

River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

The Speaker of the Ohio House says a snowstorm is the only thing which could stop an override of Governor Mike DeWine's veto of a bill banning so-called "gender affirming care."

Ohio House Speaker Jason Stephens told reporters Governor DeWine's administrative rules announced Friday on the subject did not sway members of the G-O-P. Today's session of the Ohio House is scheduled to start at two P-M.

Staying in Ohio... prosecutors dismissed without prejudice criminal cases against the former president and vice president of Eastern Gateway Community College. This means prosecutors may refile charges against Dr. Jimmie Dale Bruce and James D. Miller at a later time.

The Weirton Daily Times reports the City of Weirton will move forward with plans to rebuild the city's water treatment and wastewater plants. Six years in the making... the plans call to double the capacity of both... but will require re-bidding... as the water plant bids had a "buy America" waiver... and the wastewater plant bids came in seven-point two million dollars over budget.

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AEP – Appalachian Power customers in West Virginia will see a price hike in September. In a 37-page decision... West Virginia's Public Service Commission criticized the utility's logistics management... saying smaller coal stockpiles at plants left it – and consumers – more vulnerable to price swings.

For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

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A federal judge has stayed enforcement of Ohio's new law governing the use of social media by teenagers. Lisa Lacerra has more.

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News 9 reports Yorkville residents say there's no police presence in the village... after the police chief left the job January 3d. Yorkville Mayor Sandy Reasbeck told residents at a village council meeting Tuesday... the village would receive mutual aid on police calls from surrounding police departments.

West Virginia's former assistant Adjutant General... retired Brigadier General Chris "Mookie" Walker has announced he's running for U-S Representative in the 2d Congressional District as a Republican... joining an already crowded primary battle.

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As Valentine's Day approaches... one candy manufacturer seeks to ride the latest relationship wave. Krystin Goodwin reports.

<<sound full>>

For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

HEADLINES 1-11-24

#1

The Ohio State Highway Patrol's St. Clairsville Post is investigating a fatal, one-vehicle crash that happened early this morning in Belmont County. Officials say 49-year-old Peter David Byers died in the crash. Troopers say Byers was traveling south on Township Road 101 when his truck veered off the edge of the road, down an embankment, and overturned into a creek. According to the OSHP, Byers was unrestrained, and alcohol is believed to have been a factor. The crash remains under investigation.

#1

The American Red Cross of the Ohio River Valley is gearing up for its 38th annual Media Day Blood Drive. The drive is set for Jan. 22-23 at Wheeling Island Hotel-Casino-Racetrack from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Donors must bring a driver's license or blood donor card. Sharon Kesselring is the executive director of the American Red Cross of the Ohio River Valley says this year's goal is to collect 160 units of blood in two days. She said that once a donor is cleared of any illness, it takes less than an hour to donate. It could take a few more minutes if you are a "power red," which means that you can give two units in one appointment. If you're unable to give blood but are willing to help, the organization is still looking for volunteers. Just visit Red Cross dot org.

The process is moving forward in the Blaine Hill Water Sewer Project in Belmont County. It would completely redo the lines extending from Blaine Hill to the Ohio Valley Mall. Commissioner Josh Meyer explained that what is now an 8-inch line will be updated to a 12-inch line. The nearly \$2 million project won't cost the county a dime. To start, \$800,000 came from Congressman Bill Johnson's Office last year, and Meyer said funding came through the OMEGA, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and also through the federal EPA. Officials will have bids open Feb. 7 for the project and then proceed after review.

#2

A telephone scam is making its way around Belmont County. Scammers are posing as officials from the Belmont County court, telling citizens they did not show up for jury duty and must pay a fine. Clerk of Courts Laura Zupko warns residents that this is false information and the incorrect way of being notified. If you are receiving these calls, or fall victim to them, you are advised to contact local authorities or the court at 740-699-2169.

#2

Bids were opened Wednesday for upgrades to one of the bathrooms in the Sargus Juvenile Center in Belmont County. Recently, officials with the center had been trying to work with county commissioners for necessary upgrades, as the building is essential for rehabilitation of troubled youth for Belmont and Harrison counties. One bid for the project came in from border patrol for \$216,000. Officials will review then proceed with a decision.

#2

Ohio launched its first homebuyer's program this week, designed to encourage home ownership in the state. It's Ohio Homebuyer Plus, a program that allows residents to open a savings account with an additional interest rate of 2.5 percent, plus an income tax reduction from the state. State Treasurer Robert Sprague said a resident can deposit anywhere from \$100 to \$100,000 in one of these savings accounts and you can keep that money for up to 5 years. If the individual doesn't use the money toward the down payment or closing cost of a home within those 5 years, they are no longer eligible for the program and will have to pay back the reported income tax. The only other parameters for the account are you must be 18 or older and a resident of Ohio. The maximum the account can hold is \$100,000. The program is available to a growing number of certain financial institutes.

#1

The City of Wheeling has launched a web page to share information with the public about the city's streetscape project. The site will include renderings, frequently asked questions, updates on street closures and other project timelines. The goal of the page is to inform the public about the West Virginia Department of Highway's project. Its Wheeling, W, V dot gov, slash Streetscape Project.

With River News Network headlines, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

The village of Yorkville has to find police protection... after the former police chief moved to a position with the Tiltonsville Police Department. Mayor Sandy Reasbeck tells News 9 council will consider proposals from other departments for police coverage.

West Virginia Governor Jim Justice... in his final State of the State address... has called on the legislature to pass tax credits for child and dependent care as part of next year's state budget.

600-thousand Ram 2500 and 3500 trucks with Cummings diesel engines will have to go back to the dealer to repair and replace the engine control software. The recall comes as part of a settlement with federal and state regulators concerning so-called "defeat devices" for emissions tests.

For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

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Continuing coverage now of an issue affecting all towns in the listening area.

Wellsburg Council has agreed to raise starting wages of police officers to 22 dollars an hour during a probationary period... and 24 dollars an hour upon police officer certification. The Herald-Star reports the village has trouble retaining officers... as many move to become Brooke County Sheriff's Deputies.

In Ohio... the village of Yorkville grapples with police protection... after the former police chief moved to a position with the Tiltonsville Police Department. Former police chief John Morelli tells News 9 residents should have concerns.

<<sound full>>

West Virginia Governor Jim Justice stressed a theme of stewardship in his final State of the State address Wednesday night. Governor Justice said he wants to see the legislature pass tax credits for child and dependent care... adding families need the tax breaks to help with household budgets.

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Owners of Ram 2500 and 3500 trucks with Cummings diesel engines face a mandatory recall to repair and replace the engine control software. In a press release... the Department of Justice says more than 600-thousand trucks need the software fix... and the tab Cummings will pay in the Clean Air Act settlement comes to around two billion dollars.

For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

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The Ohio House overwhelmingly voted to override Governor Mike DeWine's veto of House Bill 68... which bans so-called "gender-affirming care" for those under 18. Jack Callaghan reports.

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In his final State of the State address... West Virginia Governor Jim Justice touted a string of tax reductions during his two terms in office. He called upon the legislature to pass new tax cuts for child and dependent care.

<<sound full>>

Ohio's Lottery says it has restored mobile cashing after a Christmas Eve cybersecurity breach. The page on the lottery's website adds no further details concerning the breach... which according to bleeping computer-dot-com... involved a ransomware gang.

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A Wall Street Journal reporter says he's found the solution to housing costs in New York City... by living in Columbus, Ohio. Therese Crowley has the story.

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For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

HEADLINES 1-12-24

The demolition of the OVMC buildings ~~starting~~^{ed} this week, meaning the Wheeling-WVU Cancer Institute Regional Cancer Center project is underway. Associate Vice President of Foundation and Community Relations Jess Rine said the demolition process will take place all year long. The next building to come down is the nurse's building. All the timelines are very fluid, depending on weather and anything else they find going through the demolition. With five buildings slated for demolition and construction for the building to follow, the project's timeline is scheduled for completion in 2029.

Volunteer Wheeling has come alive ~~again~~^d and is ready to meet. Since 2018, Wheeling Heritage has fueled the revitalization of 'The Friendly City.' Now, the organization is planning for its annual volunteer program, set to begin with a gathering Jan. 23 at 5:30 p.m. on the third floor of the Wheeling Artisan Center, on Main Street. Wheeling Heritage has also launched a new platform made possible through the West Virginia Main Street program. Individuals can volunteer by documenting buildings in the downtown historic district. Program manager Alex Panas explained the work will ultimately track what spaces are available--either commercial or residential. Wheeling's dog-themed festival "Fidofest" is just another of the projects needing volunteers. Each volunteer position will be presented to the public, making them accessible to all.

Each year, the Charitable Healthcare Network in Ohio ~~honors~~^s one person to be its Community Partner of the Year. This year, that person is Tony Mougianis at the Ohio Valley Health Center. Mougianis says he's always been interested in the health center's efforts but really tuned in after he helped restore their roof 10 years ago. Mougianis has served on the board of directors for years, helping spread the word of its mission and hosting fundraising events like its annual gala. OVHC Executive Director Ann Quillen said this is a prestigious honor as this is on the state level, and she said Mougianis is the perfect person for it. Quillen said with Mougianis' the Health Center has really grown, increasing its care and improving the marketing of the center.

Bethany College's upcoming women's basketball game against Washington & Jefferson will have a special focus to raise awareness about sexual assault. ^{#1} Bison Makenzee Mason created the idea for the game which will aim to make a platform where victims can find solidarity and reassurance. Her goal is to let victims know they are not alone in their experiences. The game will tip Jan. 27 at 1 p.m. at the Bethany Fieldhouse.

In Columbiana County, Liverpool Township resident Christopher Morrison was recently charged with ~~the~~ ^{*D} murder in the death of his wife. Morrison made an appearance in court Thursday and waived his right to his preliminary hearing. The case is now set to proceed to a grand jury. During the proceedings, Morrison's attorney requested a modification to his client's bond as Morrison has no prior offenses. However, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Ryan Wiekart explained that the bond already set was appropriate, citing that Morrison is considered a flight risk. The grand jury date has not been set.

You may remember the story a few months ago about Frosty's Frozen Frenzy in Saint Clairsville. The company's permit expired in September, and over the past few months, the owners have been working with city officials to stay in the same St. Clairsville location. St. Clairsville planning and zoning administrator Tom Murphy said the city and council found out, that their codes were a bit lacking in a temporary business perspective, and they needed to be updated. The owners and council were able to come to an agreement and Frostys Frozen Frenzy opened as a drive-thru coffee shop on the first of this year. On Monday, council gathered even more information on how to proceed on changing the codes for temporary business. They created a draft, and Murphy expects it to be approved soon.

#7



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PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dunbar Recreation Center Remembers the Life of Coretta Scott King

MLK Day presentation honors wife of slain civil rights leader in her own words

Weirton, W.Va., January 9, 2024— Following the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. March on Jan. 15, 2024, the Dunbar Recreation Center, located at 300 Kessel Street in Weirton, will present *An Interview with Coretta Scott King* during its noon luncheon.

Performed in the style of Reader's Theatre, *An Interview with Coretta Scott King* shines the spotlight on the woman responsible for continuing her husband's legacy following his assassination on April 4, 1968. Using Mrs. King's own words, the audience will have a unique opportunity to learn about Dr. King's spouse and partner, whose passion for social justice and reform was as fierce and focused as her famous husband's.

Starring Rosie McAllister as Coretta Scott King and Bethany Fernbaugh as the Interviewer, this half-hour production is co-sponsored by the Dunbar Recreation Center and the Ohio Valley Cloak & Dagger Company.

“The Dunbar Recreation Center is looking forward to honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 15, 2024, at 11 a.m.,” Earlean Jones, president of the Dunbar Recreation Center, said. “Starting with a walk from Christ the King Church to the Dunbar Center and concluding with a luncheon and presentation at the Center, this day is just a small part of the legacy Dr. King left behind and shows togetherness among all people.”

The performance will take place at 12 p.m., following the MLK Walk on Weir Avenue at 11 a.m. *An Interview with Coretta Scott King* is free and open to the public, but donations to the Center are greatly appreciated.

Officially placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2021, the Dunbar Recreation Center is located at 300 Kessel Street, along Weir Avenue, in Weirton, W.Va.

With River News Network headlines, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

West Virginia's Division of Highways has briefed Ohio County Development Authority on a so-called "half interchange" plan to cut down on traffic on Two Mile Hill heading for The Highlands... according to The Intelligencer. That plan calls for just one set of ramps to accommodate traffic coming eastbound from Wheeling.

Martins Ferry's American Legion Post 38 has launched a fundraising campaign to raise a hundred-thousand dollars. The Times-Leader reports members seek to reopen the post's bowling alley... which shut down during the pandemic.

West Virginia Democrat House of Delegates Minority Whip Shawn Fluharty... from Ohio County... has reintroduced a bill which would require lawmakers to pass a screening for illegal drugs... before they could collect pay or expenses.

For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

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A local business owner went to fight city hall – and found city hall agreed with him.

Frosty's Frozen Frenzy opened this past summer in St. Clairsville with a temporary permit. That permit expired in September... but co-owner Darin Davis sought to stay open to sell hot drinks in the cold season. He went to St. Clairsville City Council with his problem of permitting... and Council decided to update the city code. Davis talked with News 9.

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Staying in Ohio... a fatal vehicle accident in Belmont County claimed the life of 49-year-old Peter David Byers. Troopers from the St. Clairsville Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol report Byers lost control of his truck on a township road... and ended up overturned in a creek. Investigators say the facts suggest alcohol might have contributed to the fatal wreck.

The Weirton Daily Times reports the Chester Police Department wants to trade-in their venerable 45-calibre pistols for ones in nine millimeter. Police Chief Chuck Stanley says after trade-ins... the new service pistols will set the town back about four-thousand dollars.

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House of Delegates Minority Whip Democrat Shawn Fluharty from Ohio County has once again introduced a bill requiring members of the West Virginia Legislature to pass a drug test. House Bill 44-70 would make legislators pass a screening for illegal drugs... before receiving pay or expenses as lawmakers.

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West Virginia's Division of Highways has come up with a plan to reduce traffic on Two Mile Hill headed for The Highlands.

The Intelligencer reports the Ohio County Development Authority received a briefing on the new scheme... which calls for an additional set of ramps to accommodate traffic coming eastbound from Wheeling. Traffic returning westbound would continue to use the existing interchange. Federal officials would have to approve the plan.

West Virginia Republican Senator Shelly Moore Capito says the current administration doesn't do nearly enough to control the U-S southern border. In a press conference Senator Capito expressed her frustration with policies currently in effect.

<<sound full>>

Martins Ferry's American Legion Post 38 has launched a fundraising campaign to fix the roof on the post's bowling alley. That will cost around a hundred-thousand dollars... according to the Times-Leader.

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A candy many associate with childhood will go out of production. Tom Rigotti reports.

<<sound full>>

For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

HEADLINES 1-15-24

A Madonna High School junior has ~~collected~~ collected more than 200 coats in his own coat drive. Cole Canterbury did a history project for his class, and he realized how many low-income families are in the area, leading him to organize a free coat drive. Cole organized 9 different drop-off donation locations with a significant turnout from community members who were eager to contribute to the cause. Cole managed to collect 200 coats in good or brand new conditions. The drive was held at both Weirton and Wellsburg Salvation Armies, attracting individuals from Brooke, Hancock, and surrounding counties.

After nearly 3 decades in politics – covering a long tenure on the Hancock County Commission Board and a stint in the West Virginia Legislature -- Jeff Davis has decided to not seek reelection. Davis has been on the commission since 2001. Davis said he thanks everyone he worked with, saying he didn't do the work on his own and that he's grateful toward the other commissioners he's worked with. He specifically noted the \$100 million in grant money toward water and sewer projects that the commissioners worked on.

In his 2023 State of the State address, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine told the General Assembly that 40 percent of all Ohio 3rd grade students are not proficient in reading. Now almost one year later, schools around the state are working to change that through the ReadOhio initiative, which places an emphasis on the science behind reading. DeWine's administration launched the program in August just before the start of school. DeWine says in the short time since schools shifted to the science of reading techniques, there has been a positive return. Outside of the classroom, safety remains a top priority for DeWine when it comes to education. And that doesn't just mean in the classroom. It extends to transportation to and from the school. DeWine says there is a working group, consisting of public safety experts, some interested citizens, a bus driver, and a school bus driver, and they are set to come back to the Governor soon. And as for installing seat belts on school buses, De Wine says he is waiting to hear the recommendations from the group.

~~#2~~
Two people were jailed after the Jefferson County Drug Task Force seized narcotics and a firearm during a search at a Market Square Apartment. Charles C. Dickey and Jenna Brown were arrested after the task force executed a search warrant at the apartment. Detectives seized cocaine, meth, a firearm and money. Dickey faces a felony charge of having a weapon under disability and one count of receiving stolen property. Brown is charged with two felony drug possession counts. Both were taken to the Jefferson County Jail.

~~#2~~
Today's Pittsburgh Steelers-Buffalo Bills playoff game has garnered lots of attention—especially when you see the pictures of the snow covering Highmark Stadium. But there's another competition associated with the game, between two well known restaurants. Here's how it goes: If the Steelers win today's game, the team at LaNova Wings in Buffalo will be treated to ribs and more from Dee Jay's Barbecued Ribs and Grille in Weirton. If the Bills win, the team at Dee Jay's will be treated to wings and pizza from LaNova Wings in Buffalo. Both restaurants' social media pages will keep fans up to date on the game.

~~#2~~
During the mid 1900's, Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. Marched to end racism--and now members of the community are marching in his honor. All ages and backgrounds gathered at the windmill in Wheeling marching down Martin Luther king Boulevard. This being a time to educate and remember what Dr. King fought for. Sunday's march has become a tradition for many in the friendly city. The ceremony featured two awards--the Rosa Parks award as well as the M.L.K. Award. Honorees were Theodora "Teddie" Grogan, Martha Wright, Rodrigues "Rod" Lee, and Rabbi Joshua Lief.

#1

A community dialogue was held at West Virginia Northern Community College on Saturday-- honoring the life and legacy of Doctor Martin Luther King, Junior. Presented by the Wheeling Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Committee, the dialogue was designed to encourage the next generation to keep his name alive --showing who he was and what he fought for. The main theme ^{was!} ~~was~~ collateral damage, defined by Merriam-Webster as "any death, injury, or other damage inflicted that is an incidental result of an activity." Led by a panel of six individuals representing different age groups and backgrounds--the discussion was set up in a Q&A form, moderated by Cory Campanizzi.

With River News Network headlines, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

The American Red Cross says it faces an emergency blood shortage... as the nation's blood supply has dropped to critical levels. Oglebay Park will have a blood collection drive Wednesday starting at 11 A-M. To schedule an appointment or for more information – call 1-800-RED-CROSS. That's 1-800-RED-CROSS.

West Virginia's Senate Bill 144 now heads to the House of Delegates after state senators voted to approve it. The proposed legislation would require local school boards to broadcast public meetings to the district website... and record it for on-demand playback.

Over the weekend... many participated across our area to remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. ... as part of today's federal holiday.

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The American Red Cross says it faces an emergency blood shortage... as the nation's blood supply has dropped to critical levels.

In our area... the next blood collection drive will take place Wednesday between 11 A-M and four P-M at Wheeling's Oglebay Park. Next Monday and Tuesday... the annual Media Blood Donor Drive takes place at Wheeling Island Hotel, Casino and Racetrack from 11 A-M to five-30 P-M. To schedule an appointment or for more information – call 1-800-RED-CROSS. That's 1-800-RED-CROSS.

Continuing coverage now of an issue all local governments in our area face. Police departments across the nation have trouble finding recruits. Kathleen Maloney reports on the bigger picture.

<<sound full>>

The West Virginia Division of Corrections says some national guard soldiers performing correctional officer duty have been released from state duty. State Corrections Commissioner Billy Marshall said Friday the state hopes to release all guard members performing duty at state prisons by the end of the fiscal year.

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Lifewise Academy started serving students at Bellaire Elementary School on Friday... according to the Times-Leader. The nonprofit offers voluntary Bible-based instruction to public school students.

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West Virginia's Senate has passed – and sent to the House of Delegates – proposed legislation requiring local school boards to broadcast public meetings to the district website... and record it for on-demand playback. Senate Bill 144 also calls for broadcast and recording of public comments as well.

Steubenville City Council at its regular meeting Tuesday will take up how it handles public forum. The Herald-Star reports Council will consider changing the rules the rules to require members of the public wanting to comment to sign up by noon the day of the meeting.

A reminder... today is the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday holiday. Area residents took time over the weekend to mark Dr. King's legacy promoting better race relations in America. As a federal holiday... government offices and courts are closed... and the U-S Postal Service will not deliver regular mail.

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In the Miss America pageant... Miss Colorado won the title. Chris DeMeo tells us about her.

<<sound full>>

For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

HEADLINES 1-16-24

On Wednesday, the city of Wheeling is set to start its efforts to bulldozing homeless camps on public property. This comes two weeks after the postponement given by the city manager's office to provide people with ample notice. Just two days from the start date, homeless advocates are urging city council to halt the implementation of the camping ban. Monday morning, a letter was constructed by over 30 homeless outreach service providers requesting a suspension. The letter states that there are flaws in the ban and says it will place more barriers on the fight to end homelessness. The letter sent to council also addresses several gaps in the ban. According to those who signed the letter, some of those gaps include obtaining land, identifying and procuring finances, and building the camp and facilities. In addition to the letter, the group is encouraging citizens to come and speak at the upcoming council meeting on Tuesday. They have also launched an online petition for the public to join their voices.

Wellsburg swore in three new police officers on Monday - Richard Reinard, Kaylin Ferguson and Danny Casto. One was hired as a full-time officer and the other two as part-time officers. Mayor Dan Dudley said their additions help fill a need within the police department and community. Dudley said Wellsburg is almost back to full force now.

West Virginia State Police are investigating an officer involved shooting that took place in New Martinsville on Monday morning. New Martinsville Police Chief Tim Cecil said the officers involved have been evaluated and are fine. The West Virginia State Police have taken over the investigation.

The Salvation Army of Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel and Tyler counties has announced it will open its doors as a winter freeze shelter during the current cold snap. People can use the building at 140 16th Street in Wheeling from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Anyone is welcome. In addition to housing men, they will utilize cots for women until capacity is met. The shelter will be used until the weather breaks. Officials will evaluate the hours on a day-to-day basis.

Tax season is approaching, and there are a few things you want to take note of when it comes to real estate taxes, especially considering levies on the November ballot. That includes a small part of Jefferson County. Jefferson County Auditor EJ Conn said that Jefferson County did have a new taxing district created for part of Island Creek that joins Seven Ranges. Keep in mind, new builds on properties also lead to value changes. Jefferson County Chief Deputy Treasurer Danielle Conlon said the bills should be going out the week of January 22nd, and the due date will be March 6th. Conlon says you can make payments up until the due date, but after that there will be a 10 percent penalty added on. You can stop into the treasurer's office to pay or mail it in. They also have a drop-off box that is checked daily in between the courthouse and Huntington Bank.

#2

An hour of reflection was hosted Monday at the Martin Luther King Recreation Center in downtown Steubenville to honor his life and legacy and to never forget the impact that he's had on the country and in the community that can still be felt today. The service featured community members that spent an hour looking back at the life of Dr. King. Everyone also had the chance to listen to some of his most prominent speeches. Organizers say the messages he delivered over 50 years ago are still important in today's cultural climate. In Weirton, people gathered at the Dunbar Recreation Center on Monday to hear the story and honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dunbar Board of Directors President Earlean Jones said it's extremely important to keep his message going more than a half century later. This year, the focus was centered on life after his death and homed in on the accomplishments of his wife, Coretta Scott King. Excerpts from her speeches and memoirs were incorporated into a play.

Chester City Council has approved six new firearms for its police department. The decision comes as part of the ongoing efforts by the department to modernize its equipment and provide officers with the necessary tools to effectively carry out their duties. Prior to city council approving the new guns, police officers have been carrying a 45-caliber. The new guns are 9 mm, a weapon that has been extensively tested by the Los Angeles Police Department. This model is known for its accuracy and versatility, and the city believes it's a suitable addition to the department's arsenal. The police department is expecting the firearms within the next two months.

7

Wheeling Mayor Glenn Elliott has announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for United States Senate in the 2024 election for the seat currently held by Senator Joe Manchin. Elliott was born and raised in Wheeling and was elected to the first of his two terms as Mayor of Wheeling in 2016. During his tenure as Mayor unemployment has fallen in the Wheeling area from 6.6% in 2016 to 3.8% at the end of 2023. The Mayor says one of his key accomplishments has been his collaboration with the West Virginia Division of Highways and the U.S. Department of Transportation on a \$33 million project to replace the entire streetscape on Main and Market Streets in downtown Wheeling.

With River News Network headlines, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

In a letter made public Monday... over two dozen homeless service agencies and public interest groups asked the city of Wheeling to pause enforcement of a ban on camping on public property. Wheeling City Council meets for a regular meeting today at five-30 P-M.

New legislation proposed in the Ohio General Assembly seeks to give kids an allowance... if they show up for school. If Ohio House Bill 348 takes effect... the state would pick at least one urban and one rural district to participate in a pilot project to test three different payment schemes before the program goes statewide.

Sistersville General Hospital will hold a town hall meeting Thursday starting at five P-M. The meeting at the Sistersville Fire Hall will have hospital officials fielding questions about the construction of a new, 30-thousand square foot hospital.

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The City of Wheeling faces a deadline from the West Virginia branch of the A-C-L-U... which has threatened to sue the city if it tries to enforce a ban on camping on public property in the city.

In a letter made public Monday... over two dozen homeless service agencies and public interest groups asked the city to pause enforcement of the ban... until the city establishes a managed camp. No site has yet been identified for that managed camp... and city officials say local agencies and faith-based groups would have to do the operations and managing.

Ohio Republican Governor Mike DeWine wants state lawmakers to ban the sale of so-called "Delta-8 THC." Advocates of "Delta-8 THC" – a less powerful version of Delta-9 THC, treated as regular marijuana, with both made in the production of C-B-D items – say the substance helps with chronic health issues. No age limit exists to purchase Delta-8 THC... and Governor DeWine says kids purchase the substance to abuse it.

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Owners of electric vehicles in the Chicago area have discovered the laws of chemistry and physics still apply in extreme cold... as Dane Placo reports.

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New legislation proposed in the Ohio General Assembly seeks to give kids an allowance... if they show up for school.

Should Ohio House Bill 348 become law... the state would pick at least one urban and one rural district to participate. Science will take over... with a control group of half of the kindergarteners and half of the ninth graders not getting payments, while the other half would. The pilot project would test three different payment schemes.

Wellsburg has sworn-in three new police officers... according to News 9. Of those three officers... one will work full-time, while the other two will work part-time. City Mayor Dan Dudley says the new officers fill a need in both the department... and the community.

In testimony before the West Virginia House of Delegates Finance Committee Monday... Chief Justice Tim Armstead requested a budget increase for the court system of over six million dollars. Justice Armstead says increases in P-E-I-A premiums... and the governor's requested five percent pay raise for state employees all contribute to the higher budget request.

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The nation's largest retailer plans to roll out A-I tech to warehouse club check-outs by the end of the year. Matt Murphy reports.

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For River News Network, I'm Kurt Weinschenker.

HEADLINES 1-18-23

Across nine different categories, the 2023 Wheeling Fire Department's total incident report was down by 10 percent from 2022, with a drop in all categories ranging from EMS, fire service and weather calls leading to this reduction. Wheeling Fire Chief Jim Blazier said that 2024 started off with several runs, but he thinks it will be another normal year after the spike in incidents from 2022. This year, the department will be doing significant internet upgrades to all fire stations and accept the delivery of a new rescue truck in the fall. The department also anticipates the completion and opening of its new headquarters, located at the corner of 17th and Wood Streets in East Wheeling sometime this spring.

A Marshall County woman whose car went into Big Grave Creek ^{#1} on Wednesday afternoon, apparently climbed onto the roof of the vehicle when it started to take on water. The woman was rescued from the roof of the car by first responders. Authorities say the woman said she drives across the creek regularly, and had driven across it on Wednesday morning. Apparently by Wednesday afternoon the water level had changed.

A railroad worker was killed early Wednesday morning in Jewett. According to Harrison County Sheriff Joe Myers, the victim was found Wednesday morning when more employees arrived and discovered the male victim. The incident is now being handled by the coroner, who will work to determine the cause of death.

The Veterans Memorial Bridge connecting U.S. Route 22 over the Ohio River between Ohio and West Virginia was reopened on the westbound side to all three lanes of traffic as construction barrels have been removed. Weirton Police Chief Charlie Kush said just because the bridge is no longer an active work zone it doesn't mean that drivers will be seeing fewer patrols or officers. The traffic changes in downtown Steubenville are a concern that city leaders have been evaluating and working to learn more about as the future of the Market Street Bridge remains uncertain.

#1

The City of Wheeling began to bulldoze homeless camps just after 10:15 am on Thursday, and in response, the American Civil Liberties Union of West Virginia (ACLU-WV) has filed an emergency request for a temporary restraining order against the City of Wheeling. Many of these individuals stay at the Life Hub Winter Shelter, and were still there at 7 or 8 a.m. when the first warning was given that the bulldozer would be back at 10. Now, despite hopes about a temporary injunction, the camp is being torn out. The ACLU filed a lawsuit Tuesday evening to block Wheeling's habitation ban, which criminalizes being homeless in public. ACLU-WV previously gave the city four days to reconsider enforcement of the ban, which took effect on Jan. 1. Wheeling Council met on Tuesday night to approve the camping ban.

*2

The city of Steubenville has partnered with a company that offers a voluntary program for Steubenville homeowners, if it fits their needs. The partnership is with the Service Line Warranty Program which aims to educate and assist homeowners with their lateral water and sewer line responsibilities. Account Manager Christopher Rebar said it lets homeowners know what they're responsible for within the communities with their lateral water, lateral sewer lines, but also their interior plumbing and drainage for their homes. Three different protection programs -- all optional -- are being offered to Steubenville residents. The water service line program, which deals from the main line to the home, the sewer service line program, which is from the home to the sewer main, and the interior plumbing and drainage program, which is for any of the pipes that are within the house. Residents can choose one, two or all three programs. If a program fits your needs, there are a couple of options for payments with no deductible as long as homeowners stay under the coverage caps. They can also pay for the program monthly, quarterly, or annually. Informational mailers have been sent out to residents.

An Ohio County legislator is looking to pass through Raylee's Law, which would prevent people who have an open CPS case from homeschooling children. Delegate Shawn Fluharty's bill has gained national attention. Raylee Browning died in 2018 of abuse and neglect after she was taken out of school by her father following a teacher's report under mandatory reporting requirements. Fluharty said the move was part of a small loophole that he says needs to be closed. Raylee's law says if you are facing an investigation for child abuse or that you've been convicted of child abuse, you cannot take your child out of public school and home school them behind closed doors, so nobody can see what's going on, which happened in Raylee's situation. The bill was introduced in 2019 and has generated heated debate since then. Fluharty said he hopes 2024 is the year it finally gets passed through.

New details have been released after a Wheeling Park teacher was relieved of his duties. Former Wheeling Park teacher Micah Kovacs Farmer of Wheeling was arrested and arraigned this week on a felony charge of sexual abuse of a minor 16 years or older by a parent, guardian, or custodian. According to a criminal complaint, Farmer was told to avoid any contact with the victim and to avoid any private interaction with the victim on December 15. Farmer is out on a \$5,000 bond. If convicted, Farmer could face jail time of no less than 1 year and no more than 5 years. The West Virginia State Police is investigating this case.

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Wheeling Mayor Glenn Elliott has filed paperwork to seek the Democrat Party candidacy for the U-S Senate seat coming open due to the retirement of current U-S Senator Joe Manchin. Elliott will face determined Republican opposition from either Governor Jim Justice... or current U-S Representative Alex Mooney.

The clock ticks away on a ban on camping on public property in Wheeling. West Virginia's branch of the A-C-L-U has threatened to sue the city over the ban... set to take effect at five P-M today... barring court intervention.

News 9 reports Steubenville's City Council voted down by a seven to zero margin a proposed change to public forum at council meetings. The proposal would have required those wishing to address council sign up by noon the day of the meeting.

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Barring intervention by a court... the City of Wheeling's ban on camping on public property will take effect at five P-M today. The Intelligencer reports while the ordinance allows for exceptions... the city manager's office has received no formal requests for one.

Wheeling's outgoing Mayor Glenn Elliot has filed paperwork to run as the Democrat Party candidate for the U-S Senate seat left open by the retirement of Senator Joe Manchin. Mayor Elliott spoke with News 9 about his decision to run.

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A federal judge says police violated constitutional rights of a county commissioner in Ohio when arresting her. Tom Rigatti explains.

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West Virginia Republican U-S Senator Shelley Moore Capito says in a letter released Tuesday... she's urging the Department of Transportation to approve funding to replace the Market Street Bridge connecting Brooke County to Steubenville.

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