

WGTH-AM ISSUES & PROGRAMS LIST

FOURTH QUARTER 2020

OCTOBER – DECEMBER

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2020

CHANGES IN VIRGINIA ELECTION LAWS AND UPDATES

There were many significant changes in the election laws in Virginia prior to this year's Presidential Election. Most notably, this was the first time that "no excuse" early voting had begun in Virginia, and forty-five days of "in-person voting" were allowed in which voters could cast their ballots ahead of the November 3rd General Election. Because of the newness of early voting and other changes, as well as confusion generated by some media sources and social media, numerous voters expressed confusion and doubt about procedures and the integrity of the process.

Program: Prerecorded interview

Date/Time: October 21, 2020 @ 11:32 am

Duration: 20 minutes

Guest: Brian Earls, Director of Elections for Tazewell County

Brian Earls, Director of Elections for Tazewell County, having already participated in a couple of interviews prior to and at the beginning of the new-to-Virginia early voting process, was very willing to report to listeners regarding the status of voting in Tazewell County to date and to attempt to clear up any confusion about the process and any misinformation regarding its integrity. He was pleased to report that a surprising 10% of eligible voters had already voted. The inclusion of

mail-in ballots would allow for an estimated 20% or greater voter participation prior to the election. Voter interest in the 2020 election appeared to be at an all-time high with a very large number of first-time voters registering... nearly one thousand. Earls said that many new voters were people that would have been eligible to vote for quite some time... some for decades.

In addition to heightened interest in the Presidential election, numerous voters were taking advantage of early voting to avoid long waits and large numbers of voters at the polls on Election Day in hopes of evading the COVID-19 virus. According to Earls, frequent disinfecting and other precautions had been taken at the Office of Voter Registration and Elections in order to provide as safe and healthy an environment as possible.

There were several new election law procedural changes and issues that had developed since the previous interviews. Earls explained the use of the new “drop boxes.” One drop box had been placed in a room adjacent to the office. It had the required signage and a separate entrance from the outside to allow voters to cast their ballots without having to encounter other individuals that might have COVID or other infectious diseases. The drop box was lashed to the table on which it sat and had a security camera focused on it and the door. On Election Day, each polling location would have a drop box of its own which would be secure but easily accessible.

Another new procedure had been granted to the Director of Elections... known as the “curing process.” Voters that had voted their mail-in ballots but had made mistakes that would not allow them to be counted could now be notified and allowed another opportunity to vote. Possible reasons for the voided ballots would include: no physical address, not completely filling out the envelope as required, and no designated envelope containing the ballot inside the outer envelope.

Deadlines and other procedural updates were discussed. Earls cited October 23rd as the last day to request mail-in ballots and October 31st as the final day for early in-person voting. Several issues had arisen since early voting began. First of all, many people had requested an absentee ballot be sent to them and, then, they changed their minds and decided to vote in person. In order to prevent two ballots being cast, it was required that they surrender their absentee, or mail-in, ballot when they came to vote or sign a statement that they had not received a ballot in the mail or could not find it. Although it is perfectly legal to vote after surrendering an absentee ballot that had not been voted, Earls expressed dismay at the mounting cost due to the frequency of this occurrence. Return postage was now required to be paid by the Office of Voter Registration and Elections so every mail-in ballot had twice the postage and a significant amount of pre-printed paperwork which resulted in a substantial waste of taxpayer money.

Earls cautioned voters to be, particularly, aware of two additional potential problems. First of all, he encouraged voters to read and be familiar with the content of the proposed Constitutional Amendments ahead of time in order to avoid delays while voting in person. Secondly, he encouraged voters that wished to vote for a write-in candidate to be certain to fill in the oval next to the write-in line on the ballot or it would not count. Spelling names correctly was beneficial, but Earls said counting misspellings was at the discretion of the Electoral Board. He indicated that they are fairly lenient.

Furthermore, Earls recommended that voters be patient regarding the announcement of the returns. New voting law has extended the time for allowing the receipt of mail-in ballots. Also, it would take a considerable amount of time to count write-in ballots for those receiving greater than ten percent of the votes cast. (Those receiving under ten percent would not be considered.) With several candidates staging write-in campaigns in local town elections, this would likely be an issue.

CONCERNS REGARDING ISSUES OF MORALITY

There has been an ever-increasing concern over the input of educational and governmental sources regarding issues that involve morality. This becomes a real issue when what is being presented undermines the values taught in the home. Many conservative parents have been aghast when they have discovered, or have been alerted to, some immoral ways of thinking that are being taught to their children in public schools and other public arenas. These indoctrinations are presented as though they are perfectly acceptable when, in fact, the doctrines may be polar opposites of what the parents have been attempting to teach their children.

Because legislators do make a difference in public policy covering many aspects of morality, it is important for concerned individuals to elect representatives with similar principles and values to their own. Moreover, those in authority in government, often, have some say in educational instruction related to morality.

Program: Prerecorded interview

Dates/Times: October 30 @ 11:33 am & November 1, 2020 @ 6:10 pm

Duration: 29 minutes

Guest: Victoria Cobb, President of the Family Foundation

Victoria Cobb, President of the Family Foundation, participated in a prerecorded interview and presented a wealth of pro-family information to the listeners. She gave a summary of the history of the Commonwealth of Virginia's largest and oldest pro-family organization and its beginnings with founder, Walt Barbee in 1985. Victoria's personal involvement in the organization has exceeded twenty years... more than fifteen years of which have found her in the presidency. She spoke with passion about her desire to influence the culture for the good on behalf of families, marriages, and the dignity of human life.

Victoria cited numerous incidents of highly questionable occurrences involving children. For example, there was a state-funded mass mailing in which children received postcards with numbers they could text to ask questions about sex. These kinds of incidents are the reason the Family Foundation issues alerts to parents and caring individuals to make likeminded people aware of the usurping of the values they are trying to teach their children.

The main thrust of the interview dealt with the timely topic of voting in the 2020 Presidential Election. A United States Senate seat and various House of Representatives candidacies throughout the state were, also, a part of this year's election cycle. However, conservative United States Congressman Morgan Griffith, who represents most of the listening area, ran unopposed.

Victoria said, "Legislators do make a difference." Listeners were encouraged to make their voices heard and to, "Steward that vote!" She, also, warned that, "Every law is someone's morality." Suggested methods of becoming involved in promoting pro-family legislation included: 1) finding out who the representatives are for the location in which a voter lives, 2) being aware of potentially harmful legislation that could negatively affect families, 3) visiting or emailing representatives on a regular basis to express concerns, and 4) reminding legislators of their accountability to protect the rights of individuals and all those with regard for life and in favor of strong families.

RECOGNITION OF VETERANS:
NEVER FORGET OR TAKE FOR GRANTED

It would be unconscionable for any community to fail to recognize and demonstrate sincere gratitude toward the veterans that fought in order to protect and preserve the freedom enjoyed by its citizens. Unless a person has served in such a sacrificial capacity, it would be difficult to imagine the degree to which the brave men and women of the military surrendered their own comfort and, too often, their lives or limbs. Veterans and their contributions to the welfare of their country should be celebrated and appreciated.

Program: Prerecorded promotional segments

Dates/Times: November 4 – 8, 2020, played throughout the day

Duration: 57 seconds

Guest: Jerry McReynolds, Event Chairperson and Organizer for the Town of Tazewell Veterans Day Celebration

The Town of Tazewell honored all area veterans with a Veterans Day parade. Jerry McReynolds, event chairperson and organizer, informed the listeners of the specifics of the Town of Tazewell's plans, where and how veterans were welcome to participate, and what observers should do in order to protect themselves and others from the spread of COVID. The event was held on November 8th.

Program: Prerecorded Veterans Day salutes

Dates/Times: November 9 – 13, 2020, played throughout the day

Duration: From less than one minute to more than two minutes (varied)

Guest: Jim Ray, local veteran and guest speaker for the Richlands area Veterans Day program (2 segments from Jim's presentation at the event)
Connie Allen, Director of Community Development, organizer of the event, and Edythe Brown recorded four additional in-house segments

Due to the initial uncertainty of when and how Veterans Day was to be celebrated locally, WGTH honored veterans by recording four historical segments featuring:

- 1) An informational segment regarding the origin of Veterans Day, once known as Armistice Day, and the significance of November 11th, along with a quote from Sir Winston Churchill
- 2) Thirteen of the many wise and famous quotes from General Douglas MacArthur, a five-star general of the United States Army and American military hero
- 3) An inspiring summary of some of the history and highlights of General George S. Patton's military career, including one of his famous quotes about fear and duty
- 4) An entertaining summary of the military service and exceptional sharp-shooting skills of Corporal, later promoted to Sergeant Alvin C. York from the hills of Tennessee near the Kentucky border

After it was decided that Richlands would have a Veterans Day program and serve takeout hotdog dinners, WGTH was able to air segments promoting the event that were prerecorded by Connie Allen. Connie is the Director of Community Development for the Town of Richlands.

Jim Ray, local veteran, was the guest speaker for the program honoring veterans. Two excerpts from his entertaining and inspiring stories were extracted, with permission, and aired in rotation with the four in-house segments mentioned above. One segment featured a humorous story about his being warned never to volunteer for anything, then he volunteered thinking he was to become a "fireman" and make the folks back home so proud. In reality, he had to constantly stoke the fires that kept the quarters warm for several weeks. In a portion of the other segment, Jim gave his testimony of the radical change in his life when he became a Christian.

INSPIRING WRITERS AND USING WRITING AS THERAPY

People write for different reasons. It is not uncommon for writers to use their skills as an outlet for emotional venting of sorts. This practice can be therapeutic for the author and the author's readers. However, many writers never feel confident enough in their own creative abilities to take the step toward sharing their works by having them published.

Program: Prerecorded interview

Dates/Times: November 24, 2020 @ 7:05 pm & November 25, 2020 @ 2:05 pm

Duration: 21 minutes

Guest: Jamie Bryant, author of children's books and native of Richlands

Although Jamie Bryant grew up in Richlands, Virginia, knowledge of her tremendous talent in writing children's books had never made its way to WGTH until she planned a trip to Richlands to visit her mother in an assisted care facility this Thanksgiving and connections were established. During a prerecorded interview, Jamie shared how she became an author by writing about her life experiences in a book called, *Fish Guts and Other Bedtime Stories*. She gave titles and other information about numerous other books that flowed out of her love for writing, her love for children, and her desire to encourage others to write and publish their works. She encouraged listeners that enjoy writing to share their creativity and talents with others.

What Jamie did not expect to happen as she wrote was the healing that would come to her and her damaged relationship with her father. Jamie said she loved her father, but they had a very strained relationship. She harbored feelings of anger, frustration, and disappointment because of the rift between them. This was, especially, true following her

parents' divorce. She shared that every time she spoke about her father she found herself saying negative things about him.

One day, she felt strongly convicted that, if she claimed to be a Christian and to love her dad, she should not always be critical and negative about him. The conviction came as a result of her writing books about sweet memories full of fun times from her youth most of which included special times with her dad. Jamie knew that she needed to truly forgive him for any and all wrongs in the past and discontinue her judgmental thoughts and comments toward him. As a result, Jamie's relationship with her dad was restored and she learned to practice true forgiveness.

Because of her desire to help children in the development of their character, Jamie is working on a series of nine books... each one focusing on a different Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23a) and using a different animal as the main character. For example, The Love Bug, The Joyful Jellyfish, and The Peaceful Panther were the first three books in the series. She has now completed seven Fruit of the Spirit books and hopes to finish the series fairly soon.

MONITORING MENTAL HEALTH DURING HOLIDAYS

According to the songs associated with the season, holidays are supposed to be full of joy and merriment. However, for people with mental health issues, the holidays can trigger more intense emotions and tendencies toward depression and other issues. Uncontrolled behaviors and lack of self-care can prove very problematic.

Program: Prerecorded interview

Dates/Times: December 10 @ 7:05 pm & December 11 @ 11:45 am

Duration: 3 minutes 20 seconds

Guest: Dr. Jessica Whelan, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

Dr. Jessica Whelan, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner in Missouri, discussed the need for people with mental health issues to take extra care during what she calls in her profession, “the psychiatric busy season.” Having been in private practice as a nurse practitioner for seven years and as an RN in psychiatric mental health prior to that, Whelan has had experience in dealing with mental health disorders for quite some time. According to Whelan, sixty-four percent of people with mental health issues report worsening during the holidays.

The difficulties with Bipolar 1 Disorder were highlighted as especially significant and potentially dangerous with high and low mood swings and characterized by manic symptoms. One common problem for people with this disorder is the potential to practice excessive spending... especially during the holidays.

Whelan advocates mindfulness as a necessary practice to avoid unwanted mental and emotional instability during the holidays. Being keenly and consistently aware of the state of mind (one’s thoughts and emotions), in a nonjudgmental way, can make the holiday experience much more pleasant and under control. Other recommendations from Whelan: 1) include family members in the assessment process to maintain additional help and concern; 2) self-care, including a regular, eight hour sleep schedule, must be a top priority; and 3) maintain the recommended regimen regarding the use of medications.

PROVIDING GIFTS FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN

The Christmas season brings with it expectations – in the minds and hearts of children – for the fulfillment of wish lists and new items of toys and clothing. In non-COVID years, rural Appalachia has been considered an underprivileged area. With the additional economic stresses caused by the pandemic, many area families are struggling to make ends meet and extra expenditures would require that some basic

needs would not be met. Another very real problem that continues to plague Southwest Virginia and the surrounding region is that of drug abuse. Parents in prison is not an uncommon occurrence. Christmas shopping would be a hardship for so many.

Program: Prerecorded message about “Shop with a Cop”

Dates/Times: December 3rd @ 6:27 pm & December 7th @ 8:40 pm

Duration: 7 minutes on December 3rd during the Christmas Parade and 2 minutes 7 seconds on December 7th

Guests: Jerry Gilbert, Chief of Police for the Town of Richlands
April Trent, announcer at WGTH

During this year’s Reverse Richlands Christmas Parade in which cars drove by stationary floats and other parade entries in order to maintain a safer atmosphere to avoid coronavirus spread, WGTH aired a prerecorded message from Richlands Police Chief Jerry Gilbert. In his message, Jerry expounded the “Shop with a Cop” program. The Richlands Police Department delights in going shopping one-on-one with underprivileged children (recommended by local schools) and seeing the joy the children express as their shopping carts are loaded with items of their choice for Christmas. Jerry expressed his gratitude to the community for the donations that paid for this pleasure. He, also, let the listeners know that more donations meant more children could be helped. The police department was, already, collecting donations for next year’s “Shop with a Cop.” (Jerry’s message was aired, again, on December 7th.)

Following Jerry’s prerecorded message during the parade, WGTH’s April Trent shared a heartwarming testimony of her personal experience being a beneficiary of the “Shop with a Cop” program when her family was struggling financially once during her childhood years. She vouched for the impact of the program in a child’s life and encouraged listeners to donate, if possible, to such a worthy cause.

PROMOTING EVENTS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Promoting community events throughout the area has been a little more difficult due to the pandemic, because fewer people are getting out and spreading information by word-of-mouth. Social media helps to some degree; but misinformation, or not enough details, can create problems. A reliable source with information directly from the organizers is most helpful.

Program: Informational segments regarding area Christmas parades

Dates/Times: November 25th – December 5th at various times throughout the day for the Reverse Richlands Christmas Parade

November 30th – December 5th at various times throughout the day for the Town of Tazewell Reverse Christmas Parade

Duration: Each of the informational segments prerecorded by the guests in charge were, approximately, one minute

Guests: Connie Allen, Executive Director of Community Development for the Town of Richlands

Amanda Hoops, Executive Director for Tazewell Today

Connie Allen, Executive Director for Community Development for the Town of Richlands, and Amanda Hoops, Executive Director for Tazewell Today in Tazewell, both prerecorded invitational and informative segments regarding the Christmas parades for their localities. Both parades were “reverse” in nature, that is, the floats and other parade entries were stationary and the observers drove by while maintaining a safe distance and remaining in their vehicles. Due to the unusual nature of the parades resulting from the desire to prevent the coronavirus spread, Connie and Amanda each had more explaining to do than would normally be the case regarding the particulars of their locality’s parade.

Program: Live remote coverage of the Reverse Richlands Christmas Parade

Date/Time: December 3, 2020 from 6:05 – 7:00 pm

Duration: 55 minutes

Announcers: Ron and Edythe Brown and Charlene Pinkerton of WGTH

The unusual nature of the Reverse Richlands Christmas Parade made for an interesting change of procedures this particular year. Charlene drove as Ron and Edythe described the floats and other parade entries. The crew drove through and described the scene twice in order to include more details for those that were not able to attend the parade for whatever reasons. An incredibly lengthy line of vehicles stretched for miles to wait their turn to view the “reverse parade.”

IMPORTANT COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION

To many people, the fear of the COVID-19 vaccine is only slightly less than their fear of the virus itself. Despite reassurances from experts in various aspects of healthcare and immunology, some potential recipients remain doubtful about the vaccine. Reliable information from knowledgeable sources will, likely, be the most consoling and convincing of all things taken under consideration.

Program: Focus on the Family

Date/Time: December 18, 2020 @ 10:30 am

Duration: 28 minutes

Guests: Dr. Daniel Hinthorn, Infectious Disease Specialist in Kansas

Dr. Scott James, Infectious Disease Specialist in Alabama

The Focus on the Family broadcast on December 18, 2020, was entitled, “COVID-19 Vaccines: What You Need to Know.”

Two distinguished infectious disease specialists, Dr. Daniel Hinthorn from Kansas and Dr. Scott James from Alabama, were the guests of Focus on the Family President Jim Daly and co-host John Fuller. After explaining the way a vaccine works and how and why this vaccine was tested and issued more rapidly than others in the past, both doctors fielded questions from Jim and John... including questions they had received from listeners to the broadcast. Many questions dealt with safety concerns especially due to the, relatively, fast production and distribution of the vaccine. Dr. Hinthorn and Dr. Scott gave educated reassurances to support the research, testing, production, and administering of the vaccines.