that have been accepted to a four-year university.

The 2011 scholarship recipients are:

**Student**
- Rondell Anderson of Berryville, VA
- Amir Banks of Bluemont, VA - Buena Vista, VA
- Andrea Gaither of Inwood, WV

**University**
- Shenandoah University - Winchester,
- Southern Virginia University
- Marshall University - Huntington,
Dorothy P. Davis, Museum Board president, said, “The Museum is proud to make this effort to assist African-American graduates of Clarke County High School in their pursuit of higher education at a four year university.”
SU faculty honored at McMurrann Convocation

Four Shepherd faculty members were awarded the Outstanding Faculty medals in Teaching, Research, Service, and Advising during Shepherd University's McMurrann Scholars convocation Friday, April 29. The awards were presented by Dean Laura Renninger and President Suzanne Shipley.

The 2011 winners of the Shepherd University Outstanding Faculty Awards included Dr. Rebecca Mercado, assistant professor of education; Dr. Joseph Robbins, assistant professor of political science; Dr. Gordon DeMeritt, department chair and associate professor of business administration; and Dr. Carol Plautz, assistant professor of biology.

The Outstanding Teacher Award was given to Dr. Plautz, for her willingness to explore new teaching and learning initiatives (i.e.; learning communities, research mentoring, and experiential learning opportunities), strong student support as evidenced by evaluation critiques, and overall excellence in all aspects of the profession.

Winners of the four awards received a special medal and their name was added to the Outstanding Faculty Awards plaque on display in the Dr. Howard N. Carper, Jr. Learning Commons in the Scarborough Library of Shepherd. They also received a $500 professional development stipend from Dr. Richard Helldobler, vice president for academic affairs.
Watson named dean of library

June 9, 2011

SHEPHERDSTOWN - Shepherd University has named Ann Watson, of Granville, Ohio, as the new dean of the Scarborough Library, effective June 30. Watson comes to Shepherd after serving as the library director at Ohio University-Lancaster since fall 2008.

While at Ohio University, she was responsible for the integration of technology through participation in the campus library system and oversaw a $1.8 million renovation project. Watson previously served as head of access services, head of instruction and instruction coordinator at Denison University from 1997 until September 2008.

Watson holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from West Virginia University, a Master of Science in library science in library and information science from Kent State University, and a Master of Arts degree in education from The Ohio State University and is a member of the American Library Association and the Academic Library Association of Ohio.
Former Shepherd student pursues online writing passion

Holly Williford / Special to The Chronicle

After graduating with an regents bachelor of arts from Shepherd University, Shepherdstown native Naber Bouberhan is self-publishing via The Useless Critic, an online pop-culture blog he has contributed to for the past two years.

"Yes, I am having trouble finding a job post-Shepherd. I heard on the radio once, 'What do you do with a degree in Liberal Arts? Answer: Get a nose ring and start pouring coffee at Starbucks.' Well, I would if Starbucks would give me a job," Bouberhan said in an email interview.

Bouberhan is moving to Anchorage, Ala., to school this summer at Alaska Pacific University to pursue his degree in Cultural Studies. Right now Bouberhan works in online advertising; however, his main focus is on The Useless Critic, where he is self-publishing two novels under pen names.

"The material we currently feature would have been very difficult to market to publishers not because of quality, but because of things like printing costs, concerns about language, censorship and finding a target audience. Our target audience is anyone that uses the Internet," Bouberhan said.

Through his novels he hopes to cause what he describes as "laugh riots."

"When I go to the theatre, I like to see the laugh riots. I like to see the plays that make me unstable with laughter. I want to be in a state where I need recovery. I like material that pushes the extremes of humanity," Bouberhan said.

Right now Bouberhan is working on a new work called "All American Pick-up Lines."

"It is exactly what it sounds like - pick up lines for each state in the U.S. and possibly Canada," Bouberhan said, "The pick up line for South Carolina: 'Yes, I will date you even if your daddy wasa clansman'."

Bouberhan and his fellow contributors have goals from television to European comedic tours for expansions of The Useless Critic, which is now up to 1,000 viewers a day.

"There is no other website on the planet earth that features our styles of humor and views on pop culture. Some people might say it's weird, and I could simply say it's different, but that is a little too boring. We are
different because we cross into so many genres. We feature music mixes that consist of everything from indie and pop to the traditional music of Japan," Bouberhan said.

The Useless Critic was founded in January 2009 by Brittany Kemp who met Bouberhan at Edinboro University. Bouberhan transferred to Shepherd University, but they still work together along with contributors who span from Pittsburgh, Pa.; Washington, D.C.; Los Angeles; South Korea and soon to be Chicago.

Despite having difficulties finding stable employment, Bouberhan remains optimistic with his experience at Shepherd University.

"I think the professors at Shepherd really made the difference for me. It was a positive experience and the University tried hard and worked hard with their work," Bouberhan said.

To read and/or purchase Bouberhan's work and view the blog, visit www.theuselesscritic.com.
CATF rehearsals begin

Festival to kick off July 8

Tricia Fulks / Chronicle Editor

Daniel Morgan Shelley has been acting professionally for five years. The Juilliard graduate, who came to town earlier this week to begin rehearsals for the Contemporary American Theater Festival, admits it took him a little time to get his footing in the world of theater.

But, he said, this is what he lives for interacting with the audience, other cast members and the crew. Shelley feels his role as a storyteller to keep live theater enduring.

"I feel like I'm part of a very long tradition of storytelling that has gone back a long time," he said. "People go to the theater to have an experience."

And it is experiences that CATF Producing Director Ed Herendeen hope the cast and crew create for themselves and the audience this summer as they embark on the Season 21.

Monday CATF staff and board members as well as many locals welcome this year's cast, crew and playwrights with a picnic on the Frank Center lawn to kick off rehearsals for this season's festival.

Herendeen gave remarks, noting that it is the story that bring people in.

"We believe that the stage is absolutely essential viewing for anyone interested in ideas and the power of story," he said. "Ideas are powerful, but stories are
Center lawn Monday evening. The CATF Board organized the welcoming function for the Season 21 company. (Chronicle photo by Trida Fulks)

Advertisement

more powerful."

He added, "Tell me a story' still comprises four of the most powerful words in the English. Stories have forever been cultural threads. They help make sense of our world."

And this year, all of these stories, the newest plays in American theater, will be told in Shepherdstown, Herendeen said, the oldest town in West Virginia.

"The power of place has everything to do with the success of the Contemporary American Theater Festival," he said.

The shows that will kick of Season 21 include Tracy Thurber's play "The Insurgents," in which CATF received a donation to commission. Shelley will play the part of Nat Turner in this play. Others include Pulitzer Prize winner David Mamet's "Race," which has already appeared on Broadway, and Sam Shepard's play, "Ages of the Moon," which premiered in Ireland before CATF bought the rights.

Tracy Thorne is a playwright new to CATF, but her play, "We Are Here," will be directed by CATF veteran Lucie Tiberghien, in her fifth season with the festival.

Thorne recruited long-time friend and film and television actress Tamara Tunie to play the part of Vera. Tunie said she had hoped to one day be in Thorne's play, and as a Broadway producer, she also appreciates CATF's mission.

"It is my desire to see as many American playwrights produced on the Broadway stage as I can," she said.

Tunie said it is obvious the CATF board and Herendeen are engaged and committed to the playwrights and what they do.

Kyle Bradstreet can attest to that.

Bradstreet's show, "From Prague," the fifth show the the rotating repertoire, will have its world premiere at this year's festival. Herendeen will direct. Bradstreet, who has produced various one-acts off Broadway, written "Alcohol." and "Honor Thy Mother," did readings in his Brooklyn apartment before CATF bought the rights to it.

"Working in the room with (Ed) is absolutely incredible," Bradstreet said. "He's so responsive of the playwright. He wants to work side-by-side with the playwright and make sure we have the same vision."

For the month of June, until the festival kicks off July 8, the actors will be in rehearsals on Shepherd University's campus while the crew prepares the sets and costumes.

"Over the next two months," Herendeen told the company Monday night, "we have been granted the privilege to make theater and make believe."
Shepherd earns grant of nearly $29,000

SHEPHERDSTOWN - Seung-yun Kim, Shepherd University assistant professor of computer information sciences, has received a $28,800, one-year grant award from the West Virginia IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence program. This is the second year that Kim has received an INBRE award for his research on Petri nets. This year’s proposal is titled “Petri Nets-based Modeling of Human Systems: Towards Drug Trial Modeling & Simulation.”

Based on the INBRE 2010-2011, Kim published three peer-reviewed technical papers at the International Conference on Bioinformatics and Computational Biology in March in New Orleans. These papers include Krebs Cycle, Glycolysis Petri Net Models, and Simulations for Biochemical Education. Melissa Pegues, senior chemistry major from Charles Town, and Nicholas Drozd, senior computer engineering major from Martinsburg, worked with Kim on this research with collaborating faculty member Robert Warburton, Shepherd professor of biochemistry.

“This research opportunity will give students a chance to look at other student’s work in the biochemistry area and an opportunity to use presentation skills they will use in the future,” Kim said.

The grant award will allow two students, who have yet to be named, to work with Kim this summer. The project will begin May 1 and run through April 30, 2012.

“The overall intent is to determine if using Petri nets can improve the process of drug development by replacing some of the pre-clinical trials in animals with a mathematical model,” Kim said. “The proposed research will increase the awareness of Petri nets and its tools as well as the importance of the pre-trialing of drugs and provide undergraduate students with a blend of conceptual and theoretical knowledge and practical, hands-on experience to develop critical thinking and research skills.”

Research from this project will be presented this summer at the WV-INBRE Summer Symposium at Marshall University in July; work on the project will continue through the academic year 2011-2012.

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Hearing showed strong support for preservation

Delegate John Doyle / The Doyle Report

A public hearing held recently by the Jefferson County Commission about spending county money on the purchase of what is called the "cement mill" property drew about 40 citizens, capacity for the commission's meeting room in Charles Town.

About 20 people (I included) spoke in favor of the effort. Only one person spoke against it. I talked with several people who did not speak and all of them said they supported the effort. A couple of years ago the commission voted to put $100,000 toward the effort. Now one of the five commissioners wants the county to back away from the deal and two others have indicated they are considering that position.

The state of West Virginia has contributed two grants of $100,000 each toward purchase of the property. These grants are from federal money distributed by the state Department of Transportation (DOT). The Civil War Preservation Trust has contributed $100,000. The owner is asking $400,000.

However, the appraisal for the property is $339,000. Will the owner agree to lower the price? If so, the Commission would not have to pay the full $100,000. The DOT's approval of the appraisal does not mean that the purchase price cannot exceed $339,000. It just means that the state's contribution may not exceed that figure.

Actually, the Commission would not have to pay the full $400,000 anyway. The Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association has committed $5,000 and I have committed at least $25,000 from the money provided for "community participation projects" (CPPs). All of that can count toward the required local "match."

A certain amount of CPP money is assigned each year to each member of the legislature to allocate as he or she wishes. That money can go to just about anything as long as it isn't used to pay salaries. In the past I have allocated it to parks, day care centers, historic preservation and myriad other local endeavors. No local entity gets an ongoing stream of money. Each year's CPP money is allocated that year.

So, now we're down to $70,000 for which the County Commission would be responsible even if the purchase price were to remain at $400,000 (which nobody expects). Also, the Save Historic Antietam Foundation indicated at the public hearing that it might be amenable to helping financially. The purpose of buying the property would be to hold it until it could be made part of either Antietam Battlefield National Historic Park or Harpers Ferry National Historic Park.

I worked very hard to get the two state DOT grants because I firmly believe that the site of the Battle of
Shepherdstown must be preserved for posterity. The "cement mill" property is part, but not all, of the site of that historic Civil War battle.

When I spoke at the hearing I said I looked forward to the property someday being part of the Antietam park. I personally think that makes more sense than making it part of Harpers Ferry since Antietam is much closer. However, I would be quite happy to see it become part of Harpers Ferry as well. And Harpers Ferry makes some sense because that park isn't just about the Civil War. The Harpers Ferry park also has industrial history as part of its mission, and the cement mills at the Shepherdstown Battlefield site are historic in their own right.

A few people seem to confuse the question of the cement mill property with that of the so-called "tobacco warehouse," which is in the town of Shepherdstown (the cement mill is a mile downriver). These are entirely separate issues.

The National Park Service (NPS) is presently having a study done by a group of historians. That group will recommend to the NPS whether or not the property should be made part of the national park system and, if so, into which park it should be incorporated. That recommendation is expected sometime this fall.

Technically, the deadline set by the West Virginia DOT for concluding this deal is July 1. The county commission had planned to vote on the question June 23. But DOT took several months longer than expected to analyze and approve the appraisal (as this is being written the paperwork had still not been put in the mail from Charleston). So DOT has told me that it will not hold Jefferson County to that July 1 deadline. The commission will have several months beyond July 1 to decide. That's good, because we can await the NPS historians' recommendation.

The one person who testified against preserving the Shepherdstown Battlefield site said that no tax money should go to this sort of thing. Well, our tax money already goes to this sort of thing elsewhere in West Virginia.

The Droop Mountain Battlefield State Park, on the Greenbrier/Pocahontas county line, gets operating money of about $140,000 each year from the state treasury. Droop Mountain was a significant early battle of the Civil War in that it was a major reason the Confederacy gave up on trying to keep what was then western Virginia from federal hands. Otherwise the state of West Virginia most likely would not have been created.

But Shepherdstown, by "cementing" (pun intended) the Union victory at Antietam, also had much to do with enabling the founding of our state. That also helped President Lincoln's issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. And Shepherdstown was bloodier than Droop Mountain. In fact, Shepherdstown had more casualties than any other battle fought on the soil of what is now West Virginia. Our tax money should go to Droop Mountain but not to Shepherdstown? Please.

A few deniers still argue that nothing of consequence happened at the Battle of Shepherdstown. Indeed, when I was growing up in Charles Town in the 1950s and attending Shepherd University in the 1960s, nobody knew much about the Battle of Shepherdstown. Not until recently have folks begun to pay attention to Civil War historians (some of whom have been screaming at us for years that this site is very important).

I asked Dr. Mark Snell, director of the George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War at Shepherd University (and one of those historians who has been trying to get our attention) why Shepherdstown had been overlooked. His answer: "Simple. It happened the day after Antietam." The 23,000 casualties in one day there put the entire nation into a state of collective shock.

It's about time we remembered.
Nonprofit to premiere "Rosie" movie

A West Virginia nonprofit will hold a screening for a documentary film showcasing the lives and work of real-life "Rosie the Riveters" at the Erma Ora Byrd Center as part of an effort to bring national awareness to the "Rosie the Riveter" history.

The film called "We Pull Together: Rosie the Riveters, Then and Now" was produced by award-winning documentary filmmaker B.J. Gudmundsson who worked in cooperation with the nonprofit "Thanks! Plain and Simple."

Anne Montague, executive director of the nonprofit, spearheaded the more than four-year effort to locate "Rosies" to tell their story.

Montague said her goal was to actively involve them in the process of educating others about their work. The documentary film is one of the many "educational tools," including things like an alphabet book and workshops for teachers, that are being developed about the "Rosie the Riveter" history.

Though Montague began working out of Charleston, she hopes that with the premiere of the film, "Thanks! Plain and Simple" can expand the "Rosie" movement to the Eastern Panhandle and eventually the entire nation.

Montague said the film demonstrates how the "Rosies" pulled together and became a community working together for the cause of freedom. She hopes people will come together now to embrace the "Rosie" story.

"The women have showed us that they can pull together. The country needs to pull together," she said.

Gudmundsson said the film will provide viewers with information that many of the "Rosies" feel has been left out of the history books.

Gudmundsson said that films like this are important educational opportunities because they explore the human experiences that make up American history and go beyond dates and facts.

"It's important that people be able to tell their own stories in their own words," she said.

Gudmundsson, who works independently, won the West Virginia Filmmaker of the Year award in 2005 for her film "30 Cal Price and the Pocahontas Times."
Gudmundsson has produced at least 17 other documentaries chronicling historical and cultural topics.

For the "Rosies" film, Gudmundsson said she combined the 60 hours of footage collected by the nonprofit and videographers around the state, including Shepherd University professor Kevin Williams, and drafted it into a 70-minute documentary.

Gudmundsson described the finished product as a "conversation" that pulls together anecdotes from each of the 34 women interviewed.

The film will chronicle both the work lives of the "Rosies" featured and the personal impact the war had on each woman's life.

Both Montague and Gundmusson expressed a sense of urgency about telling the "Rosies" story.

Montague hopes the film will kick off a national movement to find and document the "Rosies" legacy before it's too late.

"Women are leaving us frequently to health or death. It's imperative to us to get women while their still living," she said.

Gundmusson hopes that this film will inspire more work like it.

"There are lots of stories still yet to be told," she said.

The film will premiere tonight, Friday June 10 at 6:30 p.m at the Shepherd University Erma Ora Byrd Auditorium. A reception will precede the film beginning at 5 p.m. Many "Rosies" featured in the film plan to attend.
Students participate in national piano auditions

The 2011 National Piano Playing Auditions were held May 18 to 20 in Shipley Recital Hall on the Advertisement campus of Shepherd University.

Arlene Manger of Sterling, Va., was this year's adjudicator.


Area teachers who entered students in the 2011 Guild Auditions were Jenny Anderson, Janet Marsceau, Gary Mullenax, Sandy Paine, Ruth Raubertas and Brenda Slick.