





# Crab line longer than it used to be

## CRAB FEAST NOTEBOOK

BY CASSIE SHANER  
The Dominion Post

Bill Hedrick's record is 39. That's the most crabs he has ever eaten at the annual Crab Feast sponsored by the National Capital Area Chapter (NCAC) of the WVU Alumni Association. But he doubted he would set a new record this year as he cracked open his sixth crab Saturday. Crab Feast attendees can eat all the crab they want, but they're limited to six per trip to the buffet line. And it's tougher than it used to be to get through the line, Hedrick said. "But I'm going to get another dozen, at least," said Hedrick, a history teacher at Morgantown High School.

**Volunteers help prepare food at event**  
Tony Hylton, of Bruceton Mills, comes to the Crab Feast for the food, but not to eat it. He's been cooking hot dogs at the annual event for more than 30 years. Chesapeake Seafood Caterers prepared the crabs and shrimp Saturday, but the rest of the food was made by NCAC volunteers.



Cassie Shaner/The Dominion Post

**Former WVU quarterback Major Harris** signs a football for Nick Ropp and greets fellow WVU graduates Jae and Cory Hoeksema, their daughter Chloe and friend Bill McCartney.

Hylton, who was soaked in sweat, said he doesn't mind the hard work, though. "The university is so important to so many people," said Hylton, who used to live in the Washington, D.C., area. "It feels good to give back, and there's a lot of friends here."

**Mascot: Event 'good warmup'**  
Brock Burwell, WVU's 2010-11 Mountaineer, said his buckskin suit was "a little warm," but he enjoyed Saturday's crab feast nonetheless. "This is the best alumni event I've been to all summer," said Burwell, who has been traveling the state. "It's a great turnout, and you

couldn't ask for better weather. ... It's a good warmup for the first game."

**1954 mascot attends first Crab Feast**  
Burwell wasn't the only Mountaineer mascot at Fort Hunt Park. John Coyner, who carried the rifle in 1954, came from Wichita, Kan., to attend the crab feast for the first time. Coyner's college roommate, Paul Farmer, helped found the event and invited him to come. "I've seen a lot of people," Coyner said. "I got to meet the Mountaineer and had a nice visit. I told him he's in for the best experience of his life. It's quite an honor."

**Major Harris attends his first Crab Feast**  
Several crab feast attendees were honored to meet former Mountaineers quarterback Major Harris, who also attended the event for the first time. They lined up to snap photos, get autographs and reminisce about their favorite WVU football moments. Dave Seldomridge, of Arlington, had Harris sign a WVU mug and window decal. "I used to watch him play ball," Seldomridge said. "He was incredible."

**Bert Sharp on the ball at football games**  
Bert Sharp graduated from WVU in 1951, but he never missed one of Harris' games. In fact, he didn't miss a game for 20 years. Sharp, who worked as a scientist for the Department of Defense before retiring, attended every home and away game from 1987-2007. "I retired in 1986, so what else are you going to do?" said Sharp, a longtime Crab Feast attendee. "There were some good times, but let me tell you, there were some long trips home."

## CRAB

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uate who lives in nearby Annandale, Va., attended the crab feast for the fifth time Saturday at Alexandria's Fort Hunt Park. "This gets bigger every year," she said. "It's great fun, and I meet new people every time." Farmer and about 25 other WVU alumni met for the first crab feast in 1977. They gathered at then-NCAC president James Edmundson's house and cooked the crab themselves in the backyard. Afterward, Farmer got calls from other WVU alumni who said they would like to attend. NCAC officials moved the event to Cameron Station, a military base in Alexandria, the following year, and it's grown in popularity ever since. This year's event attracted about 750 people who feasted on 55 bushels of Chesapeake Bay blue crab, 450 pounds of shrimp, hot dogs, buffalo wings, corn on the cob, watermelon and other picnic fare. They also played cornhole and listened to live bluegrass music, creating a tailgate party atmosphere at Fort Hunt Park. "There's food, friends, beer and crab. What else could you want?" said Mark Coleman, a WVU alumnus who lives in the Washington, D.C., area. Coleman and his friends set up their own shaded picnic area under a blue and gold WVU Mountaineers canopy. They've attended the crab feast for the past 10 years, and Coleman said it's an opportunity for them to catch up and make plans for the upcoming football season.

For others, it's a family reunion. Glenna Linville didn't go to WVU, but her niece did. She joined family members from Florida and New York at the crab feast for the third year in a row on Saturday. "We use it as a way to celebrate WVU and have a family reunion," Linville said. "We wouldn't miss this for the world. We have a lot of fun." WVU alumni Pam and Barry Casto came from Point Pleasant to meet up with their son, Chris, who also graduated from WVU. He and several others recommended the crab feast to them. "They said it was fantastic," Pam Casto said. "And who doesn't love crab?" NCAC President Kevin Nodianos said "Mountaineer pride" and positive feedback keep people coming back to the crab feast, which serves as a fundraiser for the NCAC's John F. Nicholas Jr. Scholarship Fund, year after year. "These guys that have been doing this have been doing it for so long," Nodianos said, referring to Farmer and the others who originated the event. "They know what they're doing. It's a lot of fun." WVU President James Clements said the event's growth reinforces the family atmosphere among WVU alumni. "This is pure energy," said Clements, who donned shorts decorated with crabs for the occasion. "You've got hundreds of Mountaineers here. They're dedicated. They come every year. And they bring their families, which is appropriate because we're like a big family."

## ROBBERY

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money. The employee didn't have any cash and Martisko left, deputies said. On Saturday, Martisko was taken to the North Central Regional Jail after appearing before Magistrate James Neighbors, who set bond at \$50,000. His preliminary hearing will be at 9 a.m. Aug. 30.

In a press release from the Sheriff's Department, Kisner credited hot spot managers across the area for aiding the investigation. "The assistance of several Hot Spot managers networking between themselves and the sheriff's department was imperative to the quick resolution of this case," he said. He didn't return calls in time for this report.

## SENATE

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appointed by Manchin to replace Byrd until voters make their pick in November. That person will serve the remainder of Byrd's term, which ends in January 2013. In addition to Manchin and Howard, those in Saturday's special primary election include, in ballot order, Democrats Ken Hechler and Sheirl Fletcher; Republicans Thomas Ressler, Harry Bruner, Frank Kubic, John Raese, Dan Rebich, Kenneth Culp, Lynette Kennedy McQuain, Scott Williams and Mac Warner; and Mountain Party candidate Jesse Johnson. Early voting began Friday and runs through Wednesday. Those winning their party's nomination will face off in November's general election.

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