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On the cover

The CAWV 2020-2021 President Michael Gianni is president of the third-generation family-owned business, The James White Construction Company located in Weirton, West Virginia. His mentors were his father, uncle and grandfathers who instilled in him a sense of pride in completing projects successfully that had the company name attached to them. He brought that same level of dedication to his service as president of the largest, full-service association serving West Virginia's construction industry. For more on President Gianni's year leading the CAWV, see page 6. Cover photo by Pat McDonald.

The Contractors Association of West Virginia is a nonprofit trade organization representing the building, highway, heavy and utility contracting industries in West Virginia. Its services include establishment of a close working liaison with state and federal agencies; worthwhile educational and informational programs; the regular dissemination of pertinent information to its members; strong legislative and media relations; as well as all other activities deemed necessary and proper to promote the general welfare of the construction industry. The CAWV is a certified chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America and the American Road and Transportation Builders Association.

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MICHAEL L. CLOWSER
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2020-2021 CAWV President **MICHAEL GIANNI**

2020 – 2021 CAWV President Michael (Mike) Gianni is a third-generation contractor in the family business. The James White Construction Company, Weirton, has been serving the Tri-State area of West Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania well before its incorporation in 1949. The company, founded by Gianni's grandfather, James White Senior, started out primarily as a utility and small excavation contractor. Through the years they have expanded and diversified into industrial, commercial, heavy/highway, and private site development work. Gianni began attending West Virginia Utility Contractors Association meetings in 1985. He served as WVUCA president from 1998 to 2001. The leadership and personal skills learned from working in a family-owned construction firm helped guide him during his year at the helm of the Contractors Association of West Virginia.

His year as President of the Contractors Association of West Virginia was not what Mike Gianni was expecting. First there was COVID, then hip surgery which had him sidelined for a few weeks.

Through Zoom, and with the help of CAWV leadership and committee chairs, this year's president didn't miss a beat. Committee meetings and planning sessions were held using Zoom and he participated in most every one of them.

"Our officers and committee chairs really stepped up in order to keep the association moving forward," said President Gianni. "The pandemic was not what I expected I would be dealing with during my year in office."

One thing that was expected by this year's president is he would join the family construction business after graduating West Virginia University with a degree in business administration.

"I never thought that I wouldn't be at the James White Construction Company," said Gianni, who is a third-generation member of the Weirton-based utility contracting firm. "I worked all through high school as a laborer. Most of the time I was doing the jobs the other workers didn't want to do," he quipped.

In 1949, The James White Construction Company was incorporated by Gianni's grandfather, James White Senior. Prior to that, the company

operated as Weir-Cove Ice and Coal Company, delivering ice and coal to residents and businesses in the Weirton and Steubenville, Ohio area. In 1956, Donald Gianni Senior, Gianni's father and James White's son-in-law, joined the company. His uncle, James White Junior, began work in 1966. Mike Gianni graduated WVU in December 1979 and started work in February 1980.

"The first day I came to work wearing a tee-shirt, jeans and boots," the new graduate recalled. "My Uncle Jimmy made it clear that I would not be dressing like that in the office. More was expected if I was to represent James White Construction."

After getting experience in doing plan

take offs, Gianni began bidding jobs and then started taking care of smaller projects. The company mainly worked in and around Weirton, including performing much of the civil work undertaken by Weirton Steel and Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel.

"Weirton Steel would always invite us to bid on their projects, and other times they would just tell us to come and do the work," he recalled. "Most all of our jobs were within an hour's drive until the early 1980s when we got a big sewer job in Richmond, Indiana."

ENR ran an advertisement for the \$3 million to \$4 million project. Infrastructure construction was slow in the Weirton area and the company submitted the successful bid. That led to three contracts totaling about \$7 million on a sewer job in Cincinnati.

"I spent a lot of time traveling to Indiana and Cincinnati but I got to know a lot of the local people," Gianni stated. "They helped with locating subs and the projects were very successful. This is when JWC started branching out."

In mid-1980, JWC was successful on two of four contracts for a major sewer project in Buckhannon.

"This is one of the first jobs I took care of," Gianni said. "It was a big project at the time, about \$4 million."

A major project in the mid-1990s was a water project for the Raleigh County Public Service District to provide service to the new regional jail under construction near the airport.

"We ran a 16" ductile iron water pipe from Daniels to the jail which required us to bore under I-64," he noted. "The rock on this project was crazy. We had a 44" trencher that was going through buckets of teeth a day."

The outgoing CAWV president recalled one of his favorite projects in his early career at JWC.

"Geupel Construction in Columbus had the concrete pavement replacement project for the Pittsburgh International Airport in the early 1990s

and they subbed all the underground storm sewer to us. When you fly into Pittsburgh, all the new taxiways you see are part of that project. It is very unique to work within an airport facility and it was fascinating to watch the airport terminal being built."

Over the years, JWC performed the water, sewer and drainage work for Geupel on their West Virginia Division of Highways' projects.

"We probably did most of the utility work on the I-470 bridge project as well as the underground facilities on Interstates 70 and 470 in the Wheeling area," he said.

"Uncle Jim would drag me along to Charleston for the Tuesday highway bid lettings," he recalled. "After a while,

it was my job to come to Charleston on Monday to prepare the bids and deliver them to the drop box by 10:00 a.m. on bid day. I stayed at the old Charleston House hotel so I got to meet a lot of the contractors and suppliers. I always enjoyed coming to Charleston but not so much the four-hour drive back to Weirton the next day," he laughed.

WVDOH work is what got Gianni involved in the West Virginia Utility Contractors Association (WVUCA). Jim White was active in WVUCA and served on its Board of Directors.

"WVUCA would have their meetings around the same time as the WVDOH lettings so I started attending," Gianni commented. "I met people who did the same things as me and we were discussing the same things. It was good



Mike Gianni is a third-generation contractor working in the family business. His leadership skills and personal traits were instilled by his father, Donald Gianni Senior (far right) and uncle, James White Senior (second from right). Other family members in the James White Construction Company include brothers Donald Gianni Junior (far left) and Robert Gianni (middle).



Today's leadership team at James White Construction are Donald Gianni Junior, Mike Gianni and Robert Gianni.



Mike Gianni's grandfather, James White Senior, operated Weir-Cove Ice and Coal Company before incorporating The James White Construction Company in 1949.

to hear from them. I got to meet leaders in the utility contracting industry like Ken Dunn, Vernon Withrow, Ron Spradling and Ron Whitney. They all treated me very well. They freely shared their experience and they educated me on how to do things the right way."

Gianni became very involved in the utility contractors association, including WV EXPO. WVUCA and the West Virginia Society of Professional Engineers are the original founders of the annual equipment and design exposition.

"The first EXPO I attended was at the Charleston Civic Center when all the exhibits were in one room, and even then we didn't fill up the room," he noted. "Back then, all the exhibitors were construction related, no computer or service-related firms. Technology plays such a big role in our industry today which comprises a large segment of EXPO. You can be at EXPO for two

days and still not see everything that's offered."

[Editor's Note: After a two-year hiatus due to COVID, WV EXPO will be held March 23 and 24, 2022.]

Gianni became involved with the Contractors Association of West Virginia in 1985 when CAWV and WVUCA joined. He served as WVUCA president 1998 – 2001.

He said there were numerous issues utility contractors dealt with in the 1980s and 1990s. These include WVDOH issues such as working along DOH rights-of-way, standardization and inspection fees. He was also instrumental in the creation the West Virginia Bid Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse was established to prevent bid dates for major water and sewer projects being scheduled on the same day or close to one another. This service, still being operated today, attempts to prevent a project's bid date from con-

flicting with an already established bid date for another project.

One issue that Gianni is proud of is his work on "Amendment 3, Yes for Clean Water and Jobs," the \$300 million Infrastructure Improvement Amendment for water, sewer and economic development related construction. Amendment 3 was on the November 8, 1994 ballot and was the first general obligation bond issue to be favorably decided by West Virginia voters since 1973.

The amendment created the immediate benefits of an aggressive water and sewer construction program, as well as a revolving fund that, to this day, makes annual appropriations for clean water in every area of West Virginia.

"CAWV and WVUCA members were very supportive and active in the campaign to promote the amendment to voters," said the WVUCA leader. "We were able to show that thousands of jobs would be created just from the spending on water and sewer construction projects alone. Once the projects were completed, they provided more economic activity that created even more jobs throughout West Virginia's economy."

Amendment 3 passed by the slimmest margins of any constitutional amendment in the history of the state -- 191,373 votes for and 186,244 votes against.

"There was a lot of support for Amendment 3 but it still only passed by a margin of 50.7 percent to 49.3 percent," stated Gianni. "This speaks to



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the strength of the CAWV and WVUCA and what we can accomplish when we all work together. I think people listen when our members have something to say."

The outgoing CAWV president said the relationship the two organizations have established with funding agencies has allowed them to gain a confidence and understanding that the industry is trying to work through problems and issues that are mutually beneficial.

"I'm confident the joint committees we have with the highway, utility and building funding agencies create the best quality construction at the best price. This ultimately benefits the taxpayers of West Virginia who fund these projects," he opined.

The outgoing president reflected on his term at the helm of the largest, full-service association serving West Virginia's construction industry.

"I did not expect that we would have to rely so much on technology to meet

our goals and objectives," he observed. "Our officers and committee chairs navigated their duties through Zoom and webinars and we were able to keep members engaged and involved. I think we need to get back to sitting around the table looking at each other face-to-face, but Zoom meetings will allow more members to participate in the future."

Gianni said he is very confident with CAWV's upcoming officers and directors.

"I am very pleased Nate Orders is following me as president," he stated. "Nate has been involved in the construction industry all his life. He has participated in just about every activity of the association. He and the officers will be engaged and will work hard for the industry."

CAWV's 2021-2022 President Nate Orders, president of the third-generation construction firm, Orders Construction Company, St. Albans, thanked the outgoing president and praised him for his

year of service to the association at this year's CAWV Annual Meeting held July 8-11 at The Greenbrier.

"Mike, you represented the association and the construction industry well," said incoming President Orders. "You led the association through uncharted waters this year. You did a fantastic job as our president."

The traits Gianni brought to his year as CAWV president were instilled by working in a family business.

"I was inspired by my grandfathers, Gaston Gianni and James White Senior," he said, "as well as my Uncle Jim and father, Don. My Dad was well respected for being honest and dependable. I'd hear this from other people. My Dad always told my brothers and me to treat people with respect, be fair, give a good product and, hopefully, they will call you back for more work."

Brothers Robert Gianni started with JWC in 1976 and is treasurer and general manager, and Donald Gianni Ju-



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Mike Gianni and Terri Binkoski have been together for over 20 years.

nior began in 1991 and is secretary and safety officer.

"James White's employees have always been local people, like family even though they weren't," stated Gianni. "They were all familiar with the company which made it family. Lou Almonte is our vice president and general manager who has been with us since early 1990s. David Holt, who recently passed away, was our estimator and project manager since late 1990s."

The fourth generation is entering the firm. His nephew, Thomas Gianni, Donald Junior's son, and Robert's son-in-law, Frank Flora, are working in the company.

Gianni donates his time to other activities. He is serving a second term as president of the Weirton Rotary Club where he received the E.R. Hartman Award for his service to the club and the Weirton community. Now that he has recovered from a second hip surgery, he plans to play more golf and attend WVU home football games.

Gianni has been with Terri Binkoski, his life partner, for over 20 years. He has two daughters, Ashley and Alyssa, and a son, Christopher, and daughter-in-law, Chelsea. He and Terri plan to spend time with his five grandchildren.

He thinks he will never completely retire from James White Construction but he does see a time he will step aside to let someone else run it.

"The CAWV must continue to push for funding for highways, schools and water and sewer projects," he stated emphatically. "We have to build our infrastructure. If West Virginia's economy is strong and people are working, people will be paying taxes which leads to future development. This won't affect me but it will affect future generations."

The seasoned construction professional said the question is where a big pot of money will come from.

But, as Mike Gianni states, "I expect it will all work out."



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West Virginia's Economic Development Efforts Spur Construction Opportunities

Annual Meeting Attendees Learn



Commerce Secretary Ed Gaunch was the keynote speaker at this year's CAWV Annual Meeting General Business Session. Members in attendance learned that West Virginia's economy is rebounding from the COVID pandemic which he believes will benefit construction in the Mountain State.

"My job is to be a catalyst to create an atmosphere where business can flourish in West Virginia," Commerce Secretary Ed Gaunch told members attending the 2021 CAWV Annual Meeting at The Greenbrier that was held July 8-11. "Then these companies can provide a future for their children and grandchildren."

Secretary Gaunch, who was appointed Cabinet Secretary by Gov. Jim Justice in 2018, outlined the positive and negatives of trying to attract businesses to locate in the state.

"There are many things right about West Virginia that are attractive to companies wanting to locate a facility," he stated. "West Virginia ranks sixth in the nation in the cost of doing business."

Factors that make up that ranking include electric rates for industrial users which are consistently lower than the national average. West Virginia has

no federal unemployment debt, the state's workers' compensation rates are 18 percent below median rates and the fourth lowest in the country, and the cost of living is 21.9 percent lower than the national average.

"One of our main challenges is to get a better trained workforce," the secretary stated. "The first question I get from potential developers is 'can we find workers?' Frankly, we have to change this because West Virginia is last in the nation in workforce participation. We need to have people enrolled in community and technical colleges. We need to engage the business community to help develop an educated workforce."

Secretary Gaunch, who was a member of the CAWV for nearly 40 years through Carson Insurance Agency, told members that the perception that West Virginia doesn't have "shovel ready" sites for companies to locate is not necessarily correct. The state

has put money into infrastructure development throughout the state and the West Virginia Legislature, in a June special session, added \$30 million to his agency to help close deals



Secretary Gaunch, who was a member of the CAWV for nearly 40 years through Carson Insurance Agency, told members that the perception that West Virginia doesn't have "shovel ready" sites for companies to locate is not necessarily correct.

on projects. He did note that southern West Virginia lacks critical water and sewer facilities and a modern highway, which hinders development in this part of the state.

"We are doing preliminary design work on water and sewer projects and the federal relief bill is providing millions to infrastructure projects," he told members. "We will never have these federal dollars again and we have to put them to good use. We have to stop planning our future by looking at our past so we must be prepared to take advantage of opportunities when they come our way."

Members attending the General Business Session during the Annual Meeting learned that businesses from 31 countries operate in West Virginia and they employ 30,000 West Virginians. Secretary Gaunch hinted of a huge project that will be announced soon that will be located in Canaan Valley near the Virgin Hyperloop project in Tucker and Grant counties. He did note there have been changes in Virgin Hyperloop's corporate structure which have slowed the project somewhat but told members he hopes the \$500 million project is still going forward.

"We beat out other states to get the Hyperloop because of West Virginia's strategic advantage," said Secretary Gaunch. "We have the ability to get all agencies of state government together around a table and we were able to solve all the issues in one afternoon. This doesn't happen just everywhere."

He hinted of another 'big deal' for West Virginia. He intimated that *Business Facilities Magazine* (BFM) was releasing its rankings of states that will show West Virginia ranked 10th on its Best Business Climate list.

(BFM released its 17th annual rankings following the CAWV meeting showing West Virginia No. 10. Gov. Justice said of the rankings, "For years, I've been saying that West Virginia is the best kept secret on the East Coast, but the word keeps getting out and the world is taking notice of how our state is one of the best

places to live and work. Not only have we improved our state's economy and business climate, we've jumped to the head of the pack. I want to thank all the folks at our Commerce, Economic Development and Tourism departments for all the hard work they've done to make our state shine.")

The state was one of two — the other being Arizona, ranked No. 9 — identified by the magazine as "rising stars" that saw "breakthrough results" for the 2021 ranking.

"When I started this job, I was hoping to be in the top 40," the secretary opined.

West Virginia's economy is rebounding from the pandemic in a quick V-Shape, the secretary noted. Before the COVID pandemic, the state's unemployment rate was 5 percent. During the height of the pandemic, unemployment had jumped to 12.6 percent. He thinks the state's recovery will ultimately benefit construction in the Mountain State.

"Our state park lodges and campgrounds are seeing record numbers and you can't get a camp site through this winter," Secretary Gaunch stated. "The legislature approved a \$60 million bond last year to upgrade park lodges and campsites and the governor got approved a \$42 million supplemental in June for additional upgrades at parks throughout the state. CAWV members are performing much of the work awarded through the Division of Natural Resources."

The DNR is just one of the agencies in the Commerce Department. The secretary gave an overview of the other agencies within the department that interact with the construction industry, including the Division of Labor, WorkForce WV, and Miners' Health, Safety and Training. He also said he is working with the CAWV, the Department of Administration and State Purchasing on an escalation clause for materials and equipment due to the unprecedented rise in construction material pricing.

"Secretary Gaunch has been dili-



CAWV President Mike Gianni welcomed members to Saturday's General Business Session and thanked this year's sponsors who helped make the 2021 meeting a huge success.



Steve McGough, chairman of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), spoke to members about the record-breaking proposed infrastructure bills.



Lisa Teel, assistant vice president of agency operations for Encova, announced a new workers' compensation plan that will include eligible CAWV Associate Division members.



A large number of members attended the Highway/Heavy Division meeting held July 10 in conjunction with the CAWV Annual Meeting at The Greenbrier.



CAWV Highway/Heavy Division Chairman Shannon Hapuarachy, SMH Construction Company, Inc., provided members an overview of recent Joint Cooperative Committee activity including the Specifications, Publications, and Material Procedures committees.



Jimmy Wriston, P.E., deputy secretary of the West Virginia Department of Transportation and deputy commissioner of the West Virginia Division of Highways, provided members an update on the WVDOH's construction and maintenance program.



Steve McGough, chairman of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA), spoke at the Highway/Heavy Division Meeting in addition to the General Business Session.

gently working with Governor Justice to diversify West Virginia's economy and bring new industry and jobs to the state," said CAWV President Mike Gianni, The James White Construction Company, Weirton. "When he talks to prospective companies, he tells them, 'When you live, work and play in West Virginia, it doesn't take long to realize how blessed you are to be here.' We are honored that he attended our meeting to share positive news about West Virginia's future," President Gianni stated.

Nearly 400 members and guests attended the 2021 CAWV Annual Meeting held July 8-11 at The Greenbrier. The meeting began with a reception on Thursday followed by a Board of Directors meeting that discussed a

number of industry issues. Golf, trap and fishing tournaments were held on Saturday and many members took advantage of The Greenbrier's activities.

Steve McGough, chairman of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) and President and CFO of HCSS, Inc., spoke to the full membership about the infrastructure bills proposed by President Biden and House and Senate leadership. He also spoke in detail on highway issues before Congress in the Highway/Heavy Division Meeting, including the reauthorization of the federal highway bill (FAST Act), which is expiring September 30.

"The Senate has passed a bipartisan

bill that provides a 24 percent increase over current highway allocations and the House has a bill that provides a 32 percent increase," McGough told members. "The bills do not fix the Highway Trust Fund because there is still a gap in the amount of funds needed to address America's highway transportation needs."

The Houston, Texas, resident noted the role West Virginia's senators are playing in a national highway bill and in the formation of an infrastructure bill. They both are integral in the development of both issues, he said.

"There are many issues ARTBA is addressing on behalf of our members," the chairman noted. "We are advocating solutions to highway revenue

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The CAWV Building Division was led by Chairman Derick Foster, Paramount Builders. In the meeting, members discussed important issues building contractors are facing.



James Scott Pierson, Triton Construction, Inc., was re-elected CAWV Utilities Division Chairman at the Utilities Division meeting.

shortfalls, defending the industry against unrealistic permitting requirements, hours of service for drivers, local hire and DBE requirements and Buy America provisions. If you are not a contributor of TMAW (Transportation Makes America Work), I urge you to do so," McGough noted.

Lisa Teel, assistant vice president of agency operations for Encova, announced a new workers' compensation plan for CAWV members. Since 2008, the CAWV and Encova have offered a discounted workers' comp plan for contractors, which has saved CAWV members hundreds of thousands of dollars in premiums and provided services to keep jobsites safe.

"We are pleased to announce today a new program that will benefit all CAWV members," Teel stated. "Over the next few months, we will be rolling out a program to CAWV Associate Division members to offer them a discount on their workers' comp premium."

Associate members are eligible for the discount if their operations require them to be on construction sites or perform work similar to construction. Effective September 1, 2021, select CAWV Associate Division members whose policy effective date is on or after September 1 may participate in the program. Associate members whose business operations require them to work on the jobsite on a regular basis, experiencing many of the same risks as the contractor mem-

bers, may now qualify to receive a policy premium discount.

"The CAWV and Encova will host a webinar for members on the new program when the program rolls out," Teel said. "Associate members will receive an emailed invitation once a date is set. Any CAWV associate member insured for workers' compensation by Encova with active payroll in one or more of the classification codes which will be part of the CAWV plan may participate if they meet program eligibility requirements," she said.

INDUSTRY ISSUES DISCUSSED IN DIVISION MEETINGS AT ANNUAL MEETING

A large group turned out for the Highway/Heavy Division meeting held July 10 in conjunction with the CAWV Annual meeting at The Greenbrier. Division Chairman Shannon Hapuarachy, SMH Construction Company, Inc., Beckley, called the meeting to order and provided the audience an overview of recent Joint Cooperative Committee activity, including June meetings of the Specifications, Publications, and Material and Procedures committees, and the Asphalt Subcommittee.

The Highway/Heavy Division hosted Jimmy Wriston, P.E., deputy secretary of the West Virginia Department of Transportation and deputy commissioner of the West Virginia Division of Highways, who provided members an update on the WVDOH's construction

and maintenance program. The division meeting also featured remarks by Steve McGough, chairman of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

Deputy Commissioner Wriston provided an update on the dynamic restructuring of the agency, including formation of two new divisions.

"The Strategic Performance Division helps us become more data driven and the information transparent," he stated, "helping us better apply our valuable resources, and the new Technical Support Division better matches our workflow.

"Our people are our most important resource," he told division members, noting that the agency was able to hire 51 graduate engineers in May, a record. The commissioner commented that three years ago, the average age of their workforce was 57 and today it is 46.

Deputy Commissioner Wriston said he was pleased with the great legislative support given to the WVDOH, noting the \$150 million recently provided to the agency from the general fund. (See the July 16, 2021 CAWV Highway/Heavy Bulletin which provides a list of 425 projects to be funded with the additional \$150 million appropriation). He stressed to members that all of the projects have to be completed by June 1, 2022.

"Agencies are working together, col-



Chad Earl, Bob Orders and Andy Teeter attended this year's Early Bird Reception.



Brittany Presta and Ann Orders converse while enjoying the Thursday evening event.



Nate and Melissa Orders were happy to attend this year's Annual Meeting.



Sean Mayberry and Lee Cooperrider during the Early Bird Reception.



Christina and Bruce Dunlap and Steve and Katie Diehl pose for a photo at this year's event.



Patton Coles, Bob Orders and Steven Carr having a discussion at the Early Bird Reception.



Kevin Teel, Matt Campbell and Gene Thompson greet one another at this year's Annual Meeting.



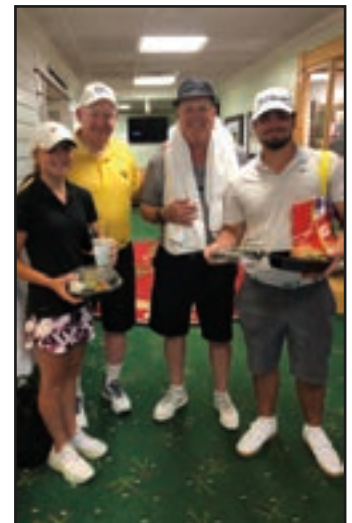
Leo Vecellio and Steve and Elaine McGough talk about the nation's construction issues at the Early Bird Reception.



Over 70 members participated at this year's Annual Meeting Golf Outing on the Meadows Course at The Greenbrier.



The golf outing concluded just in time for a downpour.



Angeline Duriez, Jim Dailey, Andy Teeter and James Dailey after golf.



Ed Gaunch, Mike Gianni, Jim Dailey and Bob Orders catch up during the Welcome Night Reception.



Lisa Thomas, Cameron and Megan Morrison, and Russel Kocher enjoyed this year's Annual Meeting.



Kevin Kemerer and Dave Lanham at the Welcome Night Reception.



Tracy Clay and Jared Clonch attended this year's Annual Meeting at The Greenbrier.



Shannon Hapuarachy and Callie Hutchinson, Chris and Melissa Lambert, and Summer and Keith May catch up at the opening reception.



Andy Jenkins, Matt Farley and Glenn Pratt smile for a photo during the Welcome Reception.



Mike Skeens and Art King enjoyed this year's Annual Meeting.



Newly engaged Annika Lafferty and Austin Thrasher attended this year's event.

laborating, following the vision of the Roads to Prosperity program," he added, commenting on the many years of under-investment in highways. He touched on the critical roles Senators Joe Manchin, D-WV, and Shelley Moore Capito, R-WV, are playing at the federal level, expressing optimism in seeing reauthorization of a federal highway bill by September.

Deputy Commissioner Wriston said that, in his opinion, the General Obligation (GO) bonds are the salvation of West Virginia, stating that the final sale of \$200 million in bonds from the

2017 \$1.6 billion Roads to Prosperity bond amendment has been completed with a very good premium due to high demand for the bonds. He said this \$200 million will be mostly advertised by the end of the year.

There was significant interest from investors in toll revenue bonds the West Virginia Parkways Authority sold on Wall Street in June.

"The authority took \$333 million in bonds to the market that will finance future highway projects in a 10-county region in southern West Virginia. The bond sale also garnered a \$90 million

premium for a total sale of \$423 million," the highways official noted. "All turnpike projects will be let to bid in 2021."

The Parkways Authority was able to secure a 2.62% interest rate on the bonds. They will be paid back over a 30-year period using toll revenue from the Turnpike. (A list of GO bond projects and turnpike bond projects are included in the July 23, 2021 CAWV Highway/Heavy Bulletin.)

Discussing the difference between GO and Turnpike bond funded projects, the deputy commissioner said

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Megan and Dustin Fisher and Ann and Ryan Cocco enjoyed the President's Reception.



Jamie and Cathleen Ridgeway attended this year's Annual Meeting.



Shannon Hapuarachy and Callie Huchinson celebrated their engagement at the event.



Lynn Fink and Brant Moorhead at the Saturday reception.



Sean and Jill Fradiska enjoyed this year's Annual Meeting.



Tammie Alexander and Brian Virtue mingle with members at the President's Reception.



Mark and Angie Urso and their son David attended the Saturday reception.



Jeremy and Meredith Irons with their sons Brennan and Bryson.



Jaclyn and Chad Duriez attended their first Annual Meeting.



Mark and Sara Haverty at the President's Reception at The Greenbrier.



Clay and Sam Booth participated in The Greenbrier's outdoor activities during Saturday's President's Reception.



Emmett Kemerer putted on the green at the Saturday reception.



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turnpike dollars are less restricted on method of procurement and inspection. On a GO bond project, he said, the WVDOH cannot use state forces for inspection. The WVDOH, he said, will be asking consultants to take on more responsibility on one project where they will be asked to provide a lump sum price for inspection.

"We will ask them to look at the overall project, the construction schedule, the size of the package and the risk and we will see how it works," he noted.

The highway division veteran told division members that the agency currently has \$3.6 billion in active projects underway today, five times the normal federal aid program. He said he is proud of the work being done by state forces and the WVDOH maintenance organizations, noting the division's focus on core maintenance activities, generating better life cycles by doing the right things at the right time.

"Our Strategic Performance Division is helping us make better deci-

sions about applying resources where needed based on data," he stated.

There will be five or six Design-Build jobs coming out, but its use will be greatly reduced in the future, according to Deputy Commissioner Wriston, who said the WVDOH is developing new criteria for use of Design-Build.

"Design-Build, in my opinion, while offering some advantages, has been overused and we have not seen projects being done faster or produced savings. The hold up on projects is attributable to environmental, right-of-way and permitting issues," he commented. He told members the Cheat Bridge project on Corridor H will be advertised Design-Build.

Deputy Commissioner Wriston said he thinks that Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects are good for the division's toolbox but that he does not see traditional PPP projects as a good fit for West Virginia. "West Virginia doesn't have the traffic count to generate enough revenue to justify a

PPP project," he noted.

The deputy commissioner said contractors attending the July 14 Construction Subcommittee meeting would be learning more about a new contractor prequalification process the division will be transitioning to over the next 1 to 2 years, including subcontractors being prequalified, a contractor rating system, and potential impacts on bonding percentage.

He said there has been a great improvement in project finalization, emphasizing how serious the division is about getting jobs finished.

"We are not at 180 days everywhere, but we are improving. Schedules and quality are two very important items and 180 days is plenty of time," he said.

Deputy Commissioner Wriston discussed future focus areas, including bridges and work on Corridor H, Coalfields Expressway, King Coal Highway and Route 2. He noted that the division has reconstructed over 70 miles



President Mike Gianni (left) and Golf Co-Chair Steve Humphreys (middle) presented the CAVV Scholarship Foundation a check for over \$17,000. Accepting is Scholarship Chair Gene Thompson.



Chad Earl, Jamie Dorsey and Jill Fradiska were the winners of the Annual Meeting Trap and Shooting Clay Tournament held at The Greenbrier Gun Club.



Brennan and Bryson Irons and Gene Bailey were the winners of this year's fishing tournament. Awards were presented at the President's Banquet held Saturday, July 10.



Chip Sweeney, John Farley, Mark Farris, Brant Moorhead and Angelina Duriez were the winners of this year's Annual Meeting Golf Tournament. (Not pictured: Ernie Dellatorre).



Nearly 400 members and guests attended the 2021 CAVV Annual Meeting held July 8-11 at The Greenbrier. The event concluded with the President's Banquet that was held in the Colonial Hall.



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Incoming President Nate Orders presented outgoing President Mike Gianni gifts of appreciation for his year as CAWV president, including a golf bag with his name and the Hard at Work logo embroidered on the front of the bag.

of interstate, with additional needs on sections of I-64 and I-77.

Responding to a question regarding WVDEP permitting issues, he said, "We are making great strides and moving in the right direction, adding that other federal agencies are more of an issue." He stressed the importance of the quality of the permit application.

When asked about the new Technical Support Division, the deputy commissioner said that all the groups that support project development - drillers, geotechs, environmental, specifications and publications - are now under a single division with one leader. He added that remote work for state employees has ended. Lastly, he touched on the importance of safety on the job and in work zones and stressed that all contractors maintain their traffic control measures during construction.

Shannon Hapuarachy was re-elected chairman of the CAWV Highway/Heavy Division during the division meeting.

The CAWV Building Division met at the CAWV Annual Meeting. Chair-

man Derick Foster, Paramount Builders, St. Albans, led the meeting and discussed important issues some members are facing. Building Division members were briefed on S.B. 673, the CAWV's bill to require civil action regarding West Virginia construction contracts be resolved in West Virginia, which passed 33-0 in the Senate and 99-0 in the House.

The bill was developed by the CAWV Legislative Committee to mandate that West Virginia is the location where construction claims must be resolved if a party to a West Virginia construction contract breaches that contract. Under current law, there may be a dispute of only several thousands of dollars, yet West Virginia construction firms were faced with bringing a lawsuit thousands of miles away, which is expensive, time consuming and disruptive. Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania have legislation that voids any language in a boilerplate contract that forces in state firms to resolve any disputes in the state where the project owner resides, thereby requiring the contractor or subcontractor to hire out of state counsel.

Also discussed was H.B. 2006 which

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removes the West Virginia Contractor Licensing Board from the Division of Labor and creates it as a separate board under Chapter 30 in the State Code, which is how other professional licensing boards are governed. In addition, it removed the requirement to hold a contractor's license for commercial projects under \$25,000 and residential projects under \$5,000. The bill also eliminates the contractor license for Painting and Landscaping contractors at any dollar amount.

Contractors, suppliers and architects in the Building Division discussed the unprecedented cost increases and supply-chain disruptions affecting their respective construction projects. The CAWV has been working with state Purchasing Division officials, legislators and cabinet secretaries for the Department of Administration and Commerce to develop a clause that could be used to limit pricing volatility on construction materials and equipment.

It was reported that the School Building Authority of West Virginia (SBA)

will get back to their regular funding cycle in December 2021 and will have an estimated \$75 million to award for projects. It was noted that recently the SBA removed MIP Grant funding for projects in order to allow the West Virginia Department of Education time to award the nearly \$500 million it has received in COVID relief funding. The SBA feels most of the MIP projects that were originally funded will now be funded with the Federal Covid Relief funds.

Dave Ferguson, ZMM Architects, shared some good news on upcoming building projects with Building Division members that include:

- Richwood High School / Richwood Middle School - Spring 2022
- Summersville Middle School / Nicholas County High School - Late Spring 2022
- Earthwork Package for Summersville Project - Fall 2021
- Mercer County Elementary School - Summer 2022
- Cabell County Career Technology Center - Summer 2022

- Meadows Elementary School - Late Summer 2022
- Shady Spring Elementary Additions/Renovations - Late Fall 2021
- Davis Creek Elementary School - Summer 2022
- Milton Elementary School - Summer 2022

Attendees received an update on the CAWV Workforce Development Task Force and the Equipment Operator Training Course at Camp Dawson which is continuing to grow. The comprehensive Equipment Operator Training Course is designed to produce operators that are trained in 28 days and are ready to go to work in the construction field on five different types of equipment. Several CAWV members attend each graduation at Camp Dawson to meet with the graduates and interview them for jobs with their companies.

Also, during the meeting, Courtney Persinger, president of Persinger and Associates, Charleston, was elected as chairman of the Building Division, and Derick Foster, Paramount Build-



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ers, was elected as the new Building Division Director. Members discussed several other industry issues that will be placed on the agenda for the next CAWV Joint Architects Committee meeting which will be announced at a later date.

James Scott Pierson, Triton Construction, Inc., St. Albans, was re-elected CAWV Utilities Division Chairman at the Utilities Division meeting.

Division members were updated on funding and activities of the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council, Water Development Authority, Clean Water State Revolving Fund and Drinking Water Treatment Revolving Fund. Members learned of projects that are presently in construction and funding commitments to projects yet to be bid.

West Virginia is receiving \$4 billion in direct funding with more coming through grants and federal programs. Nearly \$1.25 billion will go the State of West Virginia and \$677 million will go directly to city and county governments. A large portion of the funding is expected to be invested in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. These funds must be obligated by 2024 and expended by 2026. The CAWV is working with state and federal funding agencies to determine how best to plan, design, advertise, bid and award projects as quickly as possible.

Several other industry issues were discussed during the meeting such as material pricing and supply issues which will be placed on the agenda of the next CAWV Joint Utilities Committee meeting.

Outgoing CAWV President Mike Gianni, president, The James White Construction Company, Weirton, thanked members for their hard work throughout the year.

"This has been a challenging year due to the pandemic but I'm glad to say we came through it well," the president stated. "Members stayed active in committees through Zoom conferencing, and we are starting to get our

committees back in full operation. I appreciate everyone that contributed their time and expertise to industry issues these past twelve months."

The outgoing president introduced and congratulated the incoming officers and directors.

"They will be engaged and will work hard for the industry. I'm very pleased to introduce your new president, Nate Orders. Nate has been involved in the construction industry all his life. He has participated in just about every activity of the association. He will do a great job as president," said outgoing President Gianni.

CAWV's 2021-2022 President Nate Orders, Orders Construction Company, St. Albans, thanked the outgoing president and praised him for his year of service to the association.

"Mike, you represented the association and the construction industry well," said incoming President Orders. "You led the association through uncharted waters this year. You did a fantastic job as our president."


Orders is President of Orders Construction Company, a general contractor delivering an array of construction services to clients in the Mid-Atlantic region, and specializing in bridges and highways, water and wastewater treatment plants and industrial construction.

A native of West Virginia, he is graduate of the Cornell University College of Engineering and a registered Professional Engineer. He resides in Charleston with his wife, Melissa, and their four children, Catherine, Andrew, Elizabeth, and Matthew. He is active in the YPO, (the Young Presidents Organization), a member of the Clay Center Board, and serves on the BB&T (now Truist) Advisory Board.

"I am very honored and humbled to serve as your president this year," said President Orders. "I have been around the industry and association for quite a while and I have great appreciation for what my grandfather, Robert O. Orders, Senior, and father,

Robert O. Orders, Junior, have done for the association and for me personally," he said.

Robert O., Senior spearheaded in 1970 the merger between the AGC of West Virginia and the West Virginia Contractors Association into the Contractors Association of West Virginia. Robert O., Junior was CAWV president in 1992-1993.

"I'm looking forward to working with my fellow officers and all members in the committee process to keep the CAWV strong. We have all learned that working in the CAWV allows us to make new connections and make our careers more rewarding. I want to recruit new members so they will have those same opportunities." 

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Contractors Association of West Virginia 2020 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The CAWV Safety Committee created a new award for 2020 to recognize a member that goes above and beyond in exceeding expectations and demonstrating excellence to help build a better West Virginia.

The President's Award of Excellence will be awarded at the CAWV Annual Meeting at The Greenbrier each year and the award applications will be sent each year in conjunction with the CAWV Safety Awards applications.

This year's award focused on the initiatives that members took to develop and implement new safety procedures to help overcome the hurdles that we faced during the COVID pandemic. Several members submitted impressive new policies and procedures, but one really stood out from the others.

This year's winner, Kelly Paving, Inc., was recognized for going above and beyond during the pandemic to keep their employees and the public safe while on the job.

Due to shortages on everything related to hand washing there were no wash stations to be found. Kelly Paving's team came up with an innovative way to provide hands-free wash stations for employees in order to keep them working safely. They designed, built, and delivered wash stations to each project.

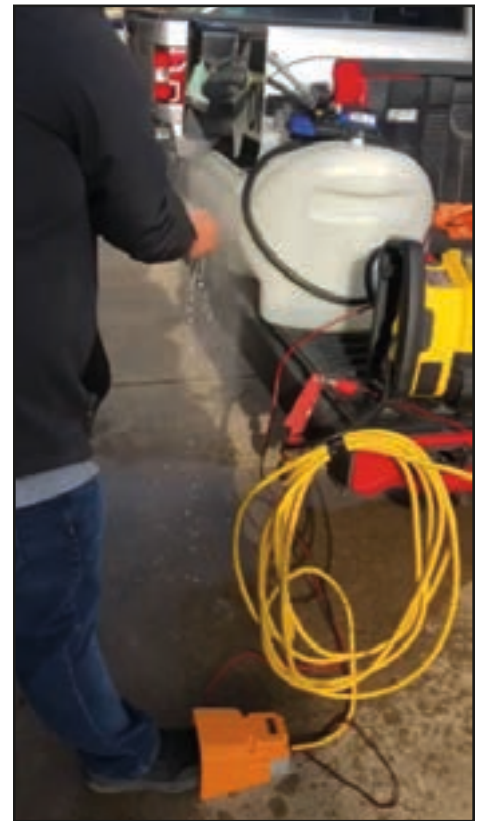
"Construction sites can be difficult for employees to practice good hygiene," said Gary Tuttle, VP of Safety/Risk Management for Kelly Paving, Inc. "The handwashing stations we developed have allowed long term solutions for our employees to have a designated place to wash

their hands with soap and water while not touching any surfaces."

Past CAWV President and Kelly Paving Vice President, Roger Thomas, and Kelly Paving Vice President, Mark Haverty, accepted the award on behalf of Kelly Paving.

"What an honor it is to win this initial President's Award of Excellence and have our team recognized for their initiative," said Haverty. "We will definitely display this award proudly".

The CAWV Board of Directors encourages all members to submit an application for the 2021 CAWV President's Award of Excellence when it is sent to members in January of 2022.



Kelly Paving, Inc. was awarded the 2020 President's Award for going above and beyond during the pandemic to keep their employees and the public safe by developing hands-free wash stations for employees on all jobsites.



The 2020-2021 CAWV President Michael Gianni (middle) awards Kelly Paving, Inc., Williamstown, the first CAWV President's Award of Excellence at this year's Annual Meeting held July 8-11 at The Greenbrier. Accepting the award for Kelly Paving, Inc. are Vice Presidents Roger Thomas (left) and Mark Haverty (right).

Contractors Association of West Virginia 2020 SAFETY AWARDS

The Contractors Association of West Virginia announced the association's 2020 Safety Excellence Award winners. The award winners were recognized during the CAWV Annual Meeting held July 8 – 11 at The Greenbrier since this year's CAWV State Meeting (when awards are usually presented) was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The association annually recognizes contractor and associate members who have exhibited a superior effort to improve safety in the construction industry. Members participating in the program are scored on their documented safety policies and procedures, their commitment and approach to safety and health, and

their recorded statistical data for the year. Special attention is given to the quality of safety training provided to employees and members who demand active employee involvement in their safety process.

Finalists are chosen from contractor and associate members who achieve an excellent performance rating. Awards were presented to those members that met or exceeded the program criteria.

"The CAWV salutes these winners for their safety records and their commitment to construction workplace safety," said CAWV Executive Director Mike Clowser. "These firms set an exemplary standard for an ef-

fective construction safety program."

CAWV Safety Committee Chair Tim Quintrell, Triton Construction, Inc., St. Albans, presented the awards to members who were in attendance at the CAWV Annual Meeting or available prior to publication of this issue of *West Virginia Construction News*.

The CAWV Safety Committee encourages all Associate and Contractor members to submit an application for the 2021 CAWV Safety Awards. Applications will be available to members in January of 2022.

Contact Pat McDonald at pmcdonald@cawv.org with any questions or for more information.



Building Division Over 200K Manhours Brewer & Company of WV, Inc.



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Building Division Over 100K Manhours High Point Construction Group, LLC



Tim Critchfield

Building Division Over 50K Manhours Paramount Builders



Tim Quintrell and Derick Foster

Utility Division Over 100K Manhours C.J. Hughes Construction Company, Inc.



Utility Division Over 50K Manhours FAMCO, Inc.



Utility Division Less Than 50K Manhours Pritchard Signal & Light Company



**Highway Division Over 500K Manhours
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**Associate Division Less Than 50K Manhours
Rudd Equipment Company, Inc.**



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Tim Quintrell and Tim Dorsch

CONGRATULATIONS *to the 2020 Safety Award Winners!*

CAWV Associate and Contractor members are encouraged to submit an application for the 2021 CAWV Safety Awards. Applications will be available to members in January of 2022.

CONSTRUCTION BRIEFS



The Glenville Roundabout, located at the intersection of US 33, College Street and Mineral Road, was officially dedicated at a recent ceremony and will provide a new entrance to Glenville State College and the Town of Glenville. Mountaineer Contractors Inc., Kingwood, was the contractor on the \$5 million project.

■ **The Glenville Roundabout, located at the intersection of US 33, College Street and Mineral Road,** was officially dedicated at a recent ceremony and will provide a new entrance to Glenville State College and the Town of Glenville. The roundabout eases congestion at the intersection, where College Street and Mineral Road previously approached US 33 at sharp angles. The roundabout design was chosen as the best solution to improving traffic flow in the area, because it will provide smoother access to both the town of Glenville and Glenville State College. Campus officials intend to build a sign near the roundabout identifying it as an entrance for the college. Funding for the \$5.07 million project was a combination of federal money and Roads To Prosperity funding. Construction began in November 2019. **Mountaineer Contractors Inc.** from Kingwood was the contractor for the project...

■ **In January 2020, local, state and federal officials a \$25 million broadband expansion project** in Harrison County. Two months later, the COVID-19 pandemic arrived,

slowing the already onerous process of gaining the federal approval required. Now, officials with the Harrison Rural Electrification Association hope the final hurdles will soon be cleared, allowing for the start of work that's expected to provide broadband service to around 6,300 households in Harrison, Lewis, Upshur, Barbour and Doddridge counties. The association was awarded \$18.7 million through the USDA's ReConnect Pilot Program for the \$25 million project. HREA will finance the remaining \$6.2 million through a loan from CoBank. The association is "inching closer" to construction and is awaiting final approval from the USDA's Rural Utilities Service to hire project engineers. At that point, construction work can begin soon after...

■ **A long-talked-about traffic congestion project in Kanawha County is currently** on the list of projects expected to be financed by a recent bond sale that's backed by tolls on the West Virginia Turnpike. The West Virginia Parkways Authority recently sold a total of \$423 million in bonds to investors. State law requires the money to be used

to finance highway construction projects in the 10 counties close to the Turnpike. One of the projects listed is \$19 million to build a new roadway and bridge to ease congestion in the Davis Creek and Corridor G area in Kanawha County. South Charleston Mayor Frank Mullens said the work will provide another way for motorists to exit the Trace Fork/Dudley Farms shopping areas to Jefferson Road. The Parkways Authority has also announced the newly sold bonds will provide funding for a \$203 million project for the Pineville-to-Welch section of the Coalfields Expressway along with partial funding for the Beckley Z-Way, improving US 60 between Chelyan and Montgomery, and replacement or rehabilitation of eight different bridges...

■ **Bids were recently accepted for the Route 119 sewer expansion project** for the City of Philippi. Low bidder on the project was **Bear Contracting, LLC**, Clarksburg, for \$1,508,700. Other bidders included: **Pro Contracting, Inc.** of Lost Creek for \$1,758,960; **AMPECO, Inc.** of Elkview for \$1,873,995; **J.F. Allen Company** of Buckhannon for \$1,924,734; D&M Contracting, Inc. of New Alexandria, PA, for \$1,991,000; and **Hull's Contracting, Inc.** of French Creek for \$2,100,690...

■ **Edward Allen Bell, who has developed luxury housing in and out of West Virginia,** has purchased for \$4.5 million the former One Commerce Square office tower, at the corner of Lee and Hale streets. Bell said he plans to build 67 condominium units on floors three through 17 and is still considering what to do with the first two floors. He is working to arrange some sort of retail/food mix on those floors. Bell, 54, of Hurricane, is the sole developer and owner of Eagle View apartment complex atop a mountain east of the city. He also owns, among other properties, high-end apartment/

CONSTRUCTION BRIEFS

condominium complexes in Morgantown, Wheeling, Bridgeport and Columbus, Ohio. The Commerce Square development joins planned downtown units at the Atlas Building and the 800 block of Virginia Street and existing units near Appalachian Power Park and on Kanawha Boulevard...

■ **The Alum Creek Cave Trail at Audra State Park in Barbour County will get a facelift soon.** Gov. Jim Justice recently announced a contract had been awarded to **Green River Group LLC** of Morgantown, the low bidder on the project at \$168,980. The bid process was overseen by the state Department of Transportation and is being funded through the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trail grant program that's administered by the

West Virginia Division of Highways. The project consists of approximately 700 feet of aggregate surface for a hiking trail...

■ **The Harpers Ferry Town Council held a special meeting to review its proposal** for how it plans on using potential money from the American Rescue Plan. In all, the council asked for \$4,961,300 for six underlying items to help improve the town. Those six items were distilled from dozens of ideas. The most expensive item on the list the council sent to the county commissioners was the \$2.125 million it proposed for essential water distribution and repairs. This is separate from the USDA loan that the town recently received to replace the Harpers Ferry's water plant. As Councilmember Laurel Drake pointed out, the water

distribution system is also in need of some "critical upgrades" that, according to the drafted letter, "remain unfunded." While water distribution repairs might warrant the biggest price tag, streetscape issues topped the list, indicating that infrastructure issues such as sidewalk repair, curbing and stormwater runoff are the town's biggest current priority. Third on the proposal was a High Street improvement plan for \$1.275 million. From there, the cheapest item on the list was outlined, and that proved to be broadband, IT security and digital record keeping, which amounted to \$60,000 of allocated funds, should the council receive them...




■ **A potential new development on U.S. 119 could be hindered by the cost of water access**, according to a report presented to the Boone



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County Commission by Project Manager Terry Martin with the Regional Intergovernmental Council. Developer Donovan Pearson and investors look to build multiple cabins on Mountaineer Drive on U.S. 119. The site for the proposed 25 cabins is near what was once Magic Mart and is now a new development for Boone Memorial Hospital. Pearson said he hopes to provide much-needed lodging for Hatfield-McCoy Trail System users once related trailhead-access projects around the county are open for business. While projects involving the drilling under highways have been completed in Boone County in the past, this project could ring in at more than Pearson's initial estimate of \$250,000. With no homes in the area to tap into the new service, the need for the water project could be a singular one. After Pearson's pre-

sentation and request for a financial commitment from the county during a commission meeting last month, Martin advised the developer should meet with the Boone County Public Service District because they would be the entity that would apply for grant funding to support the project. The American Water Company provided an estimate in the amount of \$407,000 to complete the construction for the construction project if it were privately funded. If publicly funded, Martin said, the PSD would have to acquire an engineer to provide an estimate on the project, which would have to be put out for bid...

■ **A portion of a Kanawha County golf course that's been closed because of damage** from the June 2016 flood might be redeveloped

into space for picnic shelters, tennis and pickleball courts, and a splash pad. The Kanawha County Parks and Recreation Commission is seeking a \$6 million to \$7 million overhaul of the Coonskin Park golf course and clubhouse. Plans include redesigning the front nine holes of the course, and redeveloping the back nine holes into something else altogether. The front nine holes of the golf course would be revamped into an "upscale short course with iconic greens from golf design history," said Jeff Hutchinson, director of Kanawha County Parks and Recreation. The park's clubhouse would get a "spruce up," including new carpeting, paint and a sound system. The Parks Commission is waiting to hear from the West Virginia Economic Development Authority about whether the agency will help fund



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the project. If the project is funded, the Parks Commission would have to formally vote on the project, as well...

■ **West Virginia University's athletic department has spent the past couple of years** rehabbing two major facilities. It poured \$55 million into renovating the 41-year-old Puskar Center, which is the operations hub for Mountaineer football. It also is repurposing the Natatorium, which had been the home of the WVU swim program for 44 years until the shiny, new Aquatic Center at Mylan Park opened in 2019. With the pool in the Natatorium no longer needed, West Virginia gutted that facility and is turning it into an Olympic Performance Center, which was made possible because of a \$10 million gift from the Hazel Ruby McQuain Charitable Trust. The Olympic

Performance Center will provide a centralized training home for many of WVU's 400 Olympic sports student-athletes. Now their strength and conditioning, rehabilitation, nutrition and a variety of other services will take place in the 21,000-square foot Performance Center, which is situated right behind the Coliseum. Work on repurposing the Natatorium started nearly a year and a half ago and now is nearly complete. Contractor on the project is **March-Westin Company, Inc.** of Morgantown...

■ **Hoping to keep the history of a local landmark alive, the Barrackville Covered Bridge** Preservation Society recently formed, and it's in the process of finding funding to rehabilitate the Civil War-era structure. The 145-foot bridge, which is now closed to vehicles, was erected in

1853 and put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981. The bridge is owned by the West Virginia Division of Highways. According to Diana Marple, the preservation society's secretary, the bridge has fallen into a state of disrepair in recent years, and she and other residents are trying to restore the landmark to its former glory. Currently, the preservation society is working with the Division of Highways to try to find funding for the repair costs, and the group is getting advice from the National Covered Bridge Preservation Society throughout the process. The town hopes to hold a festival centered on the covered bridge in June 2022, which they'd use to raise money and awareness for the cause...

■ **Preparations for construction of the Coalfields Expressway** from Wyoming County to Welch

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are well under way. Joe Pack, state Department of Highways District 10 engineer/manager, said rights-of-way are being secured in the Welch area to make way for the highway. Pack said the WVDOH is "shooting for the spring" of 2022 to begin moving dirt for the project. Pack said a two-lane connector will be constructed just west of Welch Community Hospital on Rt. 7 and it will go up on a ridge and ride that ridge to another connector that comes out on Rt. 16 in Wyoming County. Pack said the DOH is also already working on the design of the King Coal Highway intersection with the Coalfields Expressway at the McDowell County/Wyoming County line. The Coalfields Expressway will eventually connect I-77 and I-64 from Beckley to Southwest Virginia, exiting West Virginia west of Bradshaw and con-

necting with Rt. 23 in Virginia, which links to interstates in Kentucky and Tennessee...

■ **Work to stabilize a downtown Huntington pump station is underway. Crews are working** on the 11th Street pump station in Harris Riverfront Park. The project is expected to be complete by December 1, said Huntington Water Quality Board Executive Director Brian Bracey. The director said the goals of the project are to stabilize the monoliths, repair a sewer line and stabilize the pump station. In 2015, a sinkhole formed for an unknown reason near the pump station after high water in the park. The project's timeline should end ahead of high water season, which Huntington usually experiences at the end of December and early January. An en-

gineering plan was created by **Mead & Hunt**, Charleston, to stabilize the area. The Huntington Stormwater Utility received a \$5.1 million grant for the project from the U.S. Economic Development Administration last August...

■ **Funding for a critical water project is coming to the city of Milton. After approval** from the Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council, Milton is set to receive \$970,000 in critical need grant funds to replace about three miles of waterline along Newmans Branch Road. The replacement will extend along the line from U.S. 60 to the city's water storage tank on Newmans Branch. The Newmans Branch line serves a lot of customers, including areas of Milton Middle School and Woodline Subdivision. 

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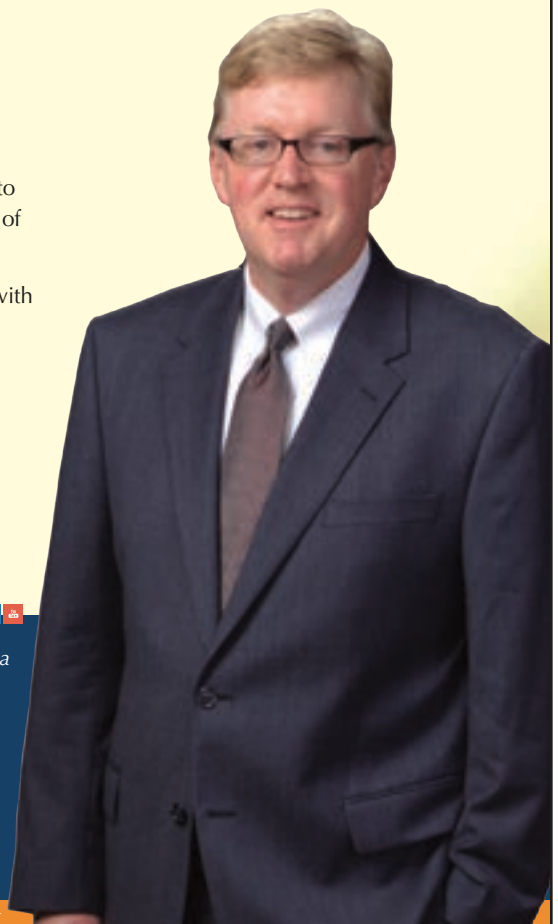
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Attorney Robert "Bo" Sweeney (licensed in WV) has a practice based in civil litigation, with a concentration in the defense of mesothelioma and asbestos claims, construction disputes and defending employers in deliberate intent suits.

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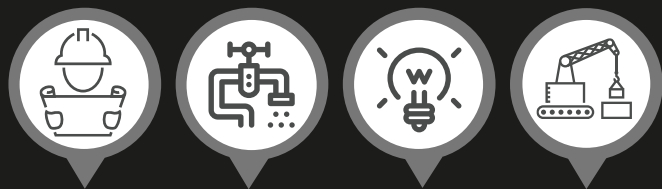
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