

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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FREE

Harvest OKs funds for power project Substation, line to go in at CCBC

The Harvest Foundation will invest \$11 million on the construction a new substation and transmission line to help provide reliable, clean electricity at Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre (CCBC).

The funds, which comprise about half of the \$22 million total estimated cost of the substation and transmission line, were announced by Harvest.

Funding for this project is unique for Harvest, which usually awards grants. But in this case, the cost will be repaid by Appalachian Pow-

er Co. based on usage from tenants at CCBC over the next 15 years, according to Harvest Foundation President Allyson Rothrock.

Once a tenant locates to the park, Appalachian will refund construction costs of the substation and transmission line based on revenues from each new customer, the press release stated.

Without the substation and line, there would not be sufficient electrical power for advanced manufacturing facilities, Rothrock said, adding that would be a huge obstacle to recruiting com-

panies to Commonwealth Crossing.

"It's something we have to have there," she said. "It's a lot of money. We're fronting it; they will pay it back. We believe there will be users. We want Mark (EDC President/CEO Mark Heath) to be able to recruit and say we have clean power."

Commonwealth Crossing, at the Virginia and North Carolina border and U.S. 220 South, is a 720-acre industrial park that will soon be home to two projects. PressGlass, Europe's largest independent

flat-glass processing operation, announced in July that it will locate a facility at CCBC, and the Commonwealth Centre for Advanced Training (CCAT), a state-

of-the-art training center for CCBC tenants, is under construction and scheduled to open in early 2019.

Rothrock added that of-

(See Power p. 4A)

Foundation invests \$22.3M in latest round of grants

Projects as diverse as the Philpott Marina expansion, a new lab to train nursing students, help for people signing up for Medicaid and a new electrical substation to help attract industries to Henry County will ben-

efit from the latest round of Harvest Foundation funding.

Those projects are among the 12 grants and a community investment totaling \$22.3 million that were to Henry County will ben-

(See Grants p. 6A)

The holidays have arrived

Right: A 30-foot Christmas "tree" was lit at the R.P. Gravelly-A.J. Lester Art Garden at the corner of Mulberry Road and Starling Avenue in Martinsville recently. The display was created by Ian Hogg, presented by Piedmont Arts located nearby, and sponsored by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Martinizing Dry Cleaning. Hogg, of Martinsville, has created spectacular light displays at his home and other locations for several years.

Below: Santa waves to the crowd from his float in Saturday's Ridgeway Christmas Parade.



More photos, Page 7B

Cases' ties mulled; Short deaths, Wis. case may be similar

By Debbie Hall

An incident in Wisconsin bears a striking resemblance to the 2002 disappearance of Jennifer Short and the shooting deaths of her parents, Michael and Mary Short.

In Barron, Wis., Jayme Closs, 13, has been missing since early October. Her parents -- James Closs, 56, and Denise Closs, 46 -- were found shot to death in their home, according to online reports.

Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry said "I have reached out and called" federal authorities in hopes they will contact their counterparts in Wisconsin and have them call Perry so the departments can compare the cases.

"It does seem there are similarities to the cases," Perry said. But, "you have to be objective. It could be related to the Short case, but that's not a certainty."

Regardless, the investigation into the Short family killings continues, Perry said of the incident that began on Aug. 15, 2002.

That morning, Mary and Michael Short were found dead in their Bassett home. Both had suffered single gunshot wounds to their heads, authorities said.

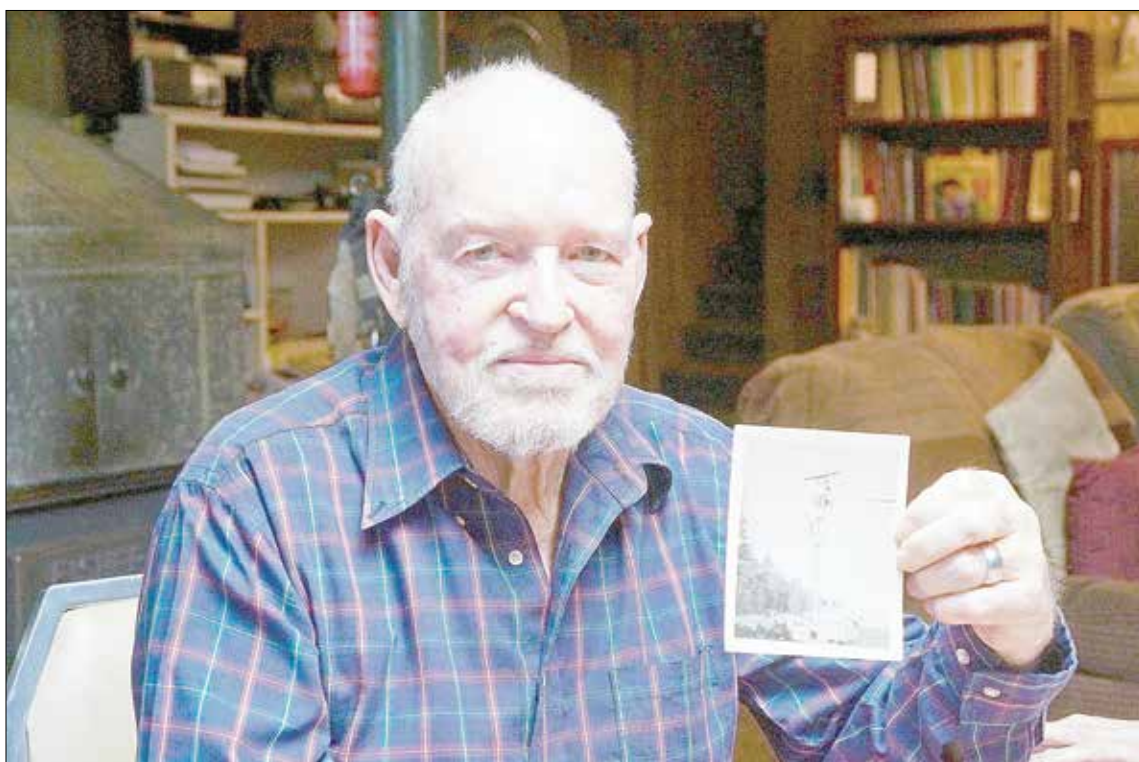
Jennifer Short, 9, was missing and initially presumed abducted by her parents' killer or killers, authorities said. Her remains were found about six weeks later in a remote area of Rockingham County, N.C.

Jennifer Short also suffered a single gunshot wound to the head, authorities have said.

Although more than 16 years have passed, "no one in the community has ever forgotten the case," Perry said.

(See Perry p. 7A)

Investing in the future County man was among first workers at Philpott Dam



Robert Hamby moved to Henry County in 1949 to work on the construction of Philpott Dam. At left, he holds a photograph of the construction. At right, he is one of the men shown working on the cable system for the project.

By Ginny Wray

Robert L. Hamby jokes that he invested in Philpott Dam.

No, he isn't referring to the hours he spent helping build at the dam nearly 70 years ago. He is talking about the quarter he put in the first bucket of concrete ever poured for the dam.

And it wasn't just Philpott Dam north of Bassett. Hamby put 25

cents in the concrete of several dams he worked on during a lifelong career as an ironworker.

Why? "I was young and dumb," he said recently, laughing.

His wife, Dorothy, puts it differently. He was leaving something precious, she said, adding, "He was leaving his mark."

The 65th anniversary of Philpott Dam and Powerhouse was marked

in September, and Hamby was there nearly from the start. Now he is nearing his 90th birthday and his eye sight is not what it once was, but he still can pick himself out in a photograph walking mid-air on the conveyor system he helped install and remember the work he did there.

THE BEGINNING

Hamby was born in Nashville,

Tenn., the son of an ironworker who traveled across the United States to work on such famous projects as the Golden Gate Bridge and the Hoover Dam. His family traveled with him, and his son learned the trade.

In 1949, after finishing high school and working on construction sites outside Atlanta and Macon, Ga., the younger Hamby joined a

(See Hamby p. 3A)

C-PEG's Startup application process is underway

The application process for the Chamber's Partnership for Economic Growth (C-PEG) Startup Martinsville-Henry County is underway for the 2019 round.

Startup Martinsville-Henry County is an entrepreneurial mentoring program with an intensive eight-week entrepreneurial boot-camp program for startups and four-week boot-camp for growing companies. The application process is competitive and requires that applicants agree to the program guidelines.

January 8, 2019, is the application deadline.

Partners include C-PEG, City of Martinsville, Henry County, the Campbell Family Group and the George W. Lester, II fund through the Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia Inc. Additionally, Appalachian Power is a sponsor of Startup and Grow Martinsville-Henry County, and American National Bank is the small business sponsor for Chamber and C-PEG events.

Since 2015, when the initiative originally began as Startup Martinsville in the Uptown Martinsville area with a Community Business Launch grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the geographic area has grown to include the entire footprint in the City of Martinsville and Henry County thanks to support from both locales and private sector funding.

To date, the initiative has successfully graduated 103 individuals from its training program, awarded 27 businesses with over \$170,000 in cash and in-kind funding. These businesses have created over

\$800,000 in new capital investment and created 90 new jobs.

C-PEG partners with Patrick Henry Community College to deliver the entrepreneurial boot camp sessions as well as Longwood's Small Business Development Center, SCORE and the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation and a host of staff from the City and County, local entrepreneurs and business experts.

Martinsville Mayor Gene Teague said, "We are pleased with the progress of our entrepreneurial development efforts and Startup Martinsville-Henry County is a great example of how our partnership with CPEG is continuing to be beneficial to our entire community."

Jim Adams, chairman of the Henry County Board of Supervisors said, "Henry County is pleased to continue to support this effective small business initiative. The program consistently demonstrates that it is an effective way to build entrepreneurship in our community."

The application packet is available online at www.martinsville.com/startup.

Contact the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce with any questions at 632-6401 or mhc-coc@mhcchamber.com.

Martinsville-Henry County Chamber's Partnership for Economic Growth (C-PEG) is an independent, yet closely aligned, charitable affiliate of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce. C-PEG is charged with funding and supporting the area's efforts to improve economic growth.






A Small Business Mentoring, Boot Camp and Business Plan Competition

You are invited to apply to our Startup or Grow Martinsville-Henry County Program

To apply for the startup or grow sessions, download the entire application packet at www.martinsville.com/startup. Complete your application and submit it to mhccoc@mhcchamber.com by **January 8, 2019**. Applications may also be submitted in person or by mail at 115 Broad Street, Martinsville, VA 24112, before 5:00 p.m. (local time) on the day of the deadline.

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Hamby

(cont. from page 1A)

dam project in Cartersville, Ga.

"The cable system for Philpott came out of Georgia, and I was hired with it," along with Joe Hylton, who originally was from Wilmington, N.C., Hamby said. Later, two or three other men from Arkansas joined the group.

They started working at 8 a.m. six days a week and "worked until whenever," Hamby said. At first he lived in a room atop Russell's Grill in North Bassett and was paid the union scale of \$2 an hour with double pay for overtime, he added.

The men's first job at Philpott was to erect 125-foot tall towers and put up a cable system that carried buckets of cement and equipment across the Smith River. It was dangerous work high off the ground, Hamby recalled, estimating it took them about a month to create the cable system.

According to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers notes from 1950 on file at the Bassett Historical Society, the main 3-inch diameter cable was suspended on a 17,000-foot span. The entire assembly was designed to handle a safe working load of 20 tons.

It was electronically operated and controlled in the head tower. According to the Corps of Engineers, the operator and signalman in a cofferdam — a timber structure filled with compacted earth that kept water from the construction site — could not see each other. They communicated by phones and bells.

Hamby remembers pinching prongs together to sound the bells in the operator's room in a prearranged sequence to indicate that path of the buckets of concrete. A certain number of bells meant the bucket was to go up, another number meant it was to go down and so on, he said.

According to the Corps of Engineers



Above, Philpott Dam construction begins to control the Smith River.

information, concrete was purchased elsewhere and shipped by rail to a facility in South Bassett. It was stored in silos.

When it was needed, the mixed concrete was dumped into a railroad hopper car and transferred to the 8-foot bucket suspended from the cableway. The bucket moved along the cable until the concrete was deposited in the blocks, or sections of the dam.

Hamby said each bucket held eight yards of concrete, and they poured several hundred yards in each 8- to 10-hour work day. According to the Corps of Engineers, the project would require 265,000 barrels of cement. That would equal about 1,060 carloads or 20 trainloads of cement and 610 tons of sand and crushed stone.

"The tonnage would fill a fleet of 10-ton trucks 231 miles long if parked bumper to bumper if all hauled at once," the corps' notes added.

The first concrete for the dam was poured

at 6:50 p.m. March 13, 1950, according to the Martinsville Bulletin. About 16 tons of concrete were poured into the bed of the river as the work began.

"Before midnight, 2 1/2 feet of concrete was within the forms for the first monolith to be constructed. The dam was to consist of 22 upright sections (monoliths) and be 920 feet wide and 219 feet high," the Bulletin stated.

The July 18, 1967, Martinsville Bulletin described the construction scene:

"Watching the various phases of construction was fascinating. It went on day and night, winter and summer. During hot weather, huge refrigerators kept the concrete at a constant temperature. During the winter, the concrete was heated as it was being mixed. And there was always a big crowd there to watch the concrete being moved in huge buckets by electrically controlled cables in the spot where workers were putting it into pre-fabricated forms. It was

quite a sight watching this monstrous gorge being tamed by man."

The Philpott Dam project was authorized by Congress in 1944 to generate power and to halt flooding that had plagued the Bassett area. After work on it began in 1949, the dam provided flood control by 1951 and in 1953, the dam and all three generators in its powerhouse were operating, according to Bassett Historical Center files. At that time, it had a combined capacity of 14,000 kilowatt of electricity.

The nearly \$14 million cost included the dam, powerhouse, site clearing, relocations and land in the reservoir created by the dam. About 400 people work to construct the concrete gravity dam.

HAMBY'S CAREER

Hamby worked on the Philpott Dam from 1949 until "Uncle Sam came and got me" in October 1950, he said. He went into the Army and served in Korea from February 1951 to June 1952.

He left behind his wife, the former Dorothy Turner, whom he had married in December 1950. A graduate of Bassett High School, she lived with her mother in Bassett and worked at Stone Mercantile while he was overseas. After that, she traveled with him and worked until their two daughters were born.

After Hamby got out of the service, he took a job at a DuPont plant in Aiken S.C. After about three years, Hamby took to the road again, working on projects in Gainesville, Ga., Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Arkansas before he returned to Henry County to work on construction jobs at the DuPont plant.

"I wound up on Smith Mountain Lake, working on the dam," he said, and stayed for 10 years. He was part of a group kept on by the contractor after that dam was built and was going to work on a dam on the New River until it was halted by an environmental issue.

Hamby then joined Martin Processing,

working as a maintenance mechanic for 15 years until he retired at age 60. That job meant he could be home with two daughters, who were in high school and "needed Daddy at home," he said. Martin Processing was the predecessor to Eastman in Fieldale.

Of all the places Hamby has lived and worked, his favorite is "right here" in Henry County, he said. "I like it here better than anywhere I've ever been," he added.

Now, Hamby and his wife live in the home they built in the Reed Creek area. Their daughter, Lisa Mathis, lives next door; their other daughter, Terry Kendrick, was killed in an auto accident in 1996. The Hambys have four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Hamby said he is proud of the work he did at Philpott Dam, but he did not elaborate. Dorothy did.

"He put his body and soul in it," she said proudly. Along with his 25 cents.

Parents may find a helpful hand, compassion if they 'Call Granny'

By Ginny Wray

Have you been home alone with a fussy baby and wished you had someone to talk to about it?

Or maybe your toddler would rather throw his vegetables than eat them and you need tips on changing his behavior.

Or perhaps you are new to the area and don't know where to find the services your young children need.

And maybe you thought that if you could just call your grandmother, she would have a sympathetic ear and time-tested advice.

Soon, you will be able to do just that. A unique, free service, called "Just Call Granny," is being created to assist parents and caretakers of small children. It tentatively is expected to begin March 31.

"Just Call Granny provides caring, trained volunteers who offer comfort, encour-

agement and resources to Martinsville-Henry County parents and caretakers of small children through a nighttime phone service," its mission statement reads.

Organizers are partnering with area churches to provide volunteers who would be given a cell phone that parents and caregivers could call for information, support and prayer between 6 and 10 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays.

"The beauty of the program is volunteers could use their time and talents in their homes. This allows many people in our faith community who have trouble getting out due to health issues a chance to minister to others," according to information on the pilot program.

At least 30 volunteers are needed to start the program. They will be asked to sign up for one shift once or twice a month

for three months.

They will serve in teams of two — one as a call volunteer who would take phone calls during the four-hour shift, and one as a lead volunteer who would help in case of an emergency such as a sickness of the call volunteer and to offer support to the call volunteer if needed.

Volunteers will be trained by local experts and will have community resource lists and other information.

They must be 21 years of age or older; consent to and pass a criminal background check; know how to use a cell phone; have a flexible daily schedule; be friendly, compassionate and patient with good listening skills; must attend and complete orientation and training; must complete the screening process through an application process; and be willing to attend Just Call Granny meetings when sched-

uled, four times a year.

According to the pilot program information, the idea for Just Call Granny originated with Cindy Edwards, a retired teacher, mother, grandmother and wife of a retired United Methodist pastor. In April 2016, she learned from a fellow retired teacher, the late Jo Carter, about the 44 pinwheels placed at Roselawn Burial Park by the Exchange Club of Martinsville and Henry County and CASA for Child Abuse Awareness Month. Each pinwheel is in memory of a youngster who died of child abuse in Virginia.

"This display became the inspiration for a vision to be formulated," Edwards wrote. "It caused me to think about the number of families that live in our community that do not have a positive voice in their lives and how we as a church and community could become a supportive voice.

"The second part of the vision was helping people of all ages experience the joy of being in ministry despite age or any physical restrictions that they may have," she continued.

She prayed and shared her vision with her pastor, Kameron Wilds, and a visioning team at Smith Memorial United Methodist. That laid the foundation for Just Call Granny.

"I feel strongly that the Just Call Granny vision needs to be shared with my brothers and sisters in Christ and other members of our community. With God's guidance and direction, our community could become the voice to change the circumstance of a while and a family," Edwards added.

To launch the service, organizers plan to partner with local day care centers to spread information about Just Call Granny. Promo-

tional baskets will be placed in day cares and will include a small gift for parents, a Just Call Granny magnet, homemade prayer square and a brochure. The baskets also will include a stuffed lamb wearing a T-shirt with the Just Call Granny logo.

For more information, email Just Call Granny at jcgmh16@gmail.com; visit the Just Call Granny Facebook page or smithmemorialumc.com; or call Edwards at 647-1664.

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The columnists' views appearing on this page do not necessarily reflect the editorial position of *The Henry County Enterprise*.

New company not resting on its hammocks

Dam Good Equipment producing outdoor equipment in Martinsville

By Ginny Wray

Most people look at a hammock and think of a lazy afternoon in the shade of tall trees. Three local entrepreneurs look at the same hammock and see their future.

Randy Trent and Ricky Joyce created Dam Good Equipment, which makes, markets and sells hammocks and other outdoor equipment. They are the co-owners of the company; Joyce's wife, Janine, is executive director.

The company was founded in June 2017, starting as an importer and reseller of outdoor sports products that were made overseas. But when it experienced about \$20,000 (retail value) in mistakes, such as quality problems, mislabeling and defective merchandise, "it infuriated me," Trent said.

So the three began looking for an American supplier and found Sharon Sleeper at Mollie's Originals, which does custom sewing in uptown Martinsville. They were steered to her by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Valerie Harper at the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp., they said.

By January of this year, Dam Good Equipment was in production with Mollie's Originals sewing single, double and Big Dam hammocks out of two types of American-made nylon.

The Big Dam hammock is unique — and aptly named. It is 18 feet long and 7 feet wide and can hold up to five people. "To our knowledge, it is the biggest hammock made in the United States," Trent said.

It also sells out each time one is made, he added.

Making the hammocks in this country is important to Trent, of Bassett, and the Joyces, of Axton. Their goal was to make affordable, high quality products and



Patrick Moran, son of Tim Moran, one of the owners of Skyline Tree Service, relaxes in a Dam Good Equipment hammock strung between two trees. The photo is on Skyline's Facebook page. Dam Good Equipment also has done photographs with the local SPCA, which used the pictures on its Facebook page and in its newsletter.



Shown with some of Dam Good Equipment's hammocks are (from left) co-owner Ricky Joyce; executive director Janine Joyce; Eddie Bowman, who does marketing and social media for the company; and co-owner Randy Trent.

when those products are made in the United States, the company can control the quality, Trent said.

"Now we can inspect each (hammock) before it's shipped. We know who made this," he said, picking up a red and blue hammock folded into a small, bright yellow nylon bag. He showed the stitching on the hammock and explained that he believes it makes the hammock stronger than others on the market.

Dam Good Equipment's hammocks sell for \$75 for a double, which Trent said is \$25 less than the average national brand that is imported. Plus, Dam Good's

price includes the straps used to connect the hammocks to the posts or trees, while other brands sell their straps separately, he said.

In addition, "we are really proud" of the fact that hammocks can be customized and delivered in 21 days for less than \$100, Trent said. Embroidery also is available, he said, such as the rooster embroidered on a hammock for the Rooster Walk music festival last spring.

Dam Good Equipment also sells sleeping bags, which are imported due to the challenge of working with down filling, as well as Dam hats and



Dam Good Equipment co-owner Randy Trent holds a small nylon bag that contains one of the company's hammocks.

fleece compact blankets made at Mollie's. It also plans to add its label to a clothing line, Trent said.

The company's name "is a pun, obviously," said Trent, who added that the name just occurred to him one day. "I love Philpott Lake and Philpott Dam," and the shape of the dam is reflected in the firm's logo. It also differentiates the company from others, he said.

It also brings out people's sense of humor. "We hear it all," added Ricky Joyce of the name, with a laugh. But, he added, they shorten the name to "DGE" in front of children.

Dam Good Equipment promotes its products on Facebook and holds a weekly drawing to give away a hammock. It takes part in festivals, such as one scheduled this fall at Mountain Valley Brewing, and Skyline Tree Service has photos of the hammocks in use on its Facebook page.

"I'm surprised at the amount of recognition we've received this year," Trent said. He often hears people say, "I've heard of you guys" and "I've seen your stickers on cars."

But there have been challenges. For instance, Trent said at first, they wanted to offer a lot of different products, but they learned they needed to focus on their core product line and their

brand image.

The products are sold online at dam-tough.com, anytime-USA.com and eBay, Janine Joyce said. Locally, they are available at Anglers Choice and the Smith River Outfitters.

The company's goal is to grow, quickly. "We have plans to continue growing and investing and reaching a higher market with national advertising. ... We're all

focused to become financially viable. Our goal is to have 10 to 15 sewers in 12 to 18 months," Trent said.

Trent and the Joyces all are from this area and work at other jobs in addition to Dam Good Equipment. Trent works in the health care field, Ricky Joyce works for the Virginia Department of Transportation, and Janine Joyce does online sales and has a bookkeeping background. They met about nine years ago at Cross Point Church.

All three hope to be working full-time with Dam Good Equipment in 12 to 18 months, Trent said.

They have no other employees now, but do have a core team. For instance, Eddie Bowman of Bassett does marketing and social media, which has included a photo spread with the local SPCA, which used it on its Facebook page and newsletter.

The business is "100 percent personally financed," Trent said, declining to reveal company sales.

It also is 100 percent committed to growing in this area.

"We believe in Martinsville and Henry County" and think many positive things can happen locally, Trent said. They are investing here so they can be part of that change, he said.

Power

(cont. from page 1A)

officials hope to have the substation and line done by the time PressGlass starts hiring.

"This project is necessary to ensure that PressGlass and future tenants at Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre will have the most reliable power quality to the park," she said. "With unemployment at record lows and the consistent amount of new business announcements and existing business expansions, we truly are turning a page in our community. It is imperative that we keep this positive momentum moving forward by provid-

ing the best possible infrastructure for industry in Martinsville-Henry County."

Henry County Administrator Tim Hall said the substation will be close to the edge of Commonwealth Crossing that is near the southbound lane of U.S. 220. It will be near the rail line at CCBC but will not interfere with that line or a potential spur from it, he said.

A similar project was done at the Patriot Centre industrial park several years ago.

"We knew at some point we would have to have an on-site substation" at Commonwealth Crossing, Hall

said, adding that there is no industry in that area now that would draw the amount of power the substation will provide.

But the industries being sought for Commonwealth Crossing "can't have a 5- to 10-second blip" in electrical service because it would halt production and mean the loss of the product at that point, Hall said.

The 5.75-mile transmission line will come off electrical lines north of the Magna Vista High School

area, he said.

The project is a partnership among the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp., Henry County, Appalachian Power Co. and The Harvest Foundation. Other partners may be announced as the project advances.

"Commonwealth Crossing is a great example of what can be accomplished with teamwork," Hall said.

"The Harvest Foundation's decision to help with this latest project speaks well of its com-

mitment to this community."

Heath added, "A fully developed Commonwealth Crossing is an asset few communities can offer to major advanced manufacturing clients, especially communities of our size. CCBC is a deal changer for Martinsville-Henry County, and the EDC is privileged to be a part of the team making this happen."

The Harvest Foundation is a nonprofit organization estab-

lished in 2002 by the sale of Memorial Hospital. It seeks to invest in community initiatives that support economic development in Martinsville-Henry County.

To date, the foundation has put more than \$119 million in grant funds back into the community and has an annual grants budget of roughly \$10 million. To find out more about Harvest, visit www.theharvestfoundation.org.

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Fire officials use drones as tools



Officials check out the city's drone and its landing pad.

By Debbie Hall
Martinsville Fire and EMS have a new tool to help many tasks, according to Fire Marshal Ted Anderson and Kris Shrader, deputy fire chief.

The fire department now has two drones — both purchased with grant funds -- to use in post fire investigations, search and rescue operations and even to assist the National Weather Service (NWS) access storm damage.

They purchased the first drone in August 2017, Shrader said. The small drone cost \$1,200 at Best Buy and included an iPad and other equipment, he said.

Fire department officials elected to invest in the inexpensive drone to ensure it would work as they hoped, Shrader said, adding that the drone first was used to examine a scene after a fire in Henry County.

The drone captured photos of a breaker box that is believed to have prompted the fire, he said, adding the photos were so clear that officials could zoom in and see the name and other data on the breaker box.

The department decided to buy a second

drone for about \$2,000 in February 2018, Shrader said, and explained that the newer model includes a thermal imaging camera. It also came with additional equipment.

Anderson said Shrader was the first local person to obtain the certification needed to fly the drone, adding that the FCC requires interested agency applicants to complete a test to gain their certification.

"I did some online training. It took about a month to prepare to take the 60-question test," Shrader said. After he passed the test, a temporary certification was issued. Three months later, and after an extensive federal background check, Shrader received the permanent certification.

Andy Powers has since followed suit, and others are in various parts of the testing/certification process, Anderson said.

The department continues to use the drones in various settings, from helping the Virginia State Police investigate the scene of a fatality to helping the NWS by providing photos of storm damage.

Essentially, and in



Fire officials conduct training at the public safety complex



Martinsville's drone was used to photograph storm damage for the National Weather Service.

terms of adaptability and use, "the sky's the limit, no pun intended," Shrader said. He explained that drones also can be used to "get a bird's eye view" when planning events, generating GIS maps for economic development projects, if needed, and helping with investigations of vehicle accidents.

Center to celebrate 30 years of service

Edwards Adult Day Center will celebrate 30 years of service to Martinsville and Henry County on Dec. 13 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 431 Commonwealth Boulevard in Martinsville.

The event will honor those who were instrumental in getting the center up and running, said Patsy L. Dillard, executive director.

Invited are the officers that signed who signed the agency's by laws, including Alice Culler,

the first executive director, the Edwards family, the board of directors, and all families who have had loved ones to attend the center in past years.

There will be ornaments of those who have passed away for families to take home with them to hang on their personal Christmas trees, as well as a Christmas dinner with staff members and their families.

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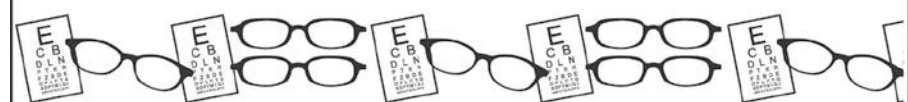
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Grants

(cont. from page 1A)



Commonwealth Crossing Business Center takes shape with construction of the Commonwealth Centre for Advanced Training (CCAT) building.

approved by the Harvest Board of Directors recently.

"I think we've got some game changers," said Harvest President Allyson Rothrock.

Specifically, she cited a \$5.8 million grant to Patrick Henry Community College to improve workforce training and create a state-of-the-art lab for nursing students; expanding the marina from 40 to 56 slips and improving the adjoining campground as part of the area's quality of life; and addressing needs such as substance abuse through the Hope Center - Axton campus, among others.

"I'm excited about all of them," Rothrock added.

Harvest typically has a grant budget of \$10 to \$12 million. This grant cycle is nearly double that because of an \$11 million "community investment" to construct an electrical substation and transmission line at Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre. (See related story.)

That project is not a grant since the funds will be repaid by Appalachian Power Co. over a 15-year period based on tenants' use of power at Commonwealth Crossing, Rothrock said.

Following is a summary of 12 grant awards:

Patrick Henry Community College

Patrick Henry Community College (PHCC) will increase the number of graduates who enter the local workforce in several fast-growing sectors with a three-year, \$5.8 million grant. The focus areas include nursing, welding and Industry 4.0, referring to highly automated "smart factories" that use cyber-physical systems.

PHCC will buy three simulator/virtual dissection tables, known as the Anatomage Table, to better prepare RN (registered nurse) students for anatomy and physiology courses. A nursing success coach will be hired to assist with advising and other work for students enrolled in health science programs.

In partnership with Sovah Health, PHCC will develop a Clinical Simulation Lab for Nursing Education in Sovah Health-Martinsville's hospital facilities.

To expand its current offerings in Industry 4.0, PHCC will hire an instructor to teach related programs of study and will install eight workstations with equipment from Festo Didactic: Cyber-Physical Lab.

PHCC will meet the ongoing welding demands by renovating the front building of the MET complex to increase capacity from the current 16 welding booths to 35.

This grant will focus on satisfying local workforce needs, providing students with the skills needed to obtain a living wage job, and preparing current PHCC students for credentials and sustainable careers.

Henry County - Marina Expansion

Philpott Marina and the adjoining group campground site in Henry County will undergo an expansion and upgrades with help from a \$62,500 grant from Harvest.

Henry County officials look to add 16 boat slips and supporting infrastructure to the marina, improve existing campsites and evaluate the feasibility of adding sites and amenities at the highly successful group campground. Upgrades at the campground will allow for year-round camping and include a dedicated boat dock just for campers.

The four-year-old, 44-slip marina has a waiting list of 125 people, and the campground site is booked six months in advance. Two of the 44 boat slips are designated for campground users. The site is fully sustainable and self-funded with collected revenues.

The Harvest grant represents 20 percent of the total project budget of about \$312,500. The project has a preliminary completion date of October 2020. Henry County Administrator Tim Hall said the marina expansion will create a shorter stretch of boat slips next to the existing slips. It will not go past the entrance to the cove, he added.

Partners in the project include Henry County, the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp., Dan River Basin Association, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Harvest.

Smith River Sports Complex

The Harvest Foundation will provide a three-year, \$2.4 million grant to the Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority to support the Smith River Sports Complex. This grant includes funding for capital improvements at the complex, as well as operations funding.

Planned improvements include replacement of the turf fields, repairs to the pedestrian bridges, parking lot and drive resurfacing, installation of LED lights in the parking lots and fence replacements.

Rothrock said the facility is being refreshed, "getting it back to the way it was when we built it 10 years ago." Harvest paid to build the complex and turned it over to the recreation facilities authority when it was completed.

Martinsville-Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness

The Martinsville-Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness will focus on Virginia's Medicaid expansion and build on its existing programs with a two-year grant of \$929,720 from Harvest. The state's Medicaid expansion will impact around 3,800 local residents.

The coalition will partner with the Department of Social Services to enroll uninsured

adults who are newly-eligible for Medicaid by providing one-on-one application assistance. The coalition will improve its ability to connect patients not only with health services, but also workforce, educational and training services. Patients will be referred to United Way of Henry County and Martinsville's "Getting Ahead in a Just Getting By World" program, and a referral system will be established with the Virginia Workforce Center.

Also, the coalition will work with Community Recovery Program (a program of Piedmont Community Services) to establish job readiness and employment training workshops at the Health Connect Center. Patients will receive help with job searches, resume writing, interviewing and other skills.

Virginia Health Care Foundation

The Harvest Foundation will partner with the Virginia Health Care Foundation (VHCF) in its SignUpNow/Project Connect initiative in Martinsville-Henry County to help area residents apply for Medicaid coverage.

Harvest is providing a two-year \$65,000 grant to VHCF to employ an outreach worker to assist local, uninsured residents gather needed documents and successfully enroll in Medicaid. According to the grant application, the outreach worker will be able to serve an additional 700 residents over the next two years, or approximately 16 percent of eligible residents. The Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission provided a matching grant for the outreach worker.

The Martinsville-Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness will provide office space and supervision for the worker, and the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services and the Virginia Department of Social Services will meet quarterly with the worker to ensure he or she stays up-to-date on any changes in policy or implementation practices.

Henry County Public Schools

Henry County Public Schools will use a three-year, \$1.2 million Harvest grant to ensure all students are reading on grade level by the end of third grade. Officials hope to increase the percentage of students reading on grade level in the third and fifth grades, and they strive to increase scores on the PSAT.

Grant funding primarily will be used to help teachers improve student literacy. The three-year plan will incorporate the use of the HighScope Curriculum for preschool classes, a Balanced Literacy Model for kindergarten through fifth grade, and continued literacy work with Dr. Kay Brimijoin, a consultant with expertise in differentiation, curriculum design

and teacher effectiveness.

The program also includes access to myOn, an online digital library that houses more than 5,500 digital books accessed on iPads, anywhere without using the Internet, provided without cost to students from the third to ninth grades.

Martinsville Schools

Martinsville City Schools will prepare its students to successfully transition to the SEED Fund program at Patrick Henry Community College (PHCC), or other educational and training institutions with a three-year, \$416,120 Harvest grant. With this grant, officials hope to increase students qualifying for dual enrollment by 80 percent and have at least 80 percent of students meet or exceed ACT college-ready benchmarks. Goals also are set for this year's eighth-graders to be on track in reading and math using MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) data, and for fifth graders on track in reading and math.

PHCC's MHC After 3 will partner with the city schools to provide support for students. PHCC students also will serve as mentors to Martinsville High School students. In addition to academic supports, the school system also will address workforce readiness, which includes time management, organization, communication and collaboration.

Carlisle School

Officials at Carlisle School look to improve written communication skills and achieve higher SAT scores with a Harvest grant. A three-year grant of \$177,390 will help Carlisle launch a comprehensive writing program that encompasses students from kindergarten to 12th grade.

Goals for this program include 75 percent of students reaching their projected growth scores as outlined in MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), and for eighth- through 12th graders to improve their scores on the writing and language section of the SAT.

Instructors will use the MAP language test and the SAT Assessment Suite to pinpoint areas of weakness in students' writing ability. Each student will have an education plan that follows them throughout their school careers, and staff will have access to professional development to bolster the program's success. Carlisle staff and faculty will work together to implement the new writing program.

Smart Beginnings Martinsville-Henry County

Smart Beginnings Martinsville-Henry County is expanding its Promising Neighborhoods program with a two-year grant of \$268,368 from The Harvest Foundation.

Promising Neighborhoods is a collaborative, two-generation approach piloted with a Harvest grant in 2016. The program will take on two additional communities bringing the total to four — the Patrick Henry Elementary School area, the area surrounding Campbell Court Elementary School, the area surrounding Albert Harris Elementary School, and the Sanville Elementary School area.

In the expansion of Promising Neighborhoods, the role of family navigator will expand to include more intense coaching for parents. They also will be connected to financial literacy training, workforce development services, resources such as Virginia Legal Aid, and access to "Getting Ahead in a Just Get-

ting By World" training which will address intergenerational poverty and how to move forward to sustainability.

United Way of Henry County and Martinsville

The United Way of Henry County and Martinsville looks to expand its Bridges Out of Poverty and financial stability programs with a two-year, \$147,181 grant from The Harvest Foundation.

"Getting Ahead" is a 16 week program that will leverage local resources and expertise to establish a framework for sustainable living. To reach people who are employed but still need assistance with sustainability, United Way will work to expand its Workplace Financial Wellness program at area businesses. The program will help participants understand basic financial literacy principles such as budgeting, credit scores and retirement planning. They also will learn more about banking, predatory money lenders, develop a plan with financial goals and be connected to VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) for free tax filing services.

Hope Center Ministries

Hope Center Ministries is expanding its drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation program for men with help from a three-year, \$225,939 Harvest grant. The Hope Center - Axton campus opened in 2017. In October 2017, it received a \$10,000 Pick Up the Pace! grant from Harvest to make an initial expansion to serve 20 men. Following this planned expansion, the program will be able to increase its capacity to serve men in a much more comprehensive manner.

The Axton campus is located in the former Irisburg Elementary School on Irisburg Road. Grant funding will enable an expansion of three cabins, with one built per year, that will each house eight men in the program. Beds in the main facility will be reserved for new admissions.

In addition to the program's main elements, participants will be able to gain job skills and industry-recognized certifications and credentials through a partnership with Patrick Henry Community College. Potential development opportunities may include plumbing, HVAC, CDL and construction. The courses will be offered on-site at the Hope Center, or off-site at PHCC's campus.

Over the past year, the program has served 44 men, with a 32 percent success rate, more than double the national success rate of 15 percent.

Virginia Museum of Natural History

The Harvest Foundation will provide a \$30,000 grant to the Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH) to construct an outdoor education pavilion to increase visitation to the museum and the region.

The pavilion will connect with J. Frank Wilson Park, and the museum will feature rail exhibits about forest ecology and conservation. Educational programs from the pavilion, interpretive elements and its multi-functionality will further position the museum and the region as a premier visitor destination, according to the grant application.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$150,000. Other partners include the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission.

The museum will conduct a fundraising campaign to collect the other money needed for the project.

MIX takes educators into industries

Young people do not need to leave the area and earn four-year college degrees to get good jobs with promising futures here.

That was the message heard by local teachers and school counselors in the Modern Industry eXchange (MIX) program after they toured three local industries recently.

"We have lots of opportunities for people in Martinsville and Henry County to become employed," Martinsville Middle School teacher Stephanie Atkins said, summing up comments of several other educators.

"We are all so conditioned" to think that there are no jobs here, but that is not the case, Atkins said she learned. "There are jobs available. I hope many members of the community take advantage" of them.

The MIX program enables area educators to visit local businesses and industries so they can help their students understand the employment possibilities here, according to DeWitt House of the Harvest Foundation and Sarah Hodges of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. (EDC). Those two organizations sponsor MIX, and House and Hodges accompanied the educators on the tours.

Also, they said, educators are encouraged to share the information they learn with their colleagues.

Now when a student says "There's nothing here, ... I know better," said Nicole Kendall, who teaches marketing and CTE (career and technical education) at Bassett High School. She added that through the MIX program, she learned there is a future here for students.

The MIX program was divided into two parts. On Oct. 11, the 18 educators visited Eastman and Arconic, both in the Patriot Centre at Beaver Creek industrial park. On Oct. 25, they toured Solid Stone Fabrics off Rives Road and Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre (CCBC) on the county's southern border.

They also heard from Henry County Administrator Tim Hall, Martinsville City Manager Leon Towarnicki, EDC President/CEO Mark Heath and Patrick Henry Community College President Dr. Angeline Godwin.

Towarnicki noted that Monogram Foods in the Patriot Centre is seeking to hire about 100 people and plans to expand with 300 more.

"There are hundreds of jobs in a full spectrum of career choices" that are unfilled, he said.

Many of those jobs do not require four-year college degrees and some pay upwards of \$50,000 a year, Towarnicki said, adding that some are with the local operations of national companies that offer advancement opportunities.

He urged the educators to spread the word about job openings and

possibilities.

Those include the \$6.5 million, 25,898-square-foot Commonwealth Centre for Advanced Training (CCAT) being built at the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre. When the building is completed next spring, a company that locates in the business centre can use it to recruit employees and train them on company equipment. When the company's new facility is ready, it will move its equipment and employees there and another CCBC company can use the training building.

The CCAT building gives this area an advantage in recruiting companies to Commonwealth Crossing, according to Towarnicki, Godwin and Henry County Deputy Administrator Dale Wagoner, who addressed the MIX group at CCBC. He added that there is very little county money in CCAT; the Harvest Foundation, Tobacco Commission, VEDP and the use of New Market Tax Credits, funded the majority of it.

Godwin said the training center will help bring sustainable, higher wages to the area and "a pathway students can see" to good jobs. Enabling a company to build its workforce while it constructs its building gives the area a "very, very powerful competitive advantage" in recruiting industries, she said.

PHCC will provide the training at CCAT, which will be tailored for each industry using the center. That is the approach used at the local Center for Advanced Film Manufacturing developed for Eastman, in which 80 percent of the curriculum is advanced manufacturing and 20 percent is tailored to the company.

"You are front-line recruiters for economic opportunity in the area," Godwin told the educators. They can "show students they can have a career in advanced manufacturing here and beyond" and also be part of the area's economic recovery.

INDUSTRIES ARE HIRING

The three companies which the educators toured all are hiring or planning to hire employees.

Solid Stone, which manufactures and distributes fabric worldwide for consumer markets, has 80 employees in Henry County plus about five in sales elsewhere, and it will need between five and 20 more in the near future, according to David Stone, company founder and CEO.

The company hires some college graduates as well as "sharp high school kids" who are good with computers and machines, Stone said.

The challenge is "not just finding good people but keeping good people," he said. To do that requires paying higher wages, and "economic development will make that happen."

Solid Stone offers

competitive pay and benefits package as well as an employee-friendly management style, and it has little turnover, he said. "We're proud of that," he added. Arconic's Martinsville operation, formerly RTI International Metals, is an aerospace grade titanium production facility for commercial and military aviation. Employees operate automated titanium forging and finishing equipment that requires proficient computer and computational skills to problem solve, according to EDC information.

Its Patriot Centre operation employs 55 people and hopes to continue to grow, according to Glenn Wood, human resources manager with the company. In late October, it was hiring utility operators, who are cross trained on multiple machines, and a maintenance mechanic, he said.

Arconic seeks higher-caliber individuals who generally are working for someone else and choose to move to Arconic, he said. Applicants must pass a test that covers general math and reading for comprehension, basically at a high school graduate level, as well as such things as the ability to follow directions and work safely, Woods said.

"I tell kids and educators when they take kids through here, we have jobs for engineers and materials management and human resources that require a college degree. But if you want to come here and get a good job, you have to have a high school diploma," Wood said.

The company has worked with local schools since 2012, and "I like to think we're getting our message into the schools," Wood said. "We try to participate in any way we can support public educators. They are producing a resource for us down the road."

Eastman is a global advanced materials and specialty additives company that produces a broad range of products found in items people use every day. It focuses on delivering innovative and technology-based solutions while maintaining its commitment to safety and sustainability, according to EDC information.

Eastman currently has more than 700 employees working in its two facilities in Henry County that

manufacture performance films that are sold worldwide under Eastman's Advanced Materials business segment.

Shawn Pace, site manager for the Eastman facility in the Patriot Centre, said when the educators visited, "We discussed what modern industry looks like in terms of safety, quality, complexity and technology. We also discussed the skill sets and personal attributes our prospective employees need to be successful in this environment."

The educators were impressed with how technical and complex Eastman's manufacturing processes are and the attention to detail that is required to make high-quality products, Pace said. The group also visited with a few employees and noted the importance of collaboration and problem solving skills in addition to core education requirements such as reading comprehension, he said.

Pace said Eastman currently is hiring for plant operating roles as well as engineering and other positions. Plant operating roles do not require college degrees while the engineering and business support positions do, he added.

More information on employment and applications is available at www.careers.eastman.com and www.careers.arconic.com/.

EDUCATORS' LESSONS

In addition to the job prospects here, some educators were surprised by the level of technology in the industries, just as Pace observed.

Jeff Wickline, who teaches marketing at Magna Vista High School, said when he thinks of industry work he visualizes piece work and strenuous, hard work. But that is not the case now, he said, adding that he was impressed with what he saw in the companies and now knows that "you don't have to leave the area to be successful."

Atkins agreed, saying that what used to be vocational education that led to industry jobs meant getting your hands dirty. But not now, she added.

Rebecca Everhart, a business teacher at Magna Vista, and Elizabeth Barbour, a computer science teacher at Fieldale-Collinsville (See MIX p. 9A)



David Stone of Solid Stone Fabrics shows local educators through the company's facility off Rives Road. The educators took part in the MIX program sponsored by the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. and The Harvest Foundation.

Perry

(cont. from page 1A)

If anything, recent media attention of the 2002 incident has prompted additional leads for investigators to chase, he said.

The additional information can be helpful, Perry said.

"There was a little extra information that came in this summer ... that kind of, possibly relates to a motive" in the deaths, Perry said. He declined to elaborate, other than to say "it does appear it was a real setting and location at that time."

Perry said investigators also have dealt with a recent "bogus lead." He explained that "periodically through this investigation, we have

had people who seemingly tried to mislead the case" by intentionally providing misinformation.

Even with that and the number of years, he declines to label the case as a cold case.

"It is an older case, but I am hopeful that there is a point when this case will be solved," Perry said. "We need people's help and information to get there."

A reward of \$80,000 is available for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the Short family deaths. Anyone with any information is asked to call authorities at (276) 638-8751.

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Milestone approaching

Smith River Sports Complex will mark 10th anniversary in 2019

By Ginny Wray

The Smith River Sports Complex is poised to celebrate 10 years of bringing sports, revenue and tourism to Henry County and Martinsville.

The complex will mark its 10th anniversary in 2019. Plans are in the works for a one-day celebration in August or September similar to the one in 2009, when the complex officially opened in eastern Henry County.

Lloyd Barber, the executive director of the sports complex, said the event likely will feature music, food and drinks, and a variety of organized activities.

Between now and then, the complex will be "spruced up a bit to get it back to the condition it was in 10 years ago," Barber said.

That will include refreshed paint to buildings and signs, repairs to the parking lot, sidewalks and bridges, installing new turf to the fields and playground, and other possible upgrades.

"Keeping up with repairs and maintenance is an ongoing job. We (the staff) take great pride in the complex and realize its significance as an asset to the area," she said. "My husband and I are not from here and when our family and friends visit, we love to bring them here (to the complex) to show it off, and they are always impressed."

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

In 2006, The Harvest Foundation announced a \$20 million plan to build a soccer complex in Henry County and an arena in Martinsville. Two years later, ground was broken for the complex when about 15 children from local soccer teams, dressed in their uniforms, kicked soccer balls into portable goals at the site off Irisburg Road in Axton.

In December 2008, Harvest announced it was reassessing the arena plan, citing the national economic downturn, the lessons learned during construction of the soccer complex and more going on uptown, according to articles at the time. Ultimately, the proposed arena site became the home for the New College Institute building in uptown Martinsville.

In July 2009, the \$8.7 million sports complex was informally opened to the public, and The Harvest Foundation turned over ownership of it to the Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority (SVRFA).

"Being one of the first investments made by the Harvest Foundation, it (the sports complex) remains an important quality of life feature for all of our residents," Allyson Rothrock, president of The Harvest Foundation, said recently. "In addition to the many sports events held at the complex, it has become a favorite location for active river floats and avid walkers. We are excited that it will soon be directly connected to the Dick and Willie trail."

Bob Davis, a former member of the Harvest board who was chairman of the SVRFA board when the complex was constructed, called it



Ultimate Frisbee players go airborne as they pursue the Frisbee at left during a game at the Smith River Sports Complex. The complex hosted 15 different sports and is used daily for walking and fitness, golf, horseshoes, kayaking and canoeing, cycling and many other sports. (Undated photo courtesy of the Smith River Sports Complex)



A crew worked on the SRSC fields before the sports complex's 2009 opening. Now, after 10 years of use, the turf on some fields will be replaced.



The Eastman Pavilion at the sports complex is a popular site for birthday parties and other gatherings.

"the culmination of a labor of love."

That labor of love created two fields with synthetic turf and special sports lighting, wireless electronic scoreboards and fixed seating for 250 at each field; three full-sized Bermuda T-10 hybrid grass fields with lights, irrigation and drainage; one full size practice field; the Benny Summerlin Legacy Court with concessions, restrooms, office and meeting space; two picnic pavilions, children's playground; and walking trails that lead to the Smith River. Observation decks, a kayak/canoe launch and a dog path have since been added.

The fields are available for soccer, lacrosse, football, flag football, field hockey, Ultimate Frisbee, and T-ball. Other activities offered include cross country racing, biking, hiking, water sports and corn hole.

In the past few years, a golf driving range has been added to the complex which Barber called surprising success. Last year, golfers hit an average of 200 buckets of golf balls per month at \$5 a bucket, which goes to help support operational cost at the complex.

The Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. (EDC) paid for that range as well as a water slide for the complex. The slide use has been lower than expected, mainly for birthday parties, company events, church events and similar activities. Barber said. As a result, it now will be open just by appointment so the complex will not lose money on it.

The newest amenity provided by the EDC is an amphitheater, built by Frith Construction at the festival grounds down by the river. The amphitheater made its debut at the annual Wine By The River Festival this past September.

The Dick & Willie Passage trail also is being extended to the complex, as Rothrock mentioned, and Barber said there have been talks of adding restrooms near the trail. "We look forward to the increase in the number of visitors the trail will bring to the complex," Barber said.

Other ideas for additions to the complex that have been mentioned but not yet decided on include disc golf and camper hook-ups by the Smith River, she said.

MISSION INTACT

Over the decade, the complex's mission has remained the same: "The Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority addresses a community need for diverse sports opportunities, enhances the visibility and image of the Martinsville-Henry County area and, through sports tourism, brings additional revenues to support local businesses and boost economic growth in the region."

Barber addressed each goal:

- The complex offers 15 different sports and activities at last count, she said. In addition to the field uses, the complex is used daily for walking and fitness, golf, horseshoes, kayaking and canoeing, cycling and many other sports. As a result, Barber added that she still is surprised when people refer to it as the "soccer complex."

- The complex enhances the area by being a first-class facility, she said, where it hosts successful events with good quality customer service.

"When people from larger cities come here we get comments all the time (such as) 'How can a town the size of this have such a nice facility,'" Barber said. "We tell them we are very fortunate to have a community foundation whose leaders decided to invest in the development of this complex so many years ago."

She was referring to the Harvest Foundation, which was formed from the proceeds of the sale of Memorial Hospital and uses them to enhance the education, health and vitality of the local community.

Harvest continues to support the complex, paying 37 percent of its \$540,000 annual budget, Barber said. The rest of the revenue comes from sponsorships, concessions, rentals and player (team) fees, she said.

"Our biggest challenge is getting support from local businesses," she said. That involves convincing them that money spent on sponsorships is an investment in the quality of life in the area, not just advertising dollars, she added.

Sponsors of various aspects of

the complex include Taco Bell and the Boys and Girls Club, SOVAH Health, Eastman, Bassett Furniture, Hardide Chemicals, EMI Securities, Carter Bank, Burton and Co. Insurance, Planet Fitness, Novatech and Chick-fil-A. Additional sponsors are being sought for the driving range, Field 6, the new amphitheater and other areas, Barber said.

"We're probably operating as self-sufficiently as possible," Barber said. Funding 63 percent of its budget, up from 25 percent in its first year, is "pretty good progress."

The revenues made by hosting tournaments and events do not always cover all of the costs involved, so community support for the day-to-day operations is crucial, Barber said, adding that while being self-sustaining would be ideal, she is not sure it ever was expected.

- An independent, professional assessment put the sports complex's economic impact at \$4.2 million a year, Barber said. That includes travel costs such as lodging, meals, entertainment, fuel, and other spending throughout the community, she said.

That assessment was done two years ago and the complex has the same number of events now — out of 52 weekends a year, there are 29 out-of-town events at the complex — so it likely is still accurate, Barber said. Houston Stutz handles marketing and operations for the complex and attends one trade show a year to meet coaches and tournament representatives to recruit events to the complex, Barber said.

"Also, in the past two years we've had 100 percent return rates" with events coming back year after year, she said. "That speaks highly of our customer service, and helps with referrals" she said, adding that the complex's membership in the National Association of Sports Commission helps to market its name.

Local commitments of the complex are at full capacity, Barber said. The complex is used by area high schools, Patrick Henry Community College, the Piedmont Youth Soccer League and other groups.

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Company recognizes volunteer, aids schools

Arconic's Martinsville Plant recently recognized Stuart Bowman for his 40 years of volunteer service to the Fieldale-Collinsville Rescue Squad by making a \$1,000 donation to the squad in his honor. Here, Plant Manager Joel White (left) presents Bowman with the check. Bowman has served in every capacity at the rescue squad and recently was recognized as the longest continuously volunteer member during the squad's 50th anniversary celebration.



Arconic in Martinsville recently presented a \$20,000 donation to the Martinsville Public Schools to help fund their STEM programs. Shown at the presentation at the Nov. 12 Martinsville School Board meeting are (from left) city School Superintendent Zeb Talley; school board Chairman Dr. Joan Montgomery; Joel White, Arconic plant manager; and Todd Cassell, CTE/STEM coordinator for the city schools.

MIX

(cont. from page 7A)

Middle School, both said they were impressed with the technology they saw.

"It's not hands-on, physical labor in a factory," Everhart said. At Arconic, only a handful of people run the production operation, which is far different from the factories she worked in during her summers in college, she said.

Barbour also noted that instead of manual labor, people work at computers and manipulating controls.

Atkins said she will implement what she learned in the career class at Martinsville Middle School. That school also has career fairs, college awareness months and other activities to help students determine what they want to do with their futures, she added.

Carlos Wade teaches Introduction

to Technology — robotics — at Fieldale-Collinsville Middle School. The MIX program made him "prouder of Martinsville and Henry County" because students can stay in the area and find good jobs, he said.

He said he was "surprised and not surprised" at the amount and nature of the technology at the local companies, including the robotics he saw at Eastman and Arconic. They use skills that mirror ones his students are learning, he added.

Wade said he would like to be able to bring students into the workplaces to see how their lessons connect to local jobs. That is something Stone said he welcomes at Solid Stone, and he invited the educators to bring their classes for tours or to work on a specific project.



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'Tis the Holiday Season

Christmas Cheer ensures children get gifts

By Ginny Wray

This December will mark the 66th year that Christmas Cheer has ensured that needy children will have presents Christmas morning and their families will have the makings of a holiday meal.

Christmas Cheer was incorporated in 1952 — the original petitioners were R.M. Simmons Jr., Seymour M. Rosenberg and Sue M. Davis — to provide a centralized organization to help the needy at Christmas. Its mission has not changed since then, according to Kathy Lawson, president of the organization.

“We make sure those in need have food and children have toys at Christmas,” she said. “There are lots of other organizations that do other things.”

Having one organization whose sole purpose is to help people at the holidays ensures that donations are not duplicated so as many Martinsville and Henry County residents as possible are served fairly and equally, Lawson added.

This year, Christmas Cheer has a goal of serving 864 households. That is an increase of 37 over last year's total of 827 households served. Those households included 416 children.

Through Christmas Cheer, children up to age 10 received at least three “big” toys, such as bicycles and tricycles, baby dolls, kitchen sets for toddlers and others. Each child also receives a game, ball, coloring book and crayons, as well as gloves, a stocking hat and socks.

Families with children aged 2 and younger also are given diapers and baby blankets.

Christmas Cheer also provides stocking caps and socks for older children in a household, and it buys duffel bags for children in foster care. Books are included through Christmas Cheer's partnership with Smart Beginnings' Dolly Parton reading initiative.

Each food box contains cereal, oatmeal, different types of canned goods such as

vegetables and soups, a cake mix, icing, cookies, hot chocolate mix, coffee, tea, cornbread mix and macaroni and cheese mix, as well as a blanket.

Last year, cheer spent \$24,860 on food and about \$6,000 on toys, Lawson said. Its \$50,000 budget also covered things such as the duffel bags.

Cheer buys food through the Food Lion Foundation and purchases as many toys locally as it can, Lawson said. The Toys for Tots program donates toys to cheer, and it receives toys and financial assistance from the annual Toy Run.

Christmas Cheer does no paid solicitation or advertising to raise funds, relying instead on word-of-mouth and media announcements to generate contributions.

The largest number of households ever to receive Christmas Cheer assistance in one year was 2002, when 1,142 households were served during the throes of local factory and business closings. Also, in 1999 when Tultex Corp. announced its closing, Christmas Cheer held a special collection and donated \$27,684 to the Salvation Army to help displaced textile workers.

“We have a good working relationship with the Salvation Army,” Lawson said. The two groups “work in harmony to serve people who need assistance.”

That includes preventing people from getting Christmas assistance from both groups, which would limit the total number of people who could be helped, Lawson said. There are signs posted at the cheer office advising people not to apply for cheer assistance if they already have sought help from the Salvation Army, she said, and the two organizations compare their lists of applicants to eliminate duplications.

Also, the Salvation Army has more programs to assist the needy, such as Angel Trees, but it does not distribute food as Christmas Cheer does, Lawson said.

While Lawson

spends 40 to 50 hours on Christmas Cheer during December, the work begins much earlier in the year. The group sets its goal in late July or early August and orders food in August for a November delivery. It takes applications starting Nov. 1 at the United Way office on Liberty Street in Martinsville.

Applications are reviewed by a screening committee which determines the final number of recipients. Food is packed on the first Saturday in December, with about 30 volunteers packing more than 800 boxes in three hours last year. Inmates from the Martinsville Sheriff's Office help create food stations so the boxes are filled in an assembly-line fashion.

“It's amazing,” Lawson said, calling the process a “well-oiled machine.”

Toy purchases — tailored for specific children — begin in early November and continue as needed, she said. Recipients then pick up their toys and food boxes a few days before Christmas.

In the past, the toys and food were delivered to recipients, but Lawson said that ended about 20 years ago as the number of recipients increased. In the past clothing also was given out, but that was stopped because many other groups and churches were providing that service, she said.

Christmas Cheer relies on its community partners who help with things such as warehouse and office space as well as donations and services.

Lawson became involved in Christmas Cheer in the late 1980s. She worked for Chip Wyatt's insurance company at the time and he was on the cheer board. “I thought it was a wonderful program and of course they needed help on clothing day, food box day” and other times, she said. She has served on the board since 1993 and has been president for 8-10 years, she added.

As president, she organizes the board's six or seven meetings a



Kathy Lawson (left), president of Christmas Cheer, and Roy Prillaman, second vice president of Cheer, are shown in the organization's office in Martinsville. They both have volunteered with Christmas Cheer for more than 20 years.

year, sends a personal note to all donors and fills in wherever needed. She does most of her own family's Christmas shopping early so her schedule is open during cheer's busy season, and her family members often help out with cheer shopping and other tasks.

Lawson works full-time as personal lines manager at Burton and Co., and she and her husband Ralph have three children and seven grandchildren. She

is a member of Martinsville City Council, volunteers with the local Exchange Club and Red Cross, and is involved in various boards with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission.

She plans to stay involved with Christmas Cheer as long as she is able. Why? “The smiles,” she said. “It makes you feel good when a parent comes in to pick up their box and they're in awe that their kid is going

to have something.” And there are the hugs and tears when people learn their children's names have been drawn to receive specially donated items.

“We had a single dad the year before last. When he was told his little girl was getting a tricycle, he wept,” Lawson said.

The reward for cheer volunteers, she added, “is the satisfaction of knowing you're making someone's Christmas a little happier.”

Volunteer has Christmas spirit months before holiday season arrives

December is height of the Christmas season for most people, but not for Roy Prillaman and the other volunteers at Christmas Cheer.

“Christmas Cheer is on our minds” many months of the year, said Prillaman.

That season starts in the mid-summer when the cheer board meets to set its goal for the year to provide toys for children and food for needy families in Martinsville and Henry County at Christmas.

“The public doesn't even realize ... you don't open (the Christmas Cheer office) today and finish the day after tomorrow,” he said.

Prillaman has been involved with Christmas Cheer for more than 20 years and currently is its second vice president. He also is filling in as first vice president this season.

In those roles, he oversaw the office operations on Liberty Street where applications for cheer assistance were received and also the food and toy distribution operations and warehouse on Commerce Court.

That is no small feat. He begins in August by ordering items for the Christmas Cheer food boxes, enough to fill a 53-foot trailer. When

the truck arrives in mid-November, it has to be unloaded and the food stacked along a conveyor for packing into boxes by about 100 volunteers, including students, city jail inmates and others.

“We have a wonderful group of volunteers that helps us box the food. We all work together as a group,” Prillaman said.

The result is 50-pound boxes of enough food — cereal, canned goods and more — to make a couple of meals, he said.

The recipients of that food as well as toys purchased by Christmas Cheer are first screened by about a dozen volunteers in the organization's offices, he said, adding that the office's 25 chairs and five interview rooms often are full of applicants.

A committee then approves or rejects the applicants and sets the total number that will receive help. This year, Christmas Cheer plans to serve 864 households.

Lists of recipients also are compared against those of the Salvation Army to avoid duplications so more people can be helped, Prillaman said.

(See Volunteer p. 5B)



Jon Perry (left) orders a hot dog from the volunteers in the Spencer-Penn Centre kitchen recently. In the center is Marla Perry and at right is Sadye Perry, of the Bassett High School Beta Club, who is completing volunteer hours at the center.

Music and food fill the auditorium monthly at Spencer-Penn

By Mary Jordan

Music Night at Spencer Penn Centre began on the second Friday night in February 2006.

Having obtained the deed to the property in November 2004, the organization needed to raise money for renovations of the old school. It also needed to get the word out about the new life of the school, now called the Centre, and hoped that by getting people in the building, perhaps they would come back for other events and possibly rent a space. That was a lot to ask of a monthly night of bluegrass music.

At the time, there was only one venue having bluegrass music that we knew of and that was the Patrick County Music Association. Denny Alley of that association spoke with us about how it handled music nights with as many as five bands. That was out of the question for Spencer Penn because we had to beat the bushes for our first several months to get bands to come. But the bands did come and so did the people. We have had great success since, of which we are very appreciative. Admission is \$4 per person.

Along with good bands, one aspect of music night that helps bring in the crowds is the concessions. Again, our volunteers stepped up to

(See S-P p. 3B)

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Read more in this edition of the Henry County Enterprise!
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S-P volunteers share favorite recipes

CHRISTMAS CRACK



by Ann Perry

- 1 – 16oz jar unsalted peanuts
- 1 – 16 oz jar salted peanuts
- 1 – 12oz semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 – 10 oz peanut butter chips
- 2 – 1lb packages almond bark

Layer the ingredients in crockpot. Cover and put on low for 2 hours. Remove lid and stir. Replace lid and leave 30 minutes. Stir again and spoon mixture on non-stick foil to harden.

FRESH APPLE CAKE

by Nancy Taylor



- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 3 cups flour
- 1 ½ cups oil
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup nuts
- 3 cups chopped apples

Cream sugar, eggs, and oil. Sift dry ingredients and add to creamed mixture. Stir in apples and nuts. Bake at 350 for 1 hour and 20 minutes.

Topping: Boil 1 stick margarine, 1 cup brown sugar, and ¼ cup evaporated milk for 3 minutes. Pour over hot cake.

HOMEMADE YEAST ROLLS

by Bonnie Freeman



- 2 cups water
- 3 tsp or 1 pkg yeast
- 1 egg

- ¼ cup oil
- 1 ½ tsp salt
- ½ to ¾ cup sugar
- Bread flour
- Warm water and mix with yeast, then set aside.

In a large bowl, mix egg, oil, salt, and sugar. Add water mixture. Mix well. Add flour a little at a time and mix. Continue to add flour until dough can be formed into a ball. Cover and set aside to rise – may leave overnight. When double in size, punch down and add more flour until dough isn't sticky. Pinch or roll and cut out rolls. Place on a greased pan to rise. Bake at 375 until golden brown on top. Makes about 35 rolls.

CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER CANDY BARS

By Johnny Mounts



- 1 package devil's food or dark chocolate cake mix
- 1 can (5 oz) evaporated milk
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- ½ cup dry-roasted peanuts
- 4 packages (1 ½ oz each) chocolate peanut butter cups, coarsely chopped

Preheat oven to 350. Lightly grease 9x13 baking pan. Beat cake mix, evaporated milk, and butter in large bowl until well blended. Dough will be stiff. Spread 2/3 dough in prepared pan. Sprinkle with peanuts. Bake 10 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with chopped candy. Drop remaining dough by large spoonfuls over candy. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until set. Cool completely. Makes 24 servings.

CHOCOLATE COVERED CRANBERRIES

by Robin Root



- 1 small bag fresh, whole cranberries (room temperature)
- 1 container baker's dipping chocolate

Rinse and dry cranberries. Follow

directions on container for melting dipping chocolate. Using a fork, dip cranberries in chocolate and place on a baking sheet lined with wax paper. Chill. Place in serving or storage container and keep chilled.

JALEPENO POPPER PULL APART BREAD



by Susan Sabin

- 16 small slices bacon
- 6 medium sized jalepenos
- 1 can of prepared biscuit dough (8 biscuits)
- 14 oz shredded cheddar cheese
- 14 oz cream cheese
- Salt
- Pepper

Dice jalepenos. Mix cream cheese with 2/3 of the cheddar cheese, jalepenos, dash of salt and pepper. Cut 8 biscuits in half to create 16 pieces and wrap each in bacon. Place biscuit pieces around the edge of a round pie pan. Place cream cheese mixture in the middle. Top with remaining cheddar cheese. Bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes or until biscuits and bacon are done.

CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI BRAID



by Mary Jordan

- 2 cups cooked chicken, chopped
- 1 cup broccoli, chopped
- ½ cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, pressed or 1T minced garlic
- 4ounces (1 cup) sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

- 1/2 cup mayo
- 1 tsp dry dill
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 pkgs (8 ounces each) refrigerated crescent rolls
- 1 egg white lightly beaten
- 2 Tbsp slivered almonds

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Chop chicken, bell pepper, and broccoli. Add to bowl. Add garlic, shredded cheese to bowl and mix gently. Combine mayo and dill mix and add to mixture. Mix all. Unroll 1 package of rolls, do not separate. Arrange longest sides of dough across width of rectangular pan. Repeat with remaining package of dough. Roll dough to seal perforations. On longest sides of pan, cut dough into strips 1 ½ inches apart, 3 inches deep (there will be 6 inches in the center for the filling) Spread filling evenly over middle of dough. To braid, lift strips of dough across mixture to meet in center, twisting each strip one turn. Continue alternating strips to form a braid. Tuck ends under to seal at end of braid. Brush egg white over dough. Sprinkle with almonds. Bake 25-29 minutes or until golden brown. Cut with serrated knife.

Yield: 10 servings or 20 samples

CREAMSICLE PIE

by Nelda Purcell, as adapted from one by Alpha Campbell in the Horsepasture Church cookbook.

- 8 oz. cream cheese (I use neufchatel cheese with 1/3 less calories)
- 1 c. confectioner's sugar
- 1 med. can crushed pineapple (or 1/2 large can--the medium cans are hard to find), drained
- 1 small box orange Jell-o (can use sugar free)
- 1/2 c. boiling water
- 1 8 oz. Cool Whip (can use reduced calorie)
- 2 graham cracker pie crusts (store bought version)

Dissolve jello in boiling water. Beat cream cheese (room temperature, softened) and confectioner's sugar until smooth. Add pineapple, drained well. Stir Jell-o into mixture. Fold in Cool Whip. Put into pie crusts and refrigerate.

PHCC board to hold special meeting

A special called meeting of the Patrick Henry Community College Board will be held on Monday, December 10, 2018, at 11:15 a.m. in classroom 124 of the Frith Economic Development Center,

located on the PHCC campus, 65 Patriot Avenue, Martinsville.

The board will meet to consider approval or renovation of PHCC Manufacturing and Engineering Technology Complex.

S-P

(cont. from page 1B)



Lynn Wolf, a volunteer at the Spencer-Penn Centre, grabs one of the popular desserts at Music Night.



Jeannie Knott makes sandwiches for Music Night at the Spencer-Penn Centre.

help. In the beginning, Virginia Rodgers got our routine going. With her knowledge of food and catering, she guided us into serving hot dogs, barbecue, pinto beans and cornbread, homemade chicken salad sandwiches and then homemade desserts.

Volunteers have come and gone due to health issues or moving away but one volunteer has been with us making hot dogs since 2006. Ann Perry has been crowned the "HOT DOG QUEEN" and actually has had a steamer dedicated to her. We haven't kept count of the number of dogs that she has assembled but it has to be at least a million.

Hot dogs are assembled per instructions from Bill Jeff Nelson, a volunteer who owned a restaurant, with the hot dog chili always put on last. Linda Barnes prepares the chicken salad, and the barbecue is purchased. Jerry Hylton prepares chicken and dumplings in the winter. Prepared food is cooked in the Spencer Penn kitchen, which has been approved by the State Health Department.

Other volunteers presently helping in the kitchen are Nelda Purcell, who also is one of the 2006 originals;

Nancy Taylor, Jeannie Knott, Johnnie Mounts, Lynn Wolf, Robin Root, Barnes, Rodgers, and of course the office staff is always there. We also welcome "child labor" — any youngster who needs community service hours.

Our music night family enjoys our homemade desserts prepared by alternating groups: The Red Birds and the Blue Birds. What troopers these ladies have been over the years. The Red Birds are Nelda Purcell, Susan Emmert, Temple Mays, Ramona Cassady, Lynn Wolf, Robin Root and Myra Bourne. The Blue Birds are Ann Perry, Lillian Holland, Rose Hylton, Carol Bondurant, Dean Pigg, Gloria Viperman, Celie Cassady and Nora Stokes. Occasionally, others donate desserts as well.

Our guests all agree that these ladies prepare some lip-smacking treats. There are cakes and pies of all types, and one constant is the request for any dessert with coconut. With the holidays around the corner, some of our volunteers have shared recipes for their favorite treats.

(Mary Jordan is executive director of the Spencer Penn Centre.)



Music Night patrons line up to buy hot dogs, barbecue and other food from the kitchen of the former elementary school that now is a community center in Spencer.

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PHCC program staff pays it forward

Alumni return to teach youth

A majority of the staff working with special programs that encourage middle and high school students' success in school and higher education are alumni of those programs who have returned to help other young people.

Twenty-two of the 34 staff members with the Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science, Talent Search and MHC After 3 programs through Patrick Henry Community College have come back to work with the initiatives, according to Shanna Francisco-King, director of pre-college programs at PHCC.

All the programs work to either encourage academic achievement in middle or high school or help the students pursue and successfully complete postsecondary education or both.

Brittany Gill is typical of four of those staff members. She joined the Upward Bound Math and Science program when she was a 10th grader at Martinsville High School. Now, she teaches and is assistant site director for MHC After 3 at Laurel Park Middle School.

She returned to MHC After 3 because "I had such a great time in the program when I was in it and I wanted to give back, to show my appreciation. ... I wanted to give

kids the same thing I got" from it, she said.

Lindsey Bryant of Figsboro joined the Talent Search program when she was in high school, first at Fieldale-Collinsville and then at Bassett. Now, she is assistant coordinator of the Upward Bound program.

Terrence Schoefield joined MHC After 3 when he was in the sixth grade. He now attends Redford University and returns to the program to teach whenever possible, he said.

Schaquoria Barbour also was in the 10th grade at Martinsville High School when she joined MHC After 3. Now, she is the site director for MHC After 3 at her alma mater.

Francisco-King said it is common for students to return as teachers.

"They will always feel like people value them and care about them," she said. "Their experiences were always positive and happy growth experiences. Also, they genuinely want to make that experience a reality for someone else."

Millennials "have a huge sense of loyalty for their community" so by returning to the programs, they are giving back to other students and the area, Francisco-King added.

The Talent Search program seeks to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as other youths

who complete high school and enroll in and complete postsecondary education.

It was a perfect fit for Bryant, who said she joined at age 17 to get help with the college application process, which was starting to go online at that time around 2004-05.

She found a "champion on my side to help me with the application process," she said. Francisco-King reviewed her applications' essays, called the colleges to make sure they had received Bryant's paperwork and wrote letters of recommendation. The group also went on college trips.

It worked. Bryant said she was accepted at several colleges and chose Christopher Newport University, where she graduated with dual majors in communications studies and history.

After working with a community development program in Vermont, she returned home and became a part-time college readiness and leadership instructor with MHC After 3. That led to a job as an adviser with Upward Bound and now, at age 32, she is the assistant coordinator for the program.

In that position, she works with first-generation and low income high school students who want to go to college, helping them through the application process as Talent Search had helped her.



Twenty-two of the 34 staff members with the Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science, Talent Search and MHC After 3 through Patrick Henry Community College have come back to work with the programs, according to Shanna Francisco-King (second from left), director of pre-college programs at PHCC. Three of the alumni shown above: (from left) Lindsey Bryant, Terrence Schoefield and Brittany Gill. Not pictured but interviewed for this article is Schaquoria Barbour.

She also works with them on leadership skills, community service, career readiness and other areas.

"I see this as future workforce development for Martinsville and Henry County," Bryant said. For that reason, students attend career fairs to see what jobs are available here now and the skills they require, she said, adding that she hopes the students will return to the area to work.

"I am passionate about it (the student assistance programs) because I care about Martinsville-Henry County and Patrick County, and seeing these young people be able to have jobs hopefully in this community," she said. "Growing up I saw companies close; now I'm seeing them open. A lot

of these kids' parents lost their jobs. It's nice to work with them, to say, 'There is a light at the end up the tunnel. You have options. What are your goals' and help them achieve what they set out to do."

MHC After 3 serves more than 425 students from Bassett, Magna Vista and Martinsville high schools and Fieldale-Collinsville Middle School. It meets weekdays at each school and the Bassett Community Center.

It provides academic enrichment, including tutoring; offers programs and activities such as service learning, nutrition and health education, drug and violence prevention programs, arts, music and more; and has opportunities for families to be-

come engaged in their children's educations.

It was MHC After 3's programs and activities that hooked Schoefield, he said.

"I never liked to go home after school. You just sat there," he said. At MHC After 3, "you could be with friends, get a snack, interact. With MHC After 3, you really can't be shy. You can't reach your full potential" and will miss opportunities if you are afraid to speak up.

He took part in the program until he graduated from Bassett High School in 2013.

"It taught me how to be a people person, how to interact, not just sit there. It teaches you overall communications. Now in college I am a communications major," he said.

After high school, Schoefield started (See Forward p. 5B)

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Volunteer

(cont. from page 1B)

Pickup day, when recipients arrive to collect their food and toys, if applicable, can be emotional, he said, adding that the joy and gratitude of recipients dispels any hard work or stress that he and other volunteers experience.

For instance, “about four years ago when we set up at (Commerce Street), a lady got a food box and her daughter was on up in age to where we didn’t have toys for her, but we drew her name for a 26-inch bicycle,” Prillaman said, referring to drawings sometimes held for specially donated gifts. “It (the bicycle) was the only thing that girl really wanted and her mother couldn’t buy it for her. The mother started bawling in her car. She was tore up and started crying emotionally.

Forward

(cont. from page 4B)

working at MHC After 3. Francisco-King “had always looked out for me ... and gave me opportunity. She put me in the right direction. She gave me a job and I basically ran with it,” he said.

He misses both the students and the co-workers now that he attends Radford University, so he returns during breaks and other times to talk with the young people and teach culinary classes, something he started during MHC After 3. “Sometimes I see certain kids struggling and not able to do this or that, and sometimes they just need a helping hand and guidance,” Schoefield said. He added that while he sometimes didn’t listen to his mother’s advice and lessons, “when I went to MHC After 3 I put myself in it and actually did it.”

He wants to help the students realize “you can still make it if you’re from Martinsville, Henry County, Bassett,” he said. “You just have to make sure you put yourself in (line for) a great opportunity and don’t give up. It will be hard; you will want to give up. But if you give up you’ll have nothing to look forward to.”

Schoefield, 23, attended PHCC for three years and also worked as an education support assistant there. He is scheduled to graduate from Radford in May with a bachelor’s degree in communications and minors in psychology and sociology. He wants to then pursue a master’s degree in journalism and media production at Virginia Commonwealth University with a goal of becoming a television sports analyst.

Barbour joined MHC After 3 in high school because she wanted to be involved in many activities and the organization did a lot of recruiting of new members. It helped her with academics, ACT and SAT preparations and visiting colleges. “I probably wouldn’t have gone to college if not for that. I couldn’t have visited” the

We had to pull her out of the driving line to let her calm down.”

Christmas Cheer has a \$50,000 goal that is raised from community donations. “If it wasn’t for the people or citizens of the community we couldn’t exist,” Prillaman said. “This is a close-knit community. Sure, we have our problems, but we come together.”

But more could be done, he said. More volunteers are needed for the interviewing and screening as well as packing the food boxes, and “sometimes we don’t have enough to go around,” he added of the assistance.

Still, Prillaman said he gets peace of mind from knowing that he has done all he could to help the needy at Christmas.

That was the reason he joined Christmas

Cheer. “I enjoy volunteering and giving my time to the community because we are a community,” he said.

Prillaman, of Martinsville, is retired from the Martinsville Sheriff’s Office where he worked for 35 years. He now works part-time transporting inmates for that department as well as the Henry County Sheriff’s Office.

He also formerly served on the Martinsville Transportation Safety Commission. He and his wife, Wendy, have two children and two grandsons.

He also plans to continue volunteering with Christmas Cheer as long as possible. “It’s a joy,” he said.

Donations to Christmas Cheer may be mailed to P.O. Box 540, Martinsville, Va. 24114.

campuses, she said.

She also did community service and worked to overcome her shyness by getting out and meeting new people, she said.

Barbour, now 23, attended Patrick Henry Community College for two years and then transferred to Old Dominion University where she expects to graduate in May with majors in human services and counseling. She plans to work in counseling after graduation but her “dream job” would be in forensic psychology.

As a site director for MHC After 3, she does office work at PHCC in the morning, handling things such as lesson plans and calendars, and works with an average of 20-25 students after school each day, plus others who come less often. Their activities are similar to the ones she did as a student.

Barbour said she wants those students to succeed academically

“With MHS, I have a lot of kids who struggle in school,” she said, explaining that they are passing their classes but have trouble with Standards of Learning tests. “They have amazing social skills so I try to focus more on academic, SAT and SOLs” through tutoring and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) activities.

She has seen the program help her sister, who also is in the MHC After 3 program. She struggled with school until she joined the program and became committed to it, and now her grades have gone up drastically, Barbour said.

Gill works with MHC After 3 now but was in the Upward Bound Math and Science program when she was a student at Martinsville High School. A relative had praised the program’s help with college applications and SAT and ACT preparations, and she found that to be true. “I was not familiar with that at all,” she said of the college entrance tests and forms.

The help she received

through Upward Bound paid off when Gill was accepted at seven colleges right out of high school, she said.

She went to James Madison University and transferred to the Jefferson College of Health Sciences. She left both those institutions for financial reasons, she said, and transferred to the PHCC nursing program. She expects to graduate in December and will get her licensed practical nursing license, and then she plans to enter the LPN to RN transition program next year.

Upward Bound “definitely helps kids go to college,” especially students who do not have the resources or knowledge to visit college campuses, apply for scholarships and take other steps, she said. MHC After 3 and Upward bound fills that gap, she added.

Upward Bound Math and Science serves 67 students annually at Bassett, Magna Vista, Martinsville and Patrick County high schools. Students meet weekly for the program which helps them and develop their potential to excel in math and science and to encourage them to pursue postsecondary degrees and then careers in those fields.

But the program is not always about academics and school

Francisco-King “helped me out a lot,” Gill said. “Even though she is a director and not really an advisor, if I ever needed her I could go to her. Whether it was about school or personal, she got me in the right direction.”

Gill works with MHC After 3 three days a week at Laurel Park Middle, although she sometimes helps with the high school program.

All these programs are funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science and Talent Search are federal TRIO programs and MHC After 3 is a 21st Century Community Learning Center program.

Pre-college programs serve more than 1,000 at PHCC

Local after-school and other programs that help middle and high school students succeed in school as well as higher education are serving more than 1,000 students each year.

The programs — Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science, Talent Search and MHC After 3 — operate at Patrick Henry Community College and are overseen by Shanna Francisco-King, the director of pre-college programs at PHCC.

Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science, and Talent Search are TRIO programs of the U.S. Department of Education. MHC After 3 is a 21st Century Community Learning Center program, also part of the U.S. Department of Education.

All the programs are free to students.

Upward Bound serves 68 students annually at Bassett, Magna Vista, Martinsville and Patrick County high schools. Students meet weekly for the program that aims to increase the rate at which they complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from postsecondary institutions. It began here in 2006.

Upward Bound Math and Science, which began here in 2007, serves 67 students annually at those same schools. Students meet weekly for the program which helps them and develop their potential to excel in math and science and to encourage them to pursue postsecondary degrees and then careers in those fields.

Students take part in college and career readiness programs, math instruction, since labs, campus visits and “whatever they need,” Francisco-King said. “We try and help connect them to the practical side of what they’re doing in school every day.”

The students visit college campuses, mostly in the eastern U.S., almost every month and every week during the summers, Francisco-King said. They see a variety of campuses that have diverse programs, costs and services to learn about their options, she said.

Talent Search serves 500 area high school and middle school students. They meet bi-weekly for the program that is designed to increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds or communities, first-generation college students who complete high school and enroll in and complete postsecondary educa-

tion, and others.

The program, now in its second year here, provides academic, career and financial counseling, and it encourages students to graduate from high school and complete their postsecondary education, according to information from the PHCC TRIO office.

Francisco-King said the program also involves field trips to campuses, museums and other sites.

The college application process can be daunting for first-generation college students, she said, and it changes constantly. “Our job is to sort of be their agent,” answering questions and doing some of the legwork with things such as financial aid forms, she added.

Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math and Science and Talent Search have close to a 100 percent placement rate in higher education and a high completion rate, Francisco-King said. “The model is highly effective,” she added.

MHC After 3 serves more than 425 students from Bassett, Magna Vista and Martinsville high schools and Fieldale-Collinsville Middle School. It meets weekdays at each school as well as the Bassett Community Center and Stone Memorial Church.

When the program was started in 2006 it was funded by a three-year grant from the Harvest Foundation. Now, it receives 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding.

It provides academic enrichment, including tutoring; offers programs and activities such as service learning, nutrition and health education, drug and violence prevention programs, arts, STEM and more; and it has opportunities for families to become engaged in their children’s educations.

Many of the activities and programs in MHC After 3 are tailored to the students’ interests, Francisco-King said.

“The great thing about informal education is you can really teach to the group and go where their interests lie,” she said. There are planned activities and lessons but teachers can “put their own spin on it depending on where their interests lie. There is a lot of engagement with students to find out what they want and need. This generation will tell you.”

Some of the programs also offer summer camps and institutes, paid internships and specialized programs.

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS, ACTIVITIES

(The following information is from vismartinsville.com, the website of the Tourism Office of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. Visit that website for more information on these and other events. Also, events held more than once a month are listed each time but described only on the first event of the month.)

Dec. 7

- Annie, by the Patrick Henry Community College Patriot Players, 7 p.m. at Walker Fine Arts Theatre at PHCC. Tickets are available at the MHC Visitor Center, on the PHCC campus and online.
- Fast Friday at Martinsville Speedway. For \$20, fans driving their own cars (no motorcycles allowed) get a dozen laps around the track behind a pace car at speeds of up to 65 miles per hour. Call 956-7200 for more information.
- Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, sponsored by the Henry County Bike Club, 10:30 a.m. Each week cyclists meet at the Liberty Street access point of the trail to ride and have lunch at a local eatery. A different lunch spot is chosen each week. Call Marti at 358-1312 for more information. Rides are year-round but are canceled if it's raining.

Dec. 8

- Holiday pictures at the Martinsville-Henry County Visitor Center, 191 Fayette St., 2-5 p.m. Get a free printed photo and snacks. Call 632-8006 for more information.
- Light Up the Night 5K run and walk in uptown Martinsville; 5-7 p.m.; \$25 entry fee. Call 632-6427 for more information or go to www.milesinmartinsville.com.
- Annie, by the Patrick Henry Community College Patriot Players, 7 p.m. at Walker Fine Arts Theatre at PHCC.
- Pickers and Fiddlers Bluegrass Gospel and Mountain Music Songfest, 10 a.m. to noon at Pocahontas Bassett Baptist Church, 120 Old Bassett Heights Road, Bassett. Free on the second Saturday of each month. Bring your guitar, banjo or mandolin to join in. For more information, call the church at 629-5395 or Jim Hewitt, (276) 224-6980.
- Movie in the Library at Spencer-Penn Centre on the second Saturday of each month except April; 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call the centre at 957-5757 for more information.

Dec. 9

- Fieldale Community Caroling & Tree Lighting, 4-5:30 p.m. at the Fieldale Recreation Center. Call 806-9216 for more information.
- Roanoke Symphony Holiday Pops, 7 p.m. at Martinsville High School auditorium. Tickets cost \$25 reserved, \$15 general admission and \$5 student. Call Piedmont Arts, 632-3221, for more information.
- Barn Quilt Classes, 1-5 p.m. at Spencer-Penn Centre Admission fees vary based on the size of the barn quilt, which is painted to resemble quilt squares and often hung outdoors. Lauren Byron and Mitzi Britt will teach the class. Call Spencer-Penn at 957-5757 or contact Susan at spc.susan@yahoo.com to attend.
- Henry County Bike Club's Sunday Road Ride begins at the Ridgeway Library at 2 p.m. For more information, call 618-0343.
- Mountain Bike Ride at Mountain Laurel Trails, 361 Mountain Laurel Trail, Ridgeway, at 2 p.m. every Sunday. For more information, call 340-9144 or 618-0343. Check the club's website and Facebook pages for possible location changes.
- Annie, by the Patrick Henry Community College Patriot Players, 2 p.m. at Walker Fine Arts Theatre at PHCC.

Dec. 10

- "A Matter of Balance," an eight-week fall prevention class taught by the Southern Area Agency on Aging (SAAA) at the HJDB Event Center, 3289 Riverside Drive, Bassett. The class meets from 10 a.m. to noon through Dec. 17. Free; preregistration was required through SAAA. Call 632-6442 for more information.

Dec. 11

- Zumba at the Spencer Penn Centre with Julie Brown as instructor. Cost: \$5 per class; 6-7 p.m. For more information, call 957-5757 or 734-2098.
- Cookie Exchange at the Blue Ridge Library in Martinsville, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Free.

Dec. 12

- Henry County Bike Club variety ride on the Fieldale Trail. Call 618-0343 for ride locations and times.

Dec. 13

- Billy Strings at the Rives, 215 E. Church St. Fireside Collective opens at 8 p.m.; Billy

Strings performs at 9 a.m. First 175 tickets cost \$20 each; final 100 tickets cost \$25 each. For more information, call 403-0872.

- Thursday Trail Trekkers, 1 p.m., Lake Lanier. Contact Paul at kpj24112@gmail.com with any questions. Seniors interested in this program must register with Henry County Parks & Recreation Senior Services. Trail Trekkers is co-sponsored by Henry County Parks & Recreation and the Dan River Basin Association.
- 2nd Thursdays, 5-8 p.m., sponsored by Martinsville Uptown to encourage residents to get to know the uptown businesses. Many stores will extend their hours for the event; many restaurants will offer specials.
- Tai Chi at the Blue Ridge Library in Martinsville, noon to 1 p.m. every Thursday. Free.
- Chair aerobics at Spencer Penn Centre, sponsored by the M/HC Coalition for Health & Wellness and taught by Paula Battle. All exercises will be done while sitting on a chair or holding onto a chair. 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 957-5757 or 734-2098 for more information.
- Art at Happy Hour: "The Art of the Quilt: Trends." 5-7 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. Free.
- Aerobic exercise class at Spencer-Penn Center, sponsored through the M/HC Coalition for Health & Wellness. The class will use steps, balls, bands and weights to get a complete work out. Instructor is Anita Hooker; 6:30-7:30 p.m. Call 957-5757 or 734-2098 for more information.

Dec. 14

- Music Night at Spencer-Penn Centre, 475 Spencer Penn Road. Two Young Two Old and The Country Boys will perform from 5-9 p.m. Admission is a \$4 donation at the door. For more information, call 957-5757 or 734-2098.
- Second Thursdays in Uptown Martinsville, 5-8 p.m. Many businesses and restaurants will stay open late, and some will offer special promotions. For more information, call the Chamber of Commerce, 632-6401.
- Fast Friday at Martinsville Speedway. Cost is \$20. Call 956-7200 for more information.
- Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, sponsored by the Henry County Bike Club, 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 16

- Mountain Bike Ride at Mountain Laurel Trails, 361 Mountain Laurel Trail, Ridgeway, at 2 p.m. every Sunday. For more information, call 340-9144 or 618-0343.

Dec. 17

- "A Matter of Balance," an eight-week fall prevention class taught by the Southern Area Agency on Aging (SAAA) at the HJDB Event Center, 3289 Riverside Drive, Bassett. The class meets from 10 a.m. to noon through Dec. 17. Call 632-6442 for more information.

Dec. 18

- Zumba at the Spencer Penn Centre. Cost: \$5 per class; 6-7 p.m. For more information, call 957-5757 or 734-2098.

Dec. 19

- Henry County Bike Club variety ride on the Fieldale Trail. Call 618-0343 for ride locations and times.

Dec. 20

- Thursday Trail Trekkers, 1 p.m., Fall Creek Falls. Contact Paul at kpj24112@gmail.com with any questions.
- Chair aerobics at Spencer Penn Centre, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 957-5757 or 734-2098 for more information.
- Tai Chi at the Blue Ridge Library, Martinsville, noon to 1 p.m. Free.
- Aerobic exercise class at Spencer Penn Center, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Call 957-5757 or 734-2098 for more information.

Dec. 21

- Fast Friday at Martinsville Speedway. Cost

is \$20. Call 956-7200 for more information.

- Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, sponsored by the Henry County Bike Club, 10:30 a.m.

Dec. 23

- Mountain Bike Ride at Mountain Laurel Trails, 361 Mountain Laurel Trail, Ridgeway, at 2 p.m. every Sunday. For more information, call 340-9144 or 618-0343.

Dec. 26

- Henry County Bike Club variety ride on the Fieldale Trail. Call 618-0343 for ride locations and times.

Dec. 27

- Thursday Trail Trekkers, 1 p.m., Smith River Sports Complex. Contact Paul at kpj24112@gmail.com with questions.
- Survival Essentials Weekend: 8 a.m. Dec. 27-31 at the Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway. Cost: \$495. Topics include shelter, water, fire, food and tools through lectures demonstrations, discussions and hands-on training. Call 226-9104 or go to www.sustainablehomestead.com for more information.
- Chair aerobics at Spencer Penn Centre, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Call 957-5757 or 734-2098 for more information.

Dec. 28

- Survival Essentials Weekend: 8 a.m. at the Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway.
- Essential Survival Skills — Water, at The Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway. This one-day class teaches how to harvest clean water in a survival situation. Bring lunch and clothing to spend the day outdoors. Registration begins at 8 a.m.; classes 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fee: \$95. Call 226-9104 for more information.
- Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, sponsored by the Henry County Bike Club, 10:30 a.m. information.

Dec. 29

- Survival Essentials Weekend: 8 a.m. at the Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway.
- Essential Survival Skills — Fire, at The Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway. This one-day class is a download of how to build a fire. Bring lunch, water bottle and clothing to spend the day outdoors. Registration begins at 8 a.m.; classes 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fee: \$95. Call 226-9104 for more information.

Dec. 30

- Survival Essentials Weekend: 8 a.m. at the Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway.
- Essential Survival Skills — Food, at The Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway. This one-day class teaches native plants and primitive and moderns means of trapping animals. Rabbit stew dinner provided. Bring lunch, water bottle and clothing to spend the day outdoors. Registration begins at 8 a.m.; classes 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fee: \$95. Call 226-9104 for more information.
- * Mountain Bike Ride at Mountain Laurel Trails, 361 Mountain Laurel Trail, Ridgeway, at 2 p.m. every Sunday. For more information, call 340-9144 or 618-0343.

Dec. 31

- Survival Essentials Weekend: 8 a.m. at the Sustainable Homestead Institute, 190 Eastridge Road, Ridgeway.

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Merry making in Ridgeway



Skylar Prillaman, Grand Marshal waves to the crowd in the Ridgeway Christmas Parade.



Amy Bunn (left) of the Ridgeway Library and her husband, Magna Vista High School teacher Joel Bunn (right), taught the wreath-making class at the library. In the center, Susan Reynolds of Henry County shows the wreath she made in the class.



About 24 people attended holiday wreath-making classes at the Ridgeway Branch Library on Dec. 1. Above, Doris Cole (left) and Norma Ricard, both of Martinsville, show the wreaths they made during the class. Ricard is president of the Piedmont Estates Garden Club, and Cole is vice president of the club.

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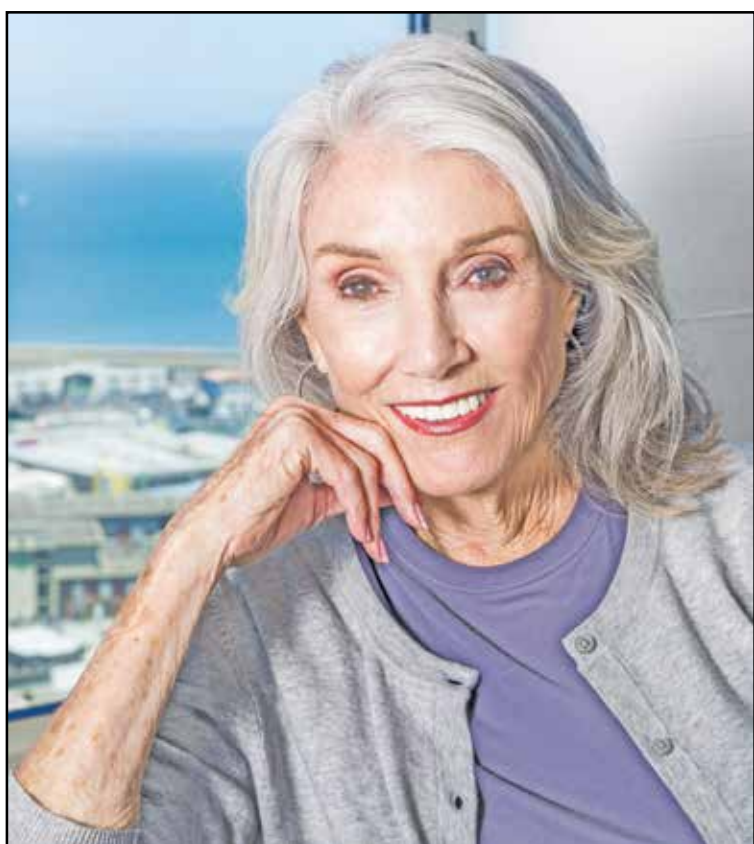
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