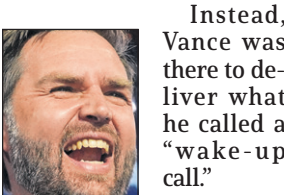


Who is JD Vance, Trump’s VP pick?

1st-year senator fought GOP elites while charting populist path

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — When Ohio Sen. JD Vance traveled to the Munich Security Conference earlier this year, he wasn’t there to reassure Europe and other global allies that America would aid Ukraine in its war against Russia, as all of the other senators were.



Instead, Vance was there to deliver what he called a “wake-up call.”

In a fiery speech, the freshman senator said that just because Russian President Vladimir Putin is a “bad guy” doesn’t mean that America’s own interests shouldn’t come first.

“There are a lot of bad guys all over the world, and I’m much more interested in some of the problems in East Asia right now than I am in Europe,” Vance said, arguing that the U.S. doesn’t have the money or the manufacturing capacity to help Ukraine enough to win the war.

Now elevated into the national spotlight as former President Donald Trump’s

SEE VANCE, 7A

WVU grad will become first woman from state in space

By TY MCCLUNG  
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Chuck Yeager, Jon McBride, Katherine Johnson and Homer Hickam Jr. are all historic West Virginians who have made their names by their contributions to space travel. And soon, Emily Calandrelli will join that list.

Calandrelli, a Morgantown native and WVU alum will soon make history as not only one of the first 100 women in space, but also the first female West Virginian in space.

Calandrelli, 38, announced the news across various social media accounts Tuesday afternoon that she will travel to space on a Blue Origin flight. She said that being an astronaut is a culmination of all of her dreams happening at once, and that she hopes to represent the state in a positive way.

“I am elated to represent West Virginia in this way,” Calandrelli said. “When we see West Virginia in the news, it is not always for the

SEE CALANDRELLI, 7A

# WHEEL IN THE SKY KEEPS ON TURNIN’



KENNY KEMP | Gazette-Mail photos  
Putnam County Fair attendees get a view of the fairgrounds from on high while riding a Ferris wheel Monday, July 15, 2024, in Eleanor. See more photos on Page 8A.

## 2024 Putnam County Fair opens

Staff report

THIS WEEK is a great time to visit the fair. The Putnam County Fair, that is.

Head out to Eleanor through Saturday. While there, visitors can load up on cotton candy, take a Ferris wheel ride, watch as young handlers show off their critters, marvel at the fire breathers on the main stage and much more. Hundreds of fair fanatics will turn out nightly for the sights, sounds and smells.

So go soak it all in. But mostly, hold on to the memories. They will be plenty of them at the fair. Wednesday’s lineup at



Friends and 4-H members wait for the Demolition Derby to begin Monday at the fair.

the Putnam fair includes:

- 6 p.m.: Kids Kar Extravaganza, Motorized Track Complex
- 6:30 p.m.: Heifer, feeder calves show, Show/
- Sale Arena
- 7 p.m.: Wrestling, Entertainment Tent
- 8:30 p.m.: PhirePhamily entertainment, Midway Stage

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### PUTNAM COUNTY FAIR

**WHEN:** Daily through Saturday. Opening times vary. Fair closes daily at 11 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Putnam County Fairgrounds, 1019 Park Road, Eleanor  
**TICKETS:** \$15, one-day pass; \$78, season pass  
**INFO:** [putnamcountyfairwv.com](http://putnamcountyfairwv.com)

## Charleston marijuana measure hits a snag

By ASHLEY PERHAM  
aperham@hdmallc.com

The Charleston City Council has delayed a vote changing the criminal penalties for marijuana.

A bill sponsored by Councilmen Chad Robinson and Frank Annie would make a first offense of simple possession of any amount of marijuana a penalty of only court costs, which would be \$72.

A municipal judge would then dispose of the charge, which could be expunged after a period of time.

The second offense would be a fine up to \$500, but the second offense could take effect only if an offender reoffended in a 12-month period. Otherwise, the first-offense provision and disposition would apply.

If someone is in possession of marijuana with the intent to distribute, they will be charged with a felony offense, which is handled in Kanawha County court.

### Concerns with bill

Several councilmembers shared concern about the bill, saying:

- It could encourage drug dealing
- It could lead to confusion without an amount for simple possession
- A nonjailable offense means no appointed counsel for defendants
- Marijuana is a “gateway drug”

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, researchers disagree on whether marijuana can lead a person to use more dangerous drugs. There is limited evidence that using marijuana increases the risk of using other drugs.

The CDC does say that most people who use marijuana don’t go on to use harder drugs. However, marijuana users who go on to use any other drugs could have a higher risk of dependence or addiction to those drugs.

Changing these penalties would not change the crimes or penalties of driving under the influence or being intoxicated in public.

According to City Attorney Kevin Baker, Charleston would not be the first West Virginia city to make the offense a non-jailable one. Morgantown has a penalty of a fine up to \$15, and Parkersburg has a penalty of a fine up to \$500.

While jail time up to 30 days is currently a potential penalty in Charleston, that penalty is never used in municipal court, said Dave Potters, an assistant city attorney who works in Municipal Court.

### Police response

Councilmembers also had concerns about the effect on law enforcement. Charleston Police Chief Scott Dempsey answered questions in the meeting.

Dempsey urged councilmembers to have caution

SEE COUNCIL, 7A

### INSIDE TODAY

Where does LG Electronics stand, 6 months after W.Va. initiative was announced?

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**CHARLEY WEST SAYS:**  
I don't think it's a game of chance to say there's just something so undeniably American about a county fair.



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