

The WV INDEPENDENT Observer

JEFFERSON COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

DECEMBER 2023

COUNTY COMMISSION

Circuit Judge Orders
County Commission
To Meet & Vote

4

INFRASTRUCTURE

New High-Voltage
Transmission Line
May Cut Across County

5

COMMUNITY

Officer's Quick Action
Prevents Fatality At
Shepherdstown Bridge

6

EDUCATION

Shepherd University
Charts Course For
Academic Changes

7

NATURE

Look At The River
To Watch The Ducks

8

ENGAGE & EXPLORE

9 Running For Office 2024

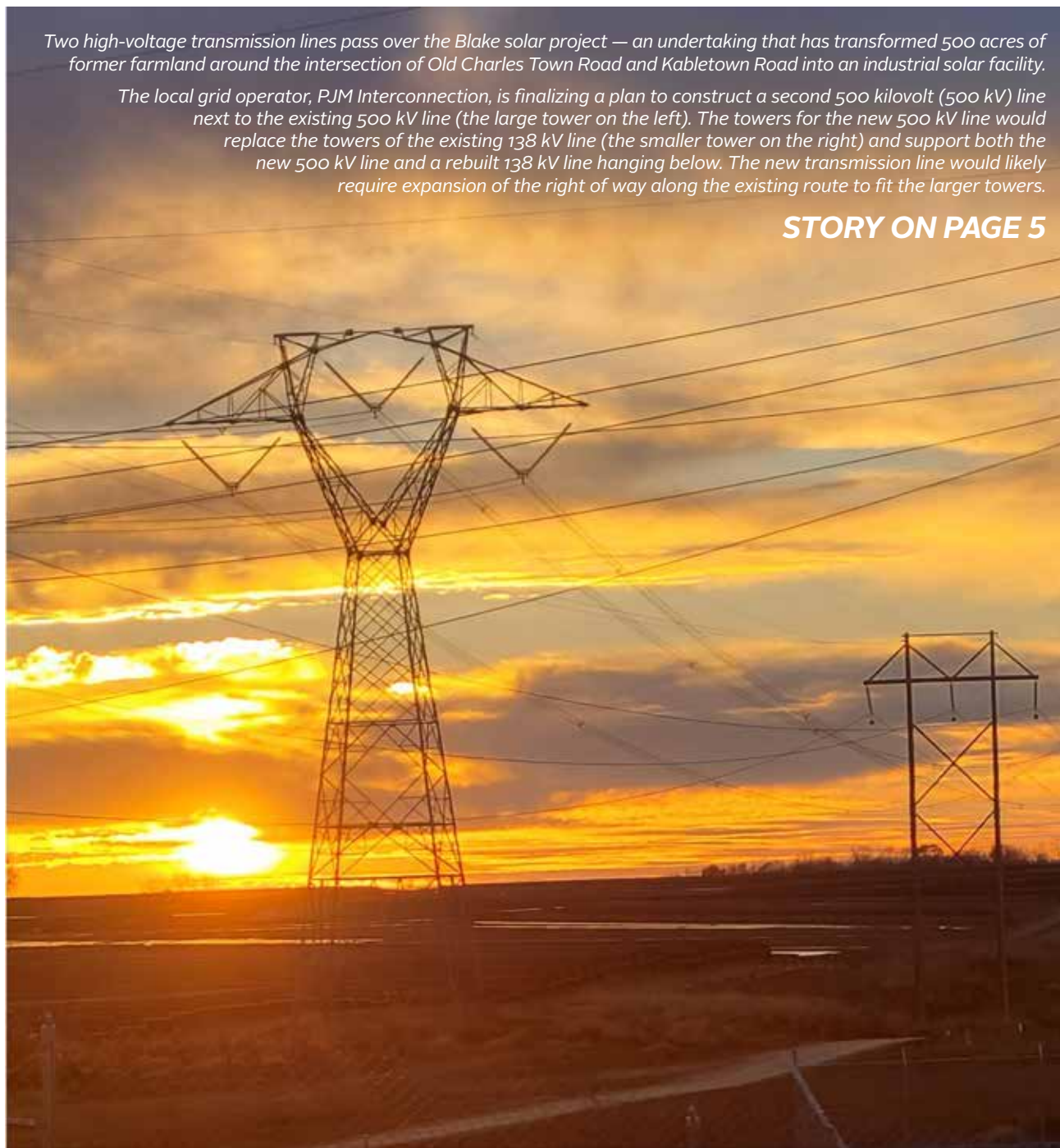
10 Theater & Dance

11 Holiday Highlights

Two high-voltage transmission lines pass over the Blake solar project — an undertaking that has transformed 500 acres of former farmland around the intersection of Old Charles Town Road and Kabletown Road into an industrial solar facility.

The local grid operator, PJM Interconnection, is finalizing a plan to construct a second 500 kilovolt (500 kV) line next to the existing 500 kV line (the large tower on the left). The towers for the new 500 kV line would replace the towers of the existing 138 kV line (the smaller tower on the right) and support both the new 500 kV line and a rebuilt 138 kV line hanging below. The new transmission line would likely require expansion of the right of way along the existing route to fit the larger towers.

STORY ON PAGE 5



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THIS PAPER WANTS TO BE RECYCLED. 



The Blake industrial solar facility appears to be employing a lot of workers for the construction on its 500-acre site in Kabletown. Looking at the cars in the temporary parking lot, you can see lots of license plates from Texas, Florida, and other far-flung states but very few from West Virginia.

TO OUR READERS — When the Jefferson County Commission met on November 30 for the first time since September 7, there were a few high priority items on the agenda and all of the votes were unanimous, even if the discussions were tense (see page 4). The agendas for the next few meetings will likely be more contentious, as the Commission addresses some of the complex issues left unresolved over the past few months.

On the list of open items is zoning for industrial solar facilities. The Commission's action on that topic at the September 7 meeting left a lot of unanswered questions and the solar zoning ordinance “repeal” has been in limbo since then (see story in *The Observer*, November 2023).

The 500-acre Blake solar facility just southeast of Charles Town is the first to begin construction (and the smallest of the four projects that have submitted plans). The project is a bit different from what might have expected based on discussions during the solar zoning amendment process: The land for this project was sold to the developer rather than leased, the soil has been extensively regraded, and the benefits of the construction jobs don't appear to be very “local” (see photo above).

Going forward, the Commission has some negotiating leverage, as all of the solar projects are likely to be requesting tax abatements. Perhaps it's an opportunity for substantive discussions about how to manage the county's growth based more on reality and less on political slogans.

Steve Pearson
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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// COUNTY COMMISSION

COUNTY COMMISSION RETURNS TO WORK

Judge Orders All Commissioners To Meet, Legal Issues Continue



Commissioners Tricia Jackson (standing, left) and Jennifer Krouse (standing, right) arrived exactly on time for the November 30 Commission meeting.

ON NOVEMBER 30, ALL FOUR SITTING COMMISSIONERS were in attendance at a meeting of the Jefferson County Commission for the first time in almost three months. Their first action was to appoint Pasha Majdi to fill the fifth seat on the commission — which had been vacant since June 16 following the resignation of Clare Ath.

The path to filling this vacant seat on the Commission has been lengthy and convoluted. On June 23, the Commission interviewed several individuals who had responded to the Commission’s advertisement for candidates to fill the vacant seat. Following the candidate interviews at that meeting, Commissioners Steve Stolipher and Jane Tabb cast their votes for one of the candidates and Commissioners Tricia Jackson and Jennifer Krouse cast their votes for another. After a brief discussion, it became apparent that none of the commissioners were willing to discuss compromising on a single candidate. According to state code, the next step after this deadlock was for the Commission to request the Jefferson County Republican Executive Committee (JCREC) to provide a list of 3 candidates.

Two Commissioners Refuse To Meet

The Commission received the list of 3 candidates from the JCREC in early August, but the voting was deferred when Commissioner Krouse raised an objection that one of the candidates was not qualified. A subsequent ruling

by the West Virginia Ethics Commission did not support Krouse’s objection. With the question of the candidate’s qualifications removed as an obstacle by the Ethics Commission’s opinion, Jackson and Krouse then raised an objection that the JCREC’s selection process was flawed and posed an insurmountable legal obstacle to the Commission acting to fill the vacancy.

The Commission’s president, Steve Stolipher, maintained that the Commission had a duty, specified in state law, to fill the vacant seat and remained adamant that the appointment could not be removed from the agenda as demanded by Commissioners Jackson and Krouse. Both Commissioners Jackson and Krouse declined to attend the next Commission meeting on September 21, demanding that the action item to fill the vacancy be removed from the agenda before they would return. With one vacant seat and two commissioners absent, the Commission did not have a quorum to conduct business on September 21. This situation continued for the next six meetings, with the Commission unable to conduct business — meaning that new contracts, new hires, grant proposals, action on probate cases, and the release of construction bonds were all put on hold for almost three months.

Legal Action To Remove From Office

On November 13, the County’s Prosecuting Attorney, Matt Harvey, filed a petition “to remove Jefferson County Commissioners Jennifer Krouse and Tricia Jackson from office for official misconduct, neglect of duty and/or incompetence.” The removal petition was declared valid by Circuit Court Judge David Hammer on November 29 and has been forwarded to the Chief Justice of the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals. The Chief Justice has 20 days from the receipt of the petition to appoint a three-judge panel, which will convene without a jury to review the evidence and arguments and then decide whether there is a clear and convincing case for removing Commissioners Krouse and Jackson from office. 🗳️

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 // GO TO WORK OR GO TO JAIL

A FULL AGENDA FOR UPCOMING JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSION MEETINGS

The Jefferson County Commission has two meetings scheduled this month, on **December 7 at 9:30 am** and **December 21 at 6:00 pm**. Other open items that will need to be addressed include the hiring of a new county administrator and deputy county administrator, acting on several open probate cases, reviewing a special tax district request for the Hill Top House project in Harpers Ferry, and kicking off the county budgeting process.

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// INFRASTRUCTURE

NEW TRANSMISSION LINE PROPOSED

Second High-Voltage Line Would Cross Entire County



The four industrial solar facilities currently approved in Jefferson County will connect into the regional grid, each supplying a small amount of the capacity required for the data center industry concentrated in Northern Virginia. The Blake project (seen here from the backyard of a neighboring residence) is the smallest of the four projects. The project encompasses just over 500 acres and is rated to provide 56 megawatts of capacity. As a point of comparison, providing 13 gigawatts of energy with similar industrial solar facilities would require 130,000 acres — roughly the entire land area of Jefferson County.

DOMINION ENERGY IS FORECASTING that it will need to supply approximately 13 gigawatts of additional electric energy over the next 15 years to meet the ongoing expansion of data center facilities in Northern Virginia, according to recent reporting in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and analysis by the Piedmont Environmental Council. To put those numbers in context, the *Times-Dispatch* equates 1 megawatt to the power needed for 250 homes. By that calculation, a gigawatt (1,000 megawatts) would power 250,000 homes and 13 gigawatts is the energy capacity required for 3.25 million homes. As another reference point, there were approximately 3.685 million housing units in the entire state of Virginia in 2022 according to the US Census — so the electric energy needs outlined in Dominion Energy’s data center forecast are comparable to doubling the residential population of the entire state of Virginia.

According to the US Energy Information Association (EIA), Virginia’s current electricity use exceeds its total in-state generation capacity, requiring high-voltage transmission lines to deliver energy generated elsewhere to supply the needs of Northern Virginia’s expanding data center industry. The regional grid operator, PJM Interconnection, is tasked with

MAJOR TRANSMISSION LINES

In Jefferson County, West Virginia

- Power Grid**
- Substation (138 kV)
 - Existing Transmission Line (138 kV)
 - Existing Transmission Line (500 kV)
 - - - Proposed Transmission Line (500kV)

- Solar Projects**
- Blake Project
 - Flowing Springs Project
 - Torch Rippon Project
 - Wild Hill Project

0 1 2 mi

Transmission line paths are approximate

Graphic: WV Independent Observer

keeping the electricity transmission system in balance by connecting generation facilities with the demand. In response to Dominion Energy’s forecast, PJM is proposing to construct a new 500 kV transmission line through Jefferson County by 2027. The new line would be built alongside the existing 500 kV line (see map below and image on page 1).



Additional coverage online at ObserverWV.com/electric-transmission

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 —C.G. Jung (*Civilization in Transition*, p.201)

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// COMMUNITY

LOCAL HERO GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND

Police Officer Austin Simms of Shepherdstown Receives Award



Officer Austin Simms (center) receives a Life Saving Award from Shepherdstown Mayor Jim Auxer (left) and Shepherdstown Police Chief Mike King (right).

FOR THE PAST TWO DECADES, September 11 has been a somber day — especially for first responders reflecting on the tragic events of 2001 when many brave men and women answered the call, often at the risk of their own safety.

This past September 11, the Washington County, Maryland E911 dispatch center received a call about a person acting suspiciously on the Rumsey Bridge outside of Shepherdstown.

The Jefferson County Sheriff’s deputy who was assigned the call requested assistance from Officer Austin Simms of the Shepherdstown Police Department to effect a faster response to what was thought to be a person attempting to jump from the bridge.

Officer Simms arrived at the bridge at 6:55 pm, 4 minutes after the initial dispatch to the Sheriff’s office. When he arrived, Officer

Simms observed a male individual at the midpoint of the bridge, sitting on a small section of concrete support for a light pole outside of the railing. Officer Simms attempted to converse with the individual, but the man was wearing headphones and indicated no response. For the next several minutes, Officer Simms continued his attempts to speak with the individual and gradually moved closer to him.

After approximately 10 minutes, the individual removed his headphones and placed them on the railing, then turned as if to step off into the air. Officer Simms was able to reach over the railing to grab the individual and pull him back over the railing and onto the bridge. A deputy from the Washington County Sheriff’s office arrived shortly thereafter and took the individual to a hospital for medical attention.

Chief Mike King of the Shepherdstown Police Department, described his review of the bodycam footage of the incident, stating, “it’s my belief that Officer Simms used quick thinking and reaction, which saved the life of this individual and kept him from falling to his death. This act by Officer Simms is complimentary of the Shepherdstown Police Department and makes me proud to work with officers like him.”

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// EDUCATION

SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY ADJUSTS COURSE

Faculty & Students Supportive, But Urge Caution



WHEN SHEPHERD UNIVERSITY'S BOARD of Governors looked at the school's financial projections in May 2023, there was no question that significant adjustments were needed. Dr. Scott Barton, the University's chief financial officer, described the key metric of financial stability as "days of cash on hand." Last spring, that number was projected to be negative by the end of the academic year ending in June 2024. While the "days of cash" metric is not like a scoreboard timer that signals "game over" when it gets to zero, it does set off alarms, particularly with accreditation organizations, when it dips below the recommended benchmarks.

The University's revenue is a complex mix of tuition payments, grants, loan disbursements, and funding from other sources. The key driver of revenue is enrollment — the more students on campus, the more revenue the University receives. The good news is that enrollment has been trending up for the past two years and operating revenue for the academic year that ended in June 2023 increased by \$2 million compared to the prior year.

On the expense side, the University has a lot of facilities to maintain, but it's the faculty and staff responsible for delivering the core educational functions and services that constitute the largest portion of the budget. The \$28 million total for all salaries, wages, and benefits for the year ending in June 2023 represented almost two-thirds of the University's cash expenses.

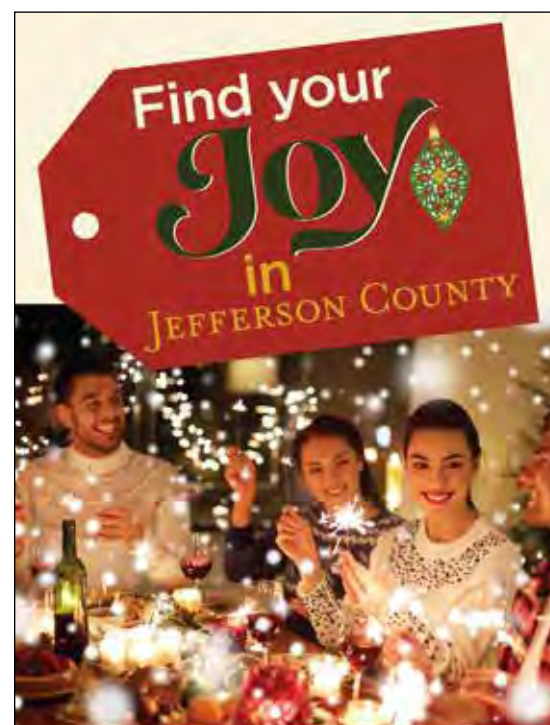
The University operating budget is typically in deficit, but that gets made up by funds from grants and other sources. Looking at the numbers last May, the Board determined that the structural deficit had become too large and needed to be reduced to ensure the financial viability of the University. The Board set a target of \$6 million in expense reductions, to be achieved over the next two years.

The first part of the structural deficit reduction project focused on changes outside of academic staffing. One of the most visible changes will be the closure of the Martinsburg campus. In August 2023, the University also announced the consolidation of various schools and departments to reduce administrative and support costs.

Dr. Robert Tudor, the interim Provost, is the chief academic officer of the University. He took on the task of reviewing the academic programs, making the case to the Board for the University to perform this analysis in-house rather than outsourcing it to consultants. He presented the final version of the "Academic Prioritization" at the November 9 meeting of the Board (image above). The final proposal, which received unanimous approval, includes the elimination of five degree programs and eight minors/concentrations. A total of 13 faculty positions will be eliminated by the end of the 2025 academic year.

Both the faculty and student representatives on the Board noted the necessity of the restructuring to ensure the short-term health of the University but expressed strong concerns that the changes could undermine its core mission and ability to attract students and faculty. Still, the in-house process overseen by Dr. Tudor seems to have generated a buffer of goodwill and is encouraging the University community to rally together. On November 28, the Senate of the Student Government Association unanimously approved a statement thanking Dr. Tudor specifically, along with the other faculty members involved, "for going about this process in a way that aligns with the foundation of our university as a liberal arts institution."

More coverage at [ObserverWV.com/shepherd-university-restructures](https://www.observerwv.com/shepherd-university-restructures)



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WITNESS THE WINTER WATERFOWL

By Doug Pifer

Doug Pifer is an artist, naturalist, and writer. He has a Master's Degree in Journalism from Penn State and has been an editor and art educator. His illustrations have appeared in various books and magazines and he has been a contributor to The Observer for several years. He lives with his wife and assorted animals on 5.7 acres in a historic farmhouse near Shepherdstown, West Virginia.

THE YEAR REACHES ITS END and a cold weather front approaches. Our excitement grows as we watch and listen. No, we're not waiting for Santa's sleigh bells. My wife and I love to watch winter waterfowl.

Thousands of ducks, geese, swans, and loons stop on the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers every year. Fleeing south from the arctic weather, they stop here to rest and refuel. Some continue south to the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic coast, while many remain over winter. Few people but duck hunters and birdwatchers bear witness to our rich abundance of winter waterfowl.

Wild ducks resting on the water are typically seen from a distance. They look like faraway specks unless you have a strong pair of binoculars or, better yet, a spotting scope with a tripod or car window mount. I bought my first scope with money earned from my first art show sale in high school and never regretted the expense — it opened up a new world for me. Nowadays spotting scopes cost much more, but investing in good optics brings wonderful results. My wife and I have upgraded ours several times since then and we use a special adapter for our cell phone camera to record our sightings.

We've been winter waterfowl-watchers for a long time. We used to live near Lake Frederick, a man-made lake just south of Winchester, VA. One rainy November day we stopped there and found the lake white with hundreds of cooing, crooning tundra swans. They generally appear around here between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Diving ducks come through a few weeks later. Redheads, canvasbacks, scaup, and ring-necked ducks land in flocks called rafts where they rest and dive smoothly below the surface to eat water plants. Most of these ducks move on as they deplete their food supply.

As the new year begins, we check out certain sections of the river looking for the black and white floating forms of goldeneyes, boldly patterned ducks with puffy, round heads. They're large ducks about the size of mallards. Drakes are black and white; hens are gray with brown heads.

Drakes have a white spot the size of a quarter between the eye and the bill and, true to their name, both sexes have shockingly yellow eyes.

Buffleheads are among the smallest waterfowl. They're black and white, with a puffy head that earned them their name (derived from "buffalo head"). I smile whenever we see small groups of them bobbing buoyantly on the water like rubber ducks. Viewed through a spotting scope in bright sunlight, they will take your breath away. The black and white head shines iridescent green, gold, and violet. It's a challenge to focus our optics when these ducks suddenly disappear underwater only to pop up again at a distance a minute or so later like floating corks.



Red-breasted merganser; illustration by D. Pifer

Our winter waterways host three kinds of mergansers, toothed-billed ducks that swim fast enough to catch fish underwater. One variety is the Red-breasted mergansers. Drakes have handsome, shaggy crests on their green heads, a reddish-brown breast streaked with black, and gray sides. Until a flock of 16 of them flew by my house last October, I believed they didn't often frequent the Potomac. Evidently these ducks were following Rocky Marsh Run to the Potomac River. A merganser has a unique shape in flight for a duck. Its slim, fast-beating wings propel a cylindrical body with head and neck stretched out straight like a bowling pin.

Few things match the drama, color, and excitement of winter waterfowl watching. If you want to see for yourself, the C&O Canal towpath that runs alongside the Potomac River offers miles of vantage points. Visit CanalTrust.org for parking maps and trip planning information.

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EXPLORE // ELECTIONS

HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT RUNNING FOR OFFICE?

Deadline To File For 2024 State & Local Elections Is January 27

OUR STATE AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS rely on citizens willing to step up and run for office. Some positions require special qualifications — such as judges, justices, and prosecuting attorneys. Other positions are typically held by individuals with specific training — such as magistrates, sheriffs, and the attorney general. However, most offices require no specific credentials or experience.

There are two overlapping election cycles in 2024 — one for offices filled in the May election and another for offices that have primary voting in the May election and a final vote in the November general election. The first group (elections decided in May) includes the local school board, magistrates, judges, and justices. The second group (which has both a partisan primary and general election ballot in 2024) includes county commissioners, assessor, sheriff, prosecuting attorney, surveyor, state delegate, state senator, and the various state officers.

School Board

The Jefferson County Board of Education has 5 members, elected at-large across the entire county. Two seats are up for election in May of 2024. Incumbent Donna Joy has indicated she will be running again; incumbent Mark Osborn

has not yet shared his decision about running. Candidates for school board must be 18 years of age (at the time of taking office) and have a high school diploma (or a GED). The board of education acts in an advisory and review capacity to the superintendent and professional staff and training is provided — so no particular skills or experience is necessary other than an interest in supporting the mission of public education.

County Commission

The county commission is similar to the board of education in that it acts as a group to oversee the county administrator and professional staff, but the range of functions and issues is broader. Candidates for county commission must be 18 years of age (at the time of taking office). The county is divided into 5 magisterial districts. Each commissioner is elected at-large across the entire county but must reside in the specific district associated with the “seat.” Normally just the “Middleway District” seat would be on the ballot in 2024, but the “Charles Town District” seat is currently filled with an appointed commissioner so this seat will also be on the ballot in 2024 to fill the remainder of the term with an elected commissioner.

Filing Deadline

The window for filing as a candidate for school board begins on January 8, 2024 and closes at midnight on January 27 2024. The window for filing to run for county commissioner is the same, unless you choose to run as an independent or write-in candidate. For more information and links to forms, visit ObserverWV.com/elections-2024.



Photo: Daphne Andrews for West Virginia

State Delegate candidates Daphne Andrews (center) and Barbara Fuller (right) have been vocal supporters of Commissioner Tricia Jackson (left), who is also a candidate for State Auditor.

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EXPLORE // THEATER & DANCE

A NEW TWIST ON AN OLD PLAY



The Contemporary American Theater Festival (CATF) is presenting a **first reading of a new play by Jeffrey Lieber**. The playwright had the opportunity to explore Shepherdstown last summer when he was in town for the rehearsals of his play *Fever Dreams* at the Shepherdstown Opera House. The community Lieber encountered reminded him of Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*. Discussions with CATF Artistic Director Peggy McKowen led to the idea to adapt the classic play into a modern script.

The first draft performance will be on **Friday, Dec 8, 6:30 pm** at the new CATF facility (the former Christ Reformed Church building at 304 East German St, Shepherdstown). More details and ticket info at CATF.org.

Visit ObserverWV/events-activities

for highlights and links to events in and around Jefferson County

Scan QR Code for link >>



TRY DANCING – IT’S GOOD FOR YOU



Community dances have been an American tradition for generations, providing social gatherings, music, and physical activity. Locally, **Shepherdstown Music and Dance (SMAD)** has organized a monthly contra dance for over 40 years. SMAD also organizes the town’s May Day celebration and Morris dancers each spring, along with concerts and workshops throughout the year. The group is currently seeking new members to step up and keep this tradition alive.

According to Joanie Blanton, contra dancing is “all about connection. In the course of a contra dance, participants connect and interact with every other dancer on the floor, which makes it really special and unique in our online media driven society. While the dances are lively, most of the moves are done in an easy (if somewhat vigorous) walking step. We invite anyone to participate, regardless of experience — the caller is there to teach the dancers and provide instructions throughout the dance.” She notes that the whole evening creates its own momentum, as dancers just keep moving and interacting with every other dancer on the floor, which makes it welcoming for all, regardless of whether you come as a single, a couple, or a larger group.

SMAD’s next event will be a **Celtic Christmas concert** (not a dance) featuring musicians KA/PO, Eileen Estes and Andrea Hoag performing a program of traditional and contemporary airs, jigs, and reels from Ireland, Scotland, Isle of Man, and Brittany. **Saturday, Dec 16, 7:30** at the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church (100 West Washington St). Tickets are \$25 (\$22 seniors, \$15 students), cash/check at the door. Website: SMAD.us.

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CHAMBER MUSIC BRINGS HOLIDAY CHEER



If you're looking for some cozy concerts with sparkle and cheer, the talented musicians of the **Appalachian Chamber Music Festival** have scheduled several concerts in December. "Christmas by Candlelight" at Happy Retreat (Saturday, Dec 23, 3:00 pm, 600 Mordington Ave, Charles Town) will be a concert of traditional holiday instrumental classics performed by Katie Tertell and Rachelle Hunt. Tickets are \$30. The schedule for the following week has concerts at St. James Church (Friday, Dec 29, 7:00 pm, 49 Crosswinds Dr, Charles Town), The Station in Shepherdstown (Saturday, Dec 30, 10:30 am, 111 Audrey Eagle Dr, Shepherdstown), Camp Hill-Wesley United Methodist Church (Saturday, Dec 30, 7:00 pm, 601 Washington St, Harpers Ferry), and the War Memorial Building (Sunday, Dec 31, 3:00 pm, 102 East German St, Shepherdstown). Tickets for the Friday and Saturday concerts are \$28 for adults, \$13 for students (kids under 13 admitted free to the concert at St. James Church). Tickets for the Sunday concert are \$39 for adults, \$13 for students and include a post-concert reception). Web: AppalachianChamber.org.

CHARLES TOWN HOT COCOA CONTEST



Charles Town's downtown merchants had so much fun with last year's **hot chocolate contest** that they are holding the event again this year, on Saturday, **December 16 from 4 to 6 pm**. It's a simple formula (for the contest, that is): 9 merchants will brew their own favorite hot chocolate recipes (those formulas are a secret, of course). The public is invited to stroll down town between 4 and 6 pm, sample as much hot chocolate as they want, and cast a vote for their favorite. The **Snarly Yow's Christmas with Krampus** will be at the American Legion (225 West Washington St, free admission) from 10 to 5 that same day.

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// COUNTY COMMISSION — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

GO TO WORK OR GO TO JAIL

SEPARATELY FROM THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S petition to remove Commissioners Tricia Jackson and Jennifer Krouse from office, local developer David Lutman filed a writ of mandamus, also on November 13, asking the Circuit Court to enforce the Commission's duty to release a construction bond of approximately \$1 million for which Lutman's company had satisfied all of the requirements for release following the completion of the Milton's Landing development project. The release of this bond had been blocked by the inability of the Commission to meet with a quorum to conduct business.

During the 9 am hearing for Lutman's petition on November 30, Circuit Court Judge Bridget Cohee ordered all of the commissioners to attend the County Commission meeting that was already scheduled for 1:30 that same afternoon and to conduct all of the business included on the agenda, including the refund of Lutman's construction bond. Judge Cohee indicated the commissioners would be under penalty of being held in contempt of court if they failed to comply with her order to attend the meeting and vote on the agenda items.

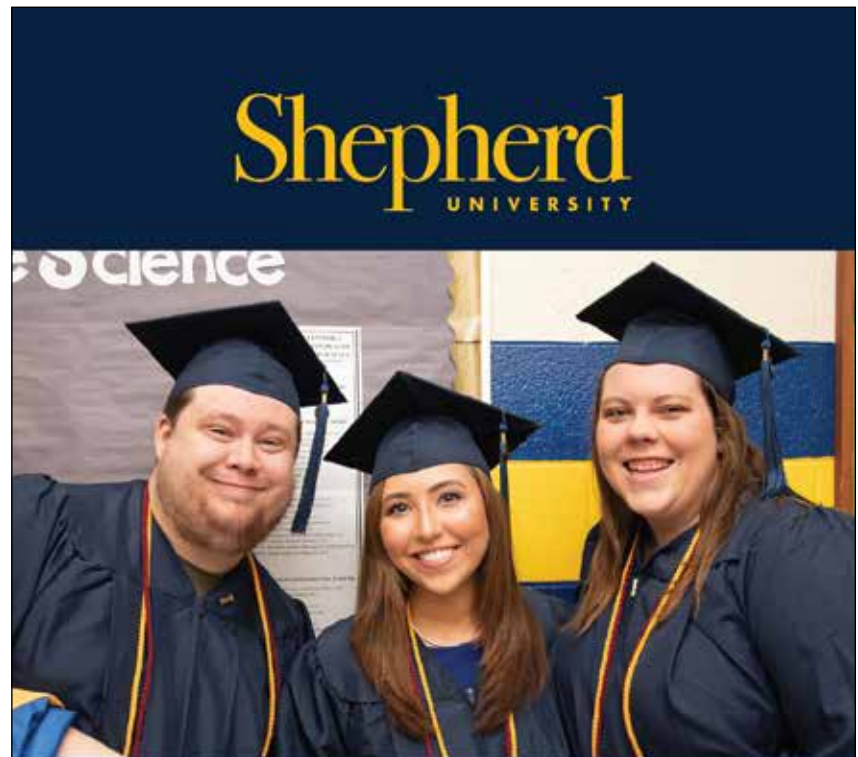
At the scheduled start time for the 1:30 meeting, Commissioners Jackson and Krouse strode into the room (photo, page 4). The meeting kicked off with a back and forth discussion between Commissioners Jackson, Krouse, and the Commission's attorney about various hypothetical concerns surrounding the procedure to appoint an individual to the fifth seat on the Commission. Following this lengthy and noticeably tense discussion, the Commission finally proceeded to appoint Pasha Majdi to the vacancy. The commission also voted to release Mr. Lutman's bond along with several other items, including the renewal of a software maintenance agreement critical to the operation of the county's E911 system.

The commissioners' actions at their November 30 meeting satisfied Judge Cohee's order from that morning (which she verified by having all of the commissioners return to her courtroom later that day to affirm that they had fulfilled their duties). Mr. Lutman included a request for reimbursement of his legal expenses for this matter — a question that Judge Cohee will decide in January.

Even though Commissioners Krouse and Jackson attended the November 30 meeting (and presumably will regularly attend future meetings), the legal proceedings in the case of the removal petition are ongoing as the Prosecuting Attorney's petition cited multiple actions of failure or refusal to perform official duties that have already taken place.



More coverage online at ObserverWV.com/jcc-2023 >>>



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SEATS ON THE BALLOT IN 2024

Pasha Majdi is scheduled to be sworn in at the December 7 Jefferson County Commission meeting, for a temporary appointment to serve on the Commission until the end of 2024. **Next year, county residents will have the opportunity to vote** on who will fill the remainder of the full term that runs through 2028 (corresponding to the full term that Ath won in the November 2022 election). Majdi is currently not eligible to run for the remainder of the term, as this seat is designated for the "Charles Town District" and Majdi resides in the Harpers Ferry district. The "Middleway District" seat will also be on the ballot next year. **See page 9 for more information about the 2024 elections.**



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