



Mountain Eagle photos - Briana Webster
 the Walker County American
 as Carroll Wilson explains the
 page assessments. The Red
 up a two-day "tabletop" train-
 on Friday and today.

so they could handle a large
 flux of people, as in the case of
 hurricane Katrina.
 "If there are no questions, let's
 get ready to move," Brown said.
 The five-member disaster assess-
 ment team consisted of Brown,
 Jamie Dill and his wife, Linda,
 Mike Phillips and Carroll Wilson.
 Dill and Phillips are members of
 the West Central Alabama Amate-
 ur Radio Club, "a group of
 licensed amateur radio operators,
 which features storm spotter
 trained individuals and special ser-
 vice-oriented volunteers who pro-
 vide emergency radio communica-
 tions to the local Emergency
 Management Agency (EMA) and to
 the American Red Cross in times of
 disaster," according to the Web site
 www.wcbarc.org.

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Wade: Some concerns about coal tax

By ED HOWELL
 Eagle News Editor

Bevill State Community College President Harold Wade said while he is concerned about the passage of the coal severance tax that funds the school's mine rescue team, he said the school's overall budget is good and there should be no reason for an increase in fees this fall.



Dr. Harold
 Wade

Wade, who has been involved recently with the search for a new president at Southern Union State Community College in east central Alabama, hit on several points during a brief interview Friday, but the biggest concern lay with the tax, which is out of a Senate committee and awaiting final approval in the Senate.

The Web site of the Alabama Legislature stated Friday that Tuesday's session will be the 23rd day out of a maximum of 30 meeting days that the Legislature can hold in a regular session. Local legislators have predicted the bill will pass by the end of the session, although they have lobbied senators for good placement on the Senate calendar.

Wade said the mining team is not just used to rescue miners, but also to rehabilitate mines to help them operate again. For that reason, the team has been at Drummond's Shoals Creek mine in west Jefferson County, which has been shut down since Feb. 24 due to a fire and roof collapse caused by methane buildup and ventilation problems. Approximately 600 min-

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Wade

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ers have been laid off.

"They've been there a couple of weeks. They're trying to help recover the mine," he said.

Wade said passing the tax will be crucial to the program without having to turn to the industry.

"I've been very upfront with the mining industry. I've said, 'If we don't get that funding, you'll have to pay to get the service.' They understand that," Wade said.

The bill renews the coal severance tax, which expires at the end of this fiscal year and is earmarked for the state docks. When the docks make a profit, Jefferson, Tuscaloosa and Walker counties each are paid \$500,000.

The revenue is used for different items in each county. The tax is earmarked in Jefferson County to be paid out for different items. In Tuscaloosa it is used for a number of items, including payment of the debt on the Mercedes-Benz plant in Vance and for library services.

In Walker County, \$300,000 is paid to Beville State, the bulk of which is used to pay for the state mine rescue team. Some of it is also used to help retrain laid-off miners.

Also, \$200,000 is set aside for the Walker County Economic and Industrial Development Authority. The funding is basically the sole funding for the authority, as it does not receive any direct appropriations from the Walker County Commission.

Wade said with the recent mining tragedies around the nation and the state, officials will likely put new focus on the program.

"With all the new emphasis on safety, that program will get a lot of attention," Wade said, adding there will be more demands for new and existing technology, as well as new regulations.

"We're not going to jump on the first thing that comes by. First we've got to see what is being mandated," Wade said. "Who knows what they will end up doing in Congress? It's going to be a process we'll go through. It's not going to happen tomorrow."

On another front, he said the newly passed Education Budget sent to Gov. Bob Riley puts Beville State in good position, with 5 percent raises that is fully funded and with certainty that Beville State will get an increase in funding.

However, Wade said the state Department of Postsecondary Education has

not broken down the amounts that will be given to each college, so that he does not know much more than the college will see an increase.

He also said it appears Beville State students will not have to worry about an increase in costs.

"There is no reason to raise fees and tuition," Wade said, adding that in enrollment, "we're holding our own."

As for the college's building program, Wade said he now expects to bid out the new math and science building for the Jasper Campus in May. That building will also include a new lunchroom and meeting area.

The roof is going on now at the new Pickens County campus, and a new roof will be in place in Fayette in a few weeks. Those two buildings will be ready to move in this fall, while a new health and science building in Hamilton will open a short time afterward.

Because of Beville State's open enrollment policy, the school will not be affected by the delay in grading SAT tests from across the nation, although he said four-year colleges will be hurt.

"If you show up at our door breathing, we'll find a place to put you," Wade said with a laugh.

Addresses

From A1

households within the Sumiton city limits, including houses in the James and

with Sumiton it's been an issue," she said.

why it's important. To us, it doesn't make any difference,"

pared to two in Sumiton. If the address changes were