



# Jefferson County Homeland Security & Emergency Management

<http://www.jeffersoncountywv.org/county-government/departments/homeland-security-and-emergency-management>

JANUARY 2019

## 2019: New Year, New Beginnings

2018 was a busy year with the five-year update of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the four exercises to meet our Emergency Management Program Grant requirements, the Community Rating System (CRS) update, and of course, the wettest year on record for rain. All along the way during the first six months we were interviewing and testing candidates to take my place as deputy director. The Disaster-Ready Kids program reached out to nearly 350 children and adults for 2018. Success! Did I mention that this undertaking was done with only 66% of our staff available? July brought us our new deputy director to bring our strength to 100%.

For 2019 we expect to meet all the previous requirements discussed AND bring back the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), renew our Storm-Ready certification and continue upgrading the Emergency Operations Center. Get Ready to keep moving forward!

### Volunteer Spotlight—Ed Smith

Next in our series profiling members of the Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management (JCHSEM) Steering Committee is a conversation with Ed Smith.

Ed Smith is the Vice Chair of the JCHSEM Steering Committee representing fire and rescue. He has been a member of the Steering Committee for many years. However, are you aware this Pennsylvania native moved to Jefferson County because of the loss of a job?



Ed relocated to Jefferson County in 1974. He was laid off from the Pennsylvania railroad and accepted employment with AT&T which is what brought him to the Eastern Panhandle. After relocating, Smith became a volunteer fire fighter with Independent Fire Company in February 1974 in what has become a rewarding and beneficial endeavor for himself and the community.

Since being an active member of Independent for so many years, Ed has held most positions from fire officer in 1976 to the Board of Directors and as chief beginning in 1990, a position he held for 20 years. Presently, Ed is the president.

There have been many changes and challenges during Ed's time with Independent, but he says it has been a great experience and he is proud of the equipment the company has obtained and their leadership. He has witnessed a lot of significant fires including the 1993 tire fire in Berkeley County.

*Cont. Pg. 4, see "Chief Smith"*

- Jefferson County Commissioners:**
- Patsy Noland, President
  - Jane Tabb, Vice President
  - Josh Compton
  - Caleb Wayne Hudson
  - Ralph Lorenzetti
- Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management Steering Committee:**
- John Sherwood, Chair, Chamber of Commerce Representative
  - Ed Smith, Vice Chair, Fire and Rescue Representative
  - Donald Grubb, Health Representative
  - VACANT, Mass Care Representative
  - Paula Marrone-Reese, Non-Governmental Organization Representative
  - Mason Carter, Jefferson County Department of Engineering Representative
  - Jeffrey A. Polczynski, ENP, Jefferson County Emergency Communications Center Representative
  - Jane Tabb, County Commission Representative
  - Kelly Parsons, Private Industry Representative
  - Pete Dougherty, Sheriff, Law Enforcement Representative
  - Thomas Butcher, Utilities Representative
  - Nic Diehl, Jefferson County Development Authority Representative
  - Holly Frye, Shepherd University Service Learning Program Education Representative
  - Sanford "Sandy" Green, Region 3 Homeland Security Area Liaison
- JCHSEM Staff:**
- Stephen S. Allen, Director
  - James M. Sager, Deputy Director, Planner, Program Manager
  - VACANT, Administrative Assistant/Public Information Officer/Volunteer Coordinator

## Preparing for Winter Weather

In continuing with our monthly theme of potential weather issues which may impact Jefferson County, we will be taking a look at winter weather hazards and associated hazards such as fire safety. Before we have snow on the ground or a threat of accumulating snow or ice, its time to take steps to prepare.

Cold temperatures, heavy snow and ice storms are all potential risks for our county. Preparedness begins with knowing the risks, making a plan with family members and having an emergency supply kit. The basic kit should contain water, food, flashlights and medications. For winter weather, you may need

to add rock salt or environmentally safe to melt ice on walk-sand to improve snow shovels and snow removing equipment, sufficient heating fuel or seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove and adequate clothing and blankets for warmth.



other products ways or traction, other other sufficient heating fuel or seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove and adequate clothing and blankets for warmth.

On the next few pages are safety tips for steps to take before, during and after a storm. The information is provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and additional details can be found at their website at [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov).

## Snow Storms and Extreme Cold



2016 Winter storm Jonas. Rt. 9, Jefferson County, WV.

Winter storms create a higher risk of car accidents, hypothermia, frostbite, carbon monoxide poisoning, and heart attacks from overexertion. Winter storms and blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice, and high winds. A winter storm can:

- Last a few hours or several days;
- Knock out heat, power, and communication services; and
- Place older adults, young children, and sick individuals at greater risk.

### If You Are Under A Winter Storm Warning, Find Shelter Right Away

- Stay off roads.
- Stay indoors and dress warmly.
- Prepare for power outages.
- Use generators outside only and away from windows.
- Listen for emergency information and alerts.
- Look for signs of hypothermia and frostbite.
- Check on neighbors.

### How To Stay Safe When a Winter Storm Threatens:

#### **Prepare NOW**

- Know your area's risk for winter storms. Extreme winter weather can leave communities without utilities or other services for long periods of time.

- Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking, and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery back-ups.
- Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms. Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.
- Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Do not forget the needs of pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights.
- Create an emergency supply kit for your car. Include jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water, and non-perishable snacks. Keep the gas tank full.
- **Learn the signs of, and basic treatments for, frostbite and hypothermia.**

### Survive DURING

- Stay off roads if at all possible. If trapped in your car, then stay inside.
- Limit your time outside. If you need to go outside, then wear layers of warm clothing. Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows. Never heat your home with a gas stovetop or oven.
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack. Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia and begin treatment right away.
- **Check on neighbors. Older adults and young children are more at risk in extreme cold.**



*2016 Winter Storm Jonas, Jefferson County, WV.*



### RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND

- Frostbite causes loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes.
- **Signs:** Numbness, white or grayish-yellow skin, firm or waxy skin
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Soak in warm water. Use body heat to warm. Do not massage or use a heating pad.
- Hypothermia is an unusually low body temperature. A temperature below 95 degrees is an emergency.
- **Signs:** Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, or drowsiness
- **Actions:** Go to a warm room. Warm the center of the body first—chest, neck, head, and groin. Keep dry and wrapped up in warm blankets, including the head and neck.

###

You can always find valuable information to help **you** prepare for winter emergencies at [www.ready.gov/winter-weather](http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather). Bookmark FEMA's mobile site [//m.fema.gov](http://m.fema.gov), or download the FEMA app today to have vital information just one click away.



Ed Smith, Bus Fire, Charles Town, WV, July 2003.

Fire crews from communities in four states and numerous counties were involved with containing and extinguishing the tire fire which took two and a half days.

When it comes to an emergency or disaster, Ed believes may have had the largest impact on his life he recalls a water rescue on the Opequon Creek when he was the assistant chief. While he was assessing how to handle the initial rescue, a couple of fire fighters decided to freelance and got into a boat and entered the water. They found themselves trapped and in need of rescue. Following that incident Ed decided the county needed a Swift Water Rescue Team.

Ed's interest in emergency services began while living in Pennsylvania. His brother was a member of the fire department, his father was a member of the fire police and his mother was president of the auxiliary. He recalls people from this time as being grateful for help during emergency situations and would tell him and others that they saved that person's life or property. The people remembered.

When it comes to Ed being involved with JCHSEM, he credits Darrell Penwell, a past director. Ed said he attended a public meeting Penwell had about the county's emergency plans. There was more cooperation between the fire departments and emergency management because they were both looking at the same issues impacting Jefferson County. That first meeting was the beginning of Ed's involvement with emergency management which has been ongoing for 25 years.

As for personal goals Ed set while volunteering there are several. These goals include training for fire, EMS and rescue personnel, raising funds for equipment or training, working with the public and maintaining a good public image. After all, the public has funded many things that emergency services have benefited from and continue to do so. Ed believes good public relations is very important and wants to see it continue.

As for achievements at Independent, Ed says the company has gone from one with the oldest equipment and falling behind to financial stability and replacing all equipment. Twice. Future goals include improving pride in the members and the company.

Independent purchased the old power company building and in 1998 renovated it including adding a meeting hall. However, the company is currently growing out of the station. Also, current discussions are about adding additional equipment to the building since they are using auxiliary equipment.

Ed believes that awareness and preplanning are critical in manufacturing and for emergency management. There are chemical solvents on some trains passing through the county and the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a critical key. He is also an advocate for propane assessment. Trains are a concern especially is transporting items such as non-odorized propane. Proper placarding is very important for responders in the case of an incident.

Ed has great pride in his achievements both professionally and through volunteering in emergency services. He enjoys a sense of accomplishment especially when the younger guys at Independent remind him that he has helped develop their careers. He is a strong believer in the safety record with the fire department and his philosophy that everyone goes home at the end of the day is always present. Property is easier to replace than people, according to Ed.

Along with volunteering, Ed enjoys traveling. Since retirement he and his family are enjoying longer trips to places such as Hilton Head, South Carolina and to Waco, Texas or Florida. He especially loves spending time with his grandchildren.

## Home Fires

During the winter months many people use alternative heating sources such as fireplaces or portable heaters especially if the power is out due to a storm. With these options also comes the possibility of a home fire. Know the facts. For example, did you know in just two minutes a fire can become life-threatening. In five minutes, a residence can be engulfed in flames.

### Learn About Fires

- **Fire is FAST!** In less than 30 seconds a small flame can turn into a major fire. It only takes minutes for thick black smoke to fill a house or for it to be engulfed in flames.
- **Fire is HOT!** Heat is more threatening than flames. Room temperatures in a fire can be 100 degrees at floor level and rise to 600 degrees at eye level. Inhaling this super-hot air will scorch your lungs and melt clothes to your skin.
- **Fire is DARK!** Fire starts bright, but quickly produces black smoke and complete darkness. **Fire is DEADLY!** Smoke and toxic gases kill more people than flames do. Fire produces poisonous gases that make you disoriented and drowsy. Asphyxiation is the leading cause of fire deaths, exceeding burns by a three-to-one ratio.

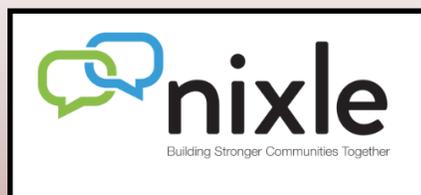
### Before a Fire

#### **Create and Practice a Fire Escape Plan**

In the event of a fire, remember that every second counts, so you and your family must always be prepared. Escape plans help you get out of your home quickly.

*Cont. pg. 6. See "Fire."*

### **Sign Up to Receive Nixle Alerts!**



JCHSEM uses NIXLE Alerts to send emergency alert notifications by text, e-mail, Facebook and Twitter. We send out weather watches and warnings, as well as emergency public information during disasters. Examples include tornado, flood, severe snowstorm, and severe thunderstorm watches, warnings, advisories, and emergencies as well as, where emergency shelters are located, where commodities can be obtained (such as water or ice), etc. Signing up is easy and it's FREE! To sign up, go to <http://local.nixle.com/register> or text your zip code to 888777 and then text JCHSEM to the same number.

In addition to NIXLE, we still use traditional media, such as newspapers, TV, and radio. However, receiving NIXLE alerts on your phone is the fastest way to receive emergency public information. Make sure that everyone in your family that has access to a phone receives our emergency alerts in case you are not together when a disaster happens. Make receiving NIXLE Alerts a part of your family's communication plan. If you have questions about NIXLE Alerts, you can go to [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) and click on "resident". You can always call our office if you have local questions or need assistance with getting registered.

Contact your local fire department for information about obtaining a flashing or vibrating smoke alarm. Smoke alarms with a strobe light outside the home to catch the attention of neighbors, and emergency call systems for summoning help, are also available.

## **Prevent Home Fires**

Home fires are preventable! The following are simple steps that each of us can take to prevent a tragedy.

### **Cooking**

- Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling, or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- Wear short, close-fitting or tightly rolled sleeves when cooking.
- Keep children away from cooking areas by enforcing a "kid-free zone" of 3 feet around the stove.



### **Portable Space Heaters**

- Keep combustible objects at least three feet away from portable heating devices.
- Buy only heaters evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Check to make the portable heater has a thermostat control mechanism, and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over.

**Only use crystal clear K-1 kerosene in kerosene heaters. Never overfill it. Use the heater in a well-ventilated room.**

### **Fireplaces and Woodstoves**

- Inspect and clean woodstove pipes and chimneys annually and check monthly for damage or obstructions.
- Use a fireplace screen heavy enough to stop rolling logs and big enough to cover the entire opening of the fireplace to catch flying sparks.
- Make sure the fire is completely out before leaving the house or going to bed.

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*Cont. from pg. 5, "Fire."*

Twice each year, practice your home fire escape plan. Some tips to consider when preparing this plan include:

- Find two ways to get out of each room in the event the primary way is blocked by fire or smoke.
- A secondary route might be a window onto a neighboring roof or a collapsible ladder for escape from upper story windows.
- Make sure that windows are not stuck, screens can be taken out quickly, and that security bars can be properly opened.
- Practice feeling your way out of the house in the dark or with your eyes closed.

**Teach children not to hide from firefighters.**

## **Smoke Alarms**



A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.

- Install both ionization AND photoelectric smoke alarms, OR dual sensor smoke alarms, which contain both ionization and photoelectric smoke sensors.
- Test batteries monthly.
- Replace batteries in battery-powered and hard-wired smoke alarms at least once a year (except non-replaceable 10-year lithium batteries).
- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement, both inside and outside of sleeping areas.

- Replace the entire smoke alarm unit every 8-10 years or according to manufacturer's instructions.

**Never disable a smoke alarm while cooking – it can be a deadly mistake.**

## **Smoke Alarm Safety for People with Access or Functional Needs**

- Audible alarms for visually impaired people should pause with a small window of silence between each successive cycle so that they can listen to instructions or voices of others.
- Smoke alarms with a vibrating pad or flashing light are available for the hearing impaired. Contact your

Need a Smoke Detector? Contact the American Red Cross



## Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

More lives are lost every year to home fires than to all major disasters.

Every day, seven people die in home fires, most in homes that lack working smoke alarms. Unfortunately, you are more likely to die in a home fire in West Virginia than any other state. To help save lives and make homes safer, the American Red Cross is installing FREE smoke alarms across the state.

To request a free alarm installation, visit [SoundTheAlarm.org/WestVirginia](https://SoundTheAlarm.org/WestVirginia) or call 1-844-216-8286.





## **January Quarterly Partnership Meeting/Luncheon At Hollywood Casino and Charles Town Races**

Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management's (JCHSEM) Quarterly Partnership Meeting/Luncheon will be Friday, January 25 at the Epic Buffet at Hollywood Casino and Charles Town Races in Charles Town from noon to 2 p.m.

We take this time to acknowledge the generosity of Hollywood Casino and Charles Town Races for sponsoring our annual partnership luncheon and for their continued support of JCHSEM activities and events.

The guest speaker during the luncheon will be Sgt. R. S. Sell, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office.

In addition to the guest speaker, the 2019 JCHSEM Steering Committee will be introduced and Director Allen will address JCHSEM's 2019 events and activities. All Steering Committee members should stay after the event for their Quarterly Steering Committee meeting and a group photo.

To attend, you must RSVP by either registering through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/jchsem-quarterly-partnership-meeting-tickets-41435268002> or by contacting Steve Allen by email at [sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org) or by dialing 304-724-3290 no later than Tuesday, January 15. Space is limited. Only one person per agency, please.

Reservations are limited to 100 people and once we reach maximum capacity for the meeting/luncheon, registration will be closed. So please make your reservation as early as possible.

## **Disaster Exercises 2019**

If you or your organization is interested in participating in the 2019 exercise series, please contact Stephen Allen at: [sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org)

**The 2019 exercise schedule is being finalized and will be posted as soon as possible.**

An effective exercise program is an essential component of our preparedness as it validates plans, tests operational capabilities, maintains leadership effectiveness, and examines ways to utilize the whole community. Exercise program management involves a collaborative approach that integrates resources, organizations, and individuals in order to identify and achieve program priorities.

## Need Training?

Emergency management is a constantly-changing field. Whether it is keeping up with the latest technology, to working with stakeholders to develop plans, conducting successful floodplain management, performing damage assessments, managing debris after a disaster, helping our communities to recover, or just learning the fundamentals, there are plenty of options available to you. Here are some great opportunities for training that you may or may not know about:

**West Virginia Military Affairs and Public Safety's Training Center, CourseMill**. If you are involved in emergency management in West Virginia, you can set up your free account at <http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov/dmapscm6/home.html>.

Here is a listing of upcoming state sponsored training opportunities. These courses are free to attend. However, registration is required.

January 29-31 **OR** February 5-7, 2019 — ICS 300. This course provides training for personnel who require advanced application of the Incident Command System (ICS). This course expands upon information covered in the ICS 100 and ICS 200 courses. The course will be held at the West Virginia State Police Academy, Institute, West Virginia.

February 12, 2019—PER 343 Social Media Engagement Strategies. Attendees are required to bring their own laptop or Wi-Fi enabled device to the training session for the hands-on exercises. This course conducts a Pre-Test, Post-Test and course evaluation online. If you do not have an online account prior to the class start date, you may not be able to participate in the class. This class will be held at the West Virginia State Police Academy, Institute, West Virginia.

February 13, 2019—PER 344 Social Media Tools and Techniques. This course will supplement and build upon NDPTC's existing FEMA-certified performance-level course, PER 304 Social Media for Natural Disaster Management Operations. Attendees are required to bring their own laptop or Wi-Fi enabled device to the training session for the hands-on exercises. This course conducts a Pre-Test, Post-Test and course evaluation online. If you do not have an online account prior to the class start date, you may not be able to participate in the class. This class will be held at the West Virginia State Police Academy, Institute, West Virginia.

To Register for these FREE Classes, go to: <http://www.onlinelearning.wv.gov/dmapscm6>. For questions about the course or registration, contact [Gregory.c.fernley@wv.gov](mailto:Gregory.c.fernley@wv.gov) or call 304-558-5380. Once you set up your account, you can log on and look at the list of available courses taught in West Virginia.

**FEMA's Emergency Management Institute's** URL is <https://training.fema.gov/emi.aspx>. From this training portal, anyone can take their online independent study courses for free. There are over 100 courses to choose from. You can also browse the schedules and information about their on-campus resident courses for those who are involved in emergency management at the federal, state, local or tribal governments.

Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management recommends the following FEMA Independent Study Courses. These courses are free and available online. Those courses can be found at: <https://training.fema.gov/is/>.

IS-393.b - Introduction to Hazard Mitigation

IS-317 - Introduction to Community Emergency Response Teams

IS-248 - Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) for the American Public

IS-505 - Religious and Cultural Literacy and Competency in Disaster

# Jefferson County Homeland Security and Emergency Management-Committees

## **Steering Committee, John Sherwood, Chair**

The Steering Committee works with the JCHSEM Director to guide the activities of JCHSEM. A fourteen-member Steering Committee is made up of public and private representation. JCHSEM is a Department within the Jefferson County Commission, who has overall responsibility for the department and its employees. The Jefferson County Commission appoints all members to the steering committee. This committee meets following the Quarterly Partnership Luncheons held in January, April, July, and October and meetings are scheduled as needed. Please call the office for exact dates, locations, and times.

## **Public Awareness, Education and Training Committee, Paula Marrone-Reese, Chair**

Any interested person can serve on this committee. The Public Awareness, Education and Training Committee is responsible to communicate the organization's activities to the public and to build support for JCHSEM's programs. They work with the Director and other staff to keep the entire community focused on the objectives of JCHSEM, the opportunities for additional involvement and support by updating citizens and businesses about what the partners are doing and how the community will and is benefiting from these efforts. Additionally, they are responsible to assist the program manager in setting up speaking engagements and public awareness events. This committee meets monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 0830 in the EOC at 28 Industrial Blvd., Kearneysville, unless otherwise announced.

## **All Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee, Mason Carter, Chair**

Any interested person may serve on this committee. The All Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee examines the community's risks and vulnerability to all hazards and assess the community's vulnerability to those risks. An All Hazards Mitigation Plan was completed and adopted by the Jefferson County Commission, all Jefferson County municipalities, WVHSEM, and Federal Emergency Management Agency in July, 2003. The plan was updated in 2008 and 2013. The 2013 Plan was approved by WVDHSEM and FEMA in June 2013 and the 2018 plan was approved in November 2018.

## **Counter Terrorism Committee, Stephen Allen, Director, Chair**

Membership to this sub-committee of the Risk Assessment and Mitigation Planning Committee is limited to members of law enforcement, emergency management, homeland security, emergency communications, Red Cross, schools, health care, fire companies, ambulance authority/EMS, and government, due to sensitive homeland security issues. The committee works on issues of planning and training for counter terrorism or human-caused disasters. Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at the EOC at 28 Industrial Blvd., Kearneysville, unless otherwise announced.

If you are interested in joining any of our committees, contact Stephen Allen at [sal-len@jeffersoncountywv.org](mailto:sallen@jeffersoncountywv.org)

Times, dates, places may need to be changed due to inclement weather, scheduling conflicts or EOC activation. If you have questions, call the JCHSEM office at (304) 728-3290.

**Jefferson County  
Homeland Security and  
Emergency Management**

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VACANT—Administrative Assistant,  
Public Information Officer and  
Volunteer Coordinator

**PUBLIC SAFETY;  
PUBLIC TRUST**

The Jefferson County Commission's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (JCHSEM) is responsible for the coordination of preparedness, planning, response, recovery and mitigation of disasters and large emergencies in Jefferson County, West Virginia. Vol-



unteer and community participation is encouraged and welcome. We currently have committees on All Hazards Mitigation Planning; Public Awareness, Education and Training; Counter Terrorism; and a Steering Committee that acts as an advisory group.

We are responsible for the Citizen Corps/CERT, Storm-Ready, Community Rating System, Resilient Neighbor Network and Project Impact programs. JCHSEM is also responsible for the Jefferson County R.A.C.E.S. group.

## Meetings & Events

### January Meetings

- Sterling National Weather Service Calls every Monday at 9 a.m.
- Weather calls every Monday and Friday at 10 a.m. with State EOC and National Weather Service
- January 1 New Year's Day—Office closed
- January 3 Amateur Radio Monthly Net Test night
- January 8 Counter-Terrorism Committee meeting
- January 9 Public Awareness, Education, and Training Committee meeting
- January 25 Quarterly Partnership meeting, The Epic Buffet at Hollywood Casino and Charles Town Races, from noon to 2 p.m.