

# THE MOUNTAINEER



**Bazzle's criminal career  
begins to dazzle after  
conviction in court.  
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*The official newspaper of  
The American Legion  
Mountaineer Boys State*



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### **The State V. Ryan Bazzle**

by Jon Bennett, STAFF REPORTER

Yesterday, one of the biggest trials in Mountaineer Boys State history occurred, the murder trial of former federalist's governor candidate, Ryan Bazzle. The day before the trial, the state was shocked when he was arrested for second degree murder.

During the trial, the prosecutors called up six different witness. The first witness was the state trooper who arrived at the scene. He stated in his testimony that when he, the sheriff of Lewis-Upshur and a DNR officer arrived, the defendant was hiding. The prosecution then proceeded to call up the Crime Scene Investigation. During his testimony, he acknowledged he did not know the caliber of the gun. The defense argued that due to that the investigator did not know the caliber, it was not clear that shells at the scene was the same caliber. The gun was deemed inadmissible.

Then the prosecutor then called the firsts of the few who were at the scene during the shooting. During his testimony, he recalled the scenes that lead up to the murder. He stated that there was no physical altercation before the shooting. He also recalling Bazzle shooting the victim then walking closer before taking another shot.

The next defendant was the county commissioner of Lewis-Upshur. He also recalled the scenes before Bazzle pulled the gun. He also saw Bazzle run off after.

The next witness called to the stand was the Forensic Lab Technician who analyzed the evidence found at the scene. From the evidence found at the scene, they were able to extract 6 prints and one was able to match Bazzle's.

The final witness the prosecutor called to the stand was the cornual of the state police. He said in his police report that Bazzle said, "I actually shot him three times."

The defendant only called one witness during the trial, the EMS worker who was also witness the shooting. In his testimony he not only said that the victim was not physical toward the event but he didn't even evoke the candidate. Bazzle chose not to testify.

During closing arguments, the DA stated that Bazzle was not guilty due to the firearm being deemed inadmissible. It took the jury deliberations 12 minutes and 27 seconds to come back with the rulings. For the count of second-degree murder, the jury found Ryan Bazzle guilty. For the count of fleeing of the scene, the jury found him guilty. Bazzle is currently waiting sentencing.

## **NEW RULE ALLOWS GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND STATE LEGISLATURE TO ABOVE LAW (OPINION PIECE)**

by Jon Morgan, STAFF WRITER

News recently came out after the Boys State government officials and legislature had a meeting after they returned back from Charleston. An arrest warrant for Nationalist chairman Hunter Gracey was to be collected by the state officers after he missed a loan debt payment, but a new rule made by the officials elected will now allow them to be practically invincible to the law.

An anonymous House of Delegates member revealed information regarding this new law, stating that from now on, any government elected official or member of the state legislature can no longer be arrested for a crime they have committed as long as 2/3 of the officials vote not to arrest the member for the crime. This potentially could be a huge threat to our democracy.

The problem with this new rule is that if 2/3 of the officials and legislature have to vote to have the member arrested for the crime they committed, then the members will never vote. Why would a member vote to arrest their own ally? Because if they did then they would be voted by the same person whenever they committed a crime. There is no reason to vote because it hurts their chances in not being arrested. This is loophole the government is abusing. **WE** as a democracy should not let this go by unnoticed.



There was a situation earlier immediately after the meeting that appointed this new rule, with a sheriff attempting to arrest Gracey. Many witnesses recorded the incident, with both Gracey and Federalist chairman Wyatt DeBord trying to explain that the new rule protected them from the law.

It has been known to all citizens that all police officers need to meet a quota of writing five tickets before the end of the week and that many officers have been on alert for anyone to make a mistake while walking outside. Now these officials will no longer need to alert and signal what they do on the road and are able to ignore just about every speeding or parking limit.

**WE** voted these people because **WE** believed that they would treat all citizens correctly and fairly and not use their newfound power to abuse it. If they made a rule that made them above the police, then what is stopping them from making new rules there power even more, shoving us citizens further and further down on voicing our opinions. If this continues, **WE** could be living in a dictatorship.

These officials said they wanted to make West Virginia a better place for the future, but if they abuse the little power that they were given when being elected in the Boys State government, who's to say what they could do with the big power that would be given to them if they were elected into an actual West Virginia state position.



# Announcements!

8-11 p.m. is the West Fork Review. This includes the talent show. Be ready for a great showcase!

## Friday's Menu

### **Breakfast**

Biscuit  
Bacon  
Eggs  
Hot & Cold Cereal  
Fresh Fruit  
Milk/Juice/Water

### **Lunch**

Chicken Tenders  
French Fries  
Pasta Salad  
Peaches  
Cottage Cheese  
Rice Krispy Treat  
Water/Tea

### **Dinner**

Roast Beef  
Mashed Potatoes  
Gravy  
Green Beans  
Salad w/Dressing  
Rolls  
Cheese Cake  
Water/Tea

## Behavioral Health

Cedric Allder, EDITOR

Kathryn Pirie, an employee working for West Virginia Higher Education's Health Science division in the specific category of Behavioral Health, described her program and its goals to the Boys State Broadcasting Department yesterday. Pirie stated that the main goal of the organization was to provide funds in order to raise awareness for behavioral health.

They start at the k-12 level by teaching behavioral health in schools. This education helps suppress mental health issues amongst teens and adults.

The organization is partnering with Mountaineer Boys State to help promote their program by providing technology to the Boys State Journalism Department.

## Developing Our Skills

Cedric Allder, EDITOR

We have all been honored with our acceptance into the 83<sup>rd</sup> Mountaineer Boys State for our hard work, leadership, and willingness to exit our comfort zones. However, we still need to refine our other skills. Today there is one skill that I would like to discuss: meal etiquette.

As the very top performers of our classes in academics, extracurriculars, and clubs, it is ridiculous that we can't figure out how to properly pass food around the tables at meals!

So, here's how to do it:

- When you sit down, take the plate in front of you.
- If you want to eat this food, take some.
- Pass the plate to the person to the right.

This simple process has developed into a large issue throughout the Boys State citizens of this year.

Yet it is not only the process of passing food around that I feel we must improve, but also the process of dumping our food. We have been told to take a friend's plate and dump their food, so maybe they could take ours the next meal. Though this does NOT mean you should expect another person to take your plate. Citizens may certainly ask another to take their plate, but should not just assign another citizen to the task of dumping for them.

We, as citizens of Boys State, should learn from our past mistakes and push ourselves to improve. If you have any questions regarding the base levels of family-style meals, come find me during activity time in the journalism building.

## **BURNS FOUND NOT GUILTY OF ARMED ROBBERY**

by Jon Morgan, STAFF WRITER

Yesterday, Wyatt Burns of the Panhandle county was found not guilty of armed robbery, being charged by Zane Yeater. According to reports, both were in a truck together when the truck crashed. Burns was able to leave the vehicle and flee from it while Yeater was unconscious.

Before the trial started, Burns' lawyer, Seth Harris, asked for the case to be dismissed because he believed the prosecutors did not enough solid and relevant evidence to try to put a case against Burns. Judge Jacob Sherman denied his request and the trial started with the jury being sworn in.

According to both Yeater and Burns, the incident started when Burns wiped Yeater's truck window with a squeegee, as Burns washed car windows for a living. They both recognized each other from school, Yeater now a clown for kids' birthday parties. Yeater asked if Burns wanted to come with to a party, which Burns accepted. While driving, they began arguing, when Yeater lost control of the vehicle and crashed. The story was the same for both the prosecutors and the defendants until after this point.

The prosecutor McMullen stated that Burns had struck Yeater with the squeegee, causing him to crash the vehicle. Burns than took off, stealing Yeater's clown wig and running into the forest, where he later went unconscious. McMullen called sergeant of police, Frederick Powers, to tell the jury what he saw.

Powers said that he arrived at the scene after office Braden Hays. He confirmed the pictures of the crime scene that McMullen presented to him and the jury. He confirmed that the squeegee, Windex, and clown bowtie were around the crashed truck, and the wig was found on Burns' body.

There second witness, Braden Hays, was the first officer at the scene and packaged all of the evidence. When presented with the evidence again, he confirmed that it was the correct pieces of evidence. He however had no words on what exactly happened during the crash.

The third witness, Richard Martinez, the State Fire Marshall, was the first EMS worker at the crash, rescued the victim out of the vehicle and also filled out his EMS report, stating that Yeater showed signs of head trauma and was bleeding.

After going through all the witnesses, it was clear that none of them had a recollection of what happened because they were did not see the crash when it happened. Yeater took the stand, saying that on



the way to the party, he told mentioned his wig to Burns, which then Burns got uncomfortable. Then Burns hit him with the squeegee, knocking him unconscious and crashing the truck, where Burns than escaped.

However, according to Burns and his lawyer Harris, he smelt alcohol while they were driving and that Yeater was driving recklessly. Burns asked if he could leave, which Yeater refused, causing them to argue, leading to the crash. Burns then left as quickly as possible in case the vehicle caught on fire, accidently holding Yeater's wig while he ran into the woods.

After Harris cross examined the witnesses, he concluded that Burns prints were not on the squeegee or the victim. After the jury decided, they said that Burns was not guilty of armed robbery.

## **Tornado Strikes**

By: Jon Bennett

Yesterday afternoon a tornado was reportedly stuck down and hit Upshur cabin. This was later confirmed by the Fire Department who were first to arrive at the scene. The national guard was needed to be called into action. Governor Willie Behrens has declared a state of emergency. There was two injuries and zero deaths. This is a developing story and more details will be released as received.

### **GOVERNOR ADDRESSES CITIZENS AFTER TORNADO DISASTER IN LUPSHUR CITY**

by VARIOUS STAFF REPORTERS

Last evening, Governor Behrens gave a speech regarding the tornado disaster that devastated Lupshur city, more specifically Upshur county. Two people were injured but are in stable condition. 11 people were displaced but thankfully, the citizens of Lewis county were able to take them in for the time being as Upshur county is being repaired. Press at the conference were able to ask a few questions for Behrens.

When asked about how the government would solve the long-term effect on the citizens directly affected by the tornado he said this. "For now, there immediate health concerns are solved and if they need any mental counseling from the trauma they faced today, we would have programs to accommodate them." When asked about how Boys State would prepare for future natural disasters, he said, "Once we have funding prepared and saved away for natural disasters such as these, and we also have our National Guard, services will be put in place for the state and its citizens for future natural disasters."

When asked what Governor Behrens was he was going to do regarding the state of the city of Lupshur, Governor Behrens said "First we are going to contact the leadership present in the city to see what they need in terms of reparations and funding."

When the governor was asked what he planned to help the victims of the tornados, Governor Behrens responded with "We will be helping them by providing state funding and any other resources they need to help them to get back to any sort of normalcy. When asked if the funding had been approved by the house and senate the governor answered with "I will soon propose legislature that will allow us to provide funding."

## **Yard Time Gone Wrong**

By: Jon Bennett

At approximately 10:00 a.m., Reese Carpenter allegedly stabbed the corrections officer observing his yard time. The suspect fled into the woods, where he was found at 10:21 a.m. According to officers on scene, the officer who was stabbed is in stable condition.

## Pull your Way to victory!

As you know the competitive tug-of-war tournament is today. Tug-of-War is a game of determination and strength. Two teams grab the rope from both sides and pull till one of the teams crosses the middle line which ends the game. Many cabins look to take the crown but only one can be the champions of the 83<sup>rd</sup> ALMBS Tug-of-War tournament. Just a reminder... the counselors remain *undefeated*.

## Tootin' Our Own Horn

Our band has been performing all week and has been doing a great job. The band has been small yet strong group of 15. They have been focusing on patriotic and pep music. The songs being performed were Armed forces Salute, The Hey song, Men of Tomorrow, Louis Louis, Barbra Anne, Rock Around the Clock, The West Virginia Hills, and Take Me Home, Country Roads. The assistant band director Al Hall has been with the program for 8 years total including a year as a citizen.

## E. (Elwood) Gordon Gee visits Boys State Assembly.

During tonight's assembly we got the supreme honor to have West Virginia University's president Elwood Gordon Gee visit us and give us a speech about his time as president of WVU and his other endeavors in life.

"I love coming here, I love the energy, I love this place" said Gordon Lee during his speech. Elwood Gordon Lee or Gordon Lee for short is the West Virginia University's president. He is currently on his second term as president of WVU. Gordon Lee's first term was during the years nineteen eighty-one to nineteen eighty-five. After his first term he moved to University of Colorado Boulder, then he went from USB to the Ohio State University. In present day he has come back to WVU to spend his second term as president. He has also got his J.D and Ed.D degrees during his time as a student of Columbia University.

"We're all about leadership, boys state participants pass with higher grades and achieve high levels of education" said Gordon Gee during his speech. During his speech he also gave us some advice when it comes to leadership. "As a leader focus on right now, don't focus on what's next", he then followed that with a story, "I woke up one day and decided to do things my own way, forty-two years later I'm still president and the rest of the guys who made fun of me are dead." Gordon gee also gave us advice on how to handle yourself, "You got to have nerves of sewer pipes." His final quote that left a lot of power was "Revenge is good gentlemen." Before he left he answered some questions "what's it like being the best University president" asked a fellow boys state member, Gordon Gee answered "I think longevity has its rewards, there's no place like home and this is my home" and the very important question "how many bow ties do you own" he answered with pride "over a thousand." He left us a lot to think about and we thank him for visiting us here at Mountaineer Boys State.

## **INTERVIEW WITH LEWIS-UPSHUR COUNTY SHERIFF**

by Jon Morgan, STAFF WRITER

Early yesterday morning, Riley Blair, county sheriff for the combined Lewis-Upshur county came to talk about his experiences about sheriff and how he plans on enforcing the law in his county.

JM: “What inspired you to become county sheriff?”

RB: “It was actually a matter of not having enough people between the two cabins and that I

Was told I was going to be sheriff.”

JM: “Do you enjoy being the sheriff and do you have any reservations against it?”

RB: “The only reservations I have is how the ticketing system is done.”

JM: “It has been said that the officers need to have five quotas by the end of the week.”

RB: “Five quotas have been said and we officers do not know if there will be any repercussions if we don’t fill them. But for me it is a matter of ‘I don’t care if I fill them, I’m only going to fill out the tickets if it is a true violation and not something petty.’”

JM: “Sounds like you’re going to be a good sheriff. It sounds like a lot of officers are going to try to write any citation they can.”

RB: “Given that Lewis-Upshur county is such a low traffic area I don’t expect to fill out five tickets. I had the opportunity to fill out two tickets, both of which I did not write. One of them was from last night regarding the murder in Lewis-Upshur county.”

JM: “Is Ryan Bazzle still the main suspect of that murder?”

RB: “I am not sure whether I can confirm or deny that because I have not been told much. That is a question for the state troopers.”

Riley Blair plans on following the Boys State police code to the best of his ability.