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## 9-11 license plate would fund new scholarship

### Donn Marshall's plan to benefit emergency workers' survivors

Staff, wire reports

CHARLESTON -- Former Morgantown resident Donn Marshall believes West Virginia should start a scholarship fund to help the survivors of West Virginia's EMS personnel, firefighters and police officers who die in the line of duty.

Delegate Barbara Evans Fleischauer, D-Monongalia, is taking up his cause.

Marshall -- who runs a foundation in memory of his wife, Shelley, who died in the 9-11 attack on the Pentagon -- met with the House women's caucus at a tea to discuss his proposal and the Shelley A. Marshall Foundation.

The scholarships would be funded by a special Sept. 11 license plate.

"We want people to start thinking about it," said Marshall, who lives in Shepherdstown with the couple's two children.

West Virginia unveiled a Sept. 11 plate last year that provides no special funding. Voters would have to approve a constitutional amendment to direct license plate revenue outside the state road fund.

Fleischauer is sponsoring a constitutional revision to meet that goal, and will present it to the constitutional revision committee, which she chairs, as early as Wednesday.

"These people work every day to protect us. We want to make sure something is done to take care of them," Fleischauer said. "The reason we want to include spouses is obvious, in that when one parent is killed the other may be forced into a position to advance their education so they can best provide for the family."

Fleischauer said she doesn't know how much money the effort would raise, or how much the scholarships would be, but the money will be put into a separate fund within the state Department of Transportation.

A board of directors would be named to choose scholarship recipients.

The license plate would be sold at Division of Motor Vehicles offices throughout the state, along with dozens of other specialty plates. But this plate would join only one other fund-raising plate in the state.

Last year, 26,000 drivers bought the Non-Game Wildlife plates, which feature a whitetail deer or a rose-

breasted grosbeak. The plates brought in \$393,000 to the Division of Natural Resources said Hoy Murphy, DNR spokesman.

Each plate costs \$55; \$15 of that goes to the DNR.

A number of states have commissioned Sept. 11 license plates. Several have earmarked the proceeds for special causes. Missouri's plate funds homeland security efforts, for instance, while Illinois' helps communities afford emergency training and equipment.

"I think it's a good idea," said Delegate Jody Smirl, R-Cabell. "We've wondered for a long time what we could do to contribute to survivors."

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