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COVID Cases Jump Again In Ohio County

From STAFF REPORTS
WHEELING — As the weekly number of new COVID-19 cases in Ohio County jumped yet again Monday, hospitals around West Virginia are straining against that rise in cases at crisis levels. The Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department announced

Monday that, between Sept. 12 and Monday, there have been 249 new cases reported in the county. That's a significant increase from the 194 announced in the previous weekly report.

COVID cases also are going up among children. Ohio County had 98 new positives among children under 18 years old.

That's up from the 75 new cases among children in the previous weekly report.

The department also reported one new COVID-related death. In the latest weekly report, WOCHD announced that there are 68 cases of the delta variant in the county, along with 86 cases of the alpha variant and

two cases of the gamma variant.

According to the Department of Health and Human Resources COVID-19 dashboard, there have been 3,976 confirmed cases, 1,454 probable cases and 93 related deaths in Ohio County since the pandemic began.

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NOT LETTING UP

• The Wheeling-Ohio County Health Department reported **249 new COVID-19 cases** in its weekly update Monday — including **98 in residents under the age of 18**.

Hairstylists A Cut Above

Wheeling Barbers Give Free Trims In Memory Of Teen

By **JOSELYN KING**
Staff Writer

WHEELING — Local hair stylists offered their time and supplies and provided free haircuts Monday in memory of a Wheeling youth who died tragically.

About 50 people were scheduled to turn out for the trims, which took place throughout the afternoon Monday at the Youth Services System offices at the Hazel Atlas Building in East Wheeling.

The haircuts were a public service program organized by Americorps-VISTA volunteer Shelby Fluharty for YSS.

She was inspired by the story of Caleb Smail, a 19-year-old who was murdered in January 2019 during a robbery. Monday would have been Smail's 22nd birthday.

"My initial thought was to do a free haircutting for the community," Fluharty explained. "We ended up tying the haircutting with Jen Stricklin, who is Caleb Smail's girlfriend's mother."

The haircut project then partnered with the Caleb Smail Kindness Project.

Stricklin, a beautician at the Posh salon, was among those donating their time and talent Monday. She was joined by Chad Stradwick of Stradwick's Fade Cave, Luke Steed of Stallion Cutz, Mandy Ware of Posh, and Sandi Bernosky of Classic Couture Hair and Nail.

(Please see **HAIRCUTS**, Page 3)



Sharon Ward, seated, gets a haircut from Mandy Ware of the Posh beauty salon in Wheeling. Youth Services System and Americorps-Vista volunteer Shelby Fluharty organized the effort for free haircuts, which were donated by local stylists in memory of Caleb Smail, a local teen who died tragically in January 2019. Monday would have been Smail's 22nd birthday.

Photo by Joselyn King



Photo Courtesy of Governor's Office
West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice provides an update Monday on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic in the state.

Help On Way For Hospitals

Task Force Created With Beds Filling Up

By **STEVEN ALLEN ADAMS**
For The Intelligencer

CHARLESTON — As hospitals continue to fill with patients suffering from severe COVID-19 symptoms, West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice announced Monday a new task force aimed specifically at helping hospitals avoid rationing health care.

Justice met with state health and COVID-19 response officials Monday morning for a breakfast at the Governor's Mansion. Speaking Monday afternoon during his COVID-19 briefing, Justice said the result of that morning meeting was a new task force.

The task force is called Saving Our Care, a play on the Saving Our Wisdom program that focused on

HAIRCUTS

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Among those turning out were people from all walks of life, according to Fluharty and Betsy Bethel-McFarland, director of communications at YSS.

At least one customer was a child staying at the YSS emergency shelter, Bethel-McFarland said.

Others came thinking it was a fundraiser for YSS, and asked how they could donate.

"There were some people from the community who benefited," Fluharty said. "They were super grateful to be here, and

were appreciative of the barbers who donated their time and supplies."

Shannon Schramm of Triadelphia volunteers with YSS, and turned out to get "a little better look."

"It was refreshing to find out they were doing something like this," she said. "YSS does so many good things."

Her twin sister, Sharon Ward, sat in the next chair getting a trim.

"I knew my sister was coming, and I wanted to come too," she said.