



Marshall men bring it at UAB
Herd pulled away early in the second half to seal an 81-74 win
Sports / 1B

Happy Valentine's Day
30 23
Weather / 16A



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Big Green hopes 500 attend banquet
With four Marshall greats returning for their induction into Marshall's Athletic Hall of Fame, this year's Big Green Foundation has a goal of filling at least 500 seats for the 2010 Big Green Dinner.
Sports / 1B

Head indoors for some winter attractions
Before you go see "Avatar" for the 12th time or sprain a wrist with that 17th hour of Wii Bowling, check out our list of the area's museum exhibits now up throughout the Tri-State.
Life / 1D

Company ready for demand for natural gas
Local businesses under the umbrella company Energy Services of America Corp. says they're ready to take advantage of changing times as the country pursues new forms of energy.
Business / 9A

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LOBBYISTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Limit studied on how quickly an official can turn lobbyist

By **BRYAN CHAMBERS**
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CHARLESTON — When Gov. Joe Manchin's chief of staff resigned from his position in early January and became a lobbyist a week later, it triggered a wave of discussion among state lawmakers.

Larry Puccio wasn't the first public official in West Virginia to take a job as a lobbyist. Nor was he the first gubernatorial chief of staff to make the career switch.

The debate centered on the quick turnaround time in which Puccio left his position in public office and registered to lobby for gambling, coal and health interests during the 2010 legislative session.

As a result, the Legislature now is considering a bill (HB 4016) that would prohibit an array of officials from becoming lobbyists for one year after leaving public office. The "revolving door" or "cooling off" provision, as it is often called, would apply to lawmakers, cabinet secretaries and agency chiefs, their deputies, and appointees of constitutional officers.

The proposal was the first piece of legislation to pass the House of Delegates and now awaits committee review in the state Senate.

West Virginia is among 19 states that don't have revolving door provisions for legislators and other public officials who become lobbyists.

The 31 states with such provisions have waiting periods that range from as soon as a legislative session ends to two years after an official leaves his or her government position, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Four other states in addition to West Virginia have proposed revolving door legislation this year.

West Virginia would be wise to join the majority of states that have the provision, said Delegate Don Perdue, D-Wayne. Such laws are in place to keep



Jeff Gentner/For The Herald-Dispatch
People fill the lobby at the Capitol on Wednesday in Charleston.

MORE ON 4A:
■ List of registered lobbyists
■ Rules governing lobbyists
■ Which groups have the most lobbyists?
■ Who are the most active lobbyists?

a reasonable distance between private interests and public officials, he said. When the two are perceived to have close ties, the public becomes leery of the governmental process, he said.

"Cynicism toward government is so great right now, and it will get worse if the kinds of things we've seen recently continue to happen," Perdue said. "Whether the negative view toward lobbying and government is based on reality or perception, it's only going to compound if we don't take action to make it more honorable."

Lobbying has been an integral part of state governments for decades, but it just recently became a billion-dollar

Please see **LOBBYISTS/5A**

MAYOR'S PLAN: Furloughs for all city workers, 11 layoffs

Council to consider new taxes to offset reduced revenues

By **BRYAN CHAMBERS**
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HUNTINGTON — Hampered by recession-weakened revenues, Huntington Mayor Kim Wolfe on Saturday released a proposed budget for the 2010-2011 fiscal year that includes civilian layoffs in the police and fire departments and furloughs for all city employees.

Huntington City Council's chairman, however, says there will be a push in the coming weeks to adopt either an occupation tax or sales tax that would eliminate the need for layoffs and furloughs.

The city already has trimmed nearly 10 percent from this year's \$44.6 million budget, which ends June 30, because of anticipated shortfalls in a key business tax. But with the brunt of the recession still on the horizon, Huntington officials are faced with some drastic decisions to get through next fiscal year, Wolfe said during his State of the City address.

"It must be clearly stated that the successes we've seen over the past year are in jeopardy if a collective solution is not found as it relates to this proposed

Please see **CITY/8A**



Lori Wolfe/The Herald-Dispatch
Mayor Kim Wolfe gives his State of the City address on Saturday in Huntington.

Couple shows love endures in even life's toughest situations



Seven months to the day after a fire destroyed their house, Mark and Isabel Cross are using Valentine's Day to share how their love has endured for each other and the community.

"If anything, it's emphasized the value of having a great partner and keeping a family as something you can fall back on when everything else is wrong," Mark Cross said.

READ THEIR STORY ON 1C

Symphony performance highlights history with 'Ellis Island: Dream of America' show

By **CHRISTIAN ALEXANDERSEN**
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HUNTINGTON — The Huntington Symphony Orchestra performed Peter Boyer's "Ellis Island: Dream of America" to a packed Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center in Huntington on Saturday night.

The performance featured a multimedia presentation of Boyer's Ellis Island, which was born out of his fascination with the relationship between history and music. The orchestra was accompanied by Beth McVey, Clint McElroy, Bill Neal and Amy Knell.

In addition to the "Ellis Island" piece, the symphony was also scheduled to play pieces by former orchestra conductor and composer, Paul W. Wheel, as well as some Aaron Copeland and George Gershwin pieces.



Jeremy McKnight/For The Herald-Dispatch
The Huntington Symphony Orchestra performs "Ellis Island: Dream of America" at the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center on Saturday.

Please see **SYMPHONY/5A**

Rafael Molina Jr., MD
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