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**Sustainable West Virginia: Full Speed Ahead**

Pilot project wraps, feedback being gathered

by Jake Glance

we support a **Sustainable West Virginia**



The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) hosted international visitors in November to discuss how Mountain State businesses can find out how their sustainability efforts stack up against other businesses locally and around the

world — not to mention ways to attract new business, help their local community and help spark economic development statewide.

Also at the meeting were representatives from schools, healthcare facilities and other groups interested in

hearing about Sustainable West Virginia, a program developed by the WVDEP to help and to encourage businesses to incorporate more environmentally friendly and community friendly practices.

SWV, Page 5

**DEP’s Energy Tree Christmas Celebration is Dec. 16**

Annual event includes Energy Tree, efficiency displays

by Colleen O’Neill

Instead of “Dreaming of a White Christmas,” make it a green one.

That’s what the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is promoting.

The agency’s Division of Air Quality (DAQ) is gearing up for its annual Energy Tree lighting.

By mid-December, a 35-foot, 800-light emitting diode (LED)-bulb Christmas tree will adorn the side of the DEP headquarters in Kanawha City.

The brain child of DAQ outreach team member Mike Rowe, the Christmas tree display demonstrates how to save both money and the environment.

“Each strand supports more than 65 bulbs, for a total of 800 LED bulbs,” said Stephanie Hammonds, outreach coordinator for DAQ.

“The display is powered by a hand crank generator to provide the electricity it takes to light up the 800-plus bulb LED Energy Tree versus a small tree of 100 incandescent bulbs. You get first-hand experience and learn a valuable lesson – just because your holiday lights are going up, your electricity costs don’t have to go up too.”

See **LIGHTS**, Page 4



The DEP’s Energy Tree, which uses energy efficient bulbs that can be illuminated using a simple hand crank, will be lit on Dec. 16 during the annual holiday event at agency headquarters in Kanawha City. It’s set for 5:30 p.m.

**Christmas Tree Recycling Set for Jan. 7 at Capitol Market**

by Jake Glance

The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) is again teaming up with the Division of Natural Resources (DNR), West Virginia State Parks and Forests, and the Capitol Market to recycle real Christmas trees into underwater fish habitat.

The collection event will be held at Capitol Market in Charleston from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Jan. 7.

At the event, those dropping off trees can sign up to win a one-night stay at Twin Falls State Park in Wyoming County or a \$25 gift certificate to Capitol Market.

Those dropping off trees will also receive a free gift from the WVDEP Rehabilitation Environmental Action Plan Recycling Program.

See **TREES**, Page 5

# Stream Partners Program Grants Awarded

## Grants provide funds for cleanups, education

by Jake Glance

The West Virginia Stream Partners Program (SPP) has awarded grants to watershed protection groups across the state to help fund monitoring, education and outreach efforts.

The SPP, which was established in 1996, is housed within the WVDEP and is a cooperative between three other state agencies: the Conservation Agency, the Division of Forestry and the Division of Natural Resources.

The grants, totaling more than \$97,000, will be presented to 20 groups:

- Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust in Wardensville will receive \$5,000 for a lecture series;
- Coal River Group in Tornado and St Albans has been granted \$5,000 for tire cleanup and Project WET;
- Coal River Mountain Watch in Naoma will get \$4,794 for a river cleanup and education efforts;
- Davis Creek Watershed Association in Charleston is being granted \$5,000 for monitoring;
- Fourpole Creek Watershed Association in Huntington will receive \$3,350 for education efforts;

- Friends of Blackwater in Thomas gets \$5,000 for monitoring, a newsletter, and office expenses;
- Friends of Deckers Creek in Dellslow will be provided \$5,000 for monitoring and a newsletter;
- Friends of Milam Creek in McGraws will get \$4,500 for monitoring and an outdoor classroom;
- Friends of Mill Creek in Ripley will get \$5,000 for a VISTA match;
- Friends of the Cheat in Kingwood has been awarded \$5,000 for mapping and monitoring;
- Friends of the Hughes River in Ellenboro will be granted \$5,000 for monitoring and education;
- Friends of the Lower Greenbrier River in Alderson is getting \$5,000 for monitoring and office expenses;
- Greenbrier River Watershed Association in Lewisburg has been granted \$5,000 for education efforts and office expenses;
- Guyandotte Water Trail Alliance in Oak Hill will receive \$5,000 for a marketing campaign;
- Indian Creek Watershed Association in Union has been granted \$5,000

- for a spring identification and interactive map;
- Morris Creek Watershed Association in Montgomery will get \$5,000 for education efforts and office;
- Paint Creek Watershed Association in Hansford will be receiving \$5,000 for education efforts and office expenses;
- Piney Creek Watershed Association in Beckley has been awarded \$5,000 for celebration and pet waste stations;
- Save the Tygart Watershed Association in Grafton will receive \$5,000 for monitoring;
- Warm Springs Watershed Association in Berkeley Springs will be provided with \$5,000 for a rain garden and pet waste stations.

For more information on the Stream Partners Program visit <http://www.wvca.us/stream.cfm>.

# Hiking is #awesome for DEP's Social Media Expert

by Colleen O'Neill

She is known as DEP's social media guru, well-versed in technology and surfing the web. But what is not common knowledge is that Brianna Hickman is an avid hiker, finding solace in nature.



Brianna Hickman

"I go hiking whenever I get the urge. It might be once a month, or more frequently," she said.

"Usually I'm by myself, but sometimes I go with family or friends. I like to do day trips, so I'll go camp someplace and do a few trails while I'm there."

"I hike because I like my alone time," she said. "It's nice to be quiet. Plus, I enjoy seeing different and new things."

In addition to enjoying the scenery while she hikes, Hickman likes observing wildlife, specifically birds.

"I usually see a lot of birds, squirrels or chipmunks. Sometimes I see salamanders, lizards or snakes. I spend a lot of time actively looking for birds, so it's not surprising that I would see them more than the other critters."

"I have been bird watching since I was quite young, when I would go with my grandpa," Hickman said.

"I like to see different birds than what I might see in my back yard, and I like to challenge myself to identify them just by their song. Hiking gives me an opportunity to see and hear different kinds of birds."

In the last few years, Hickman has traveled several places to go camping and hiking, both within West Virginia and out of state.

"I have visited Rocky Mountain National Park and Boulder in Colorado, Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee and North Carolina, and Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge in South Carolina."

## It's Beginning To Look a Lot Like Christmas



It takes a tall ladder for DEP's Jeremiah Johnson to reach to the top of the DEP's Christmas tree in the lobby of the headquarters in Kanawha City.



# 2016 ReFashion Show



The 14th Annual ReFashion Show, held Nov. 19 at the Charleston Town Center Mall, featured outfits created completely out of recycled or repurposed material. The event was sponsored by the Recycling Coalition of West Virginia. The entrants competed for hundreds of dollars in prizes. Below are the winners:



First Place, 14 and Over: This dress, made from trash bags, was designed by Lauren Bolar and modeled by Isabelle Showalter.



Second Place, 14 and Over: This dress, made from magic marker caps and repurposed fishing line, was designed by Denise Nutter and modeled by Cali Hayes.



Third Place, 14 and Over and Newspaper Challenge Winner: This dress, made entirely of newspaper, was designed and modeled by Brandi White.



Greg Sayre Memorial Category Winner and First Place, 13 and Under: This dress, made of repurposed state highway maps, was designed and modeled by Lillian Armstrong.



Second Place, 13 and Under: This dress, made from recycled popcorn bags and boxes with a skirt made from repurposed VHS tape, was designed and modeled by Gianna Perrone.



Third Place, 13 and Under: This dress, accented with designs made from recycled paper, was designed by Alexa Batten and Sierra Miller and modeled by Alexa Batten.



Coca-Cola Challenge Winner: This dress was designed and modeled by Angela Gadd.



Coca-Cola Challenge Honorable Mention: This dress was designed by Jerry Chaffee and modeled by Meghan Chafee.

# Boba Fett Collects Toy Bounty



Boba Fett, a Mandalorian bounty hunter, successfully collected the bounty on items donated to Toys For Tots. The toys were collected at drop-off points around DEP headquarters, and on Dec. 2 Boba personally collected the toys from people like John Kearney of the DEP’s Office of Oil and Gas. The Boba Fett costume is worn by Amy Higgs, an inspector with the Division of Water and Waste Management. She and other members of “Vader’s 501st Legion” travel the region to help with various charity events. For more information about the legion, check out [the December 2015 edition of inDEPth](#)

# LIGHTS

*Con’t from Page 1*

The crank generator was built just for this display by DAQ staff. Over the years, the design has been altered to improve its visibility and safety.

In 2014, staff modified the display to allow the lights to be lit until someone pushes a button on the crank generator which kills the electric power and begins the “muscle” power.

And last year, lights were placed around the base of the Energy Tree.

“When we first started the display in 2013, LED holiday lights were a novelty due to availability and cost,” said DAQ Director Fred Durham.

“However, this year, one of the home improvement stores had 70-count LED light sets on sale for \$3.98. Those lights will burn up to 25,000 hours and use 90 percent less electricity than incandescent ones.”

How does this translate into dollars? Here’s how Hammonds explains it:

“If you power six strands of LED Christmas lights for five hours a day for 30 days, it will cost you \$0.72, but if you power six strands of incandescent Christmas lights for five hours a

day for 30 days, it will cost you \$4.32.”

And LED bulbs are better for the environment and better for you. There is no mercury, making them a cleaner alternative to fluorescent and compact fluorescent lamp (CFL) bulbs.

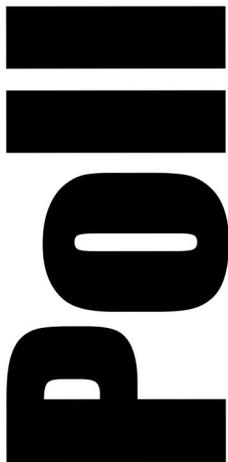
LED bulbs have the lowest energy consumption of any lighting product to date. Their light quality is equal or superior to traditional lighting products. And their life is 20 times that of some traditional lighting products.

Members of the public, and DEP employees alike, are invited to this year’s Energy Tree Lighting ceremony.

The event will be held on Friday, Dec. 16, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. DAQ staff will be on hand with refreshments and other energy efficient displays – the solar race track, energy house, and a smaller version of the crank generator.

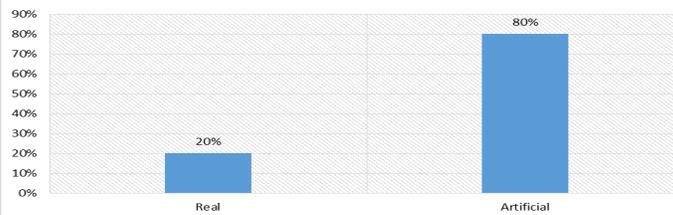
“Everyone is invited to the kickoff and to bring cameras or smart phones for photos with the best Santa in Charleston,” said Hammonds, adding that the part is being played by DEP retiree Bob Otey.

The two-tree light display and crank will be available to try until Jan. 6.

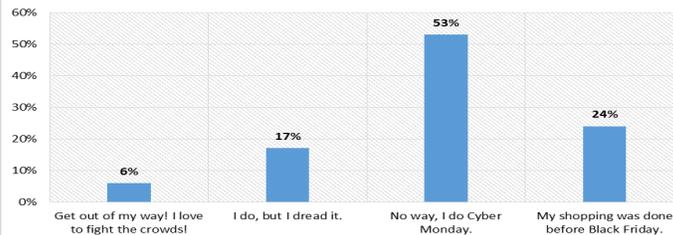


Poll conducted Nov. 28, 2016

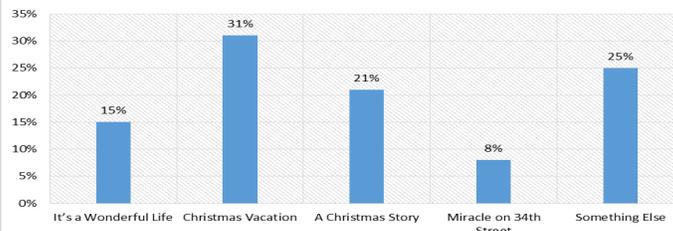
Do you have a real Christmas tree or do you have an artificial Christmas tree?



Did you go Christmas shopping on Black Friday?



What is your favorite Christmas movie?



Earl Ray Tomblin  
**Governor**  
 Randy C. Huffman  
**Cabinet Secretary**  
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# SWV

Con't from Page 1

WVDEP Sustainability Officer Greg Adolfson and Communications Chief Kelley Gillenwater hosted the meeting. The international visitors were from enviroIndex™, a company based in Canada that is well known for benchmarking sustainability efforts. The delegation from enviroIndex™ included Ashley Scott, Miriam Kaufmann and Corey Laamanen.

Scott discussed the history of enviroIndex™, which goes back more than a decade. He said the original push was to get people to think about how environmentally friendly their homes were. He said children at first used it as a game to see how well they used “green” measures in their own homes — measures such as low water consumption, energy efficiency and recycling efforts.

“The goal all along was not to rank people,” he said. “That could cause division and maybe cheating. But just to encourage people to think about it.”

He said the key is to keep coming back to the enviroIndex™ system to track progress to see how a home or a business is doing with its sustainability

efforts. But as technology changes, so do the benchmarks that determine how sustainable a facility is.

“If you go back 15 years ago, you could easily say how many low energy bulbs you have. Chances are no one would have any. Now, in most places, that’s all you can buy. Energy efficiency is becoming better because we are buying energy efficient refrigerators, or stoves, or microwaves, not because we are going ‘green’ but because those are the only ones we can buy.”

Sustainable West Virginia, by using the benchmarking provided by enviroIndex™, is not a program that allows anyone who applies to get in, a practice commonly called “green stamping.”

If a company decides to use the benchmarking tool, and enters in all the necessary data, it is possible that facility will not meet the minimum sustainability requirements to be part of the program.

“There is a high standard to be in this program, so by definition if you are in it, you’re doing good things,” said Scott.

The DEP, in cooperation with the Division of Tourism, conducted a pilot of a Sustainable West Virginia program called Sustainable Travel West Virginia

earlier this year and is now gathering feedback. Adolfson said the response has been great so far.

“We will take all of the suggestions, even the tiniest tweaks,

and consider each of them to make Sustainable West Virginia into something that businesses will want to take part in. We want to see Sustainable West Virginia grow to include not only travel destinations but eventually hospitals, schools, even entire communities.”

The travel program is slated to be launched full scale in 2017. If that launch is successful, the DEP would like to implement programs for the other sectors mentioned by Adolfson — such as Sustainable Schools West Virginia and Sustainable Healthcare West Virginia — within the next few years.



The WVDEP hosted visitors from EnviroIndex in November to discuss the Sustainable West Virginia program. Pictured are, from left to right: Greg Adolfson, Ashley Scott, Kelley Gillenwater, Corey Laamanen, and Miriam Kaufmann.

Each program will use the enviroIndex™ benchmarking tool.

The ultimate goal is for businesses to lessen their environmental footprint by decreasing their energy use and amount of waste generated, to use local products to help their communities thrive, to boost their business by tapping into a whole new segment of consumers who like to spend their money at sustainable facilities and thus help improve the local and state economy. Those involved say this is a chance to make West Virginia not only wild and wonderful, but sustainable too.

# HIKING

Con't from Page 2

“In West Virginia I have been to Dolly Sods, Seneca Rocks, Kanawha State Forest, Canaan Valley, Blackwater Falls, Sandstone Falls and Spruce Knob.”

With countless outdoor adventures under her belt, one is particularly unforgettable to Hickman.

“My most memorable trip was to Rocky Mountain National Park,” she said. “The area is so unique, and I saw so many different animals and plants. I had never seen a lot of these animals

before and it was my first solo camping trip, so it is really unforgettable. It was awesome.”

Having trekked many places around the country, her favorite area to hike is in her home state — Dolly Sods in particular.

She explained what it is about the Allegheny Mountains of eastern West Virginia, which are part of the Monongahela National Forest, that appeals to her.

“The landscape is rugged, so it’s quite beautiful and enjoyable to hike. I like the quiet and I like the opportunity to see birds that I might not see at home.”

# TREES

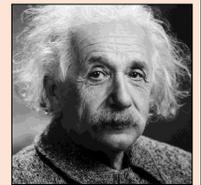
Con't from Page 1

Christmas trees must be real trees and have all lights, tinsel and ornaments removed. Trees must also have stands removed. There is no limit on the number of trees that a single person can donate.

The recycled trees will be taken to the following lakes and submerged for fish habitat: Beech Fork Lake, Cheat Lake, East Lynn Lake, Stonewall Jackson Lake, Summersville Lake, Sutton Lake and Tygart Lake.

# “ Quotable ”

“What I see in nature is a magnificent structure that we can comprehend only very imperfectly, and that must fill a thinking person with a feeling of humility.”



- Albert Einstein (1879-1955)



### New Hires

- M. Lynn Blaylock, Business and Technology Office
- Mark Deboard, Division of Mining and Reclamation
- Harold Dishner, Division of Land Restoration
- Jefferson Johnson, Division of Land Restoration
- Raphael Jones, Division of Land Restoration
- Christopher Matkins, Division of Land Restoration
- Dwayne O'Dell, Division of Land Restoration

### Recent/Upcoming Retirements

- Greg Adolfson, Public Information Office
- Mark Foley, Division of Mining and Reclamation
- Mavis Layton, Division of Water and Waste Management
- Terence Washburn, Division of Mining and Reclamation