

# THE WELCH NEWS

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Continuing The Welch Daily News

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## WEATHER FORECAST



**Wednesday:**  
Partly cloudy skies with highs of 88, lows of 65.

**Thursday:**  
Thunderstorms with highs of 81, lows of 56.



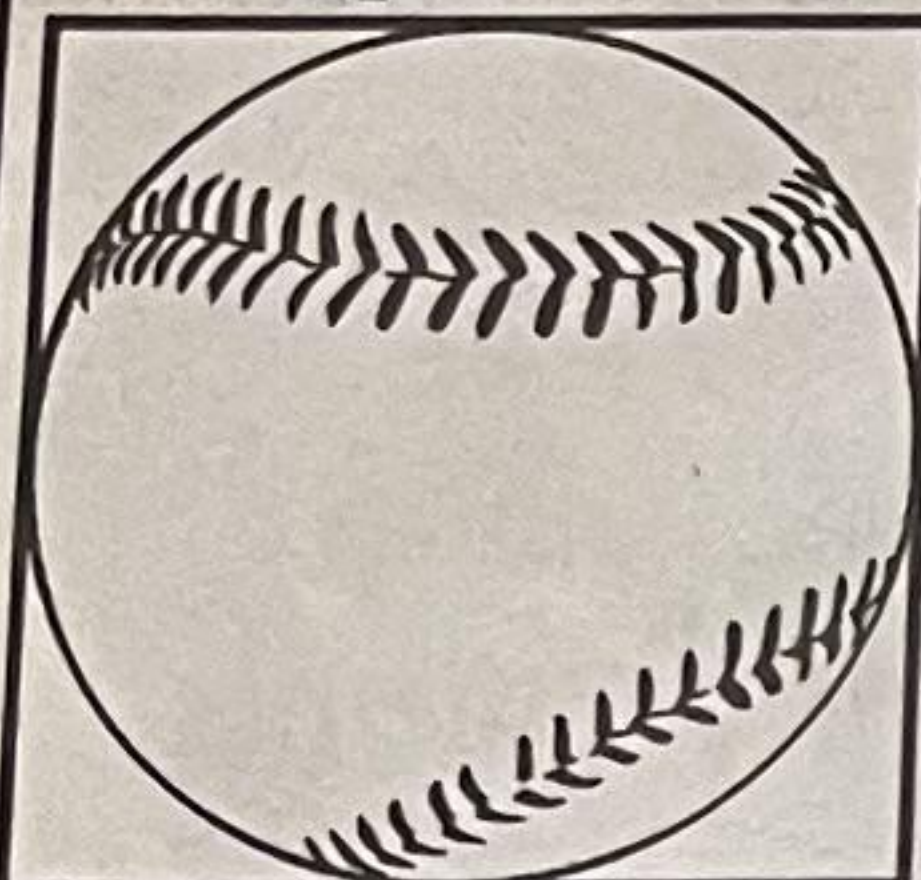
Tomorrow's Times:  
Sunrise 6:06 a.m. - Sunset 8:42 p.m.

## Lottery

**Tuesday:**  
Daily 3: 8-1-9  
Daily 4: 4-0-8-3

**Monday:**  
Daily 3: 3-1-7  
Daily 4: 5-8-1-0

## Sports



• Sports Corner

## THE MONTH OF JUNE IS..

- African-American Music Appreciation Month
- National Adopt a Cat Month
- National Camping Month
- National Country Cooking Month
- LGBTQIA Pride Month
- Men's Health Month
- National PTSD Awareness Month

## WHAT DAY IS IT?

- National Go Barefoot Day
- National Hazelnut Cake Day
- National Heimlich Maneuver Day
- National Nail Polish Day
- National Running Day

## Mountain Music Festival Returns to Caretta This Saturday



CARETTA, W.Va. - After two years of COVID-19 restrictions, Big Creek People in Action are thrilled to announce the return of their annual Mountain Music Festival.

"We have a theme for our Festivals each year and I thought a good one for this year would be Welcome Back; which will be a takeoff on the old TV sitcom Welcome Back Cotter," said Marsha Timpson of BCPIA. "While I was talking to our performers and getting their contracts ready I kept singing the tune to that show and I thought 'That's it! The words to the song are perfect and express the way we feel about having our festival again.'"

The Mountain Music Festival will be held on Saturday, June 4th, 2022 at the Caretta Community Center from 3 p.m. until 9 p.m.

"We have a great lineup of performers and we know you will enjoy each and every one of them. We have some newcomers and we have our tried and true performers. I think the Welcome back certainly extends to our wonderful performers also," said Timpson.

Virginia Bluegrass veterans

Priscilla and Wes Adair will take the stage from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. When the full band was unable to perform, the two offered to take the slot. As part of Chester Ball's band, the husband and wife duo have been a staple of the event for years and will offer 'good ole' country gospel' this weekend.

From 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., Stoney Trent will transform into the King of Rock n' Roll and perform a collection of hits by Elvis Presley. Trent has performed at the festival throughout the years and is a fan favorite.

Kelli Roberts will take the stage from 5 p.m. until 6 p.m. singing her variety of music ranging from gospel, country and contemporary music.

"Kelli puts God first, followed by her love for family and friends," said Timpson. "God has gifted Kelli with an amazing voice and I am so happy

she is willing to share it with us." Taking the stage from 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. is a newcomer to the festival known as "The Singing Barber," Noah Peters.

"Look him up on You Tube by The Singing Barber and you will see you are going to be in for a real treat. This will be the first time Noah has taken our stage but hopefully, it won't be the last," said Timpson.

Local favorite performer Joe Ford will follow from 7 p.m. until 8 p.m. Having rocked stages for years throughout the area, Ford brings a solid fan base with him wherever he is performing.

Closing out the festival will be the responsibility of Brock Whitt, award winning radio host.

"When I contacted him about performing at our Festival he said he hadn't been on stage in a few years because of the COVID shut down," said Timpson. "This young man was born to be on the stage performing."

Big Creek People in Action also cannot wait to welcome back the public to Saturday's festival. The Mountain Music Festival will be held on Saturday, June 4th, 2022 at the Caretta Community Center from 3 p.m. until 9 p.m. Food and drinks will be served and free gift bags will be distributed. A \$50 Grant's gift card will be given as a door prize at 8 p.m. This event is funded by the WV Division of Culture and History.

## COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT



Auxiliary Members Peggy Swartz, Mary Spence and Linda McKinney of the Welch Post 8 American Legion assisted by Post 8 members Bob McKinney, Dave Williams and Jan Williams placed memorial wreaths at Welch City Hall, Patriot Park area of Coney Island and the Premier Monument area today. Appreciation goes to the laeger VFW Post 1144 for maintaining the grounds around the Premier Monument Area.

## Virginia-based Non-Profit Plans To Distribute Over \$25K of Food and Other Donations To Families in McDowell County

POWHATAN, W.Va. - Best You Best Me Inc., a non-profit organization based in Virginia, will be holding its annual food and clothing drive to support McDowell County families on June 3, 2022, at the Sacred Heart Church in Powhatan, WV.

With the COVID pandemic hitting low-income communities hardest, Best You Best Me's 2022 event is anticipated to serve where help is needed most. The non-profit is gearing up to distribute over 150 boxes of food together with clothing and other necessities such

as kind words, to the communities in McDowell County struggling to make ends meet. Other items will also be available to McDowell County residents, including piles of fresh watermelons, free tacos, house plants, and hundreds of fresh loaves of bread.

In 2021 the Best You Best Me team delivered \$20K worth of boxes of food, over 10K in cash donations, 110 bags of clothing, and over 100 blankets to McDowell County, WV. The 2022 food and clothing drive is set to distribute even more.

Best You Best Me has partnered

with ProJet Aviation, Recycle Life and Smokehouse Pilots and 9 airplanes are planned to fly in from Leesburg Executive Airport (JYO) with volunteers to help on distribution day.

Individuals and families in need of help are encouraged to come to the Sacred Heart Church in Powhatan from 11 AM on June 3, 2022.

Best You Best Me founder, and CEO of Paramount Business Jets, Richard Zaher, says,

"The whole organization hangs

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## McDowell County Residents Want to Reverse Decades of Decline. Some Aren't Sure They Can.

By Douglas Soule, Mountain State Spotlight  
This story was originally published by Mountain State Spotlight. Get stories like this delivered to your email inbox once a week; sign up for the free newsletter at <https://mountainstatespotlight.org/newsletter>

## AREA BRIEFS

AREA BRIEFS for non-profit organizations will run as space permits. To guarantee your notice runs a specific number of days or to list prices, however, please contact advertising (304) 436-3144 ext. 29. Area briefs may be mailed to Box 569, Welch, WV 24801; faxed to (304) 436-3146, or brought by our newspaper office at 125 Wyoming Street. No phone submissions please.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 7th**  
• The City of Gary Regular City Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 7th, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Gary City Hall Community Room.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 14th**  
• McDowell County 911 Advisory Board Meeting will be held by teleconference and/or in person on Tuesday, June 14, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. at the McDowell County 911 Center in Welch, WV. If you are interested in attending the teleconference, please contact the office by calling 304-436-4106 for further information.

• The Town of Kimball Regular City Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 14th, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at Kimball City Hall.

Keystone have been on the decline for decades. Here, the remaining residents aren't sure what the future might hold. Some are looking to the already-stretched county government to step in. At the same time, county officials say they need more help from the state, or from the federal government. But whether the area's trend of population loss and declining opportunities can be reversed at all is a matter of debate — and money.

"The city is to a point now, you're at a standstill," said Vondalere Scott, Keystone's acting mayor. "You could go up but you ain't got much to go up with."

"Used to be" Hattie Avery and her sister Holly Maben remember Keystone as it was. After their father died in the mines, their mother moved them to the town using some of the money the coal company paid out after his death. Avery was six years old at the time, and Maben was an infant. It was the early 1950s, and Maben remembers Keystone as an exciting, bustling place to live.

"My girlfriends and I could walk to the drugstore and get comic books, walk and get ice cream, and we could walk to whatever we needed to do because it was in the vicinity," Maben said.

At that point, Keystone held more than 2,000 people more than it does now. Businesses lined its main street. Coal was king, as the saying goes, and the local mines were humming. But technology and mechanization replaced many mining jobs, and

demand shrunk for coal as cheaper forms of energy, like natural gas, became readily available.

Then, in 1999, the federal government closed down the National Bank of Keystone, a major employer in the area, amid scandal. Major flooding ravaged the land over the next few years, destroying businesses and homes that would never be replaced.

"We sat here on our porch and watched so much of our town just wash down the street," Avery said.

That caused another kind of flood: of people moving to other places. "Homes were literally washed away," Avery said. "And those people were forced to just move, relocate. And most of those people never returned."

Depopulated or not, the sisters both love the city. That's why Avery ran for city councilor, winning alongside her sister, Maben, who's going to be the town's next recorder. They both hope to make Keystone a better place, but the two have very different views about what's possible.

Maben can see it "growing and getting better."

But Avery has reached the point where she thinks dissolving the city government might be the best way forward.

"I know that we can make it better, but I'm not certain that we can make it what we want it to be with just the few of us that we have and not having the support that we need," Avery said. "As far as I can see now, I don't see much of a future for Keystone."

The city is limited in what services it can offer, and Avery wants to unincorporate so that the county or state could take over those services Keystone can't currently fund.

"We don't have any form of revenue or any form of businesses that could keep this city operational," she said.

The decision to officially dissolve the city government — and end the few services like garbage pick up and part time law enforcement it provides — will ultimately lie with Keystone's residents. First, the city would have to pay off the nearly \$40,000 it owes in electric bills, according to city officials. Then, the measure would have to be voted on by residents.

Whatever Avery thinks of the future, she plans to fight for Keystone. And she said other levels of government should be fighting for it too.

"We were important for the state when coal was a booming industry," she said. "But now, we don't have anything to offer, so we're on the backburner. Nobody notices. Nobody cares."

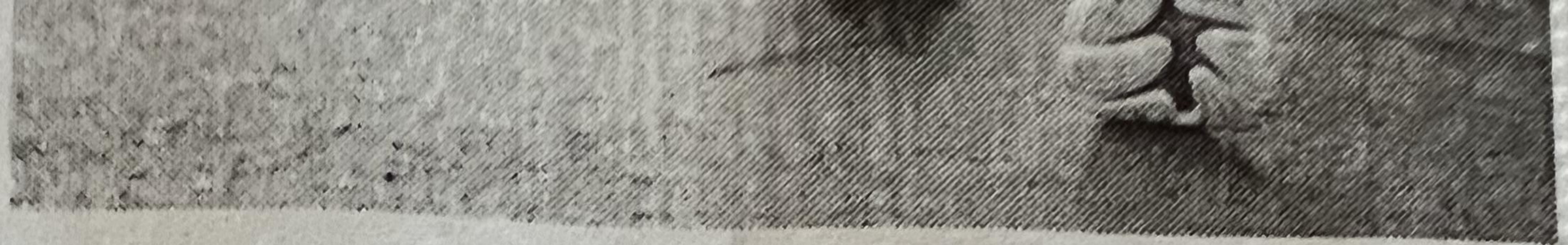
While the county recently took over the town's problematic water system, finally giving residents reliable water supply, a host of issues remain, from the snowy roads that remain unplowed all winter to the excess of dilapidated buildings.

"We just need government officials, county, state, all of them, to just try to send things our way," Avery said.

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contact Nate Smith for more  
information at (304) 862-3415 or  
(304) 887-3945.



# Virginia-based Non-Profit Plans To Distribute Over \$25K of Food and Other Donations To Families in McDowell County

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on the philosophy that alleviating suffering in another is alleviating suffering in ourselves."

"We're privileged to be able to serve the people of McDowell County once again. It's a beautiful place with a proud Appalachian heritage and community."

"This year, we plan to distribute over 150 boxes of food, each feeding a family of four for two weeks, alongside clothing, blankets, shoes, and other supplies and donations as well as lunch for as many people as possible."

Why McDowell County, WV?  
33.2% of the population in McDowell County live below the poverty line, over double the national average. The declining

(continued from Front page)

coal industry has taken jobs with it, making this one of the poorest counties in the entire United States.

"We've lost more than half our population from people leaving to find jobs," says Arnold Simonse, a McDowell County native and founder of the Itmann Food Pantry, in a recent Best You Best Me documentary.

"Many folks who are in poverty are ignored and feel that no one cares. So, our job isn't just to meet the needs of their particular day, but to show that somebody cares."

Rosie Henderson, another resident of McDowell County, interviewed in the Best You Best Me film, highlights why the plight of struggling families here is

everyone's business.

"The kind of coal that came from here is the kind of coal used to make steel. It made skyscrapers; it made airplanes. It all came from McDowell County, and it has been forgotten."

Anyone wishing to support the McDowell County 2022 drive, can donate online or drop off food donations, clothing, kitchen supplies, kids' toys, diapers, shoes, sleeping bags, bedding, sweaters, and jackets at Leesburg Executive Airport (JYO) before May 31, 2022. 100% of donations go to the people in McDowell County.

For more details, visit the online information page, or watch the film on YouTube.

# Classifieds

Call Tom @ (304) 436-3144 ext. 25



**APARTMENT FOR RENT**  
Welch Area: Near park and recreation areas, transit bus service available. No income restrictions, HUD Approved. Call 1-304-888-3601.

**MISCELLANEOUS**  
L & L Tree Service  
Tree cutting, trimming, removal, brush chipping or hillside cutting. No job too big or small. Save money, call us today. 304-967-5820

*Sell It Fast*

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**BYBM** bestyoubestme.org

June 3rd, 11 am



# McDowell County Food & supplies drive

McDowell County is a gracious community that always stands together.

Make a donation or take a donation.

There is a group of people that care about you. If you are hungry, come and eat with us. If you live in McDowell County and you need supplies, it's possible that there might be something useful here for you.

**Lunch is on us** - please join us! We have booked a local and recommended taco truck, namely "Tacos de Marcos" which will be on location and serving lunch and refreshments between 12 and 2 pm.

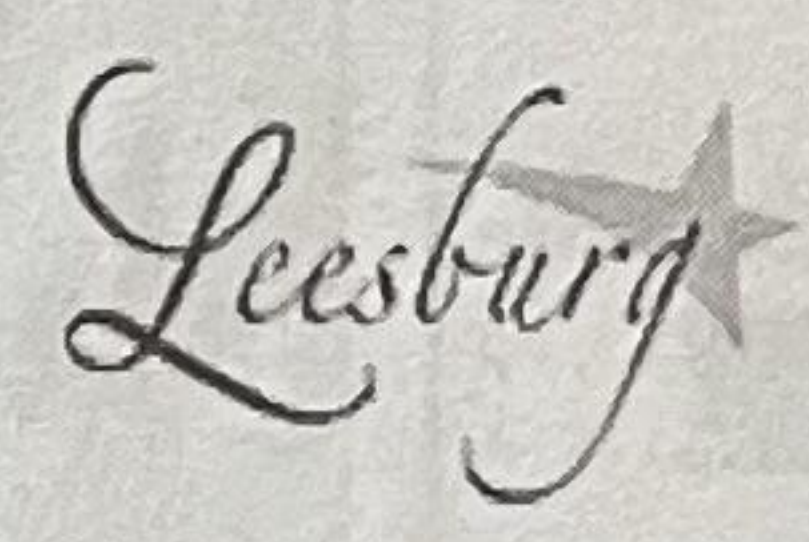
Thank you for giving us the honor of being of service to you.

## Food & Supplies

- Clothing
- Kitchen supplies
- Kids Toys
- Diapers all sizes
- Boots and Shoes
- Sleeping Bags
- Blankets and Bedding
- Jackets and sweaters
- Free Tacos

## Pick up Location

Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
35508 Coal Heritage Rd



Organized by BYBM, in conjunction with ProJet Aviation, RecycleLife.org, Smokehouse Pilots Club and supported by the Leesburg community.