

# the Charleston Gazette

THE STATE NEWSPAPER — OUR 138TH YEAR

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**Keselowski wins Sprint Cup**  
SPORTS, 1B

## Blog blasts Marple firing

By Paul J. Nyden  
Staff writer

The husband of one of two state school board members who resigned last week over the firing of State School Superintendent Joreia Marple is accusing the school board of plotting the overthrow of the well-respected educator.

Bill Phillips, who owns Phillips Strategy in Elkins, called the firing of Joreia Marple as the state Superintendent of Schools last Thursday “despicable and senseless action . . . taken at the West Virginia State School Board meeting.”

“A Gang of Five fired the State Superintendent without cause or notice,” he said. “Two

board members resigned, including my wife.”

School Board members Jenny Phillips and Priscilla Haden resigned after a 5-2 vote removed Marple from her position, without any explanation or prior notice. Both Phillips and Haden supported Marple.

On his blog — <http://phillipsbillboard.com> — Bill Phillips

wrote, “Within hours it became apparent there was another party in the conspiracy plotted by the Gang of Five when Board President Wade Linger, on a special board call, said Dr. James Phares [superintendent of Randolph County Schools] would be named and would ac-

SEE BLOG, 11A

## Israeli strike kills 11, including children, in Gaza

By Ibrahim Barzak and Josef Federman  
The Associated Press

INSIDE: U.S., Britain warn of risks in ground assault 2A

coastal road.

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — An Israeli missile ripped through a two-story home in a residential area of Gaza City on Sunday, killing at least 11 civilians, including four young children and an 81-year-old woman, in the single deadliest attack of Israel's offensive against Islamic militants.

A similar scene unfolded elsewhere in the city early today, when an airstrike leveled two houses belonging to a single family, killing two children and two adults and injuring 42 people, including children, said Gaza health official Ashraf al-Kidra. Rescue workers were frantically searching for 12 to 15 members of the Azzam family under the rubble.

While the airstrikes relentlessly targeted militant rocket operations, Israeli gunboats unleashed a steady tattoo of heavy machine gun fire and shells at militant facilities on Gaza's

The bloodshed was likely to raise pressure on Israel to end the fighting, even as it pledged to intensify the offensive by striking the homes of wanted militants. High numbers of civilian casualties in an offensive four years ago led to fierce criticism and condemnation of Israel.

In all, 81 Palestinians, half of them 37 civilians, have been killed in the five-day onslaught and 720 have been wounded. Three Israeli civilians have died from Palestinian rocket fire and dozens have been wounded.

President Obama said he was in touch with players across the region in hopes of halting the fighting, while also warning of the risks of Israel expanding its air assault into a ground war.

“We're going to have to see what kind of progress we can make in the next 24, 36, 48

SEE MIDEAST, 3A

## DISMISSAL CALLED ‘TREMENDOUS LOSS’



KATE LONG | Gazette photos

Children at Lincoln County's Midway Elementary take a mid-morning walk on the school's new trail, “to stir their brain cells,” principal Cheryl Workman said in May. “Superintendent Marple would be proud of us.”

## Child-health advocates praise ex-superintendent

By Kate Long  
Staff writer

Children's health advocates are reacting with worry and dismay to last week's firing of West Virginia Superintendent of Schools Joreia Marple, calling it “a tremendous loss” and “a travesty.”

“I'm heartsick,” said Renate Pore, founder of the West Virginia Healthy Kids and Families Coalition. “She was absolutely leading us in the right direction for children.”

“She understood more than any superintendent I have seen that active, well-nourished children learn more effectively and do better academically,” she said.



Fifth-graders at Webster County's Diana Elementary weave physical activity breaks between science and language arts lessons, as part of the Marple-inspired effort to get kids moving through the day.

Pore cited Marple's efforts to make school meals more nutritious, inject more physical activity into the school day, lower the teenage pregnancy and dropout rates, and stop bullying. “We're very worried about what will happen to those initiatives,” she said.

“I'm stunned,” said Kelli Caseman, director of the West Virginia School-Based Health Assembly. “I don't understand this at all.”

“Since Dr. Marple took office, there has been a major surge in school-based health centers opening in the counties,” she said.

Between 1994 and 2011,

SEE DISMISSAL, 3A

## ‘It's in our interest to learn this stuff’

### State trying to spread diabetes self-help to every county

By Kate Long  
Staff writer

After Sunday church at Shiloh Baptist, Regina Elzy slipped downstairs to Chronic Disease Self Management class. “We'd praise God, then go learn how to take care of the bodies God gave us.”

“When I got home, my husband and I'd go over what we did in class, so we got a twofer,” she said.

“Diabetes, we both have it,” she said. “That's life, and you deal with it. We enjoy life, and we sure don't want to have a leg amputated or be on kidney dialysis.”

“The class teaches you how to



THE SHAPE WE'RE IN

hold all that off. It teaches you how to lower your stress and bring your blood sugar down. So it's entirely in our interest to learn this stuff.”

“This stuff” is the six-week Chronic Disease Self-Management

Course created by Stanford University School of Medicine.

“Doctors can only do so much for you,” John Elzy said. “You've got to do the rest. So the more you know about how to take care of yourself, the better. Information is power. That class was packed with information.”

Now the Centers for Disease Control is urging states to spread the class statewide, as a way to fight obesity and chronic disease. West Virginia is “trying to figure out how to do that,” said Chuck Thayer of the state Bureau of Public Health.

Since 2003, Marshall University has trained about 150 people statewide to lead the course

If West Virginia is to get a grip on the obesity and diabetes epidemics, health-care economist Ken Thorpe recommends that the state do these things: (1) get people of all ages more active, (2) get the sickest patients into intensive care management and (3) set up a statewide network of diabetes prevention and control programs. Today we look at one attempt to set up a network of chronic disease control programs.

in their own communities, at churches, fire halls, senior cen-

SEE DIABETES, 11A



KATE LONG | Gazette

Regina Elzy took the Chronic Disease Self-Management Course at Charleston's Shiloh Baptist Church. “Then I'd come home and go over it with John,” she said. Both are diabetic. “Now we drag out that book when we've got a question.”

# DIABETES

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ters. "That's how it came to be in our church," Elzy said. "Some of our people got trained."

The people in her class had diabetes, arthritis and heart disease. "The same things helped us all: exercise, stress reduction, good eating, dealing with depression," she said. "You learn more about your disease and how to talk about it with doctors. Everyone lost a little weight."

More than 500 West Virginians have taken the class in the past two years. They rated it 4.7 out of a possible 5, according to a West Virginia University analysis. After the class, they reported they went to the doctor about half as much: 1.9 visits in three months, compared with 3.7 visits before.

"We'd read a chapter a week and set personal goals, then talk about it the next week," Elzy said. "The next week, you'd hear how people did, what worked for them. We gave each other ideas. It made you realize you're not alone."

"That class caused John and me to make changes in our daily lives," she said. "We used to eat three big meals a day, but we switched to five little ones, to keep our blood sugar level. And we started planning ways to stay active instead of leaving it up to accident. I walk down to get the newspaper every day, for instance, instead of getting it delivered."

"With as much chronic disease as we have, I don't think you can offer that class too much," said Perry Bryant, director of West Virginians for Affordable Health Care.

The idea is to offer it where people naturally are, "instead of making them come to us," said Marshall Medical School professor Richard Crespo.

In St. Albans, Betty and Doc Halstead, both in their 80s, took it at the senior center. "Best we've had," Betty said. "Practical and useful."

In Lincoln County, Melisa Ferrell took it at the Mud River Volunteer Fire Department. "It helped me understand my



KATE LONG | Gazette

Dee Wilder of the Bureau of Senior Services (standing) and Wendy Lewis of the Partnership of African-American Churches led a group at St. Albans' Hansford community center.

husband, how his mood will change depending on what he eats and when he eats."

In Dunbar, "the people kept meeting after the class was over, because they thought it was that valuable to them," said Rev. James Patterson of the Partnership of African-American Churches.

"We've proved that West Virginians like this class, that it works, and that it can be put on for very little money," said Sally Hurst, program coordinator.

The problem: So far, the class has been offered fairly randomly. There's been no predictable schedule. The leaders have been volunteers, so the class has been offered when there was a place and willing leaders.

Now the state Bureau of Public Health wants to get organized about it, paying Marshall to train "master trainers" who can in turn train others to deliver the class. "If we can get one master trainer in each part of the state, that would be great," Thayer said.

"It's easy to train people," Hurst said. "The leaders' guide is straightforward, like a cookbook, one, two, three, do this, then this. If you follow it — and if everyone has the book that goes with the course — it works."

"Our goal is to make it possible for West Virginians to take a self-management class if they want to, no matter where they

## Learn more about self-management courses

1. Want to find a diabetes self-management class in West Virginia? Many hospitals, community health centers and other organizations already offer classes. The Gazette has assembled a list. Find a link to it at the top of this story at [www.wvgazette.com/theshapewerein](http://www.wvgazette.com/theshapewerein).
2. For more information and a video about CDSM classes in West Virginia: <http://www.selfmanagementonline.org/>
3. The national CDSM Website: <http://patienteducation.stanford.edu/programs/cdsmp.html>

live," Thayer said. In one county, it might be offered by WVU Extension, a senior center in the next county, and a community health center in the next.

Eventually, he aims to get enough classes organized to post a statewide schedule online, he said. "That will take some organizing to make the pieces come together," he said.

The pieces are there. "Everyone wants to do this, and everyone's trying to figure out how," said Robert Roswell, director of the state Bureau of Senior Services.

"A lot of churches would probably like to do something like this," said Jeff Allen, director of the West Virginia Council of Churches.

Marshall will train employees of most of the county health departments this fall and winter.

Medicaid could become a major referral source in late 2013, as Medicaid begins to pay doctors and clinics to provide care management for obese people with diabetes.

"CDSM would be an appropriate part of that," said Medicaid medical director Jim Becker.

In Kentucky, the Legislature gives every county health department a yearly grant to provide at least two diabetes self-management classes a year. West Virginia provides no such grants. West Virginia's training is funded with a Centers for Disease Control Community Transformation Grant, but there are no funds to actually put on the classes.

"It might make sense to hire a few people to go from place to place putting on these classes and training people to lead them," Roswell said. Maybe interested agencies could cooperate to get it going.

"We've got a long way to go," Crespo said, "but we've made a good start."

Read more about CDSM and watch video at <http://www.selfmanagementonline.org>.

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