COVID-19: In Spite of Everything, Spring Arrived in All Her Glory
On April 2, 2020, this information on COVID-19 testing was posted on the hospital’s Facebook page.

COVID-19 TESTING

Available at the Parkview Center entrance Monday through Friday between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and at the main entrance daily between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. when ordered by your physician.

Drive-thru COVID-19 testing is available at the Parkview Center entrance Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. when ordered by your physician.
Princeton Community Hospital understands you are very concerned about your loved one who is hospitalized during this COVID-19 pandemic. We have had to implement a NO Visitors restriction for your loved one’s safety, your safety, and staff safety. Please help us with communication to your family and friends by having only one family spokesperson to call and communicate with the nursing staff regarding the patient’s condition and plan of care.

Nursing will communicate this plan to the patient at time of admission and will obtain the name of their ONE designated spokesperson for all communication. The designated spokesperson should then communicate to the rest of family members, preserving nursing’s time for direct care of your loved one and other patients. Thank you in advance for your patience, understanding, and compliance with our visitor restrictions as we together keep everyone as safe from infection as we can.

Congratulations to Jessica Duff, PCH Nutrition Services Department March 2020 Employee of the Month! Thank you, Jessica, for your hard work and dedication!

Congratulations to Olivia Blankenship, The Pavilion Nutrition Services Department March 2020 Employee of the Month! Thank you, Olivia, for your hard work and commitment!
April 6, 2020: The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources’ Medical Countermeasures Program at the Center for Threat Preparedness loaned a ventilator to the Respirator Therapy Department for use during the COVID-19 pandemic. It came with the expectation that the equipment will be returned in the same working order in which it was delivered when it is no longer needed for COVID patients.

The ventilator was delivered by members of the West Virginia National Guard.

Thank you to DHHR and the WV National Guard for use of the ventilator!

Eastern Door Donates Intubation Boxes

April 27, 2020: Thank you to Eastern Door & Glass for the generous gift of three acrylic intubation boxes. Two of the boxes were put into use in the surgical department and one in the ER. The intubation box is placed over the head and neck of the patient in order to form an aerosol barrier. The care provider places hands through the arm holes to perform endotracheal intubation on the patient. We greatly appreciate the generous donation!
Skyway Outdoor Donates 50 Protective Face Shields

April 14, 2020: Thank you to Skyway Outdoor for the donation of 50 face shields, expertly fabricated in their facility in Bastian, Virginia. Jessica Looney with Skyway Outdoor delivered the face shields on Monday, April 13, 2020, to Mark Pickett, PCH Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. The shields were immediately put into use in the ER, the COVID-19 isolation unit, ICU, and other departments. Thank you for your generous contribution!

Dr. Jeffry Gee Discusses Impact of COVID-19

On Thursday, April 16, 2020 at 9:10 a.m., Dr. Jeffry Gee, Medical Director at The Behavioral Health Pavilion of the Virginias, discussed the impact of COVID-19 on mental health with talk show host and PCH board member Craig Hammond. Radio Active airs Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., on WHIS 1440 AM & 97.3 FM.
PCH Radiologic Technologists Honored by WVVA as Frontline Heroes

April 16, 2020: PCH Radiologic Technologists were featured as WVVA’s “Frontline Heroes.”

Star Connor, WVVA Multimedia Journalist, was on campus on April 16 to film part of our team for the segment. Although they often work behind the scenes, Radiologic Technologists play a pivotal role in the diagnosis and treatment of many conditions. Their commitment to providing the highest quality of care involves working long hours, including nights and weekend. Congratulations to our dedicated team of Radiologic Technologists!

You are in every sense, Frontline Heroes!

Willie Owens, R.T. (R) discussing how COVID-19 has impacted the workplace.
Dear Dr. Naeem Qazi,

I am ready to be discharged. You have been an amazing doctor. I am now ready to go home. My sister will drive me to see my mom and dad. My parents are my whole heart and I’ve missed them. If Dad lives, he will be 87 in August.

The nurses have been here for me and I appreciate all of them. They have been so helpful and I love you all with all my heart.

The kindness you have shown has gone a long way. Princeton is a wonderful hospital and if I ever have to come back, I hope to have the same nurses to look after me.

My blood pressure is under control now. You have been an amazing, great, kind doctor throughout all of my appointments. I knew I could count on you.

Sincerely yours,
Laura K. England
The HR Department Celebrates our Heroes with Painted Windows

April 15, 2020: The HR Department painted the windows in the cafeteria last night to honor and salute all heroes who work at PCH. A special thank you to the heroes in EVERY department, including HR, who put their lives on the line every day to protect and care for our patients.

April 16, 2020: The HR Department celebrated the many heroes working at The Behavioral Health Pavilion of the Virginias this morning with this painted window in the cafeteria! Thank you, everyone, for your endless hard work!
April 21, 2020 – Drive-thru testing suspended at the Parkview Center entrance.

COVID-19 TESTING

Effective Tuesday, April 21, 2020, Princeton Community Hospital will no longer offer drive-thru testing for COVID-19 at our Parkview Center entrance.

COVID-19 testing is still available (just not drive-thru) daily at our main entrance from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., when ordered by your physician.

April 22, 2020: Thank you to Skyway Outdoor for the donation of 50 additional face shields made in their facility in Bastian, Virginia. Skyway Outdoor delivered the face shields on Wednesday, April 22, 2020, to Dr. Jeffry Gee, Medical Director of The Behavioral Health Pavilion of the Virginias, Bluefield, WV. The shields were turned over to Nurse Manager Patricia Coleman for distribution within the facility. Thank you for your generous contribution!
April 19-25, 2020: Thank you PCH Volunteers for 9,176 service hours during the past year!

“There is a bonding relationship you develop when you become a volunteer at Princeton Community Hospital. Volunteering lets you become part of a unique family which includes people from all walks of life that range from living the good life of retirement and wanting to give back to the community to young people who are just trying to learn their way through life and experiencing different opportunities to grow,” Volunteer Coordinator Megan Goff said.

“As you walk through the doors of Princeton Community Hospital you will find the most smiling, caring faces to greet you and be there to help you; whether it be as simple as directing you to where you need to go or being a listening ear to calm your nerves as an outpatient in the Oncology Department. Why, you ask? Because they strive to be a joy and provide comfort to our patients, visitors, and employees throughout the day, every day,” she said.

Dr. Emily Boothe Discusses Motherhood and Mental Health

On Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 9:30 a.m., Dr. Emily Boothe with The Behavioral Health Pavilion of the Virginias discussed motherhood and mental health with talk show host and PCH board member Craig Hammond. Radio Active airs Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., on WHIS 1440 AM & 97.3 FM.
April 23, 2020 – The hospital issues a public call for homemade mask donations

Princeton Community Hospital and The Behavioral Health Pavilion are in need of homemade masks.

We want to ensure that all nonclinical employees, visitors, and outpatients can use a homemade mask instead of using our critical stock of isolation masks. If you would like to make or donate masks, please contact Jennifer Terry at 304-487-7159 or Lynn Thompson at 304-487-7350. Thank you in advance!!

How to Make a Face Mask

What you will need:

- Cotton fabric (tight knit fabric is best)
- Rope Elastic, beading cord elastic will work (you may also use 1/8” flat elastic)
- Cut the elastic 7” long and tie a knot at each end (DO NOT knot the ends of the flat)

You can make two sizes: Adult or Child

1. Put right sides of cotton fabric together Cut 9x6 inches (Adult) or 7.5 x 5 inches (Child)
2. Starting at the center of the bottom edge, sew to the first corner, stop. Sew the elastic with the edge out into the corner. A few stitches forward and back will hold this.
3. Sew to the next corner, stop, and bring the other end of the same elastic to the corner and sew a few stitches forward and back.
4. Now sew across that top of the mask to the next corner. Again put an elastic with the edge out.
5. Sew to the next corner and sew in the other end of the same elastic.
6. Sew across the bottom leaving about 1.5” to 2” open. Stop, cut the thread. Turn inside out.
7. Pin 3 tucks on each side of the mask. Make sure the tucks are the same direction.
8. Sew around the edge of the mask twice.

Lynn Thompson, RN, BSN
Director of Quality and Case Management
April 24, 2020 – The following was posted on the hospital’s Facebook page

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Helping My Child Cope

Seven things you can do to help your child:

1. **Remain calm and reassuring.** Focus on helping your child feel safe. Answer their questions, listen for misunderstandings, and share accurate information.

2. **Keep as many everyday routines as possible.** Try to stay consistent with bedtimes, meals, chores, exercise, and schoolwork (which might be online).

3. **Help your child feel in control.** Enlist them in your family plan to stay healthy. Help them use their “germ buster” powers: washing hands often, not touching their face, coughing or sneezing into a tissue or elbow.

4. **Help your child feel connected with others.** Stay in touch with friends and family on the phone and online. Spend family time doing things you all enjoy.

5. **Allow your child to talk about feelings and worries, if they want to.** Talk, write, or draw about how they’re feeling. Check in on a regular basis or when the situation changes.

6. **Make time every day for stress-reducing activities.** Help your child create a habit with calming, stress-reducing activities they can do every day, such as exercise, deep breathing, or yoga.

7. **Take time to deal with your own feelings.** It’s harder to help your child when you are really stressed or worried. Talk it out with other adults – so that you can get some support.

What should I expect?

Feeling lonely, bored, stressed, anxious, or afraid of getting sick are all normal responses in this situation. Common, temporary reactions you might notice are:

**Young children:** afraid to be alone, bed wetting, bad dreams, crankiness, temper tantrums

**School-age children:** easily upset or angry, bad dreams, wanting to be near parents, trouble concentrating

**Teens:** changes in sleep or eating, arguing with friends or family, wanting to be left alone

**When and how should I get extra help for my child?** If your child’s worries or behavior changes are getting worse, or are worrying you, talk to your child’s doctor about the best way to help. There may be online or phone-based services to help you support your child.
April 24, 2020 – The following was posted on the hospital’s Facebook page

When Your Child has Existing Health Concerns

Parenting a child with existing healthcare needs can be especially stressful during a disease outbreak or pandemic. The following tips can help:

✓ **Keep in touch with your child’s healthcare team.** They are the best source of accurate information about current affairs and how they might impact your child.

✓ **Rely on trusted sources.** Misinformation can be spread online, even by well-intentioned people. Rely on national disease groups and your child’s healthcare team to answer your questions. Don’t be afraid to ask about something that you see online.

✓ **Check in about health-related worries.** Your child might be nervous about things like running out of medications. Provide fact-based reassurance whenever possible.

✓ **Be sensitive to “triggers”.** Seeing or hearing things about the disease, the hospital, and dying might be especially scary for kids with underlying health issues. Keep in mind that your child might react in ways that surprise you.

✓ **Give everyone a chance to ask questions.** Brothers and sisters may also be worried – give them factual, age-appropriate information.

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Putting it Into Practice: Using These Tips at Home

**Do:** Help put feelings into words.

**Say:** “A lot’s been happening. Is there anything you’re wondering, or worried about?”

**Do:** Find other ways to share.

**Say:** “Can you draw me a picture about how you’re feeling?”

**Do:** Remember everyone’s reactions might be different.

**Say:** “How is everyone feeling? How can we help each other this week?”

**Do:** Help your child feel in control.

**Say:** “Way to go, GermBuster powers! Let’s wash our hands.”

**Do:** Promote connection.

**Say:** “You can still chat with your friends.”

**Do:** Model reaching out to others.

**Say:** “When I’m upset, I find someone to talk to.”
Princeton Community Hospital is pleased to announce the resumption of urgent elective surgeries effective April 28, 2020. Because of the continuing threat of the COVID-19 virus, no visitors will be permitted to accompany the surgical patient inside the hospital. We request that a family member drop off the patient at the Parkview Center entrance and pick them up at the same location upon discharge. We will communicate with the family member via telephone. An exception to the “no visitor restriction” may be considered only if the patient requires direct assistance from a family member or lay caregiver.

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April 29, 2020 – PCH announces universal masking

**Universal Masking**

**CORONAVIRUS**

**DON’T FORGET TO MASK UP!!**

Please ensure you are wearing a mask (isolation or homemade) upon entering and throughout this building.

Masks should be worn while in communal spaces, such as hallways, bathrooms, elevators.

Mask should only be removed if in a private office or in shared workspace with greater than 6 feet separation.
On April 30, 2020, The Women’s Center released a new video that enabled expectant mothers who were not permitted inside because of COVID-19 to tour the facility virtually. The OB/GYNs were featured including interviews with Dr. Randy Brodnick and Dr. Robert Edwards from Bluefield.

3D Printed Mask Extenders/Ear Savers

May 4, 2020: Thanks to Nellie Cottle, Technology Integration Specialist, Peterstown Elementary/Middle School, Peterstown, West Virginia, for the generous donation of 40 3D printed mask extenders/ear savers for Princeton Community Hospital.

Each mask extender takes approximately 15 minutes to print. Ms. Cottle also printed mask extenders for first responders and for local physician offices in Monroe and Mercer Counties, West Virginia, and Giles County, Virginia.

Thank you for your generous gift!
May 6-12, 2020: A special thank you to all nurses at PCH, BRMC, The Behavioral Health Pavilion, and all Mercer Medical Group affiliates during National Nurses Week and always. You are the heart and soul of our healthcare organization.

“As nurses, we have the opportunity to heal the heart, mind, soul and body of our patients, their families, and ourselves. They may not remember your name but they will never forget the way you made them feel.”

– Maya Angelou

National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6 and ends on May 12, Florence Nightingale’s birthday. These permanent dates enhance planning and position National Nurses Week as an established recognition event. As of 1998, May 8 was designated as National Student Nurses Day, to be celebrated annually. And as of 2003, National School Nurse Day is celebrated on the Wednesday within National Nurses Week (May 6-12) each year.

The nursing profession has been supported and promoted by the American Nurses Association (ANA) since 1896. Each of ANA’s state and territorial nurses associations promotes the nursing profession at the state and regional levels. Each conducts celebrations on these dates to recognize the contributions that nurses and nursing make to the community.

The ANA supports and encourages National Nurses Week recognition programs through the state and district nurses associations, other specialty nursing organizations, educational facilities, and independent health care companies and institutions.

A Brief History of National Nurses Week

1953 • Dorothy Sutherland of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare sent a proposal to President Eisenhower to proclaim a “Nurse Day” in October of the following year. The proclamation was never made.

1954 • National Nurse Week was observed from October 11 - 16. The year of the observance marked the 100th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s mission to Crimea. Representative Frances P. Bolton sponsored the bill for a nurse week. Apparently, a bill for a National Nurse Week was introduced in the 1955 Congress, but no action was taken. Congress discontinued its practice of joint resolutions for national weeks of various kinds.

1972 • Again a resolution was presented by the House of Representatives for the President to proclaim “National Registered Nurse Day.” It did not occur.

1974 • In January of that year, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) proclaimed that May 12 would be “International Nurse Day.” (May 12 is the birthday of Florence Nightingale.) Since 1965, the ICN has celebrated “International Nurse Day.”

1974 • In February of that year, a week was designated by the White House as National Nurse Week, and President Nixon issued a proclamation.
1978 • New Jersey Governor Brendon Byrne declared May 6 as “Nurses Day.” Edward Scanlan, of Red Bank, N.J., took up the cause to perpetuate the recognition of nurses in his state. Mr. Scanlan had this date listed in Chase’s Calendar of Annual Events. He promoted the celebration on his own.

1981 • ANA, along with various nursing organizations, rallied to support a resolution initiated by nurses in New Mexico, through their Congressman, Manuel Lujan, to have May 6, 1982, established as “National Recognition Day for Nurses.”

1982 • In February, the ANA Board of Directors formally acknowledged May 6, 1982 as “National Nurses Day.” The action affirmed a joint resolution of the United States Congress designating May 6 as “National Recognition Day for Nurses.”

1982 • President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation on March 25, proclaiming “National Recognition Day for Nurses” to be May 6, 1982.

1990 • The ANA Board of Directors expanded the recognition of nurses to a week-long celebration, declaring May 6 - 12, 1991, as National Nurses Week.

1993 • The ANA Board of Directors designated May 6 - 12 as permanent dates to observe National Nurses Week in 1994 and in all subsequent years.

1996 • The ANA initiated “National RN Recognition Day” on May 6, 1996, to honor the nation’s indispensable registered nurses for their tireless commitment 365 days a year. The ANA encourages its state and territorial nurses associations and other organizations to acknowledge May 6, 1996 as “National RN Recognition Day.”

1997 • The ANA Board of Directors, at the request of the National Student Nurses Association, designated May 8 as National Student Nurses Day.

Right: May 6, 2020 – from Roller Floral, Princeton, West Virginia, to all nurses. Thank you, Roller Floral!
Congratulations to Jason Counts, PCH Nutrition Services Department’s April 2020 Employee of the Month! Thank you, Jason, for your hard work and dedication!

Congratulations to Kerri Dyson, the PCH Laundry Department’s April 2020 Employee of the Month. Thank you, Kerri, for your hard work and for your commitment to excellence on the job!

Congratulations to Odella Williams, The Behavioral Health Pavilion’s April 2020 Nutrition Services Department Employee of the Month! Thank you, Odella, for your hard work and dependability on the job!
May 7, 2020 – CDC face covering graphic posted on the hospital’s Facebook page

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Your cloth face covering protects them. Their cloth face covering protects you.

CDC.gov/coronavirus

Princeton Community Hospital
122 Twelfth Street • Princeton, West Virginia 24740
304.487.7000 • www.pchonline.org
Are the Princeton Community Hospital ER and the Princeton Rescue Squad Safe During the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Our hospitals, clinics, and the Princeton Rescue Squad are safe, operational, and prepared to handle health emergencies as well as coronavirus cases. Princeton Community Hospital isolates suspected COVID-19 patients to keep our other patients and healthcare professionals safe. The same applies to the Princeton Rescue Squad. Extraordinary measures are taken before, during, and after the transport of every patient to ensure the safety of all involved.

We are confident we can effectively care for an infected patient with little risk to our other patients, and PCH and the Princeton Rescue Squad closely follow CDC protocols and work with local public health departments to ensure our facilities and vehicles are safe and ready when emergencies occur.

Please don’t delay your care in an emergency

During this time of unprecedented fear and uncertainty, many are apprehensive to visit a hospital and don’t want to overwhelm healthcare resources. However, you should not delay when an urgent need arises—we have the resources we need and are prepared and available to care for you and your family.

Although these are frightening times, fear should never create a barrier to receiving emergency medical services. If you or a loved one is experiencing a life-threatening medical emergency, please call 9-1-1 and ask to be taken to your nearest hospital.

When should you go to the emergency room?

Go to the emergency room for problems such as:

- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe bleeding or trauma
- Loss of consciousness
- Loss of or blurred vision
- High, uncontrolled fever
- Head injuries
- Burns
- Severe abdominal pain
- Broken bones

PCH and the Princeton Rescue Squad’s greatest priority during the COVID-19 pandemic is to provide the best possible care while protecting the health and wellbeing of all patients and employees.

For the safety of other patients and our staff, please wear your homemade mask to the hospital. Visitor restriction policy is still in effect at PCH.
May 13, 2020 – 130th AW flyover honoring West Virginia healthcare workers announced

Wednesday, May 13, 2020: The 130th AW flyovers will begin at 11:00 a.m. with approximately five to 10 minutes between each location and will conclude by 1:30 p.m., National Guard officials said. The C-130 will circle each location once before flying on to the next location, according to officials. Approximate times: PCH • 12:23 p.m. and BRMC • 12:27 p.m.

A 130th AW C-130H Hercules aircraft will fly over Charleston Area Medical Center Teays Valley; Cabell Huntington Hospital; Pleasant Valley Hospital in Point Pleasant; Jackson General Hospital in Ripley; Braxton County Memorial Hospital in Gassaway; Summersville Regional Medical Center; Greenbrier Valley Medical Center in Lewisburg; Summers County Appalachian Regional Hospital in Hinton; Princeton Community Hospital; Bluefield Regional Medical Center; Welch Community Hospital; Logan Regional Medical Center; Boone Memorial Hospital in Madison; Raleigh General Hospital in Beckley; Plateau Medical Center in Oak Hill; Montgomery General Hospital; Charleston Area Medical Center Memorial; Charleston Area Medical Center General; St. Francis Hospital in Charleston; Charleston Area Medical Center Women and Children’s Hospital; Thomas Memorial Hospital in South Charleston and Family Care in St. Albans.

The flyovers will serve as training for both 167th AW and 130th AW pilots and will be conducted at no additional cost to taxpayers, the news release said.

“It is an honor for the West Virginia Air National Guard to couple our vital training to maintain proficiency with providing a morale boost to those on the frontlines of fighting COVID-19 here in West Virginia and in our surrounding areas,” said Brig. Gen. Christopher “Mookie” Walker, commander of the West Virginia Air National Guard. “Our healthcare workers are invaluable members of our society and deserve all the praise and recognition for what they do every day. It is our hope that by seeing our aircraft in the sky, these men and women will know that they are not in this fight alone and that the West Virginia National Guard is proud to stand alongside them in our state’s response to this pandemic.”

Residents are asked to maintain social distancing guidelines during this event and should refrain from traveling to these hospitals and gathering in groups to view the flyovers, officials urged.

Military flyover pays tribute to medical personnel in Princeton, Bluefield, and Welch

By GREG JORDAN • Bluefield Daily Telegraph • May 14, 2020

PRINCETON — A huge West Virginia Air National Guard transport flying Wednesday above southern West Virginia’s hospitals delivered an important message to the doctors, nurses, hospital staff and first responders dealing with the ongoing pandemic: Your work and your sacrifices for the Mountain State’s residents are greatly appreciated.

An AW C-130H Hercules aircraft with the 130th Airlift Wing of the West Virginia Air National Guard overflew Princeton Community Hospital, Bluefield Regional Medical Center and Welch Community Hospital.
The C-130 left its base in Charleston and visited each hospital along its designated route with some of the flyovers being minutes apart by air. An AW C-17 Globemaster III transport plane with the 167th Airlift Wing in Martinsburg overflew northern West Virginia’s hospitals.

The flyovers were part of the Department of the Air Force’s Operation American Resolve, a nationwide salute designed to lift the morale of medical providers and first responders during the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. It was also a training exercise for the planes’ pilots, and was carried out with no extra cost to taxpayers, according to the West Virginia Air National Guard.

Medical personnel joined first responders outside Princeton Community Hospital when the C-130 roared overhead. Despite the rainy weather, it was a moving sight.

“We were standing outside waiting and hoping to see the Air National Guard come forward, and we were concerned because it was very cloudy at the time and it was also drizzling rain,” said Rose Morgan, vice president for patient care services at PCH. “Before you could even see it, we could hear the roar of the engines and it just filled everyone with anticipation.”

The C-130’s engines grew louder.

“Suddenly, it came over the horizon and into view, and it seemed to fly very low,” Morgan said. “It just really filled everyone with such a sense of pride and honor. We were clapping and people were cheering. I really felt honored that they would come out and recognize the frontline teams and all the work that goes into taking care of this pandemic. It felt like a wonderful salute and tribute to all of us on the frontlines of providing care and protecting the public. It truly was a wonderful honor.”

First responders who work closely with the local hospitals joined in watching the maneuvers honoring their work.
“It was pretty cool to see it and see the reaction of the healthcare workers,” said Mike Crowder, the Princeton Rescue Squad’s deputy chief of operations. “We wanted to stand in solidarity with the people at Princeton Community and at Bluefield Regional Medical Center. We’ve got great relations with them. It meant a great deal to us, too. It shows support for what we do out here.”

Rescue squad personnel risk exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) every time they answer a call and serve the public. They also face the risk of taking the virus home.

“We’ve got a few folks who aren’t staying with their family now,” Crowder said. “It’s been rough. It’s harder and harder every day.”

Randy Brown, the Princeton Rescue Squad’s chief of operations, was among the spectators appreciating the huge aircraft’s visit.

“There were a lot of spectators out in the parking lot. It meant a lot to them to see that they have not forgotten Princeton, W.Va.,” he said. “It was nice for them to do some flight maneuvers to show support for the healthcare community.”

Minutes later, the C-130 was over Bluefield Regional Medical Center. Personnel went outside to witness the aerial salute to their work and sacrifices.

“I think it’s really nice. I mean, it’s showing respect to the people that’s been here. It’s hard. You’re here every day hoping and praying you won’t catch anything and take it home to your family,” Sharon Shockey, a supervisor at BRMC, said as she fought back tears. “I think it is wonderful what they are doing, recognizing everybody,”

“I’m sorry, I get emotional,” she continued. “It’s hard. I haven’t been able to go and see my mom or anything like that. I stop by her house. She is sitting in her house, and I’m out on the porch. She lifts the window up and we talk through the windows.”

After visiting BRMC, the C-130’s pilots set course for Welch Community Hospital where more medical personnel and first responders went outside to see them fly overhead. Representatives of Welch Community were not immediately available Wednesday.

A general with the West Virginia Air National Guard said being able to boost morale at the region’s hospitals was gratifying.
“It is an honor for the West Virginia Air National Guard to couple our vital training to maintain proficiency with providing a morale boost to those on the frontlines of fighting COVID-19 here in West Virginia and in our surrounding areas,” said Brig. Gen. Christopher “Mookie” Walker, commander of the West Virginia Air National Guard. “Our healthcare workers are invaluable members of our society and deserve all the praise and recognition for what they do every day. It is our hope that by seeing our aircraft in the sky, these men and women will know that they are not in this fight alone and that the West Virginia National Guard is proud to stand alongside them in our state’s response to this pandemic.”
Since 1949, Mental Health America and our affiliates across the country have led the observance of Mental Health Month by reaching millions of people through the media, local events, and screenings.

While one in five people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime, everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health. In 2020, The Behavioral Health Pavilion can provide practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase resiliency regardless of the situations they are dealing with. That may be especially true during this time of COVID-19 and social distancing.

If you are suffering from severe anxiety or depression, please call our 24/7 Crisis Referral Line at 304.325.4681. You are not alone.
Saluting Our First Responders During National EMS Week

May 17-23, 2020 is the 46th annual National EMS Week. In 1974, President Gerald Ford authorized EMS Week to celebrate EMS practitioners and the important work they do in our nation's communities. NAEMT partners with the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) to lead annual EMS Week activities. Together, NAEMT and ACEP are working to ensure that the important contributions of EMS practitioners in safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of their communities are fully celebrated and recognized.

EMS Week brings together local communities and medical personnel to honor the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services of medicine’s front line. A special thank you to all EMS professionals in southern West Virginia and southwest Virginia, as they serve on the frontline of the COVID-19 crisis - planning, adapting, and responding every day to take care of our citizens and our communities.
May 26, 2020: The Behavioral Health Pavilion Security Officer Josh Hamby recently made arrangements for the purchase of new U.S. and West Virginia flags for the facility. In addition, Mr. Hamby organized a flag raising ceremony to install the new flags, held this afternoon at The Pavilion. The ceremony also commemorated those who lost their lives while serving in the U.S. military and honored our local first responders who have worked tirelessly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Princeton Rescue Squad provided the Color Guard. The Bluefield Fire Department assisted with the installation of the new flags and were in attendance, along with members of the Bluefield Police Department.

Mr. Bill Larrison, Administrator, The Behavioral Health Pavilion, offered words of sincere appreciation to all who served in the military as well as to EMS personnel who continue to serve on the front lines during the pandemic.

Regan Cochran, daughter of The Pavilion’s Outreach Director Connie Cochran, performed the Star Spangled Banner.

A special thanks to all who attended and participated in today’s poignant and moving ceremony.
Pavilion Administrator Bill Larrison with Security Officer Josh Hamby.
Pavilion Administrator Bill Larrison addressing the crowd.
Pavilion Administrator Bill Larrison addressing the crowd.
Pavilion Administrator Bill Larrison with Security Officer Josh Hamby.
The Princeton Rescue Squad Color Guard raising the flag.
Representatives from the Bluefield Police and Fire Departments.

Regan Cochran delivering a moving rendition of the National Anthem.

Connie Cochran presenting cookies and other treats to the Color Guard.

BDT’s Eric DiNovo with the Princeton Rescue Squad Color Guard.

Connie and Regan Cochran, the Color Guard, Josh Hamby, and Bill Larrison.
Congratulations to Steve Kitts, May 2020 PCH Nutrition Services Department Employee of the Month! Thank you, Steve, for your hard work and dependability!

Athens Medical Center provides exceptional healthcare for patients of all ages. Our warm, friendly, and newly renovated clinic features inviting waiting areas and improved exam rooms.

Call for an appointment today – 304.384.7325

MARK A. YOST, D.O.
NATASHA BARKER, PA-C

We are located in Athens adjacent to Concord University and only seven miles from Princeton.

Now providing walk-in and same-day appointments.

Dr. Yost is board certified by the American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians in Family Medicine and Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment. He is accepting new patients of all ages.

Congratulations to Steve Kitts, May 2020 PCH Nutrition Services Department Employee of the Month! Thank you, Steve, for your hard work and dependability!
Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Princeton Community Hospital is not allowing visitors to accompany surgical patients at this time. We understand that this is a stressful time for the families and friends that must wait. Generally, when you leave your family member/friend in our care, several hours may pass before your doctor will contact you. You will receive two phone calls – one from the surgeon when your family member/friend comes out of surgery, and a second call when the patient has been discharged and is ready to be picked up at the Parkview Center entrance.

If you feel that this time is longer than it should be and you become overly concerned, you may call the Surgical Center’s front desk at 304.487.7291 to speak to someone who can give you an update.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during these challenging times.
The Financial Impact of COVID-19

June 4, 2020: Princeton Community Hospital experienced the first financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-March when volumes in the surgical department were dramatically reduced due to the executive order to stop elective and non-emergency surgeries and to limit outpatient procedures.

According to PCH Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey E. Lilley, in mid-March and into early-April revenue losses mounted as therapies and rehab were scaled back significantly. The hospital was facing a major reduction in revenue through this time due to the COVID-19 impact.

Many steps were taken by PCH to mitigate those losses; chief among them was the reduction of employee hours. Some salary-exempt staff had their hours temporarily reduced from 40 to 32 hours per week, some employees were furloughed due to the closure of certain services, and some salary-exempt staff volunteered to take unpaid leave.

All employees, including managers and Executive Team members, were asked to take time off using either PTO (personal time off) or unpaid leave. Those who could take off one day per week or one day per pay period did so.

The implementation of telemedicine at all Mercer Medical Group clinics and The Behavioral Health Pavilion’s outpatient facility enabled the clinics to reduce staff while maintaining safe patient appointments via telephone or computer. These steps reflected a 20% reduction in productive hours at its peak.

PCH Chief Financial Officer Frank Sinicrope said, “Although volumes dropped prior, on March 23, we stopped elective surgeries. The cessation of elective surgeries was mandated by the state on March 26. The hospital experienced a 39% reduction in gross revenue to budget at the end of April with an estimated shortfall in net revenue of $4.8 million. Although we received a stimulus check from the federal government’s Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, it fell short of making us whole. We are hopeful that additional stimulus money is coming, but that is uncertain at this time.”

Fifteen to twenty percent of PCH employees have applied for unemployment, which indicates they had some degree of reduced earnings that would qualify them. PTO hours taken have doubled since mid-March.

PCH Director of Human Resources Heather Poff said, “Our employees have worked together to make the best of this situation and ensure that our patients are well taken care of while taking steps to mitigate the cost of the COVID pandemic.”

With the resumption of elective surgeries and other outpatient procedures on April 28, and with the sacrifices made by employees over the past two months, the hospital hopes to recover from the financial losses in a relatively short period of time.
PCH Welcomes New Pavilion Administrator Bill Larrison

By Connie Cochran, Outreach Director, The Pavilion

Born and raised in Fairmont, West Virginia, Bill Larrison began a 20-year career with the United States Navy in 1967. Bill worked as an electronics technician in the Navy until 1973, at which point he received training as a counselor and served in this capacity until retiring as a Senior Chief Navy Counselor in 1987.

“As a Navy counselor, I provided career, educational, and substance abuse counseling,” Bill remarked. “I stood Officer of the Deck, overseeing command of the vessel, while in port and underway. Among other places, I was Officer of the Deck off the coast of Iran during the hostage crisis. I provided supportive counseling to crew members while in ‘war time’ steaming. We were there during the failed rescue attempt on April 24, 1980.”

While in the Navy, Bill obtained his undergraduate degree in Education from Southern Illinois University and graduate degree in Industrial Organizational Psychology from Webster University. As for his decision to retire from the Navy, Bill stated, “I left after 20 years instead of 30 because I wanted to pursue a civilian career doing exactly what I am doing now. I’ve been in this field (mental health) since 1973, and June of this year will be 47 years.”

Bill has 25 years of experience in behavioral health administration, having successfully held several leadership roles with various inpatient and outpatient psychiatric programs throughout the years. Prior to obtaining the Interim Director position at The Behavioral Health Pavilion of the Virginias in March 2020, Bill was overseeing an inpatient psychiatric program in Louisiana. When asked how it felt to have the opportunity to return to West Virginia, Bill said, “I really feel like I’ve returned home. After I flew in from Louisiana and was driving from Roanoke, I saw these mountains and I immediately felt recharged and at home. It is a culture that I understand because I grew up here.”

Bill was the son of a coal miner in Fairmont, West Virginia. At age two, he lost his father, and 25 years later, he lost his stepfather – both to mine cave-ins.

Bill assumed the role of Interim Director at The Pavilion just weeks ahead of the pandemic and since that time has demonstrated the ability to effectively lead during challenging times. As the
newly appointed Administrator, Bill had this to say about the impact that COVID-19 is likely to have on mental health and mental health care, “We are going to see a large segment of people who are going to need mental healthcare for depression and other conditions, and more and more cases of PTSD. Some folks are so fearful that they are having trouble sleeping and showing early signs of PTSD. For some (essential workers) it has been like a warzone.”

Having worked so closely with The Pavilion staff for the past couple of months, Bill shared, “I feel very fortunate to be able to come to The Pavilion. Let me tell you, the department directors are some of the best that I have worked with and I’ve done this a long time and I’ve worked with some great people. And the staff as well – I’ve got to see them at a very stressful time during a pandemic, and I am just awestruck every day at the professionalism here.”

Bill recalled one particularly stressful day at The Pavilion in which tensions were running high, “I saw them (staff) set their own anxiety aside and they automatically did what they needed to do to take care of things. I have seen this before in the Navy. They put others before themselves and did what they needed to do. It made an impression on me and it told me a lot about them. There is no doubt that these staff will be there to take care of the people in our community when they need it.”

Bill and his wife Kathy share a home in Dunn, North Carolina, with their beloved “Baby Bear,” a four-year-old poodle. Their daughter Savannah is a graduate student at the University of North Carolina, where she is pursuing a degree in clinical social work.

KN-95 Masks Donated by Rotary

June 4, 2020: KN-95 masks were donated today to Princeton Community Hospital on behalf of Disaster Aid USA, a Rotary Club Project.

PCH Vice President of Patient Care Services Rose Morgan (left) accepted the donation from local Rotary Club member Jim Ferguson.

Ms. Morgan expressed the hospital’s deep appreciation for the donation and she informed Mr. Ferguson that the masks would be put to immediate use.
June 10, 2020 – New visitation regulations announced on the hospital’s Facebook page

Princeton Community Hospital
Visitor Regulations

The situation surrounding COVID-19 continues to evolve and changes occur frequently. We continue to closely monitor the prevalence of COVID-19 in our community and follow state and federal guidance as we adapt our operations to safely care for and support our patients. During this time, the health and safety of our patients and workforce remain a top priority. Our goal is to keep a safe environment for all. However, we understand the importance visitors play in overall patient progress and healing. As current projections continue to indicate a lower than expected volume of COVID-19 in our region, effective June 10, 2020, we are easing our visitor policy as follows:

• PCH Inpatients will be allowed to have 1 visitor at a time between the hours of 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m.
• Visitors must be 18 years or older.
• Visitors must be well – no fever, cough, or signs or symptoms of infection or illness.
• Visitors will be required to bring their own mask and wear it at all times while in the facility.
• Visitors will be screened upon entry. Those who do not pass screening will be asked to reschedule their visit until they are symptom-free.
• Visitors are NOT allowed for patients who are under observation for or test positive for COVID-19.
• All visitors must remain in the patient room except to enter and exit the hospital.
• Emergency Department patients may have 1 person accompany them into the facility/room who must remain in the room with the patient during his/her ER visit.
• Individuals seeking medical imaging, lab work, or other outpatient services will not be allowed to have a visitor.
• Visitors will not be allowed for surgical and day surgery patients.
• All other visitors will be requested to wait in the vehicle.
• Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for individuals who require an essential care giver (i.e. parent, guardian, other), for end of life care, or an exception determined by the patient’s plan of care.
• Outpatient Oncology patients are at high risk due to being immunocompromised. Therefore, visitation is not allowed unless needed for the care of the patient while receiving treatment as determined by the charge nurse of the unit.
• Inpatient departments (Oncology/Women’s Center) may have additional department specific regulations.
June 11, 2020 – Please BYOM – Bring Your Own Mask!

Please BYOM – Bring Your Own Mask!

We must conserve our masks for our healthcare providers. If you are coming to the hospital as a visitor; or if you are a patient coming to PCH for surgery, medical imaging, cardiopulmonary rehab, physical therapy, ENT, an ER visit, or any other testing or procedure, we ask that you bring your own mask. Homemade cloth masks are sufficient.

Everyone inside Princeton Community Hospital must wear a mask for their own protection and for the safety of others. Thank you for your cooperation. Masks are required for everyone – no exceptions.

PRINCETON Community Hospital
122 Twelfth Street • P.O. Box 1369
Princeton, WV 24740 • 304.487.7000
www.pchonline.org
How to Wear a Cloth Mask

**Do’s**

- Wash your hands before putting on the mask and after touching or removing it.
- Wear a mask that fits snugly against your face.
- Have your mask cover your mouth, nose and chin.
- Wash your mask at least once a day.
- Avoid touching your mask while wearing it.

**Don’ts**

- Don’t wear the mask below your nose or leave your chin uncovered.
- Don’t rest your mask under your chin.
- Don’t take off the mask to speak with someone.
- Don’t wear a mask that is damaged.
- Don’t place a mask on children under age 2.

Congratulations to Nola Blankenship, May 2020 PCH Laundry Department Employee of the Month! Thank you, Nola, for your hard work and commitment!
Jennifer Wyatt Discharged After 48-Days

June 16, 2020: It is with the greatest joy that we announce Jennifer Wyatt's full recovery from COVID-19 and her discharge today after a 48-day hospital stay. We thank Mrs. Wyatt and her family for the privilege of caring for her, and we thank the community for their constant support of prayers and well wishes during her illness.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the many faithful doctors, nurses, and support staff who so skillfully cared for Mrs. Wyatt during her long and sometimes perilous journey.

We wish Mrs. Wyatt great health and happiness as she resumes her normal life. (Photographs published with the permission of Jennifer Wyatt.)
Outpouring of Community Support During the Pandemic

From the earliest days of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a tremendous outpouring of love and support from the community. The hospital has received numerous donations in the form of equipment, supplies, and food. Below is a list of the generous donors:

American Electric Power  
*PPE Kits*

Black Steel Arms  
*Customized Thermal Cups for Respiratory Therapy*

Bluefield State College Nursing Program  
*Masks, Mask Filters, Goggles, Gloves, Isolation Gowns, and Isolation Kits*

BRMC  
*Masks, Safety Goggles, Face Shields*

Cloud’s Clothing  
*Scrubs*

Concord University  
*N-95 Masks*

Con-Weld Industries  
*Particulate Respirators and N-95 Masks*

CTC Construction  
*N-95 Masks*

Disaster Aid USA/ Princeton Rotary Club  
*Masks*

Dr. Kevin Martin  
*Plastic Gowns*

Eastern Door & Glass  
*Acrylic Intubation Boxes*

Glenwood Park  
*Goggles*

Home Depot Pro Institutional  
*N-95 Masks*

Komatsu Mining Corp.  
*N-95 Masks*

Lowe’s of Princeton  
*Dust Masks, Gloves, and Numerous Cleaning Supplies*

Mercer Schools  
*Masks, Disinfectant Wipes, and Gloves*

Nellie Cottle/Peterstown Teachers  
*Ear Savers - Mask Extenders*

Preservati Family  
*Shoe Covers*

Roller Floral  
*Flowers for Nurses Week*

Salon Sublime  
*Lotion*

Sara Ballard  
*S-Hooks for ISO Masks*

Skyway Outdoor  
*Face Shields for PCH and The Pavilion*

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources Center for Threat Preparedness  
*Loan of Ventilator*

West Virginia State Police – Princeton Detachment  
*N-95 masks, Tychem Suits, Suit Tape, Coveralls, and Gloves*

**Food Donations:**

Little Caesars  
*Donated 1,120 pizzas. 140 pizzas per week for eight weeks (20 pizzas per day, seven days a week). These were distributed to all shifts and all departments over the eight-week period.*

Beef Jerky Outlet  

Blue Spoon Café  

Chick-fil-A  

Domino’s  

Mike and Sandy Connolly  
*Shari Berry cookie basket*

Pita Pit  
*with Lifeline Church*

Totally Glazed  
*with First Community Bank*
Due to a sharp increase in the number of COVID-19 positive patients in Mercer County, PCH has made the very difficult decision to implement a **NO VISITOR** policy for the safety of our patients and workforce, effective June 26, 2020. No one will be permitted to be with a patient except for the following:

- One essential caregiver will be permitted for pediatric patients.
- One essential caregiver will be permitted for labor and delivery patients.
- One essential caregiver will be permitted for emergency department patients if the patient is not able to participate in their care.

If an essential caregiver is needed for assistance in patient care (determined by the healthcare team), only one person will be permitted to accompany the patient.

**End of life care will be authorized on a case-by-case basis.**

Authorized persons will be identified with an armband provided to them at the entrance screening or by the healthcare team.

**Additional visitors will not be permitted in the lobby or waiting areas. Restricted points of entry are in place with screening protocol.**
The Community Has Donated Hundreds of Homemade Masks

When the call went out for the donation of homemade masks for PCH, BRMC, and The Pavilion, employees and community members responded quickly and generously with hundreds of masks that were immediately put to use. Thank you to everyone who made and contributed cloth masks!

Below is a partial list of those who made the majority of cloth masks.

- Hannah Catron
- Beth Lilley
- Dolly Maddy
- Pam Perdue
- Helen Ryan
- Cindy Vest
- Samvat Yadav

Beth Lilley began making cloth masks early in the pandemic. She and her sewing friends have donated hundreds of masks over the past four months.
May 29, 2020: When the Princeton Community Hospital Board of Directors approved the acquisition of Bluefield Regional Medical Center (BRMC) and its ancillary services on October 1, 2019, it was with the confidence and hope of stabilizing BRMC’s finances and enhancing their service lines. To that end and in order to facilitate a more seamless transition, Princeton Community Hospital (PCH) retained substantially all employees in good standing including the entire senior administrative staff. Prior to the acquisition, PCH commissioned due diligence that evaluated the viability of BRMC and assisted with the development of a strategic plan for strengthening the facility.

Over the past several months, PCH has endeavored to accomplish a successful acquisition. Unfortunately, numerous market factors coupled with the unexpected and dramatic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, contributed to the further deterioration of BRMC’s financial situation. In addition to declining patient volume and services, most of the patients in our service area are covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or PEIA. Reimbursement from these sources is consistently at a rate far less than the actual cost of caring for the patient.

Because of significant financial losses, the PCH Board of Directors made the decision to permanently close BRMC’s inpatient and ancillary services by July 30, 2020. PCH leadership is working with state and federal authorities to open a provider-based emergency department on the BRMC campus. PCH is working through the details and regulations to open this department as soon as possible, along with the necessary ancillary services to support its function, including lab and x-ray. The associated physician practices will continue to operate through BRMC.

The closure will impact 340 employees at BRMC. PCH has open positions in different areas of the hospital and encourages displaced workers to apply for positions for which they are qualified. The BRMC Human Resources Department will assist all employees with application for unemployment benefits and job placement in other markets.

PCH Board President Rusty Sarver said, “I am deeply saddened by this announcement and I regret that this is the outcome of the acquisition. BRMC has been a pillar of the community for nearly 50 years. It provided quality healthcare and stable employment for thousands over the decades. Many of the current dedicated employees have been with the hospital for 20, 30, and 40 years. Regrettably, with the volatility of today’s healthcare environment, our decreasing population, and reductions in federal funding and reimbursements from government and commercial insurers, there are no other viable options.”
PCH will continue to provide inpatient and emergency services to Mercer County and the surrounding areas. BRMC leadership will ensure Regional Command and all EMS personnel throughout the county are notified of any changes in the status of the BRMC emergency department. As a trauma center, PCH’s Emergency Department has the personnel and capacity to accommodate the additional workload that could be a result of these changes.

Current and past BRMC patients may continue to access their medical records and online bill pay through BRMC’s website. The BRMC Patient Portal and online bill pay will remain functional for the next six months. After six months, they will remain functional on PCH’s website.

PCH CEO Jeffrey E. Lilley stated, “Rural hospitals throughout the United States have struggled in recent years to remain open. It was our hope to change that outcome for BRMC. In the end, the board had to take steps to mitigate the losses and ensure the viability of healthcare in our region.”

The Board of Directors and administration desire to keep the emergency department with lab and x-ray support operational at BRMC and are working with appropriate agencies in this effort. As the initiative for emergency services progresses, the community will be kept informed.

Bluefield Mayor Ron Martin said, “We are working closely with PCH leadership as they move forward to develop plans for the future of BRMC. Rural hospitals struggle under the weight of reimbursement for services that simply do not cover the cost of care. Even before COVID-19, hospitals like BRMC operated on extremely thin margins, and struggled to stay afloat. Elective medical procedures were a key source of revenue, but those were halted under COVID-19 at both PCH and BRMC, putting the hospitals in an extremely difficult financial position. While we are saddened by this decision and by the loss of BRMC as a full-service hospital, we are committed to working with PCH leadership and our state and federal elected officials to find a productive use for that facility to serve the health care needs of our region.”
Fireworks are often used to mark special events and holidays. The only safe way to view fireworks is to attend a professional show. With many professional firework shows being canceled this year, it is important to know that fireworks are not safe in the hands of consumers. Fireworks cause thousands of injuries each year.

A few ideas to get into the patriotic spirit, without fireworks:

1. Use glow sticks, they glow in the dark and are a safe alternative to a sparkler. Fun for all ages.
2. Loud and proud. Noise makers are sure to make a statement. They can be found at local party supply stores or make your own.
3. Outdoor movie night. Set up a screen and projector. Don’t forget the bug spray!
4. Red, white and blue silly string…fun for all ages.
5. Make a patriotic craft with the family.
6. Throw a birthday party for the USA, and don’t forget the cake.

FACTS

- More than 19,500 reported fires are started by fireworks annually.
- Burns account for 44% of the 9,100 injuries treated in emergency rooms seen in the month around July 4.
- Half of the fireworks injuries seen at emergency rooms were extremities: hand, finger, or leg. One-third were to the eye or other parts of the head.
- Children ages 10–14 had the highest rate of fireworks injury, with more than one-third (36%) of the victims of fireworks injuries under age 15.
- Sparklers account for roughly one-quarter of emergency room fireworks injuries.


How HOT does a sparkler burn?

- 1200 °F - Sparklers
- 1100 °F
- 1000 °F
- 900 °F - Glass melts at 900 °F
- 800 °F
- 700 °F
- 600 °F - Wood burns at 575 °F
- 500 °F
- 400 °F
- 300 °F - Cakes bake at 350 °F
- 200 °F
- 100 °F
- 0 °F - Water boils at 212 °F