

Rural Health News and Notes

The WVRHA Membership Newsletter
Volume 1, Issue 1
October 2009



West Virginia Rural Health Conference:

WVRHA Board Member Hilda R. Heady is the Conference Chair and offers this WELCOME to WVRHA new and renewing members

The West Virginia Rural Health Association advocates for empowering all West Virginians to advance their quality of life, well-being and access to excellence in rural health care.



It is my honor to Chair the 17th Annual State Rural Health Conference and a privilege to welcome our WV Rural Health Association Members to the conference. We, our stellar planning committee and I, invite you to participate in all conference activities and attend as many sessions as you are able. This year's

program covers up-to-date information on our national health care reform efforts and rural health issues and developments in our state. Our workshops cover current policy and practice matters against the backdrop of the principles and premises of rural health presented to us by national and state experts. If you are new to the conference or to rural health, I ask you to challenge our more seasoned participants with your questions and observations. It is through this interaction that our passions are revitalized and our skills renewed. I want to thank the WVRHA

and especially, the Bureau for Public Health for their continued leadership in developing our conference each year. In addition this year, I want to thank both the Bureau and the Association for their support and accommodation of our WVRHEP/AHEC Awards and Recognition Dinner. Please join me in thanking our speakers and the planning committee. I wish you the best for a great conference.

Hilda R. Heady, MSW

Inside this issue:

Member Spotlight: Wetzel County Hospital	2
Together Rx Access Webinar	2
Membership Benefits	2
Contacting Elected Officials	3
Website Redesign	3
NRHA Dual Membership	3
WVRHA Board of Directors	4

Conference Highlights:

- Don't miss the Plenary Session at 11am on Wednesday, October 21st with *Maggie Elehwany, Vice President for Government Affairs with the National Rural Health Association* offering her insight into Health Care Reform.
- Come to our *Annual Membership Meeting* at 4:15pm on Wednesday, October 21st and learn more about WVRHA projects and benefits and offer your opinions on the benefits you'd like to see WVRHA offer our members.
- Remember to participate in the *WVRHA 4th Annual Silent Auction* fund raiser — opens Wednesday morning and closes Thursday evening so you can pick up your items before you leave the conference on Friday. It's a fun way to support the WVRHA!

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Wetzel County Hospital

NRHA Dual Membership

Offer: The Association is now offering dual membership packages with the National Rural Health Association (NRHA). New and renewing members are eligible for discounted membership dues to NRHA. Applications will be available at the membership meeting during the WV Rural Health Conference and in your Welcome/Orientation packet if you have already renewed or visit our website for more information www.wvrha.org

Wetzel County Hospital has been providing quality healthcare to communities in Wetzel, Tyler and Monroe (Ohio) Counties since 1920. Located in New Martinsville, Wetzel County Hospital (WCH) provides diagnostic, medical, surgical, and hospital care, as well as extended, outpatient, and other hospital and medically related services.

Many expansions of hospital services and facilities have happened over the years including relocation to the current WCH facilities in 1979. Currently underway is the much-anticipated Emergency Department expansion and renovation. The \$2.6 million project will triple the size of the emergency department and double the number of emergency beds.

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services re-



cently re-designated WCH as a Level IV Trauma Center. WCH is the only trauma-designated facility in Wetzel County and one of only 13 hospitals in WV to receive a full three-year designation. Being a Level IV Trauma Designated facility enables WCH to treat seriously injured patients, stabilize them and then transport the patient to a trauma center that handles higher acuity cases if needed. To support this designation WCH is also in the process of adding a full-time trauma helicopter base of operations at the hospital. "Our trauma designation is one more way we provide quality health care services to Wetzel and Tyler Counties in West

Virginia and Monroe County in Ohio," said hospital CEO George Couch. "While we provide education throughout the community to help lower the incidence of injuries, we realize that accidents happen and are proud to be able to provide care for seriously injured patients when necessary."

WCH's commitment to growth, innovation and the highest national standards for quality and safety is clearly reflected by their Joint Commission accreditation paired with high levels of patient satisfaction. The WVRHA is proud to have WCH as a member.

WVRHA Hosts Together Rx Access Webinar

On September 15, 2009 WVRHA sponsored an informational webinar in partnership with Together Rx Access. The on-line forum and teleconference was open to the public and provided information about the Together Rx Access program which helps uninsured people gain better access to prescription medicines.

Over 60 participants were registered for the event and 36 took part in the webinar. If you missed it you can

access information about the program at www.TogetherRxAccessOnline.com. The WVRHA thanks Amy Niles of Together Rx Access for her professional and informative presentation.

The WVRHA is exploring more opportunities to host educational events so please visit our website regularly at www.wvrha.org for current information on upcoming events.



Photo by Chuck Conner

Contacting Your Elected Officials



Contact your state and national legislators and let them know how you feel about healthcare issues.

Phone: (202) 225-4172
<http://www.mollohan.house.gov/>

Shelley Moore Capito, 2nd Congressional District
Washington, DC Office:
 2443 Rayburn House Building
 Washington, DC 20515
 Phone: (202) 225-2711
<http://capito.house.gov/>

Nick Rahall, 3rd Congressional District
 2307 Rayburn House Building
 Washington, DC 20515
 Phone: (202) 225-3452
<http://www.rahall.house.gov/>

US Senators and Representatives

Senator Robert C. Byrd
 311 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510
 Phone: (202) 224-3954
<http://byrd.senate.gov/>

Senator John D. Rockefeller, IV
 531 Hart Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510
 Phone: (202) 224-6472
<http://rockefeller.senate.gov/>

Alan B. Mollohan, 1st Congressional District
 2302 Rayburn House Building
 Washington, DC 20515

WV State Legislature

Access contact information through the website at <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/index.cfm> or request a copy of the legislative directory by calling toll-free 1-877-565-3447

Website Redesign Underway:

Webmaster Consulting (webmaster3.com) is redesigning our website to make it more member-friendly and to ensure the information available is the most current and most useful to our members. The first stages of the redesign are complete so please visit and take advantage of the new resources and information: www.wvrha.org.

Revised Membership Benefits

In August 2009 the Association Board of Directors approved a revision of the membership benefits to go into effect immediately with all new member benefits available by the start of the new membership year, January 1, 2010. The revised member benefits include:

- Educational workshops and seminars on rural health issues including audio conferences and webinars
- Discounts on registration fees
- Networking with others interested in rural health issues and contributing to the mission of the WVRHA
- Advocating for the unique concerns of rural residents and health providers at state and national levels
- Access links to state and national resources
- Receive a free subscription to the WVRHA's quarterly newsletter with information about the Association's activities, useful websites, grant announcements, legislative updates, etc. (hard copy or e-copy)
- Become a member of the National Rural Health Association at a discount which includes subscriptions to NRHA's *Rural Roads*, Action and Media Alerts and discounts to NRHA conferences

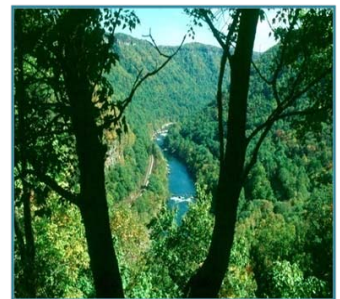


Photo by Chuck Conner



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Questions?
Contact the
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www.wvrha.org

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Sharon M. Giles, WV Area Health Education Centers
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Hilda R. Heady, MSW, WVU Health Science Center, WV Rural Health Education Partnerships, WV Area Health Education Centers
Mary Huntley, MPH, CAMC Health Education and Research Institute
Sandra Y. Pope, MSW, WV Area Health Education Centers
Lisa Scarberry, WV Primary Care Association
Dave Sotak, New River Health Association

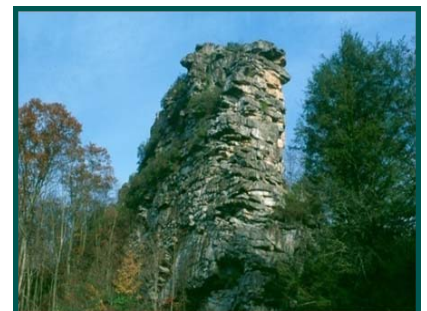


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