



# REGIONAL REVIEW

Volume 11, Issue 4

Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson  
Metropolitan Planning Commission

Fall 2010

## CROSS, JACKSON, VARGO AND COCHRAN HONORED AT 12TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

Once a year BHJ has the privilege of recognizing individuals from the tri-county region who have given unselfishly of themselves and made a difference. Dr. John Brown, BHJ executive director, says, "In each honoree, there is a large dose of George Bailey, as played by Jimmy Stewart, in Frank Capra's movie *It's a Wonderful Life*. Without their presence, we would be a lesser region."

At the 12th Annual Awards Dinner held on September 16 at the EM Media Center in Steubenville, OH, four such individuals were honored.

**David B. Cross** is this year's recipient of the Public Service Award.

He worked as a laborer at both Weirton Steel and Wheeling-Pitt. He has been a teacher, a speech pathologist and an adjunct instructor in speech. He has been a practicing attorney in Brooke County since 1978, city solicitor for Wellsburg, Brooke County assistant prosecuting attorney and since 1981 prosecuting attorney.



There are numerous programs he has been instrumental in establishing in the state of West Virginia. The Brooke County Victims Assistance Program was the first program of its kind in the State. It was later expanded to include Ohio and Hancock counties and is now known as the Hancock Brooke Ohio Victim Assistance Program. He helped establish the first Community Service Program for criminal defendants to work for charitable organizations and county entities in the Judicial First Circuit. Other programs include forming and supervising an alternative sentencing program for DUI offenders which substituted substance abuse evaluation, treatment and community

service as an alternative to incarceration. He worked in establishing and operating the first Drug Court Program and Mental Health Program in the state of West Virginia.

He has worked with local law enforcement in an undercover drug investigation enterprise in cooperation with the FBI which resulted in forty successful felony convictions of drug dealers in Brooke County during the 1980's.

He has served as voluntary legal counsel for the Brooke County Veterans Memorial Foundation in the project to establish a Veterans Memorial Site in Brooke County. He is one of the founding members of the Brooke County Education Foundation, with membership on the Board of Directors from inception, to present efforts to establish scholarships for post-high school education for Brooke High School Students.

**Anita Jackson**, a lifetime resident of Jefferson County received the Special Recognition Award. Truly deserving, she has a strong commitment to "worthwhile causes" and puts her heart and soul into organizations and events that will benefit mankind, and make someone have a better and more productive lifestyle.

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Publication of this newsletter is made possible with assistance from the Federal Highway Administration, the Ohio and West Virginia Departments of Transportation, the West Virginia Development Office, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the U.S. Economic Development Administration and BHJ member governments.

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**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**I**s anyone out there?

In the case of BHJ's message to our customers, we know you're out there, and we know we have a responsibility to communicate our regional message. However, our customers obtain their news in an increasingly expanding way.

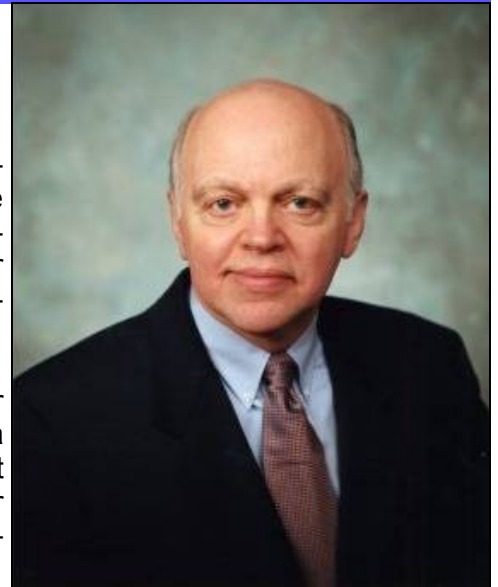
In 2000, BHJ jumped into the newsletter world. We conscientiously prepared a document and "snail-mailed" the document to 250+ customers. In 2002, to deliver our message faster and at a lower cost, we e-mailed the newsletter.

In 2002, we joined the World Wide Web and created a web site. We rapidly learned the consequence of an out of date web site and created "bi-weekly" staff web update meetings.

Regularly, our customers call and constructively illustrate a demand to expand our communication approach. This month, after considerable discussion and review, we joined Face book and created short news flashes.

So, is anyone out there? You're clearly out there. You may still get your information the "good old fashion way." But, we know 90% of all households own a personal computer, and 80% of all households have Internet access. Among households with Internet access, 50% had high speed Internet at home. The "Digital Divide" has arrived at our doorstep.

John C. Brown, AICP  
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## REGIONAL BRIDGE UPDATE: WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?



*From left to right clockwise. The Ft. Steuben Bridge closed in January 2009 and scheduled for demolition in winter 2011; the Market St. Bridge deck under renovation and expected to open in November 2010; and the Ohio Route 7/University Boulevard intersection at the Veterans Bridge.*

Our regional population of 130,000 depends upon our bridge system to minimize delay, provide job access and sustain road safety. At the direction of the BHJ Commission and our federal-state transportation partners, BHJ is working to assure these promises through a continuing program.

Ft. Steuben Bridge. Closed in January 2009, the demolition of the Ft. Steuben Bridge has been deferred until winter 2011.

Veterans Bridge. With 42,000 average daily trips, the Veterans Bridge is the workhorse for our regional bridge system. Opened in 1991, the Bridge in 2009-2010 undertook approximately \$4 million in repairs. In early 2011, Stilson Engineering Consultants will complete a preliminary design to resolve access delay near the west bank. Design and construction for these improvements are estimated to range between \$20 and \$35 million.

Market Street Bridge. In 2009, the Market Street Bridge was closed for repairs and painting. \$14.5 million in ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) funds have been obligated to this renovation. The bridge will reopen November 12. To complete a second phase, the Bridge will close again on March 14, 2011. The estimated reopening for the second phase is October 28, 2011. These improvements are expected to sustain the Market Street Bridge for another ten years.

New Ohio River Bridge Crossing between Wellsburg and Brilliant. Substantiated through a "Need and Purpose" analysis in 2000 and a "Preferred Bridge Corridor" study in 2003, a new Ohio River Bridge crossing has emergency access, safety and economic development implications.

A Bridge Site and Environmental Assessment was initiated in 2008. A Navigational Restriction Study to evaluate necessary bridge length was initiated in September 2010. A series of public meetings to review a preferred bridge site is expected in early to mid-2011. Financial commitments include an \$18 million allocation from US Senators Byrd and Rockefeller in 2005 and a \$2 million allocation from Ohio's Transportation Review Advisory Committee (TRAC) in 2009. In late September, BHJ requested an additional \$1.080 million at the Ohio TRAC review meeting in Akron. 3

## 12TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER



She has worked for Franciscan University of Steubenville for 35 years and has held many positions, currently, as Director of Community Relations. Her position affords her an opportunity to reach into the community and work with a number of agencies that help persons in need. She is one of the original board members for the Jefferson County Fourth Street Health Center; President Elect for the Steu-

benville Kiwanis Club; Charter Member of the Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors' Club; member of the Trinity Health System Heather Twig for approximately 10 years; board member of the United Way of Jefferson County and Chair for the Jefferson Society-leadership givers, and chair of "Jazz in the Garden," and "Day of Caring."

She is listed in the Library of Congress in the "Outstanding Women of America" section. She is a member of the Martin Luther King Association and authored a scholarship at Franciscan University for the Association.

She has been the Coordinator for the Jefferson County National Day of Prayer Celebration for 18 years. She is an active member of the Adena United Methodist Church and has held district and conference level positions for the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The Hancock County Commission chose well when they nominated **George B. Vargo** of Weirton for the Brooke-Hancock-Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission's 2010 Volunteer Award.

Both professionally and personally, George has made a positive impact in the community. He is a Certified Licensed Counselor (LPC) in the State of West Virginia and a Certified Public Housing Manager. Since 1997 he has been the Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the City of Weirton.

He has a passion for the youth. From 1974 until 1995 he was the director of Big Brothers/Big Sisters. He has continued in that capacity as the director of the Boys and Girls Club of Weirton since 1995 until the present. In addition, he has been the boys basketball coach for Weirton Madonna since 1995.

He is vice-president of Greenbriar Manor serving on the Board of Directors. He is the secretary/treasurer for the West Virginia Area Council for the Boys and Girls Club of West Virginia.

His hard work and dedication have not gone unnoticed. Over the years, he has received numerous awards and honors including the City of Weirton Mayor's Award as well

as the West Virginia Northern Community College Citizenship Award. He received the Hancock County Workshop Recognition of Outstanding Service Award and the Boys & Girls Club of American West Virginia State Leadership Award. On three separate occasions he was selected to coach the OVAC West Virginia boys All-Stars Basketball Game.

The final award of the evening, the Lifetime Achievement Award, was presented to Robert Cochrun of Wintersville, OH. Since January 1, 1974, **Robert Cochrun** has been serving the Village of Wintersville with a spirit of determination and dedication.

From 1974 until 1995 he served as a councilman. He was elected to the office of mayor for two terms from 1996 until 2004. He was re-elected to Council in 2006 and has served continuously.

During his 34 years in office, he has contributed much to help, improve and develop the Village. His accomplishments throughout the years are too numerous to mention them all. A brief highlight of issues he supported as a councilman and/or established as mayor include the first cable TV service, the TIFF District for the Comcast building and the move to the new Village Municipal Complex located on Grove Street. He has been supportive in the widening of U.S. Route 22, Main Street and State Route 43 at the US 22 intersection as well as the widening of and addition of sidewalks to Fernwood Road.



## 12TH ANNUAL AWARDS DINNER

come about due to his efforts—Sam's Way, Meridian Green and Cara Place. In addition, the Industrial Complex on Kragle Road was built with Bob's support.

He has been instrumental in establishing the first Village sanitation department and the first free summer pick up for large items. He helped the Village get their first grant for the Juvenile Officer for the Police Department. He aided in the selection of Magistrate for the Wintersville Magistrate Court. A recycling truck was purchased with his efforts to obtain a Recycling Grant.

He belongs to and is active in many organizations. He is a member of the Sigma Beta Phi Fraternity. He has been a member of Blessed Sacrament Church for over 40 years and belongs to the Blessed Sacrament Men's Club.

In addition, he holds membership in the Democratic Party Executive Committee and Ohio Municipal League. Bob is a former member of the Ohio Mayor's Association and a former board member of the Jefferson County Community Action Council.

Congratulations to the award recipients for 2010!

This year's dinner was supported financially by Hancock County Savings, Huntington Bank, Main Street Bank, PNC, United Bank and WesBanco. Several area businesses provided door prizes—Baker Boys, Dee Jay's BBQ & Grill, Froggy Radio, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Naples Spaghetti House, PeeDees' Brunch & Bar and Yorgo's Gyros-Potatoes. Thanks to everyone who contributed to making the evening a success.

Award winners David Cross, Bob Cochrun & George Vargo



Dr. Brown, Tracee Joltes and Andrea Bell enjoy a conversation



Enjoying the wine and cheese social hour



BHO Staff ready for the event.

## BHJ STAFF PARTICIPATES IN “DAY OF CARING”

The Jefferson County United Way annual “Day of Caring.” was held on Friday, September 24. This year several BHJ staff members joined with over 100 other volunteers who painted, cleaned, repaired, etc. at local non-profit organizations throughout Jefferson County. Joan Cresap (finance manager), Barb Zimnox (community development specialist) and Dave Snelting (transportation engineer) spent the day at Oakland Cemetery in Mingo Junction, OH pulling weeds, cutting grass and trimming hedges. Shawn Price, senior technology engineer, was at Indian Creek High School in Wintersville creating new flower beds around the portable classroom units.

Shawn Price participates in the “Day of Caring” activities.



## BHJ FREIGHT STUDY EXPECTED IN DECEMBER

In June, BHJ announced an initiative to complete a regional freight study for the three-county region. To be completed by December, the BHJ Study follows numerous regional efforts to establish a long-term footprint for freight movement in the region.



While driven by an evaluation of regional needs (i.e., volumes, commodities, transportation modes and top trading partners), the Study is expected to facilitate key investments and assure the competitiveness of the region.

In September and October, Cambridge Systematics, Inc., the Study consultant and a recognized leader in the field of intermodal freight transportation, through one-on-one meetings, a roundtable and an online survey solicited input on system needs, deficiencies, policies and operation.

BHJ is not the first region to evaluate their unique freight profile. While varying geographically and driven by different economic markets, the State of Ohio, Cincinnati, Columbus and the State of West Virginia have undertaken freight studies. The push to complete these foundation studies is “By the year 2025, U.S. domestic freight tonnage is anticipated to double, while international freight tonnage will nearly triple. This will place unprecedented demands on our nation’s freight infrastructure – our highways, railroads and rail terminals, airports, sea-ports, and border crossings.” (US Department of Transportation. *Freight Facts and Figures 2009*.)

To follow progress on the BHJ Freight Study, access the BHJ web site [www.bhjmpc.org](http://www.bhjmpc.org).

## FISCAL YEAR 2010 — A YEAR FOR PARTNERSHIP!

June 30 marked the end of BHJ's fiscal year, and at the September 16 Technical Advisory Committee and Full Commission meetings, a resolution and summary of the year's transportation activities was presented to the members for adoption.

As explained by BHJ Transportation Study Director, Mike Paprocki, BHJ's primary tasks as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Weirton-Steubenville, WV-OH Urbanized Area are to implement the locally developed goals and strategies adopted by its Transportation Study Policy Committee and achieve the metropolitan planning factors established by public law. Mr. Paprocki says, "Being committed to developing public and private partnerships, as well as fostering innovative ideas and strategies that aim to increase the efficient use of the region's intermodal transportation network, the BHJ MPO is in the forefront of a variety of transportation planning activities."

For an example, BHJ joined with the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, the Jefferson Soil & Water Conservation District, Crossroads RC&D and the National Park Service to develop a Jefferson County Trails and Greenways Plan. Creating public interest for this project began with distributing a handout flyer explaining the plan's purpose and scope, using GIS mapping to define possible on-road routes for trails and pedestrian walkways and hosting a series of six public meetings in March.

As illustrated by the Pioneer Trail in Brooke County, trail benefits are far reaching especially given the minimal public investment.

Another successful partnership is the Regional Access Mobility Partnership (RAMP) which is comprised of a group of public transit, human service and privately-owned transportation providers in Brooke, Hancock and Jefferson counties. Several recommendations as proposed by Wilbur Smith Associates who prepared a *Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan*, have been initiated and/or completed thus far.

One goal of RAMP is to streamline the various transportation services into a synchronized network that will offer a coordinated and efficient transportation service without duplication of services. To that end, the Steel Valley Regional Transit Authority and the Weirton Transit Corporation on behalf of RAMP jointly contracted with TransSched of Toronto, Ontario, Canada to implement TransView, a fixed-route and paratransit scheduling and reporting soft-

ware system. The software is expected to be in use in the very near future.

Another goal for RAMP that has come to pass is the expansion of SVRTA services to the Village of Wintersville. After months of preparation and planning, bus service became available to Village residents in August. For the first year, there is absolutely no cost to riders. Sixty people took advantage of the service on the first day.

The overall plan is to fund the service to Wintersville as a 100% federally funded program under Federal Highway's Congestion Management Air Quality program as a three-year demonstration project. Neither SVRTA nor the Village is required to provide local matching funds to operate the first three years of the transit service. Wintersville administration has agreed to place a levy issue the ballot possibly as soon as November 2011 to continue funding the transit service beyond the three-year demonstration period.

In addition, there will be no fees charged for any Steel Valley service until August 2011. Ridership, as a result, is up 15-20%.

Steel Valley Regional Transit is also considering a second proposed expansion. Robinson Towne Center in Allegheny County, PA is an area with many job opportunities, but some local commuters have had to turn down a job offer because of their lack of transportation. If service can be expanded to that area, more workers from this area will be able to take advantage of that job market.



Members of RAMP (l-r) Frank Bovina (Steel Valley Regional Transit Authority); Bob Herceg (Checker Transportation); Jeff DeStefano (CHANGE, Inc.); Beck Stout (Weirton Transit Corporation); Judy Owings (Prime Time and Karen D'Anniballe (Ambulance Service)

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## FALL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY FALL!

<b>November 1</b>	<b>Executive Committee</b>	<b>Noon</b>
<b>November 11</b>	<b>Veterans Day—Office Closed</b>	
<b>November 17</b>	<b>Technical Advisory Committee Full Commission</b>	<b>10:30 Noon</b>
<b>November 25-26</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday—Office Closed</b>	
<b>December 6</b>	<b>Executive Committee</b>	<b>Noon</b>



## Related Web Sites

**Appalachian Regional Commission**  
[www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov)

**Brooke County Economic Development Authority**  
[www.brookewv.org](http://www.brookewv.org)

**Brooke Pioneer Trail Assoc. Inc**  
[www.brookepioneertrail.org](http://www.brookepioneertrail.org)

**Business Development Corporation of the  
Northern Panhandle**  
[www.bhbdc.org](http://www.bhbdc.org)

**CHANGE, Inc.**  
[www.changeinc.org](http://www.changeinc.org)

**City of Steubenville**  
[www.cityofsteubenville.us](http://www.cityofsteubenville.us)

**Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce**  
[www.jeffersoncountychamber.com](http://www.jeffersoncountychamber.com)

**Ohio Department of Transportation**  
[www.dot.state.oh.us](http://www.dot.state.oh.us)

**Progress Alliance**  
[www.progressalliance.com](http://www.progressalliance.com)

**State of Ohio Government Information**  
[Www.ohio.gov](http://Www.ohio.gov)

**State of West Virginia Government Info.**  
[www.wv.gov](http://www.wv.gov)

**Top of WV Convention and Visitors Bureau**  
[www.topofwv.com](http://www.topofwv.com)

**U.S. Census Bureau**  
[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

**U.S. Department of Transportation**  
[www.dot.gov](http://www.dot.gov)

**U.S. Economic Development Administration**  
[www.commerce.gov](http://www.commerce.gov)

**Village of Wintersville**  
[www.wintersville.net](http://www.wintersville.net)

**Weirton Chamber of Commerce**  
[www.weirtonchamber.com](http://www.weirtonchamber.com)

**West Virginia Department of Transportation**  
[www.transportation.wv.gov](http://www.transportation.wv.gov)

**West Virginia Development Office**  
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