

ADVOCATE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Marching Patriots denied another tradition, memory

BY LEAH PIFER
Charles Town

As the 2021-2022 marching season for the Marching Patriots [at Washington High School] came to an end, the last football game flooded my fellow seniors and I with many emotions. It was unbelievable that we would be marching in our final high school show. Though it brought a nostalgic atmosphere to the night, there was still an incredible amount of energy among us.

We marched down to the field, played the school's "fight" song, the national anthem, then went and set up in the stands. Our football team was losing, but nevertheless we continued to play our stand tunes, bringing life to the rest of the stadium. We politely watched the Jefferson marching show; then marched onto the field. We flawlessly pulled off our show, and as the last notes rang through the stadium the senior's marching career was over. After we march our show, we usually get the third quarter off as a reward for our efforts on the field. During this time while the whole band is eating or finding family, the drumline moves onto the track in front of the student section to have their drum show.

This has been a tradition at WHS since its establishment in 2007.

On Friday Nov. 5th, 2021, this tradition was ripped away from our drumline. There are four seniors in the Patriots drumline and on our last game of the season, Principal Judy Marcus put an end to their last drum show. Because, in her words,

it was a football game not a drum show. This completely put a stop to the music causing uproar within the stands. The worst part may be that she only seemed to care that the Washington drummers did not have their show and allowed Jefferson drummers to continue theirs. The Washington football team was losing 47-13 at this point, so as the beating of the Jefferson drums carried to the Washington side of the field and our drumline had been shut down, we felt even more defeated as a band, but more importantly as a school.

This was not the first and most likely will not be the last time that important traditions and honors have been stripped away from the Washington band. Just this past summer, our band camp was changed from an away camp to an "on campus" camp, taking away countless traditions that band members look forward to every summer. Parents were notified that the [school] board had made the decision to not have an away camp for the bands, but Jefferson High School had their away camp.

In simple terms this is just another example of why it feels that the fine arts come second to sports teams in the eyes of Judy Marcus and Washington High School. In the last two years when so much has been lost to COVID-19, having these traditions taken away has been just that more devastating to the Marching Patriots.

Leah Pifer is a senior and an alto saxophone player with Washington High School's marching band.



Climate change is real, let's get to work

BY WEST VIRGINIA DELEGATES
John Doyle (D-Jefferson),
Evan Hansen (D-Monongalia)
and Kayla Young (D-Kanawha)

In early November countries across the world came together in Glasgow for the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference to discuss how the world will address our climate crisis. States have led on climate action for years, but now is the time for the federal government to raise our national ambition. The United States has an immense opportunity to harness the power of the clean energy economy to create new, well-paying jobs.

Across the country this year we have seen historic damages from hurricanes and wildfires, droughts and flooding, heat waves and cold snaps. As state legislators we see firsthand the impacts of climate change in West Virginia. The Mountain State faces blistering heat and increased flooding. By 2050, West Virginia is projected to see more than 60 days of extreme heat days annually, among the top-10 increases in the lower 48 states. We are also experiencing an increase in heavy downpours and flooding. There are more than 150,000 West Virginians living in

areas at risk of flooding.

We don't have to choose between good jobs and tackling climate change. Renewable energy provides a unique opportunity for West Virginians to choose jobs that allow their families to thrive. As we continue to battle climate change here, we can look to other states across the country and know that we are not acting alone.

States across the country have been at the forefront of climate action while building the new clean energy economy and addressing systemic inequities. More than two-thirds of U.S. states and territories have some form of Renewable Portfolio Standard or Clean Energy Standard. States are also transitioning fleets to zero-emissions vehicles, making buildings more energy efficient, and protecting natural landscapes to enhance carbon sequestration.

States are also working to increase renewable energy while prioritizing workers and communities. Environmental and labor coalitions in Illinois, New York and Connecticut have organized to pass clean energy legislation that safeguards the rights of workers including prevailing wage and project labor agreement provisions, job train-

ing programs, and supply chain incentives. Colorado has created a Just Transition Office to ensure that fossil fuel workers are protected during the clean energy transition.

And the West Virginia House of Delegates has established a Coal Community Workgroup to aid the communities in our coalfields to recover from coal's decline. One of us is a member of that workgroup.

While state action is critical, we can't do this alone. States rely on the federal government to serve as a strong baseline for climate action. In this moment, we must stand united. Together, with strong international, national and state action, we can take the steps that are needed to avoid further climate catastrophe and to create a clean energy economy that lifts all Americans up.

We encourage President Biden, U.S. Senators Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito, and U.S. Representatives David McKinley, Alex Mooney and Carol Miller to consider this your mandate from West Virginia. Think of our workers and families in every negotiation room. The federal government must lead on the international stage to address climate change and take full advantage of the benefits the new clean energy economy offers.

West Virginia must rethink its roadway construction process

BY STATE DELEGATE
SHANNON KIMES
Rockport, West Virginia

For West Virginia to prosper we must reform how we design, build and maintain our highways. After a century plus of highway building, many counties lack four-lane highways nor exists highways connecting major parts of WV. At the current pace, expansion of WV Route 2 from Huntington to Newell will be around about never at a cost of gazillions.

There is no four-lane connecting our state capital to the eastern nor northern panhan-

dles without transiting another state.

We must radically reduce the cost and time of building and maintaining roads. The current system, created by so called professionals and bureaucrats, benefits the current participants. They think the system only needs taxpayers working harder and sending Charleston more funding. Continuing to throw money at the current system will only result in additional slowly-built-expensive roads to mediocrity. The current par-



Shannon Kimes

ticipants should have little, if anything, to do with creating a new system.

Taking years to procure chunks of land often using our expensive and broken court system, starting over with every design, dozens of people scratching around with relatively puny pieces of earth-moving equipment, etc., isn't going to get us anywhere. Borrowing money for 25 years to repave roads with asphalt that only lasts seven years isn't a long-term solu-

tion. Our grandkids will pay on the debt while they drive in potholes fleeing the state.

The state should embark on a total overhaul of the current highway design, build and maintenance system. We need to encourage and assist the private sector to develop new equipment on the scale necessary to build highways at a rate of miles per day not inches per decade. New equipment that uses tens of thousands of horsepower rather than a few hundred to landscape the terrain rapidly like mining machinery needs designed, tested and built.

West Virginia has the people and inventiveness along with the capability to rethink highway construction. We must reduce the cost by 90 percent and speed the process by a factor of 10 times. The current participants will never do it; they will say it isn't possible and they will do everything in their power to hinder progress.

Just like Boeing and NASA would never have built a reusable rocket nor Henry Ford's competitors have ever built a \$260 car.

If West Virginia is going to move forward economically, we need modern highways in

every crack and crevice, built more rapidly and more cost effectively. Manufacturing larger and better equipment to build and maintain highways could be a job creating export industry for West Virginians. First, we must have the courage to send the current system to the ash heap of history. It is failing our people miserably.

Shannon Kimes is a West Virginia delegate representing the 9th District representing Wood and Wirt counties. He owns Kimes Steel and Rail Inc., a family owned manufacturer of railroad track products and materials.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Nov. 21, 1810: Allen Taylor Caperton was born in Monroe County. Caperton served in the Confederate Senate during the Civil War and in the U.S. Senate from 1875 to 1876.

Nov. 19, 1854: Poet Danske Dandridge was born in Copenhagen. The daughter of an American ambassador, she lived in Shepherdstown from age 19, where her work was published in Harper's and The Century. Both of her homes, The Bower and Rosebrake, are Jefferson County landmarks.

Nov. 20, 1894: Eight men were killed in a coal mine disaster near Colliers, Brooke County. They were using a dangerous method called "shooting from the solid," meaning that they blasted the coal loose without first undercutting it.

Nov. 19, 1899: Sculptor Gladys Tuke was born in Linwood, Pocahontas County. Tuke was a member of the original artist colony at The Greenbrier; during World War II she taught at Ashford General Hospital, and later established a pottery and sculpture studio in White Sulphur Springs.

Nov. 19, 1900: William Page Pitt was born in New York City. In 1926, Pitt joined the faculty of what was then Marshall

College. In his 45-year career at Marshall, he built its journalism program into one with dozens of classes and hundreds of students. Today, Marshall University's W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications is named in his honor.

Nov. 22, 1910: Fire destroyed the academic building at Concord College. By the next morning, community leaders arranged for teaching the 300 students in rooms throughout the town.

Nov. 20, 1917: Robert C. Byrd was born in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina. He was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1958 and remained in office until his death in 2010.

Nov. 19, 1921: The USS West Virginia was christened. It was one of the six battleships at Pearl Harbor on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, suffering massive damage from torpedoes and bombs in the surprise attack. The USS West Virginia was rebuilt and joined the Seventh Fleet for the invasion of the Philippines.

Nov. 22, 1926: Selva Lewis "Lew" Burdette Jr. was born in Nitro. Burdette was an outstanding major league baseball player who spent most of his career with the Milwaukee Braves.

Nov. 23, 1962: Roman Catholic Bishop John Joseph Swint died. He was a great builder of religious institutions in the Diocese of Wheeling.

Nov. 18, 2007: Country singer Chickie Williams died. As wife of musician Doc Williams, she performed with his Border Riders band and appeared on the Wheeling Jamboree radio show.

Nov. 20, 1968: An explosion at Consolidation Coal Company's No. 9 mine near Farmington killed 78 men. The disaster brought national attention to the issue of mine safety.

Nov. 24, 2008: Former Governor Cecil Underwood died in Charleston. Underwood, West Virginia's 25th and 32nd governor, had the distinction of having served as the state's youngest and oldest chief executive.

The West Virginia Encyclopedia is a project of the West Virginia Humanities Council. For more information contact the West Virginia Humanities Council, 1310 Kanawha Blvd. E., Charleston, WV 25301; (304) 346-8500; or visit e-WV at www.wvencyclopedia.org.