

# McDowell County FACES Newsletter

## The FACES of HOPE

February, 2011

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### What's In The Month:

February birth signs are  
Aquarius and Pisces

The birth flower for February  
is the violet:



The birth  
stone for  
February is  
the amethyst.



Recognized in February:  
Presidents Washington and  
Lincoln (Presidents Day),  
Black History Month, Mardi  
Gras, Valentine's Day,  
Groundhog Day, Leap Year,  
Susan B. Anthony, Pluto  
Planet Discovered, Thomas  
Edison, and Charles Dickens.

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## McDowell Leads Nation in Accidental Overdose Rates Caused by Prescriptions

Source: Drug Enforcement Administration, National Institutes of Health, US Census

The statewide death rate from accidental overdoses involving prescription drugs rose from 5.1 in 2001 to 21.5 in 2008. In both years McDowell County had the state's highest death rate: 34.2 in 2001, and 97.3 in 2008. In 2008, the latest year for which data is available, 390 West Virginians died from accidental overdoses involving prescription drugs, according to the state Health Statistics Center. In 2001, 91 West Virginians died this way. West Virginia has the nation's highest rate of drug deaths. Between 2001 and 2008, more than nine out of 10 of those deaths involved prescription drugs. Drug overdoses now kill more West Virginians each year than car accidents do. It's the leading cause of accidental deaths in the state. Between 2001 and 2008, the statewide death rate of overdoses involving prescription drugs more than quadrupled, from 5.1 deaths per 100,000 residents to 21.5.



Popular painkillers shown above (left to right) represent increases in WV's per capita consumption (measured in milligrams per person) of opiate painkillers between 1999 and 2009.

- ⇒ Fentanyl (aka Duragesic, Actiq) up 348%. It is about 80 times stronger than morphine and often used in adhesive skin patches for chronic pain management.
- ⇒ Hydrocodone (aka Vicodin, Lortab, Lorcet) up 296%. Hydrocodone abuse has increased nationally among all ethnic and economic groups.
- ⇒ Hydromorphone (aka Dilaudid) up 319%. Two to eight times stronger than morphine, it is also shorter acting and produces more sedation.
- ⇒ Methadone (aka Dolophine, Methadose) up 462%. First synthesized during World War II due to a morphine shortage, this pain-reliever is often used in the treatment of opiate addiction.
- ⇒ Morphine (aka MS Contin, Oramorph SR, Roxanol) up 199%. One of the most effective pain-relievers, it is the standard against which new painkillers are measured.
- ⇒ Oxycodone (aka Oxycontin, Tylox, Percocet) up 294%. Alone or in combination with non-narcotic pain relievers, it is prescribed for the relief of moderate to moderately severe pain.

**How Do WE Make A Difference?**

## Valentines Day

Saint Valentine's Day, commonly shortened to Valentine's Day, is an annual commemoration held on February 14 celebrating love and affection between intimate companions. The day is named after one or more early Christian martyrs named Valentine and was established by Pope Gelasius I in 500 AD. It was deleted from the Roman calendar of saints in 1969 by Pope Paul VI, but its religious observance is still permitted. It is traditionally a day on which lovers express their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards (known as "valentines"). The day first became associated with romantic love in the circle of Geoffrey Chaucer in the High Middle Ages, when the tradition of courtly love flourished.

Modern Valentine's Day symbols include the heart-shaped outline, doves, and the figure of the winged Cupid. Since the 19th century, handwritten valentines have largely given way to mass-produced greeting cards.

In the second half of the 20th century, the practice of exchanging cards was extended to all manner of gifts in the United States. Such gifts typically include roses and chocolates packed in a red satin, heart-shaped box. In the 1980s, the diamond industry began to promote Valentine's Day as an occasion for giving jewelry. The day has come to be associated with a generic platonic greeting of "Happy Valentine's Day." As a joke, Valentine's Day is also referred to as "Singles Awareness Day". In some North American elementary schools, children decorate classrooms, exchange cards, and eat sweets. The greeting cards of these students sometimes

mention what they appreciate about each other.

The U.S. Greeting Card Association estimates that approximately 190 million valentines are sent each year in the US. Half of those valentines are given to family members other than husband or wife, usually to children. When you include the valentine-exchange cards made in school activities the figure goes up to 1 billion, and teachers become the people receiving the most valentines.

The rise of Internet popularity at the turn of the millennium is creating new traditions. Millions of people use, every year, digital means of creating and sending Valentine's Day greeting messages such as e-cards, love coupons or printable greeting cards. About 15 million e-valentines will have been sent in 2010.



## Groundhog Day

**Groundhog Day** is a holiday celebrated on February 2 in the United States and Canada. According to folklore, if it is cloudy when a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day, it will leave the burrow, signifying that winter will soon end. If on the other hand, it is sunny, the groundhog will supposedly "see its shadow" and retreat back into its burrow, and winter will continue for six more weeks.

Many towns that celebrate Groundhog Day throughout North America have winter-predicting groundhogs. By far, the most notable groundhog is Punxsutawney Phil of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. Other groundhogs of note include Smith Lake Jake, Staten Island Chuck, General Beauregard Lee, Shubenacadie Sam and Wiarton Willie.



Groundhog Day proponents state that the rodents' forecasts are accurate 75% to 90% of the time. A Canadian study for 13 cities in the past 30 to 40 years puts the success rate level at 37%. Also, the National Climatic Data Center reportedly has stated that the overall prediction accuracy rate is around 39%.

WKBW-TV meteorologist Mike Randall put it a different way: since there are always six more weeks of winter after Groundhog Day, and the concept of early spring in the astronomical sense simply does not exist, then whenever the groundhog sees its shadow and predicts six more weeks of winter, the groundhog is always right, but whenever it predicts an early spring, it is always wrong. The results have an approximate 80% rate of accuracy, the average percentage of times a groundhog sees its shadow.

## Earned Income Tax Credits

The earned income credit (EITC) is a tax credit for certain people who work and have low wages. A tax credit usually means more money in your pocket. It reduces the amount of tax you owe. The EITC may also give you a refund. To claim the EITC on your tax return, you must meet all of the following rules:

- ⇒ Must have a valid Social Security Number
- ⇒ You must have earned income from employment or from self-employment.
- ⇒ Your filing status cannot be married, filing separately.
- ⇒ You must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien all year, or a nonresident alien married to a U.S. citizen or resident alien and filing a joint return.
- ⇒ You cannot be a qualifying child of another person.
- ⇒ If you do not have a qualifying child,

you must:

1. be age 25 but under 65 at the end of the year,
2. live in the United States for more than half the year, and
3. not qualify as a dependent of another person

⇒ Cannot file Form 2555 or 2555-EZ (related to foreign earn income)

⇒ You must meet these EITC Income Limits, Maximum Credit Amounts and Tax Law Updates

Your child is a qualifying child if your child meets all of the following tests:

**Relationship:** To be your qualifying child, a child must be your: Son, daughter, stepchild, eligible foster child, adopted child or a descendant (for example, your grandchild) of any of them, or brother, sister, half brother, half sister, stepbrother, step-

sister, or a descendant of any of them (for example, your niece or nephew). An adopted child is always treated as your own child. The term "adopted child" includes a child who was lawfully placed with you for legal adoption. Eligible foster child if the child is placed with you by an authorized placement agency or by judgment, decree, or other order of any court of competent jurisdiction.

**Age** Your child must be: under age 19 at the end of the year and younger than you or your spouse if you file a joint return, a full-time student under age 24 at the end of the year and younger than you or your spouse if you file a joint return, or permanently and totally disabled at any time during the year, regardless of age.

**Residency:** your child must have lived with you in the United States for more than half of the year.

## Celebrating Connections: Celebrating Children

The 14th Annual Celebrating Connections Conference will be held February 22-25, 2011 at the Charleston Civic Center, Charleston, WV. The event is sponsored by the WV Department of Education and WV Department of Health & Human Resources. The objectives of the conference are:

- ⇒ Promote effective and positive practices when working with children and families;
- ⇒ Highlight state and local programs which demonstrate effective practices with young children and families;
- ⇒ Share information regarding community collaboration;
- ⇒ Provide networking opportunities for the early childhood community;
- ⇒ Create an opportunity for early childhood programs to better understand each other through common experiences.
- ⇒ Create opportunities to learn about program specifics such as policies, standards, and transition procedures for Head Start, public/private/special education preschool, Early Head Start, child care, WV Birth to Three and the Universal Pre-K system;
- ⇒ Develop strategies to advocate for young children and families in the state within early care and education; and
- ⇒ Create an environment that fosters collaboration within the early care and education community.

Costs associated with the Conference include:

All three days = \$275  
Any two days = \$200  
Any one day = \$125  
Parking and Meals = extra  
CEU's Available

For information, contact WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources at 1-888-983-2827.



## MAKE \* A \* WISH

### McDowell County FACES

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*This newsletter brought  
to you by funds from the  
WV DHHR.*

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The Make-A-Wish Foundation is a nonprofit organization that grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength, and joy.

When we first meet a wish kid, we ask, "If you could go anywhere, have anything, be anything or meet anyone, what would it be?" When a child answers this question a wish is born.

Wishes usually fall into four categories: travel wishes, celebrity meetings, gift wishes, and occupational wishes. However, wish choices are as diverse as the children themselves. Children can wish for anything from a Caribbean cruise to being a superhero for a day. We put few parameters on wishes, encouraging kids to use their imagination and "think outside the box."

To refer a child:

1. Give a call to 1-800-664-9474 and ask to speak to someone about referring a child.
2. Go on the web: <http://www.wishsouthwv.org>.
3. Email to [swestva@wishworld.org](mailto:swestva@wishworld.org).

### Important Things To Know

\*Children should be over the age of 2 1/2 and under the age of 18 at the time of referral;

\*We begin the wish process as soon as we receive the health care professional's approval;

\*We don't care if the family is rich or poor;

\*We fulfill each wish at the family's convenience;

\*We don't refer to our children as "dying" or "terminal"; and

\*Please obtain the family's permission before referring the child.



## Standing County Meetings: Get Involved and Make a Difference

**McDowell County FACES:** 2nd Thursday of each month at the FACES Meeting Room, 12:00 noon—2:00 p.m.

**HOPE Coalition:** 4th Monday of each month at the FACES Meeting Room, 10:30 a.m.—12:00 noon.

**Community Collaborative Team:** 4th Monday of each month at the FACES Meeting Room, 12:00—2:00 p.m.

**Wastewater Treatment Coalition:** 3rd Wednesday of each month at the FACES Meeting Room, 12:00—3:00 p.m.

**County Commission:** 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at the County Commission Conference room beginning at 4:00 p.m.

**Board of Education:** 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Board of Ed, beginning 5:30 p.m. (speakers need to sign in by 5:00 p.m.).

**Healthy Families/Healthy Children Coalition:** 2nd Friday of each month at the Sterling Drive Inn beginning at 10:00 a.m.

**Town Council Meetings:** Check with your City Hall for meeting times and dates. Remember changes begins in small communities as well.

**SAFE/SHED:** 2nd Tuesday of every other month at the Starland Heights Community Room, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

**NOTE:** If you would like your standing meetings listed please email them to [facesfrn@yahoo.com](mailto:facesfrn@yahoo.com).