

# **Issues/Programs Report**

**First Quarter 2012**

## **Main Focuses:**

**Aliayah Lunsford Investigation, EPA/Coal Industry  
Clash, FGH vs. Highland, Prescription Painkiller  
Crackdown, and Bath Salts Epidemic**

**Prepared by:**

**Nate Smail  
News Director  
WDTV  
5/1/12**

The licensee of station, WDTV-TV, has determined that the issues listed here were of importance to the community during the past three months, and have aired the following programs to address those issues, during the first quarter, dated January 1, 2012 through March 31, 2012.

***Issue #1: Aliayah Lunsford***

Date(s)/Time(s) Aired: 1/1-2/1, every day; 2/1-3/31, two days a week, except for weeks of 2/27 and 3/5 (every day those weeks while volunteers searched).

Appeared on all 5 News shows (Daybreak, Midday, First at 5, 5 News at 5:30, 5 News at 6, and 5 News at 11) on specified dates for approximately 1 minute each, sometimes minutes longer (depending on nature of event).

A 3 year-old girl went missing in Lewis County in September 2011; search went on for weeks, which we covered in depth every single day. Search crews ended efforts in October, but volunteers have kept the search going, specifically for a few weeks in February and March (note this is volunteer only; FBI is not involved in these newer searches). The community has been holding candlelight vigils throughout this quarter to keep her memory alive. Authorities did not release a single new detail about their investigation into her disappearance this quarter. Story is still ongoing; will continue to cover at least once a week in shows, even if nothing new happens, in order to keep Aliayah's case and image in the public eye.

## ***Issue #2: EPA/Coal Industry Clash***

Date(s)/Time(s) Aired: Entire week of January 23<sup>rd</sup>, February 7<sup>th</sup>, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, and March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Appeared on all 5 News shows for approximately 2 minutes each date.

Federal EPA has been ramping up regulations against coal mine owners that they claim are only meant to keep the environment intact and protect nearby residents' health. Coal miners and many legislators, like Sen. Joe Manchin and Rep. David McKinley, feel differently. They think it's part of the Obama administration's concerted effort to wipe out the coal industry in favor of cleaner energies. We have also talked to many citizens to get their take on the situation, since so many families depend on the coal industry for their livelihoods. Will continue coverage into next quarter with new developments.

## ***Issue #3: FGH vs. Highland***

Date(s)/Time(s) Aired: 1/19, 2/2, 3/9, 3/12, 3/13.

Appeared on all 5 News shows for approximately 1-2 minutes each.

Last year, Fairmont General Hospital announced they were contesting a plan by mental health provider Highland Hospitals to take over the old UHC facility in Clarksburg. Health and government officials have been complaining for years that there isn't enough space for all the mental health patients in WV, and Highland represents a potential fix to that problem. Fairmont General officials claim that Highland taking over UHC would infringe on their business and endanger their ability to stay open. In January, Fairmont General lost their case in court. They talked about appealing that decision, and officially did so in March. A decision on that appeal is expected in April. Will continue covering this issue as it progresses in next quarter.

#### ***Issue #4: Prescription Painkiller Epidemic/Crackdown***

Date(s)/Time(s) Aired: 3/5, 3/12, 3/13, 3/14.

Appeared on all 5 News shows for approximately 1-2 minutes each.

The prescription pain killer epidemic is not a new problem in WV (or nationally), but new reports indicate it is getting worse, with more and more young kids and teenagers getting their hands on prescription painkillers for illegal uses. We talked to local police officials, parents, and students to get their take on the situation locally over the course of several dates. On the third date indicated above, there was actually a prescription drug arrest. We also ran interviews with local doctors and pharmacists talking about how they joined the fight by reporting all suspicious patients to DEA and local police. We will continue our coverage of this epidemic in the next quarter.

#### ***Issue #5: Bath Salt Epidemic***

Date(s)/Time(s) Aired: 1/26, 2/9, 2/28, 3/22.

Appeared on all 5 News shows for approximately 1 minute each.

This is an issue we've been following for the past 1-2 years; the rise of bath salts as a popular way to "get high". They didn't used to be illegal, but now they are after young people/adults started using them as a "get high" drug. Experts warn they're like "hyper cocaine", and equally as dangerous. During this quarter, police made several arrests for the selling/possession of bath salts. Police also gave interviews warning of dangers of the synthetic drugs. They also warned us (off the record) of a major bath salts investigation locally that should come to fruition soon. It didn't happen by the end of this quarter. Coverage will continue into the next quarter so we keep folks aware of this epidemic and the danger it represents to their communities.