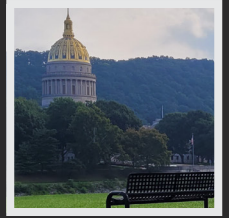


The Eagle

Featuring



Under the Dome

Pharmacy Closure

Second Edition

Spring 2025



Cups and Cats Café

Campus
Ministries



Gone Birding

What's Happening on the Other Side of the River?



When your neighbor is the State Capitol, it's important to check in and see what's going on. This spring, lawmakers have devised a series of bills that range from an increased [elimination](#) of diversity programs all the way to a bill that would [weaken](#) water quality protections. It's impossible to list here the effect of every bill, but what can be discussed is how to best stay informed about what's happening on the other side of our campus's river.

So, what can one do to stay informed?

For starters, the best thing to do is to get the information right from the source. The West Virginia Legislature has a [website](#) that records its activities. While it's not always easy to navigate, the site is indispensable for directly reading bills and figuring out what is being worked on.

So, here are some tricks for navigating the site.

When using the barebones official site, the [Bulletin Board](#) page is your friend. From there, records from both the Senate and the House can be seen using the various links on the page. For the most part, the content of these links can be surmised through their names. For instance, the links "Senate Bills to be Introduced" and "House Bills to be Introduced" show the bills being worked on, a short description of each bill, and a catalogue of activity for each legislative workday.

While it's nice to get the information from the source, it shouldn't be sugarcoated: the main site is hard to use, especially for any first timers. Fortunately, there is another official site that alleviates some of these problems.



Legislature, Cont.



more convenient alternative is the state legislature's [blog page](#). It provides brief article write-ups of legislative activities with a display that resembles a news site.

For practice, let's examine what the blog page offers.

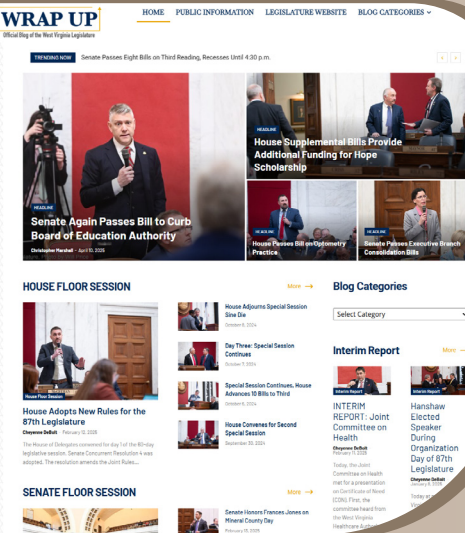
At the time of writing, the headline article for the site is an article entitled [House Passes Defining Biological Sex Bill & Parents Bill of Rights](#).

The article's title refers to Senate Bill 456, which codifies terms like "male", "female", and "biological sex." It's been opposed for its reported [restrictions](#) on transgender people. Also discussed in the article is Senate Bill 490, which bans ranked choice voting. Ranked choice voting is a process where voters can 'rank' their picks in order. The article continues to list other pieces of legislation that were worked on that day.

Through these official sites, it's easier to keep track of what elected officials are doing and to ensure legislators can be scrutinized by the public.

That said, it can be hard to interpret legal jargon in a vacuum, which is why it's important to keep local news reporting in rotation.

[West Virginia Public Broadcasting](#) routinely provides close reporting on the legislature under its Government section. [Mountain State Spotlight](#) is another local, nonprofit news outlet that frequently covers the state legislature. Additionally, the most well-known newspaper in the state is the [Charleston Gazette-Mail](#), and though it's a paid source, it does keep a finger on the pulse of local news. While all these sites are just recommendations, perhaps the best source for keeping up with the legislature is one that readers choose on their own, place trust in, and regularly use to stay informed.



UC School of Pharmacy Closure:

How a Once “Unthinkable” Decision Was Made

By: Elijah Newell

In December of 2024, the University of Charleston announced that it would be closing its School of Pharmacy and Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) Program in the Summer of 2026. The closure of the School of Pharmacy is a massive decision that affects over 26 faculty members and scores of students at UC. Daniel Silber, Executive Vice President, Provost, and Dean of Faculty, sat down for a recent interview to explain how the difficult decision to shut down the program was made.

“It was a decision that took time to reach, it was a very important decision that could not be made lightly,” Silber said.

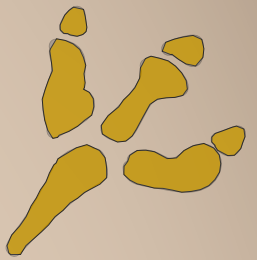
Silber talked about the history of the Pharmacy school. It was established in 2006, and at first was a flourishing success, having approximately 300 students at its peak. As the only private pharmacy school in West Virginia, the UC School of Pharmacy helped bring prestige and honor to the University, and not only financially supported itself but other programs at the University. The school also brought great benefit to the community around UC, helping to secure a grant that allows UC to distribute [naloxone](#) to health care facilities. (The naloxone program will continue after the School of Pharmacy’s closure).

However, the PharmD program began to experience decline in the mid-2010s. Silber said that enrollment consistently declined after 2016 for several years, and that once this was noticed, conversations about cutting the program were held among UC administration. Efforts were put in place by UC and the faculty and staff of PharmD to try and stop the enrollment drop, but these efforts failed, and the program eventually shrunk to 20% of its highest recorded numbers. The program had fallen from providing financial assistance to other programs at UC to requiring that same assistance to remain functional. The UC administration delivered the recommendation to stop admitting new students and to close the school to the Board of Trustees for a final vote.

The University of Charleston is no longer accepting students into its Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degree. To ensure current students can progress toward degree completion, a number of plans are in place. These plans and other issues pertaining to this decision can be found in the following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

University of Charleston
SCHOOL OF
PHARMACY
WV's only private pharmacy school

Closure, Cont.



“**I**

t was a hard decision to make,” Silber said. “Nobody enjoyed it. Everyone was sad about it. I’m relatively new to the institution, but I’ve worked with the Dean of the School of Pharmacy, our colleagues there, our faculty and staff there, and it is a sad thing to close down a school, absolutely. We looked at other alternatives to closing the School of Pharmacy. Was there a way to operate the School of Pharmacy with a really stripped down faculty and staff? We looked at that. It wasn’t really possible to do it to the extent that would have been necessary. Would it have been possible to shift to an online format? These are all things that we talked about. I really feel like we left no stone unturned because the last thing we wanted to do was close the School of Pharmacy. We really hated having to do it.”

While students in their 4th year will graduate at the end of the 2024-2025 semester, and 3rd year Pharmacy students will be able to complete their degrees and graduate in April 2026, 2nd year Pharmacy students and lower will have to transfer at the end of the Spring 2025 semester.

Silber said ultimately market forces bear the blame for the Pharmacy School’s closure. There has been a significant decline in the pharmacy industry, and as such a decline in pharmacy schooling across the US over the past several years. UC was one of only three schools in WV to have a pharmacy school, the others being state-funded Marshall University and West Virginia University. As a private institution, UC was unable to compete in a declining market with state-funded schools, and as such could no longer sustain the School of Pharmacy long term.



Silber said that UC tries to maintain a balance among its programs so that the school’s selection of degrees keep the institution financially stable. The school ensures that it bolsters and strengthens programs that offer great monetary value to the school, and that the extra cash flow can then be used to uphold other programs that may not create as much revenue. The issue of cutting a program only comes up after significant market research and statistics have determined that there isn’t enough interest or there isn’t enough help from other programs at UC to support a particular program.

“I can’t say I regret the decision in the sense that it was wrong; I think it was necessary. But sometimes you have to make a decision that is necessary, and it was very, very painful to make,” Silber said.

More information on the School of Pharmacy’s closure can be found [here](#) at the UC website.



Grab a Cup, Pet a Cat

By: Cole Friend



Across the river on Summers Street sits Cups and Cats Café; a café where customers can sip their drink, relax, and play with cats. They are open from 10am to 6pm Monday through Saturday (Closed on Wednesdays) and 12-4pm on Sundays. Because of their success, Cups and Cats Café has found it necessary to create a reservation system to make sure the cats aren't being overwhelmed by people.

"We always encourage online booking since it is a guaranteed spot; however, we do offer walk-in spots if room is available. The cost is \$10.00 for a full hour in our cat lounge. Weekends are very busy, and it is always best to plan ahead," said owner and founder Lora Reynolds.

Reynolds has been a citizen of Charleston for eight years and is involved in helping those who can't help themselves. The Cups and Cats Café is partnered with New Hope Animal Rescue, Fix Em' Clinic, Charleston, Kanawha Charleston Humane Association, and Dream Away Cat Rescue to help cats find good homes.

"All of these entities have worked together with us and each other to ensure the well-being of the cats. [The cats are] always a priority and care can be provided when needed," Reynolds said.

Cups and Cats Café gives these rescues a break in reducing the number of cats they hold. They also help these cats have an easier time of being adopted and receiving the affection they need while they wait for the day they can go home with one of the Café's customers.

"The cat cafe model has been instrumental in connecting cats with the right person. The open environment allows interaction between cats and their potential adopters that feels a bit like a home," Reynolds said. "We have adopted out several sibling pairs--it is such a wonderful thing when the litter mates and bonded pairs are able to go together."

Reynolds worked for several years to help make her dream become a reality and believes it has all been worth it to help these cats find homes. Since opening in November 2024, Cups and Cats Café has helped a total of 33 cats find loving homes.

"It took a lot of work, dedication and literal blood, sweat, and tears to make this come to fruition. Starting your own business is not for the faint of heart. With that being said, I have accomplished something I never thought possible and am proud of what the cafe is doing and how it is changing the landscape downtown," said Reynolds.



~~Tales~~ from the Cat Café

Tails 



With Special Thanks

to
Lora Reynolds

 and the cats 



Campus Ministries

and Where to Find Them

By Cole Friend



The University of Charleston hosts several campus ministries throughout the week. These ministries bring together students of all backgrounds to meet new people, make new friends, have fellowship, and study the Bible.

Each ministry currently being held on campus meets on different days of the week allowing students to find a ministry that can work with their schedule. Intervarsity meets on Monday nights at 7pm, BCM meets Monday nights at 6pm, and Young Life meet Wednesdays at 6:30. Meeting locations may vary. If you are interested in joining any of these ministries, contact Grant Brinson, UC Director of Student Engagement and Recreation, to connect you with a ministry leader.



Both Young Life and Intervarsity are part of larger organizations who work with colleges and universities all over the country to provide students with a place and community where they feel comfortable and welcome. These organizations send leaders to campuses to help organize and direct the students in their study and journey in faith.

Campus ministries associated with religious denominations are brought from local churches or students that are seeking to start their own campus ministries. Any student is capable and allowed to begin their own campus ministry but there are rules and regulations to follow in order to begin.

“It is important to have a place on campus where a student can feel that they have a spiritual belonging. If someone is interested in starting a ministry, just reach out to me and we can talk about how we can get more students involved in their ministry, if there are students who would be interested in joining,” said Brinson. Students can contact Brinson through school email at grantbrinson@ucwv.edu.

UC currently holds a total of three ministries with two more in the works. These include Young Life, BCM (Baptist Campus Ministry), and Intervarsity. Along with these, there's also recently been a CCM (Catholic Campus Ministry) and a Christian Pharmacist

Fellowship, but they have been put on a temporary pause while they look for new leaders and ministers.

Why You Should Go Birding

Benefits and Tips for Success

By: Elijah Newell



With the fresh, crisp weather of spring upon us, students at the University of Charleston will be looking for activities and hobbies to do outdoors while they're out of class and enjoying free time. One hobby that's perfect for spring, requires no money, and can be done nearly anywhere outside is birdwatching. If students learn a few tips about how to do it, they can enjoy a whole season's worth of birding.

Interested students should know that birding can provide great health benefits to its practitioners. According to a [TIME article](#), one study determined that encounters with birds can help improve people's mental health for as long as eight hours. The article also notes another study conducted in 2017 found that a higher prevalence of birds in an urban area was linked with lower rates of stress, anxiety, and depression in humans. Another [article](#) in The New York Times points out that the act of bird watching requires participants to be outdoors and walking, which has been shown to increase people's lifespans and provide massive physical and mental health benefits.

Part of what makes birding great is that you can do it virtually anywhere because birds live all around us. If one is short on time and wants to bird watch for a few minutes, you can walk outside your apartment or housing on campus and take a stroll to look for birds. If you have more time and want to go to more nature-filled areas to observe birds, [Kanawha State Forest](#) and [Coonskin Park](#) are both within a few minutes' drive of UC and offer miles of nature paths and accessible streams in which you can go birding.

No equipment is required to bird watch, but the activity can be improved if one gets a bird guide. Any kind of bird guide is incredibly useful for determining what kinds of birds one may find; a good bird guide will help determine what birds are by their color, size and shape, calls, and ranges in the area. While physical bird guides can be purchased, many free mobile apps also exist that can provide even more information in a far more portable format. One excellent example is the Merlin [app](#) by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology from Cornell University. This app provides detailed, up-to-date information on birds in virtually any area, and can help identify birds through their appearance, recordings of their calls, and even pictures.



Birding, Cont.

A notebook is also a valuable asset to a bird watcher. Whether physical or digital, notebooks offer a space for bird watchers to take notes on the species they find, catalogue when and where they find interesting birds, and act as a journal to track one's bird watching progression.

Binoculars are another handy tool for birdwatching. While there are plenty of birds that can be seen without any visual aid, certain species may not allow you to get close enough to observe them well with the naked eye. Having a pair of binoculars can be a great asset to getting views of birds perched at the top of buildings, or that are too far away to see clearly. This [article](#) lists some quality and budget options for good binoculars and monoculars for birdwatching.

Patience is key to enjoying a birdwatching session. An [article](#) by the National Park Service warns that some species can only be seen or heard if the birder is still and quiet, and that patience is key with creatures that can easily scare and don't always present themselves for easy viewing. They also recommend walking or waiting in areas where two habitats converge, such as a forest surrounding a body of water. The article also mentions that the time of day one goes birding is important: the cooler temperatures and low wind in the mornings can reveal the songs of morning birds more clearly than at later times, while other species become more active in the evening and night. In addition, while feeding birds from a birdfeeder on private property is a great way to see birds, feeding birds on any national parks is strictly prohibited.

Some of the most common larger birds in the Charleston area include the American Crow, Canadian Goose, Turkey Vulture, and the Mallard. Smaller birds local to Charleston include the Northern Cardinal, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, and European Starling. Images of these birds, and specific information on where they can be found, can be accessed on Cornell Lab's [online database](#).

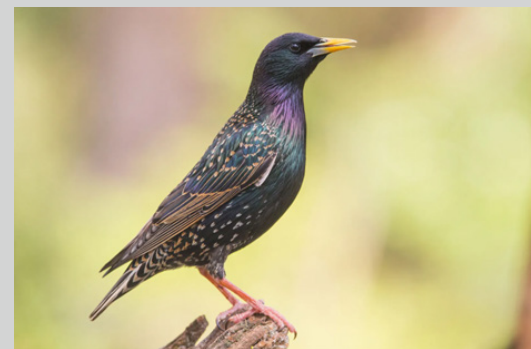
Spring is a great time for outdoor activities, and birding is a fun and healthy hobby. With some time spent out of the house and a little patience, anyone can enjoy watching the birds that exist all around us.



Tufted Titmouse, native to WV.



Male and female Northern Cardinal, common to WV



Eastern Starling, common in WV

Produced By

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Thank you for reading.

*No birds were harmed by cats in this edition.

