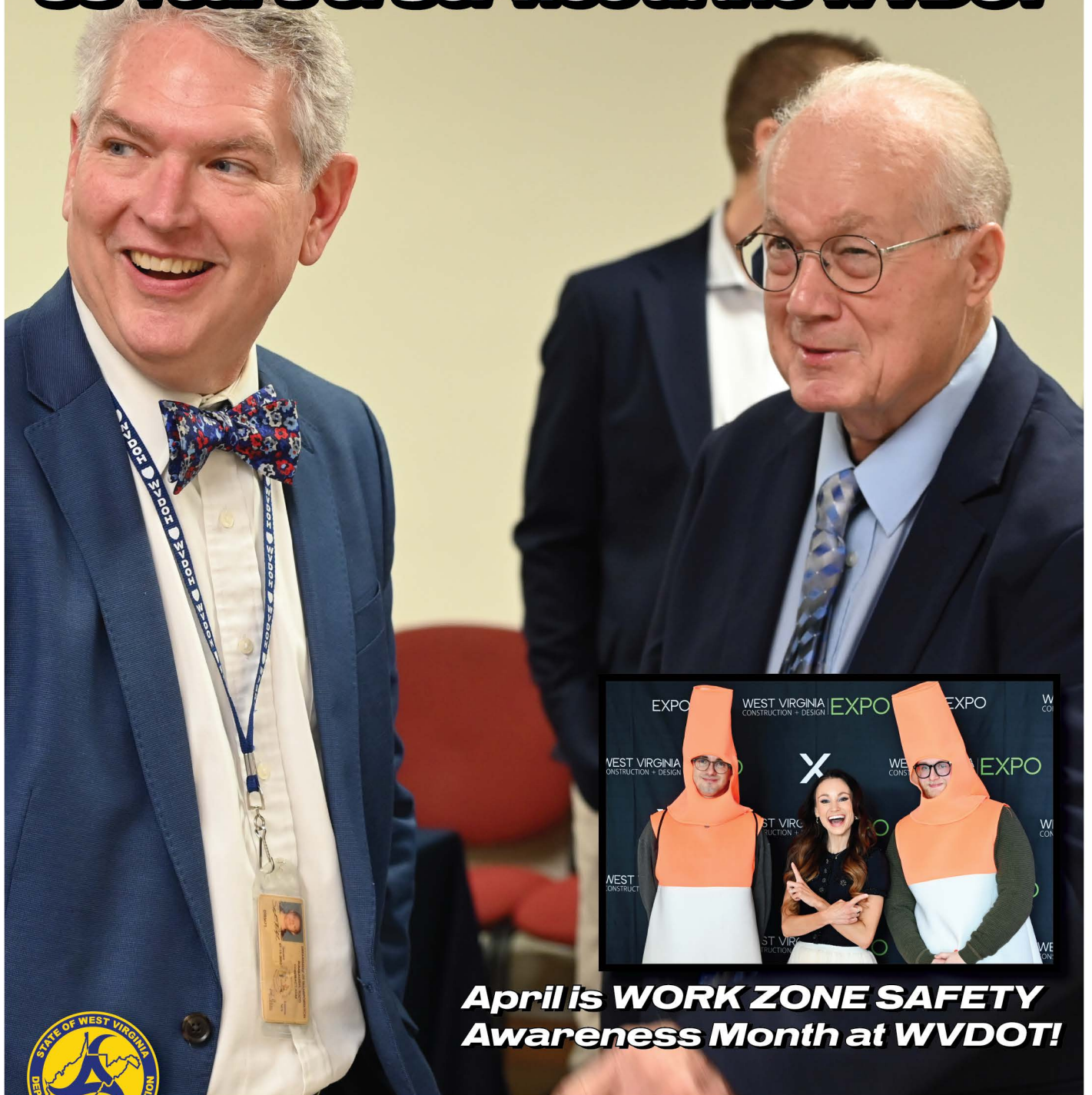


WV DOT Today!

• WV Bridge Design & Build Contest Held at WVU Tech • WVDOH Begins War on Potholes • West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles Announces Temporary location in Welch

Marvin Murphy Retires After 53 Years of Service at the WV DOT



April is WORK ZONE SAFETY Awareness Month at WV DOT!



April 2025, Volume 7: Issue 4

With the Weather Breaking WVDOH Begins Annual War on Potholes

With the end of winter and warm weather just on the horizon, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) and its partners in the asphalt industry are fighting the annual springtime war on potholes.

Relatively mild winters the past several years have allowed asphalt plants to open early, letting the WVDOH get a jump start on patching potholes. Not so this winter, where a series of winter storms and lingering cold weather put hot asphalt production on hold.

"This has been the worst winter we've had in years," said Transportation Secretary Todd Rumbaugh, P.E. "It's perfect weather for potholes."

In cold weather, WVDOH road crews can only patch potholes with a mixture of cold asphalt. Crews concentrate on the worst tire-busting potholes first, using cold asphalt until permanent repairs can be made.

Hot asphalt requires certain minimum requirements in order to cure. Ground temperatures should be above 45 degrees Fahrenheit.

"You can't fill potholes when it's cold, and you can't fill them when it's wet," said John Crane, executive director of the Asphalt Pavement Association in Charleston.

Asphalt plants shut down during the winter months for maintenance, and because it's too cold to use hot asphalt anyway. The WVDOH was able to work with asphalt plant owners over the past several years to open plants early, but continued cold weather has kept most plants closed this season.

"This has been the worst winter we've had in a decade," Crane said.



Crane said there are about three dozen asphalt plants serving the state of West Virginia. Most are currently open, with more expected to open in the coming weeks. Crane expects the majority of the state's asphalt plants to be open by the end of the month.

To make a permanent pothole repair, crews first mill out the area around the pothole to make a square or rectangular hole about two inches deep. Debris is swept out of the hole, and a sticky layer of tack is laid down in the hole to help the hot asphalt adhere to the road surface.

Hot asphalt is then poured into the hole and rolled out flat with a rolling machine. A properly done pothole patch should last as long as the roadway around it, and be smooth enough to be virtually unnoticeable to drivers.

"Our intention is to patch all our potholes as quickly as possible," Rumbaugh said.

"Please be patient with us as we endeavor to patch these potholes," he said. "Slow down and pay attention to work zones for the safety of you and our workers."

WVDOT Today!

is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Public Relations Division. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the different worksites and professions represented among WVDOT employees to empower us to function as **one West Virginia Department of Transportation**.

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WVDOT and WVU Tech Host 2025 Bridge Design and Build Contest

The 24th Annual West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Contest, hosted by WVU Tech in Beckley saw 41 middle and high school students, split into 26 teams, participate in both the software and balsa wood bridge competitions on Saturday, March 29, 2025.

Eastern Greenbrier Middle School swept the top three spots in the Balsa Wood competition, with Arabella Webb taking first place, Emma Vincent and Ellie Burns finishing second and Jayce Bush and Brysan Hamrick taking third.

In the High School Division, Princeton Senior's Aiden Miller claimed the top prize, followed by Ethan Coleman and Parker Worline (Putnam Career and Technical Center) in second place, and Larry Du and Maxwell Chen (Morgantown High School) came in third place.

The software competition saw repeat winners with Larry Du and Maxwell Chen designing the lowest-cost bridge in the high school division and Emma Vincent and Ellie Burns following suit in the middle school competition.

Behind them, James Ludwig (Oak Hill High School), and Rebecca Chen and Emily Gu (Suncrest Middle School) finished second, and Connor Atkins and Lucas Messenger (East Fairmont High School), and Laura Du and Riya Zinn (Suncrest Middle School) came in third.

On Sunday, those same students had the opportunity to do Bridge Walk at the New River Gorge Bridge in Fayetteville.



West Virginia Bridge Design and Build Winners

High School Software Competition

- 1st - nonchalant dreadheads (Larry Du and Maxwell Chen, Morgantown High School)
- 2nd - Dragons (James Ludwig, Oak Hill High School)
- 3rd - NegativeZero (Connor Atkins and Lucas Messenger, East Fairmont High School)



nonchalant dreadheads (Larry Du and Maxwell Chen, Morgantown High School)

High School Balsa Wood Competition

- 1st - Bridge Bot 12 (Aiden Miller, Princeton Senior High School)
- 2nd - PandEStrikeBack! (Ethan Coleman and Parker Worline, Putnam Career & Technical Center)
- 3rd - nonchalant dreadheads (Larry Du and Maxwell Chen, Morgantown High School)



Bridge Bot 12 (Aiden Miller, Princeton Senior High School)

Middle School Software Competition

- 1st - Dumble_Dores Army (Emma Vincent and Ellie Burns, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School)
- 2nd - ReEm (Rebecca Chen and Emily Gu, Suncrest Middle School)
- 3rd - Laura + Riya (Laura Du and Riya Zinn, Suncrest Middle School)



Dumble_Dores Army (Emma Vincent and Ellie Burns, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School)

Middle School Balsa Wood Competition

- 1st - TheDecisiveDesigners (Arabella Webb, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School)
- 2nd - Dumble_Dores Army (Emma Vincent and Ellie Burns, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School)
- 3rd - Devil Fruit Designers (Jayce Bush and Brysan Hamrick, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School)



TheDecisiveDesigners (Arabella Webb, Eastern Greenbrier Middle School)

After 53 Years, Marvin Murphy Retires

After 53, nearly 54, years of dedicated service, Marvin Murphy, P.E., retired on Monday, March 31, 2025, in a well-attended gathering at the State Capitol Complex.

Speaking at the retirement, former Secretary of Transportation, Paul Mattox, Jr., P.E., said, "I cannot think of a more respected engineer or person in the state of West Virginia."

Marvin's history with, as his son Mackenzie so clearly states, "the Department of Transportation, Division of Highways" began 53 years ago, just out of college and just after marrying his wife, Marsha, who was by his side at the retirement ceremony.

The ceremony was attended by friends and colleagues from throughout those 53 years, among them, Denny Alderson, who himself retired with 53 years of service several years ago.

Mattox related how Murphy would advise him with tempered wisdom, "Let's go home and think about this overnight; we'll discuss it in the morning over a cup of coffee."

Through the ceremony, attendees spoke highly of Murphy and of his time advising them, his steady leadership style, his deep caring about rural West Virginians, his time growing up on a farm in Calhoun County, and his love for his grandchildren.

Mackenzie joked that while his father attended WVU Tech, he attended WVU. "But Dad loved me anyway," Mackenzie said.

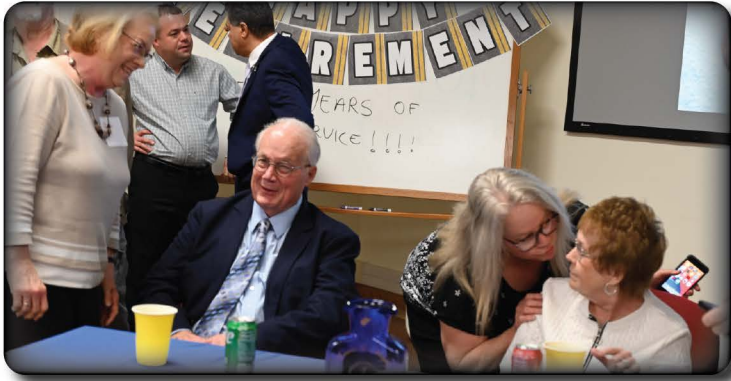
Among the many memories shared among Murphy's friends of 53 years, all stories carried the common thread of a career served with character and warmth. Following the speeches, there was a line for not only handshakes, but hugs.

"Try to understand where the other person is coming from."

— Marvin's advice on 53 years of successful work and marriage



After 53 Years, Marvin Murphy Retires



After 53 Years, Marvin Murphy Retires



Happy Retirement

April 21 Through 25 is National Work Zone Awareness Week: Go Orange for Work Zone Safety

Why all the orange? Orange you glad you asked?

Monday, April 21, 2025, through Friday, April 25, 2025, marks National Work Zone Awareness Week, a time to focus on work zone safety. With construction season in full bloom throughout the Mountain State, work zones are everywhere.

Work zone safety is serious business. In 2024, 94 highway workers were killed nationwide while on the job. In West Virginia, one contractor was killed and three West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) workers seriously injured while in clearly marked work zones.

One of them was Jordan Swiger, who was setting up traffic signs at the site of a truck wreck when an impaired driver sped into the work zone, smashing into Swiger and sending him flying. In addition to multiple broken bones and injuries, Swiger's skull was fractured in three places, leading to a three-week hospital stay.

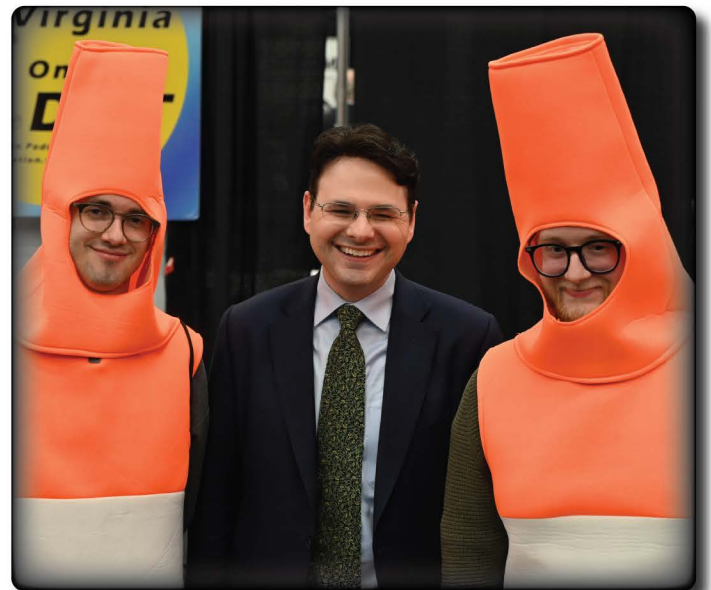
In January of this year, Mason County WVDOH worker Randall Randolph was setting up signs in a work zone when a vehicle failed to slow down. Randolph is still recovering from his injuries.



"No matter if you are somebody that's been here a day, two weeks or several years, the highway workers have a dangerous job and we have to look out for one another," Randolph said.

Dale MacDonald, who was with Randolph the day Randolph nearly died, agrees.

"We've been in situations where we've come close to getting hit before," he said. "People don't pay attention. Everybody has come into near misses but I know I have learned my lesson. I pay more attention when driving, watch my speed and care for others."



DMV Announces Temporary Welch Offices are Open to Help Assist Flood Victims

In response to devastating flooding in February, the West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is opened a temporary office in Welch to continue serving residents who have been affected by the closure of the downtown Welch office.



The temporary location is 745 Riverside Dr, Welch, WV 24801 with hours of operation being Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The new Welch office is expected to open May 2025.

The Welch office, which was severely impacted by the floods, will remain closed. The temporary office will offer online services, like vehicle registration duplicates and renewals, as well as driver's license and ID duplicates and renewals, ensuring that West Virginians in the area can continue to access vital DMV functions without significant disruption.

"Immediately after the flooding, we started work to secure a temporary location to serve the citizens of McDowell County and its surrounding counties," said DMV Commissioner Everett Frazier. "We recognize the need for certain documents for citizens as they continue the clean-up process and we want to be there to help obtain what they need."

"I have suffered total loss, myself, so I know what it's like to have nothing and need help," Frazier said. "The DMV will be there to do just that."

A statement from Dawna Skaggs WVDOT-Auditing Director: "The Transportation Auditing Division accomplished a huge milestone this past quarter by issuing 81 reports. This is the most reports issued by our division in a single fiscal year quarter in over a decade. Thanks to all division and district personnel that helped us achieve this milestone by providing the necessary information to complete our procedures. Thanks to the Transportation Auditing Team for their consistent hard work in getting all these reports issued. Without our "One DOT" cooperation, we could not have achieved this accomplishment."



New Guests Each Week!



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WVDOH and Monongalia County Officials Partner with WVU Student Government Association for Volunteer Roadway Cleanup

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) is happy to work with Monongalia County officials and the West Virginia University Student Government Association (WVU SGA) on a volunteer initiative aimed at roadway cleanup. WVU student volunteers and members of the community will assist in vital roadway maintenance tasks, including litter cleanup, string trimming, and debris pickup. Work will begin along Interstate 79 at Exit 155, in Morgantown, and continue throughout the summer.

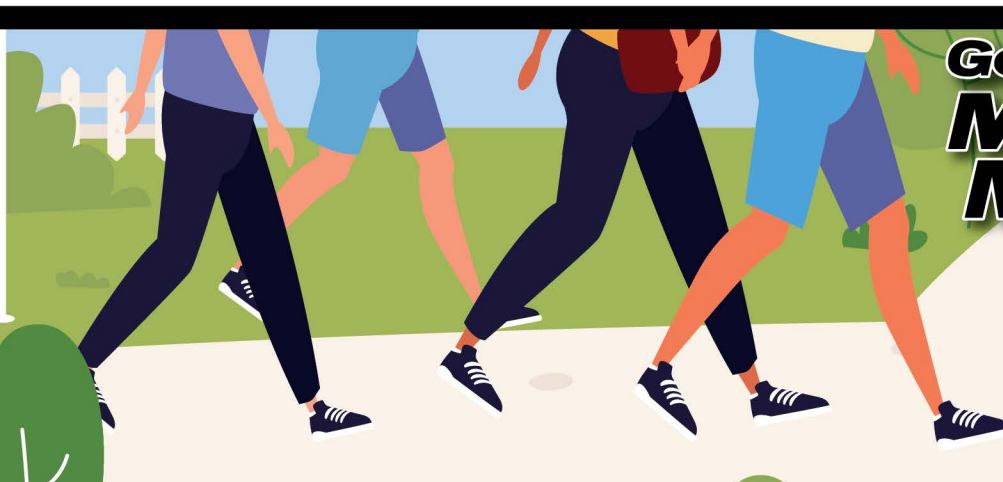
Through the partnership, students will help reduce the environmental impact of litter and overgrowth and gain hands-on experience within their local communities.

"I wanted to think of something we can do as a community to help with clean ups and just some light maintenance work," said Morgantown City Councilwoman Louise Michael. Michael paired with WVDOH District 4 Manager Earl Gaskins and WVU student government students who wanted to help as well.

"Very happy with all the interest; we have lots of volunteers so we will get this done quickly," Michael said. "We just really want to give back to the community and also help the DOH with the little things."

"We knew it would benefit WVU students, parents, and potentially recruitment," said WVU SGA's Local Governance Liaison Mimi Ferguson. "We also believe that it is important for students here at WVU to be connected with the community, and this event is a great way to build a relationship there." The opportunity to volunteer will be open to all student organizations at the university.

The event will take place on Saturday, March 29, 2025, and Sunday, March 30, 2025. Both the WVDOH and Monongalia County are hopeful that the project will serve as a model for future volunteer-driven projects to foster collaboration and community improvement.



Governor Morrissey's Mountaineer Mile with the Secretary

In the month of April on every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Secretary Rumbaugh will be inviting all employees to walk the Capitol grounds to promote healthy living alongside with the Governor's Mountaineer Mile.

WVDOH Employee Becomes First in State to Complete PAREA Program

Ian Haye, who has worked for the West Virginia Division of Highways as an appraiser trainee in the Right of Way division for the last two years, became the first West Virginian to complete the PAREA program – a major milestone in his path to becoming a fully-licensed real estate appraiser.

PAREA, the Appraisal Institute Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal program, is a standardized and convenient approach to gaining the experience you need to become a real estate appraiser.

The program must be completed within 18 months after starting, but Haye managed it in only eight.

“The reason I’m where I am is because I pushed through all of this training,” Haye said. “My free time was better spent if I was self-engaged and pushed through, which is what made PAREA so nice. I could finish it (sooner) if I just worked hard.”

With the help of an assigned mentor, enrollees appraise properties in a simulated environment, applying what they learned from qualifying or pre-licensing education to real-life situations. Participants meet regularly with their assigned mentor for support and guidance as they progress through 10 practice assignments and other immersive activities.

“I had looked into getting licensed as an appraiser and then I saw the PAREA program but didn’t look any more into it at the time,” Haye said. “When the WVDOH was hiring appraiser trainees, I jumped on the opportunity. The experience is the hardest part to get because you need thousands of hours.”



Completing the PAREA program credited Haye with 1,000 hours of experience in less than a year. To finish out the program, he had to complete three graded Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice-compliant appraisal reports on his own.

Haye’s next step is to take the National Uniform Licensing and Certification Examination, which he expects to sit for after his application is reviewed by the Appraiser Qualifications Board. If he passes that four-hour, 125-question test, he will be a licensed residential appraiser with a chance to work his way up to a certified residential and ultimately a certified general appraiser, which is his ultimate goal.

April is Work Zone Safety Awareness Month

We ask every employee to wear as much orange as possible this month to help bring awareness to the importance of safety in work zones.



Secretary Rumbaugh Encourages Employees to Participate in Governor Morrissey's Mountaineer Mile

Over 100 employees from the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) joined Secretary Todd Rumbaugh, P.E., for the 'Mountaineer Mile' – a challenge issued by West Virginia Governor Patrick Morrissey for West Virginians to get out and walk at least one mile every day.

From the power walkers to those taking a casual stroll, it was great to be together, and see so much support for Governor Morrissey's important health initiative!

Participants worked their way around the perimeter of the Capitol Complex, beginning and ending in front of the Piedmont Road entrance to Building 5.

We will keep the momentum going and continue our "road to health" Friday, April 4, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., and subsequent Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays in April. Bring a friend, schedule a meeting, or just unplug, but let's do it again.

