

AM ISSUES & PROGRAMS

THIRD QUARTER 2023

JULY – SEPTEMBER

MEDICAL/DENTAL/VISION CARE – FREE TO THOSE IN NEED

Many citizens in Southwest Virginia live in poverty and cannot afford to care for their medical needs, their teeth, and their eyes. Illnesses, often, go undiagnosed and untreated until disease progression is very serious or completely untreatable. It is not unusual to see people missing some or all of their teeth. Illness, disease, and problems with vision and hearing take more of a toll on a person's overall health than just the obvious losses. Lack of self-confidence and other mental and emotional concerns can stem from physical issues.

Program: Prerecorded interview about Move Mountains Medical Mission (M7) in conjunction with The Health Wagon

Date/Time/Duration: July 18, 2023 @ 7:09 pm, and July 21, 2023 @ 11:34 am/
22 minutes

Guests: Dr. Theresa Tyson, CEO of The Health Wagon, and Dr. Paula

Move Mountains Medical Mission (M7), formerly known as Remote Area Medical (RAM), was scheduled to be in Wise County, at the Wise Fairgrounds, on July 28 – 30, 2023. Dr. Theresa Tyson, CEO of The Health Wagon, and Dr. Paula participated in an interview in which they gave detailed information regarding the special, free health services available to uninsured, underinsured, and those that cannot afford to pay. The Health Wagon offers medical, dental, and behavioral health services at locations around Southwest Virginia. The event being promoted is the 21st specialty clinic that the Health Wagon has offered annually.

Trained health professionals volunteer to work at the Move Mountains Medical Mission (M7). There is a long list of services available, including:

- *Dental cleanings, fillings, extractions, and oral cancer screenings
- *Free eye exams, glaucoma testing, and prescription glasses
- *Specialist exams, EKG's, diabetes screening, foot care
- *Numerous "freebies," such as, haircuts and food boxes

ISSUES FACING SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

Although Virginians share many of the same issues across the Old Dominion, the “Southwest Delegation” – a group of legislators from Southwest Virginia – is keenly aware of the issues that affect the people they represent. The legislators from Southwest Virginia are, also, aware of how the majority of their constituents feel about the issues that face this region. Although the legislators that represent Southwest Virginia are in the minority in the General Assembly, they try their best to work with the majority in order to gain recognition of the specific problems affecting the region and offer some potential solutions. Occasionally, they are successful in being heard and getting results.

Program: Prerecorded update on the most recent General Assembly’s legislative session

Dates/Times/Duration: July 11, 2023 @ 7:09 pm/47 minutes, and July 14, 2023 @ 11:25 am/35 minutes

Guest: State Senator Travis Hackworth

State Senator Travis Hackworth gave an in-depth review of many of the bills brought before the General Assembly and the actions taken at the most recent legislative session. He reviewed the redistricting that had, recently, been enacted and its effect on Southwest Virginia. He added that about 28 seats would be vacated by legislators that had decided to retire and that all 140 seats needed to be filled during this November’s election.

Senator Hackworth elaborated on quite a number of specific bills and topics of discussion, including:

- *The auto standards adopted from California’s Air Resource Board that did not take into account the heavier electric cars being harder on road maintenance yet there being no gas tax to pay for such
- *The Virginia Clean Economy Act requiring zero carbon emissions by 2050
- *Police have their hands tied and cannot stop a car on suspicion of drugs being present or in use, rather it must be a secondary offense.
- *Issues regarding people released from prison without proper notice to those affected
- *Requests for more parental involvement in education

PROMOTION OF AREA CELEBRATIONS AND FESTIVALS

Local and regional celebrations and the annual Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival are important events in Southwest Virginia. First of all, they provide an economic boost to the towns and counties, as well as, to the vendors that participate. Secondly, the events are family-friendly opportunities for people to go, be entertained, and to see old friends and make new ones. Event-goers appreciate having up-to-date information about the dates, times, locations, and other specifics.

Program: Infobits regarding area events

Dates/Times/Durations/Guest:

July 1 – 4, 2023 @ various times throughout the day/51 seconds – featuring Mayor Tony Dodi giving information and an invitation for people to come to the Town of Lebanon’s Fourth of July celebration and fireworks display

July 1 – 4, 2023 @ various times throughout the day/1 minute 46 seconds – featuring Cindy Farmer sharing information about all the activities taking place at the Fourth of July celebration at Historic Crab Orchard Museum in Tazewell

July 3 – 8, 2023 @ various times throughout the day/24 seconds – featuring Joyce Reedy regarding the Fourth of July celebration and fireworks at Jewell Ridge

September 11 – 16, 2023 @ various times throughout the day/average 1 ½ minutes – Jenna Hearl with lots of information regarding the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival

DRUG COURT GIVES POSITIVE HELP TO STRUGGLING ADDICTS

Many of those addicted to drugs and/or alcohol have a sincere desire to be released from that addiction. Feelings of loneliness and thinking they must face their troubles by themselves cause many to fail in any attempts to break away from addiction and get back on track. Not knowing what kind of resources are available and how to access treatment programs is a problem for many addicts.

The stigma associated with addiction hinders a lot of addicts from reaching out for help. Adding to the addict’s frustration is the feeling that law enforcement has totally negative feelings toward all addicts. Low self-esteem, the difficulties involved with trying to break from addiction, and feeling as though everyone is judging them are just some of the negative thoughts that make successful recovery extremely challenging. Furthermore, addicts and addiction experts say the longer you remain an addict, the more difficult it is to retrain your brain for recovery.

Program: Prerecorded interview from the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival

Date/Time/Duration: September 16, 2023/1:50 pm/5 minutes 47 seconds

Guest: Priscilla, former addict, speaking on behalf of the Drug Court recovery program

Priscilla was at the Recovery Tent in recognition of September being Recovery Month. She is involved with promoting the drug court and letting people with addictions know that they are not alone. According to Priscilla, awareness of available resources is crucial to recovery. She encourages everyone in need to reach out to get necessary help.

Among the handouts at the Recovery Tent were parents' handbooks. When asked what advice she would give parents, she encouraged them to be involved in their children's lives and to know where they are and what they are doing. She encouraged open discussions of the problems that come with drug abuse.

The danger of fentanyl was cited as the major drug issue at this time. Priscilla said that addicts think they are getting another kind of drug, but life-threatening fentanyl is, also, present in with the drug they had chosen. Fentanyl is so often lethal the first time it is used.

She said that so many people believe that law enforcement officers think negatively about all addicts. She insists that is not true. Priscilla said that she had been an addict, but had been helped through drug court to recover from her addiction. Thanks to drug court, she had learned where to receive the treatment and education necessary to beat her addiction. Mostly, she credited AA and NA for assisting in her recovery. Now, she encourages those that are victims of addiction to pursue recovery through treatment themselves. Contact information was shared in order for those interested, or their families, to make the necessary connections to begin the recovery process.

PRESERVATION OF LOCAL HISTORY

The preservation of local history is important for the appreciation of the significance of this area to the greater historical account of our region, state, and nation. Additionally, the people that made an impact on the development of local culture, economy, family life, and other meaningful aspects of life should be recognized for their initiative, accomplishments, and major contributions. If not by

name, local ancestors can be acknowledged as part of a community that came together for growth, development, and protection for the common good.

Program: Live remote broadcast from the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival

Date/Time/Duration: September 16, 2023/10:15 am/8 minutes

Guest: Captain Jim Cochrane of the Knibb's Battery, Civil War Artillery

Captain Jim Cochrane of the Knibb's Battery, Civil War Artillery, is part of a living history unit. He is based in Newport, in Giles County, Virginia. Cochrane travels throughout various Southern states in order to honor his Confederate heritage through accurate depictions of a working Confederate artillery battery. According to Cochrane, the unit participates in five or six re-enactments a year and some funerals and weddings. He, and other artillerists, portray specific artillery units from various areas of the South – by name – at the living history events in which they participate. He says that they are the South's only sixteen cannon re-enactment organization, and they have recruitment flyers to encourage others to participate and preserve history.

Captain Cochrane and the Knibb's Battery have numerous kinds of artillery, artillery projectiles, artifacts (original and reproductions), and historical books. Every uniform or item mentioned is from the Civil War period, or as the "Sons of the Confederacy" call it, "The War for Southern Independence." As he spoke about the artillery, Jim shared several interesting facts. For example, the shorter the barrel, the less accurate the shot. A rifle gun could fire a distance of about 600 yards. In firing a cannon, a crew of eight was used.

Program: Prerecorded interview from the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival

Date/Time/Duration: September 16, 2023/1:15 pm/2 minutes 40 seconds

Guest: Mike Abel, representing the Tazewell County Historical Society

Mike Abel, representing the Tazewell County Historical Society, talked about the abundance of historical books available at his tent at the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival. He said that preserving area history is important and that there were numerous books about Tazewell County and surrounding counties' histories, as well as, the history of several local towns. The books are, also, available at the Society's building on Main Street in Tazewell. Mike invited people to join the Society and/or to come and work on family genealogies when they are open on Wednesdays from 11 am to 1 pm, and Thursdays from 5 pm to 7 pm.

LAW ENFORCEMENT WORKING TO HELP IN THE COMMUNITY

Frequently, law enforcement officers are seen as people looking for citizens to make mistakes so they can write a ticket. However, most law enforcement officers are looking for ways to help area citizens and to build positive community relations. In fact, there are several projects that they bring to the community to do just that.

Program: Live remote broadcast at the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival

Date/Time/Duration: September 16, 2023/9:31 am/5 minutes

Guest: Tazewell County Sheriff's Deputy Stiltner

There were several Tazewell County Sheriff's Deputies, representing various divisions of the Sheriff's Office, at their tent at the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival. Deputy Stiltner said the Sheriff's Department likes to be at any and every event where they can build good community relations. They like to help the community and "be there" for the citizens. He spoke about several of the programs aimed at developing good relations with the community and, hopefully, providing important services to community youth and adults.

The first program discussed was the ever-popular D.A.R.E. Program (Drug Abuse Resistance Education). This is taught to area students in the fifth grade and in the seventh grade. Deputy Stiltner said the program seeks to help students develop good communication skills, reminds them of their responsibilities, and presents to them a decision-making model to help them recognize when they are in a situation where good decision-making is necessary and their options for their response to it.

Project Lifesaver was presented as a program to benefit citizens with Alzheimer's and other types of dementia, along with autistic children, and others that might be endangered if they were to wander off or get lost. This is helpful to families, as well. A bracelet with a tracker is given to those at risk so that law enforcement can find them in case of emergency.

The Sheriff's Office is, also, a Virginia Department of Health Child Safety Seat Checking Station. There are four Sheriff's Deputies that are Certified Child Safety Seat Technicians. The first Tuesday of every month, they are available from 4 pm to 6 pm. They teach parents and others how to install the car seats, present them with a packet of information, and give them a DMV sticker to place on the

car seat in the event of an accident in which the adults were disabled. The sticker gives first responders important information in order to identify and care for the child.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AREA YOUTH

Too often, the contributions that area youth make for the betterment of their communities are not recognized or acknowledged. Although it is important to learn to make sacrifices and to contribute time, energy, and other resources without always being recognized, giving young people some accolades for their services reinforces the pleasure they get from serving others. Possibly, an even worse mistake that many adults make is to not even seek the participation of youth in tasks that they can do and do well. Showing confidence in their ability to handle responsibility is rewarding to youth and helps their self-esteem.

Program: Live remote broadcast from the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival

Date/Time/Duration: September 16, 2023/9:25 am/3 minutes

Guest: Mr. Bruce Miller, Richlands High School Band Director

The Richlands High School Marching Band has, traditionally, started the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival's musical programs by playing the National Anthem, and other selections, at the opening ceremonies. This has been in conjunction with the flag presentation by the Richlands High School Air Force JROTC. Mr. Bruce Miller is in his twenty-fourth year as band director at Richlands High School. He talked about the importance of his students continuing this honored tradition for the benefit of the Town of Cedar Bluff and the festival that brings in thousands of visitors each year. Mr. Miller spoke about this year's band program and the competition season. The Richlands Band is a fourteen time Honor Band. This is quite an accomplishment and one that gives Mr. Miller well-deserved pride.

This year, there are several new faces on the festival committee, and Mr. Miller was asked to help line up the musical entertainment and make sure all the participants have all they need for their performances. He and the Festival Committee requested the services of the band students. They were very helpful with all that they were asked to do. Mr. Miller gave them thanks for all they had done and what he knew they would do during the rest of the event.

Date/Time/Duration: September 16, 2023/9:07 am/9 minutes

Guest: Jenna Hearl, representing the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival Committee

During Jenna Hearl's welcoming introduction to the radio listeners featuring lots of information about the festival, there was quite a lot of recognition for the young people that were assisting. In addition to Mr. Miller's other band members, Jenna recognized the extraordinary participation by one of Mr. Miller's flag corps. Richlands senior, Graham Johnson, was credited with setting up everything for the festival on Facebook and taking care of other technical matters.

HONORING POW/MIA VETERANS

Only a prisoner of war or someone that may have been stranded on foreign soil could possibly imagine the horrors of suffering through these situations. The sacrifices our POW/MIA veterans have made must never be forgotten. There are no limits to the recognition and honor they deserve.

Program: Live remote broadcast at the Cedar Bluff Heritage Festival

Date/Time/Duration: September 16, 2023/9:16 am/6 minutes

Guests: John Absher, Town Manager of Cedar Bluff, and Tom Lester, previous Town Manager of Cedar Bluff

After a brief discussion of festival particulars, John Absher and Tom Lester made an exciting announcement. Area POW/MIA advocates, Jim Ray and Kim Ball, had approached Virginia House of Delegates Representative Will Morefield and Virginia State Senator Travis Hackworth about the possibility of having the DMV design and create a license plate that would honor POW/MIAs and feature Cedar Bluff Overlook Park's POW/MIA Memorial. According to Tom and John, there will be a bill introduced at the General Assembly in January that will likely make this a reality. Not only will this bring honor to these veterans that sacrificed so much, but it may bring attention to the Town of Cedar Bluff... boosting tourism and economic development.