



McDowell County FACES Newsletter

The FACES of HOPE

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What's Right in McDowell County

We in McDowell are always hearing what is wrong in our County. What we do not always hear about is what is right. Over the past five years, McDowell County has made many changes; in employment, education, housing, social services, health, etc. I want to take this opportunity to dedicate this newsletter in its entirety to what is right.

Using our original Blueprint Communities format, I will list objectives and give you an update on what has happened overall.

To promote the economic independence of families and individuals.

While closed now, the Ashland Company Store opened with conferencing areas, computer lab, country store, restaurant, and the TBAI Office. The Hatfield McCoy Trail became operational at Ashland and a KOA Campsite area was established. The Industrial Park Federal Prison opened and employees more than 300 individuals. The Stevens Correctional Facility opened. The Capels Landfill is open and operational. The Twin Branch Park is operational. The Houston Company Store was converted to a McARTS facility for making coal figurines etc.

The EDA is currently the owner/managing entity of the Blackwolf Golf Course (Gary County Club course). Superior Gas; Wal-Mart; Welch Subway; Bradshaw Little



General, Godfather Pizza, and Subway; Grants; DMV; Marquee Cinema; Pizza Factory; Mama Jess'; B&K Café; WorkForce and Division of Rehabilitation have all opened. Advance Auto and Family Dollar are moving into the old Big Lots location.

Workforce offers on-line registration and job search, Experience Works, Youth Connection, Unions Apprenticeship programs and other employment services.

Southern WV Community and Technical College has located in McDowell EDA Office to offer services for residents.

Reconnecting McDowell began in 2012 to assist in capacity development, housing, economic development, infrastructure, and education services.

The African American World War I Memorial was completely refurbished and open for community needs.

Wastewater Treatment is currently being worked on by the Wastewater Treatment Coalition of McDowell County and the PSD. A system was completed in Ashland, on-site systems are being installed from Ashland to McDowell. Additional on-site systems are on-going. The PSD has interest in Coalwood, Caretta/Yukon, Iaeager, and Route 52 as their current initiatives. The City of War is expanding into Centerville and Shop Hollow. The Wastewater Coalition changed legislation to allow nonprofits to manage low-interest loans for individual systems.

The PSD is working on water projects throughout the County.

Strengthen communities and the county's capacity to build for the future.

FACES sponsored a new 990 tax regulations class to aid nonprofits in meeting the guidelines set forth for transparency and accountability.

FACES completed strategic planning and succession planning with SAFE/SHED/TBAI.

TBAI held grant writing class.

EDA provided entrepreneurial training for anyone wishing to utilize their loan program.

Capacity building is an area where there is great need.

TO ENSURE A DESIRABLE QUALITY OF LIFE AND A SAFE AND HEALTHY LIVING ENVIRONMENT.

Ashland Community non-traditional septic system completed in November 2009 with 23 customers. Over \$700,000 was raised for this system. Over \$200,000 of 319 Funds available to communities below Ashland.

Wastewater Treatment Coalition was formed and a countywide plan was written in 2005. Is currently being updated.

Water Projects and Status

Jolo Phase 2 – completed

Jolo Phases 3 & 4 – started

Iaeger/Coalwood Connector - completed

Big Sandy/Rodefield – began design stage
Elkhorn Phase 1 – began design stage

A sign is in place at the Big Sandy Head Start center. A kiosk sign is being designed for the area near the Ashland Company Store for the Ashland Community System. Signage installed for Ashland septic system.

Ashland Utilities, PSD, Municipalities and the County are all working together to identify and establish management systems prior to placing any systems in the county.

The Wastewater Treatment Coalition members assisted in changing legislation to allow nonprofits to do low-interest loans for the installation of on-site systems. This allowed \$1 million in loan money to be available to McDowell and Wyoming families. WTC has a demonstration project was completed at the Big Sandy Head Start Center. This installation was the first of its kind in southern West Virginia and was made possible through the cooperation of several partners. A sign was constructed on the site that offers education to visitors about the system and the mission of the Coalition. TBAI Ashland Community is a model for communities
SHED has special appropriations to install individual septic systems with OSLP funds from DEP and has completed 44 in June 2010. The WTC Coalition has hired an Executive Director that attends various meetings in the community that support local initiatives at many levels, i.e., PSD, County Commission

Create an assessment tool for identification of spaces. Identify existing flood green spaces. Provide an assessment and photograph documentation

of the county for identifying existing or potential parks.

FACES and SAFE reviewed what rural homelessness looks like. SAFE promoted the annual “Point in Time” survey through HUD and did a public campaign for awareness in January 2010.

SHED has accessed over \$500,000 in rehab funds for home repair through a variety of sources.

SHED currently has over \$1 million in funds for permanent housing homeownership. SHED is working on the development of 8 apartments and a community center in the Algoma Company Store building which is a historical structure.

36 first-time home loans through SHED. The Payne Building, Starland Heights, The Oaks, and Drewrey Apartments are available for rent. SHED currently has 86 rental units available to low income individuals. SHED has funding for 6 new constructions that will focus on green build issues. Architect hired to provide designs.

CREATE A PRO-FAMILY SYSTEM OF INTEGRATED SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.

- The state Service Array Assessment of children’s services was completed, a strategic plan has been completed for each collaborative group of counties, and presented to the state steering team. Implementation of the plan began 2011.
- Board of Ed has placed counselors and social workers in the schools during 2011.
- Reconnecting McDowell County initiative began in 2011 with changing in legislature to allow innovation in methods to assist with school progress.
- Youth Connection at WorkForce provides youth opportunity to build and keep computers. Gear Up and GED programs are available.
- The Child Advocacy Center was built and operating currently. The Child Advocacy Center, SAFE, Board of Education and Law Enforcement complete fingerprinting on a regular basis.
- The Community Crossing offers PICK/PREP classes to couples for relationship development. Working on Relatives as Parents Program to get it up and running again.
- Staff met with County Officials to discuss options for bringing Teen Court to McDowell County and found that there was no interest with the judicial system for pursuing the concept. Staff also attempted to do teen court utilizing nonprofits and the Board of Education and was unable to move on the concept. The County began a Youth Drug Court in 2012 which addresses substance abuse but does not address other misdemeanor offences.

McDOWELL COUNTY WILL HAVE ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE AND PROGRAMS FOR PREVENTION OF DISEASES AND PREMATURE DEATH.

To date the County has been unable to address access to health insurance however there has been movement in the Children's Health Insurance Program and prevention of preventable disease.

DHHR gives Children's Health Insurance Program information as they clients come in to their facility. There is no concentrated outreach for the CHIP program. There is a 71.4% enrollment in McDowell County.

WIC is listed in the FACES Resource Directory, they use billboards, TV ads, clinics, high schools, hospital. The enrollment is low at this time.

Board of Ed provides CHIP outreach in their beginning of the school packets.

There are over 50 stakeholders through the Health Opportunities for Positive (HOPE) Coalition however 15 are active at the table unless there is a specific issue needing to be addressed.

The Clean Indoor Air Act was enforced through McDowell. Everything is included now except the free standing bars and video lottery rooms. Pursuing closing break room loophole and eliminating electric cigarette usage in public areas.

The REACH Coalition established in Kimball area to address diabetes disparities.

FACES and the HOPE Coalition created the Circle of HOPE infor-

mation meetings to educate individuals on breast health, to complete and encourage self examinations, clinical breast exams, and mammograms. Over 1,000 women have been reached since 2008. BCCSP offers locations for recruitment of women to participate in services. The Health Department provides education opportunities for health issues on PPB's, held health fairs regularly, began a 7th Grade Initiatives on DTAP and meningitis, and continue to provide their regular services.

FACES and the Prevention Resource Center provided information from a study demonstrating WV increased in deaths from opioids and diversion by 550% from 1999 to 2004. McDowell County lead in the quartile it was included in depicting McDowell as the highest rate in US.

Research based programs include: Project Toward No Drug Abuse; Not My Kid, Baby Think It Over, Not on Tobacco, used at the 21st Century after school programs and Phoenix School. SADD chapters started at River View High School.

\$3.2 million was secured for a 16 bed male/female facility which was lost to Beckley; \$1.2 million acquired for a 10 bed female facility to be built soon.

The Strategic Prevention Framework training was held with 17 trainers that will be able to re-

peat the training throughout the county.

The National Guard Junior Special Forces Program came to a close after 10 years with 278 participants going through the program.

A Suboxone clinic is being placed at Southern Highlands Community Mental Health Center and the program continues at Tug River Health Association.

Prescription Drug Abuse Forums and a Summit was held. McDowell joined the Governor's Task Force on Substance Abuse and attends the meetings through the HOPE Coalition.

DEA/Sheriff's Office/FACES completed four prescription drug take back days in McDowell County taking back 187 pounds of narcotics that were incinerated by the DEA.

Other activities for health include: 10 Celebrations of Women, Kids Feast Forum, Bonnie's Bus, Mountains of HOPE forums on breast health, second hand smoke forums, dining with diabetes classes, adult nutrition classes, and healthy lifestyle challenge.

Project Lifesaver was established in the county and is ongoing through the Sheriff's Office.

The HOPE Coalition is working closely with Reconnecting McDowell to ensure that health issues identified through county forums etc., are included in their work.

McDOWELL COUNTY WILL HAVE A STRONG EDUCATION SYSTEM THAT PREPARES YOUTH AND ADULTS FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE.

The education system was taken over by the State in 2001 and the state has partially relinquished the power back to the Board of Education. The system has improved overall in the county, with the academic achievement improving from 55th to 49th. Three new schools were built in the County with modern technology and equipment. The Board of Education and personnel have been recruiting staff from several states, providing incentives for them to come and work (hopefully live as well) in our county. There are school clinics at each high school. All children receive free breakfast and lunches. The staff is currently working to address truancy and dropout rates. There are social workers in many of the schools, after-school programs available with activity buses to take the children home in the after hours. Through the efforts of Reconnecting McDowell, new high speed internet is available at all schools. "Reconnecting McDowell is a comprehensive, long-term effort to make educational improvement in McDowell County the route to a brighter economic future. Partners from business, foundations, government, nonprofit agencies and labor have committed, in a signed covenant, to seeking solutions to McDowell's complex problems—poverty, underperforming schools, drug and alcohol abuse, housing shortages, limited medical services, and inadequate access to technology and transportation."

As our children continue to see changes throughout the county, there is great need for the county to adopt the new schools, encourage the children to do their best, be positive role models, and work with the system to be the best it can be.

The Board of Education goals for the future include:

1. Maintain maximum enrollment in Pre-K and Head Start and explore the establishment of early Head Start.
2. Continue preschool services at child care centers.
3. Increase the number of students and businesses participating in job shadowing.
4. Programs that provide or increase the educational foundation of our youth must stay at 100% capacity: HSTA, TRIO Programs, 4-H, Energy Express.
5. Offer career fairs to youth.
6. Increase access to local higher education opportunities.
7. Increase access to local vocational education opportunities for youth and adults.
8. Increase understanding of funding opportunities for adult education and training.
9. Increase mentoring and tutoring programs through clubs and nonprofits.
10. Expand the McDowell Career and Technical Center to meet specialization skills necessary for the 21st Century.
11. Identify and publicize adult education training opportunities.
12. Identify and publicize resources available to youth for post-secondary opportunities.
13. Create plans for a wireless, professional development center within the Teacher Village equipped with resources, materials and equipment appropriate for class preparation.
14. Build a technology blueprint that addresses the educational goals of the Reconnecting McDowell plan.
15. Establish reliable interconnectivity for all schools and provide internet and cell phone access to the community.
16. Address challenges to creating better band width access, internet access for schools and the community.
17. Establish professional development academy in MC with technology capability to reach every educator and staff member.
18. Acquire and convert existing property in downtown Welch to create 10 two-bedroom loft apartments that also houses 20% commercial use.
19. Strengthen on-going career support for educators and school staff by expanding and individualizing professional development offerings, utilizing access to online resource banks that create virtual learning communities to new teachers, substitute teachers and school staff.
20. Create plans for a satellite of the state's professional development academy in McDowell.
21. Work with teachers and district leaders to develop a career ladder program and requisite supports to develop potential teacher leaders, coaches, and mentors.
22. Investigate establishment of a Youth Build program
23. Create a recruitment strategy that engages districts and unions who have large numbers of reduction in force layoffs.
24. Create a media campaign that highlights teacher success.
25. Administer survey of teaching and living conditions needs and strengths to teachers.
26. Establish a health and fitness program for school district staff.

Where we unleash the potential for every student every day!