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SPECIAL SECTION
Greenbrier Classic

POWER MAY BE OUT FOR WEEK

No injuries reported; FEMA aid coming in

By Alison Matas and Megan Workman
Staff writers

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is sending truckloads of water and generators to help West Virginians reeling in the aftermath of Friday night's storm, Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin said Saturday.

As Tomblin addressed the crisis during an afternoon news conference at Yeager Airport, people in Kanawha and Putnam counties searched for gas, ice and relief from heat and worked to clean up their homes. Tomblin said the state is "on top of it."

Fifty-three of West Virginia's 55 counties experienced power loss, Tomblin said, and the outage is one of the biggest in recent history.

On Saturday, Appalachian Power estimated that it could take crews until late Friday to fully restore power to Kanawha, Putnam, Cabell, McDowell, Mercer, Summers and Wayne counties, with the earliest restoration being Lincoln County, on Tuesday.

Wayne County can anticipate power by Wednesday night. Fayette, Jackson, Logan, Mason, Mingo, Raleigh and Wyoming counties should have power by Thursday night.

Finally, on Saturday, Boone and Clay counties, as well as some remote portions of Kanawha County, should have power.

Tomblin said the main priority is making sure those in hospitals and nursing homes are taken care of while power is out to a large portion of the state.

He also acknowledged that the lack of power has made resources such as gasoline sparse.

SEE STORM, 8A



CHRIS DORST | Sunday Gazette-Mail photos

High winds during Friday's violent storm uprooted this tree, which crushed a generator and pickup when it fell at St. Albans' 18th annual Riverfest. The tree nearly hit a camper where a festival queen and two other women had taken shelter. Beyond the tree, crews work Saturday to rebuild the stage.



CHIP ELLIS | Sunday Gazette-Mail

The Exxon gas station on MacCorkle Avenue in Kanawha City was one of many places without ice Saturday.



Riverfest Vice President Greg Harkins talks about storm damage Saturday with St. Albans Winterfest Junior Queen Jacqueline Shaffer, 10, and St. Albans Riverfest Teen Queen Cassie Taylor, 16.

BEAT THE HEAT

Numerous cooling stations and shelters have been set up in the Kanawha Valley after a vicious storm Friday knocked out power to more than 316,000 residents across southern West Virginia.

Appalachian Power estimated that it could take crews until late Friday to fully restore power to Kanawha, Putnam, Cabell, McDowell, Mercer, Summers and Wayne counties, with the earliest restoration being Lincoln County, on Tuesday. Fayette, Jackson, Logan, Mason, Mingo, Raleigh and Wyoming counties should have power by Thursday night. Boone, Clay, as well as some remote portions of Kanawha County should have power restored by Saturday.

In the meantime, people can seek shelter at the following locations in Kanawha County from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.:

- Kanawha City Recreation Center: 3511 Venable Ave., Charleston
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Center: 314 Donnally St., Charleston
- North Charleston Recreation Center: 2009 Seventh Ave., Charleston
- Aldersgate United Methodist Church: 6823 Sissonville Dr., Charleston
- Kanawha County Public Library: 123 Capitol St., Charleston
- Riverside High School: 1 Warrior Way, Belle
- St. Paul United Methodist Church: 2008 20th St., Nitro

For information on other possible cooling stations and shelter locations, call the county Emergency Operation Center at 304-746-8743.

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SPECIAL REPORT

Logan ramps up to fight diabetes

Groups forming in county with little help from the state

By Kate Long
Staff writer

CHAPMANVILLE — A few weeks after Tim Harclerode started as chief operating officer at Logan Regional Medical Center, he picked up the newspaper and saw this headline: "Logan County: 6,000 diabetics and no diabetic education ... yet."

"There it was on the front page: Logan County has the state's highest diabetes rate, but no programs to help people learn to control diabetes," Harclerode said. "I looked at

Last year, Kentucky put \$3.4 million (77 cents per person) into diabetes care and prevention, compared to West Virginia's \$108,000 (6 cents per person). "We're envious," says Marshall University professor Richard Crespo.

that, and said to myself, 'Well, it's not going to stay that way. No way. We're getting out in front of this.'

The next day, hospital officials contacted Shannon Meade, director of the county's Family Resource Network, and said Logan Regional wanted to

join the effort to create a Logan Diabetes Coalition.

Harclerode and two of his staff members went to a diabetes coalition organizing meeting in Chapmanville on June 12. So did representatives of seven other organizations.

"I was so glad to see them all," Meade said. "This problem is too overwhelming for any one group to handle."

One indicator: In 2010, 39 percent of Logan County fifth-graders had high blood pressure, and 39 percent were obese, according to West Virginia University measurements. "Those children are at high risk of type 2 diabetes, which can be prevented by more physical activity and less consumption of things like soda pop," said Dr. Bill Neal, who directs the WVU project.

SEE DIABETES, 9A

YANKED FROM EXHIBITION

Tamarack: Fayette artist's work too similar to another painter's

By Travis Crum
Staff writer

Fayette County artist Winter Dawn Marie used blots of dark blue, orange and yellow paint to depict a fluid tropical sunset at night.

When she entered her impressionist painting into the 2012 Best of West Virginia Exhibit, Tamarack officials liked it so much that they made it into a promotional poster for the gallery.

So, Tamarack officials said they were shocked when they discovered Marie's piece was very similar to Belarus-born artist Leonid Afremov's "Tropical Fiesta."

Afremov painted "Tropical Fiesta" in December 2008. It depicts a row of palm trees and streetlamps in Boca Raton, Fla.

Officials said they thought it could have been a coincidence

until they realized about 20 of Marie's other pieces also are similar to Afremov works.

One of those pieces had been sold at Tamarack since the exhibition's opening on June 17, said Cindy Whitlock, marketing director. That customer will receive a full refund, she said.

All promotional material featuring Marie's work has been destroyed. Any mention of her work was wiped from the Tamarack website and Facebook profile.

"She was pulled from everything," Whitlock said. "There's nothing of hers from anywhere in the building displayed anywhere."

Cheryl Hartley, Tamarack general manager, would not say how many of the promotional posters were printed when asked Thursday. She was notified of the problem last

week and needed time to sit down with Marie to discuss the allegations, she said.

"We haven't talked with the artist about this yet," Harley said. "It's really premature for us to say anything."

Whitlock said by Friday, though, that Marie had been notified that her work had been removed.

Marie was one of 34 artists selected in April to join Tamarack's artisan residency. It's unclear if Marie's residency

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DIABETES

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The Logan hospital is planning a “range of diabetes services for the public,” Harclerode said last week. The coalition wants to help people prevent diabetes, as well as control it, he said. “We’re in the infancy stage, but we plan to develop support groups and outreach groups and pull together a much broader effort for the public.”

Logan County — home of Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin — is at least the 13th West Virginia county to create a diabetes coalition. These coalitions are home-grown, fueled by the diabetes explosion. “You can just look around and see the problem growing,” Meade said.

Diabetes has tripled in West Virginia in the past 25 years, following a tripling in obesity.

The Logan group is not waiting for the state to help them. On June 12, they brainstormed for three hours, talking about what they could do for kids who sit around texting all day, seniors who never exercise, and young mothers who put Coca-Cola in their babies’ bottles. They inventoried Logan County’s resources and talked about the need to fight the widespread notion that, “if your relatives have sugar, there’s nothing you can do.”

They targeted three groups: inactive children under 18 at risk because of obesity and high blood pressure; young parents who pass on junk food/sedentary habits to their kids; and diabetics or prediabetics over 55 who could run up huge medical bills unless they learn to control their diabetes.

They talked about the \$2.7 million grant the Mingo County diabetes coalition recently received. “We could do a lot with a tenth of that,” somebody said.

The brainstormers included people from the hospital, Coalfield Health Center, the United Mine Workers union, Automated Health Systems, the WVU Extension Service, Chapmanville government, and the Family Resource Network.

In July, the Logan County Chamber of Commerce and Southern Community College plan to join the group. “This affects us all,” Meade said, “and we need to work together.”

Diabetes already costs West Virginia more than a billion dollars a year, according to the American Diabetes Association. The ADA expects it to double between 2008 and 2018.

Don't expect funding from the state

Gina Wood, manager of the West Virginia Diabetes Prevention and Control program, came to the June meeting. It was the first coalition meeting she’d attended.



KATE LONG | Sunday Gazette-Mail

Tim Harclerode, chief operating officer of Logan Regional Hospital, brainstorms with Family Resource Network director Shannon Meade and WVU Extension Agent Dana Wright (right) about projects for the new Logan diabetes coalition. “We’ve got the highest rate in the state,” Meade said, “but if we work together, we can bring those numbers down.”

The state did not help the coalitions get started or give them money, although most are scrambling for funds. “They’re not the state’s projects,” Wood said. Twelve counties got a small startup grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission. “They’re ARC projects,” she said.

The state Bureau of Public Health does not keep track of diabetes coalitions or services, Wood said, even though West Virginia leads the nation in diabetes, according to Gallup Healthways. “We don’t have enough staff” to do that, Wood said.

Read more about this in our Special Report, on Page 1C.

Counting Wood, the state diabetes program has only three employees. “We don’t have the troops” to organize programs statewide, she said. “It would be wonderful if we did.”

County coalitions should not expect funding from the state, Wood said last week. “The biggest part of our funding comes from the federal Centers for Disease Control, and they are strict about what we can and cannot spend the money on. We’re not allowed to say, ‘Hey, let’s spend some money to work with county coalitions.’”

The state’s CDC funds have already been cut by 10 percent, with more to come, Wood said. “It gets very frustrating.”

In 2012-13, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources will take about \$330,000 of the state’s \$1 million in federal and state diabetes money for salaries and services. The state plans to distribute about \$700,000 to 14 projects

that meet CDC guidelines.

There is no process for local groups to apply for any of those funds. Critics complain that the state funds the same projects year after year. “The state should help local people collaborate and pool their resources,” said Pat White, who directs West Virginia Health Right, which serves 8,500 diabetics. “They could bring people together and give them examples of best practices and ideas about what they could do.”

“The bottom line is, we need broad coordination of effort at the local level, with support and involvement from the state,” said Krista Farley, director of health promotion for the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department. “We need to agree on a vision of where we’re going so we can put the pieces in place and make every program play together.”

“The school system’s regional-wellness people could help,” said Jorea Marple, state superintendent of schools. “I’d like to see them involved. We have a lot of children at risk of diabetes.”

What are the local coalitions doing?

Of the 13 counties with diabetes coalitions, all but Hancock County have per capita incomes below state average. They all have too few diabetic services. They all express a sense of urgency.

With limited funds, each county is taking a different track.

The Calhoun/Gilmer coalition has held “Help Yourself” classes in fire halls, senior centers, hospitals and clinics. “That’s

our big push now,” said Barb McKown, outreach coordinator at Minnie Hamilton Health Center.

The Nicholas County group emphasizes Dining with Diabetes cooking classes, led by the WVU Extension Service. “We’ve taken cooking classes to remote areas and reached a lot of people who never had a chance for a class like that,” said Jane Sherwood, of Friends R Fun health organization.

In Lincoln County, members

run a summer FIT (Families in Touch) camp for children and parents and offer a free gym and aerobics class each weekday at Lincoln Primary Care. They want to create biking trails. “Maybe we can figure out how to do that at the July meeting,” said Janet Sebert, coalition chairwoman.

Hundreds of Mingo County residents racked up thousands of miles in the coalition’s walking program last year. They co-sponsored health fairs and a diabetes clinic and, with grant funding, will start a school physical activity program and rural outreach in the fall.

People in all counties say they need help. “We struggle to keep our coalition together. Our members have such full plates,” said Nicholas County’s Sherwood. “If we had somebody whose job was to facilitate coalitions, we could do a lot more.”

Two coalitions are inactive. “The person who was spearheading ours moved,” said Angel Green of Webster Memorial Hospital. “We could start up again if somebody else would do it.”

If they were in Kentucky, they would have some resources. The statewide nonprofit Kentucky Diabetes Network has more than 200 member groups, including county coalitions. They hold annual meetings, produce a 16-page newsletter and mobilize hundreds to lobby the state Legislature when necessary.

“We’re envious,” said Richard Crespo, a Marshall University professor who helps organize coalitions.

Kentucky pays every local health department to offer diabetes self-management classes. Last year, Kentucky legislators put \$3.4 million (77 cents a per-

son) into diabetes care and prevention, compared to West Virginia’s \$108,000 (6 cents a person).

There’s talk in West Virginia of a statewide coalition that could go after grants. Logan County plans to apply for private grants. “Funding possibilities go up when you’ve got a coalition,” said Mingo County’s Hatfield.

The new Hancock County coalition got a startup grant through the National Association of City and County Health Officials. Three months later, they’re offering “Help Yourself” classes in two churches and one senior center.

“We’re on a roll,” said Jackie Huff, health department administrator. They’re considering school programs, walking clubs and races, and a public-awareness campaign.

In Boone County, the health department, hospital and several agencies are working to create a business plan for a diabetes prevention/control program. “If we want a program that won’t disappear when the grant money ends, we need a way to pay for it,” said Julie Miller, health department administrator.

In 2010, about 29 percent of Boone fifth-graders had high blood pressure. About 45 percent were obese. “We’ve got to change that,” Miller said. With federal funding being cut, she said, “joining forces just makes sense.”

Reach Kate Long at 304-348-1798 or katelong@wvgazette.com. “The Shape We’re In” was written with the help of the Dennis A. Hunt Fund for Health Journalism, administered by the California Endowment Health Journalism Fellowships at the University of Southern California’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

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