



# WETZEL COUNTY HOSPITAL

## Press Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**From:** GEORGE COUCH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**Date:** DECEMBER 31, 2007  
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### WETZEL COUNTY HOSPITAL REPORTS SUCCESSFUL 2007

New Martinsville, WV – “2007 has been a great year for Wetzel County Hospital,” George Couch, CEO reported to the Board of Trustees at their year-end meeting on December 19. “We have expanded and improved services; installed new state-of-the-art equipment and have already made plans for significant progress for 2008.”

Bill Grimm, President of the Board of Trustees extended congratulations to the hospital employees and management. “We are extremely proud of our employees and medical staff for the great progress that has been made to improve services to our citizens and surrounding communities.” Grimm pointed to three major announcements by the hospital in 2007. They include the installation of a full digital PACS system, funding to provide for expansion and upgrading of the Emergency and Trauma Department and the Board of Trustees recent approval to purchase a new 32-slice CT Scanner.

Pam Deel, Wetzel County Hospital’s Director of Radiology and Imaging Services reported that the hospital is in the final stages of upgrading to a full PACS (Picture Archiving Communication System). “PACS will advance our Radiology department into the digital age. With PACS, all x-ray images will be stored digitally. Through a secure connection, x-ray images can be viewed on computers throughout the hospital or in a physician’s office. After the installation of PACS has been completed, patients that may need to take copies of their x-ray studies to their doctor will only need to see us to obtain a CD. We will have the capability to

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transfer images to a CD which will make it easier for patients to transport their films. "Deel said that the system is presently being installed and should be in full operation in late January, 2008

\$869,000 for Wetzel County Hospital's Emergency Room expansion project was recently approved by the United States Senate, due to the work of U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd, D-W.Va. The bill approving that funding was signed by President Bush on December 26. This will be the first major refurbishing of the Emergency Department since 1979, when the hospital opened its doors. With increased patient loads and more challenging cases such as increased incidents of all-terrain vehicle (ATV) accidents; chemical exposures; drug abuse and overdose; mining disasters; and other industrial accidents, the facility has been in need of upgrades.

"Emergency care has changed dramatically over 28 years. In order to effectively deal with the complicated cases that enter the Emergency Room, the hospital must have the most effective tools and equipment to ensure up-to-date emergency health care," Byrd said.

"The top priority for the Wetzel County Hospital Board of Trustees, Management and Medical Staff has been the renovation and expansion of our Emergency Department. With the funds Wetzel County Hospital has set aside for this project and this appropriation, 2008 should finally be the year when this vitally needed project becomes a reality," said George Couch, C.E.O.

"We are deeply grateful to Senator Byrd for his dedication and commitment to this project," added Marge Knight, R.N. who is Chief of Emergency and Outpatient Services for Wetzel County Hospital. "With our advanced skills and the quality of our Emergency Department Physicians and Staff we will now be able to purchase and utilize the most modern and advanced equipment and technology, which will in turn enhance the quality of care to the citizens served by Wetzel County Hospital."

Another major improvement recently approved by the Wetzel County Hospital Board of Trustees, and slated for installation in February is a state-of-the-art Toshiba 32-Slice Aquilion CT Scanner. The Aquilion 32 is designed to deliver unmatched clinical images using multislice imaging technology that captures up to 32 anatomical slices in a single rotation. In addition, the system's sensitivity and accuracy are enhanced using isotropic scanning, which results in images that accurately capture the body's rapidly moving organs like the heart and lungs. Toshiba's Aquilion 32 is especially useful for examining patients who are unable to hold their breath, like trauma victims, acutely ill patients and young children. According to Marge Knight, the decision to install a 32-slice CT system is in response to the community's growing demand for trauma services -- ranging from auto accidents to penetrating trauma. "Our Emergency and

Trauma Department served more than nearly 11,000 patients last year, so it is important that we have the latest technology to ensure that our patients receive the fastest and best care available. The Toshiba 32-slice systems' speed and capabilities more than meets those needs."

Listed among the other Wetzel County Hospital accomplishments for 2007 include: addition of the state-of-the art laboratory processing equipment; expansion of the outpatient surgical area; addition of sleep laboratory services; renovation of the patient registration area; addition of a full-time speech therapist added to the therapy staff; Wetzel County Hospital's Woodsfield Clinic opened with the additional of Dr. Charles DeNunzio, D.O. and Samantha Farnsworth, P.A.; a new General Surgeon, Jeff Pilney, M.D. was added to medical staff; digital transcription equipment was replaced; the physician lounge was renovated; and the Special Procedures unit opened in November.

George Couch, C.E.O. also reported that the hospital has been operating profitably allowing the Board to provide employees with three pay increases over the last 13 months. He noted that employee holiday bonuses were increased this year and employee health insurance premiums have not increased for three years. "We know that not only do we have to provide a quality facility, state of the art equipment and a quality medical staff, but we must assure that our employees are rewarded for their hard work and contribution to our success. We look forward to more accomplishments and success in 2008."

Members of the Wetzel County Hospital Board include: William Grimm, President; George Friedline, Vice President; Brenda Botizan, Treasurer; Paul Feldmeier, Jr., Secretary; Don Shenefiel; Walt Christman; Tulane Mensore; Joan E. Miller; Jim Fitzsimmons; Ellie Conlon; LeMoyne Coffield, M.D.; Earl Huggins; Jimmy Glasscock; Steve Fox and Peggy Wilcox. The hospital board is appointed by and hospital operated under the authority of the Wetzel County Commissioners that include Barbara King, Don Mason and Robert Gorby.

Wetzel County Hospital is a licensed and accredited, 68-bed facility, offering comprehensive acute care inpatient, outpatient services, emergency department and transitional care unit. The hospital is located 35 miles south of Wheeling and 60 miles north of Parkersburg, West Virginia.

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