

New day at historical center

Ross new director emeritus; Snead is new director

By Ginny Wray

Pat Ross has been named director emeritus of the Bassett Historical Center.

Her appointment by the center board came Jan. 29, a month after she retired from 26 years as the center's director. Her daughter, Fran Snead of Martinsville, is succeeding her as director.

Ross joined the center (then the Bassett Public Library) in 1981, became director in 1992 and fully retired as director in 2012. However, she remained there as volunteer director.

Several months ago she decided it was time to fully retire — again. She was thrilled when Snead decided to apply for the director's job, and historical center board Chairman Betty Scott said



Pat Ross (right) has retired as director of the Bassett Historical Society and been named director emeritus of the center. Fran Snead (center) has succeeded Ross as director. At left is Betty Scott, chairman of the historical center board.

the board was just as pleased to have her.

"It's been wonderful for me to be here to watch her (Snead) learn and appreciate history, which she already did. She loves history, as do I," said Ross, 77.

Don't expect many changes at the center as a result of the new leadership. Ross expects to remain at her desk, working on official business and ready to help Snead, the staff and patrons

(See Center p. 8A)

Henry County Enterprise set to publish monthly

Beginning with the April edition, the Henry County Enterprise will become a monthly publication.

It had been published quarterly starting with its inaugural issue in December.

"Community journalism is what we do. We do it because we believe in the values of connecting people with the communities they live in," said Michael Showell, publisher. "The way we do that is by having dedicated journalists in the community listening and sharing in a professional and objective way that lets you know what is really happening where you live and work.

"It is because of these values that so many people have reached out to us, asking if we would publish a newspaper on a regular basis in Henry County and

(See Monthly p. 4A)

FAST TRACK 2019

Trade show set to show off area

Expo helps connect community

A dog wearing a bow tie is a sure hit. So are giveaways and chances to win prizes.

Those are among the strategies that veteran exhibitors have used to get their messages out and their names better known in the last 25 years of Fast Track expos.

"It's a great opportunity to showcase our animals," said Nicole Harris, executive director of the SPCA of Martinsville and Henry County, which has taken part in the trade shows for longer than the 12 years she has been with the organization.

Many people think all shelter animals have been abused, with sad eyes and cones on

(See Connect p. 5A)



Exhibitors welcome the public at a past Fast Track trade show. This year marks the 25th expo that helps area businesses and services get their names and missions out to the public.

- **WHAT:** Fast Track 2019 trade show. The theme this year is "Silver Celebration" to honor the event's 25th year.
- **WHERE:** Former Sears store at the Village of Martinsville, formerly Liberty Fair Mall, 240 Commonwealth Blvd.
- **WHEN:** VIP Business Night, by invitation only, 4-8 p.m. March 5; open to the public 4-7 p.m. March 6
- **COST:** \$2 or two nonperishable food items that will be donated to the Community Storehouse to give away. Children age 6 and under will be admitted free.

Event to mark 25th anniversary

By Ginny Wray

After 25 years of Fast Track trade shows, the events still are going strong.

"People look forward to Fast Track every year to see what's new here, what's been here and what's being offered," said Sharon Shepherd, deputy director of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce which organizes the trade shows.

There also is a social side of the expos, with visitors seeing old friends and retirees sometimes reconnecting with former co-workers, she said.

With the theme "Silver Celebration" to mark the event's 25th year, Fast Track 2019

(See Event p. 5A)

A *Pelagornis sandersi* is shown in a drawing from Sci-News.com. The first life-sized model of the massive bird will be the premier exhibit in the new Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion at the Virginia Museum of Natural History. The pavilion's construction marks the largest expansion of the museum since it opened on Starling Avenue in 2007.



Replica of massive bird to soar above VMNH pavilion

When Jean Adams was young, she had high ambitions of becoming an astronomy expert or perhaps an architect. So it is only fitting that a new part of the Virginia Museum of Natural History bearing her name will house the first life-sized model of an extinct species of bird that had the largest wingspan of any bird to have ever flown.

The model of *Pelagornis sandersi* will be the premier exhibit inside the Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion, a multi-season covered structure to be erected adjacent to the museum near J. Frank Wilson Memorial Park. The pavilion and its exhibits are scheduled

to open to visitors in spring 2020.

The museum, on Starling Avenue in Martinsville, recently announced a drive to raise \$25,000 to fund the creation of the first life-size model of *Pelagornis sandersi*. Gifts for the design and build of the display are being accepted by the museum through April 30.

"The Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion marks the largest expansion of the current museum facility since it opened its doors in 2007," said Dr. Joe Keiper, executive director of the Virginia Museum of Natural History and project lead, stated in a release. "Such a

monumental addition demands equally impressive exhibit elements and being able to suspend a life-like recreation of the bird with the largest known wingspan from within the pavilion will be a unique spectacle for individual visitors and visiting school groups."

According to newscientist.com and livescience.com, *Pelagornis sandersi* lived about 25 million years ago. The first fossils, which included a skull and some wing and leg bones, were found in Charleston, S.C., in 1983 during excavations for a new terminal at the airport there.

Its wingspan is estimated to be 36 feet

(See VMNH p. 7A)

SEED program's roots growing at Patrick Henry

By Ginny Wray

Last year, Isaiah Young was weighing his options. Should he attend a university that did not offer the exact degree he wanted and begin accruing debt that could take years to pay off?

Or should he attend Patrick Henry Community College where his tuition, fees and textbooks would be paid, earn an associate degree and apply to a college that could take him on the career path he wanted?

At the heart of his decision was not the matter of staying at home for another year; it was about getting into the right school the following year, Young said.

He chose Patrick Henry and never looked back.

"I've fallen in love with PH," he said of the community college where he has been a member of the Patriot Players theater group for several years. "I feel like the campus has been a second home for me for years now."

The SEED program at PHCC played a key role in Young's decision. He is one of 268 PHCC students enrolled in the Student Excellence in Education (SEED) program, which is a three-year \$3.1 million grant funded by The Harvest Foundation. It provides the first two years of college at PHCC free of charge for residents of Martinsville and Henry County who graduated during the 2017-18 academic year. The grant also helps fund career coaches at

Bassett, Magna Vista and Martinsville high schools in conjunction with the state Rural Virginia Horseshoe Initiative.

Students must have at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA) in high school to qualify for SEED, and they must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA at the college to stay in it. The SEED grant was announced in November 2017. A total of 368 students applied for the program for the fall 2018 semester. Of those, 268 were enrolled in SEED; 49 did not meet the high school GPA requirement; and 51 enrolled in other institutions or pursued another direction, according to DeWitt House, senior program officer for The Harvest Foundation.

SEED students are required to take 15 credit hours at PHCC so they can complete their associate degrees in two or 2 1/2 years. That time is even shorter if they were dual enrollment students in high school.

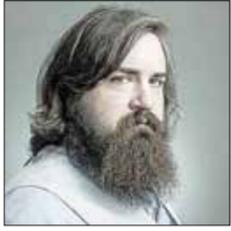
Both Harvest and PHCC are pleased with the program, according to House and Dr. Greg Hodges, vice president of academic and student success services at PHCC.

Harvest "absolutely" is committed to the SEED program and considers it a worthwhile investment, House said.

"One of the major goals (of the SEED program) was not only getting kids into higher education

(See SEED p. 4B)

The Complete Guide to Private Auto Sales



By Ben R. Williams

I'm back, baby.

Since I last had a platform to publicly harangue the fine citizens of Martinsville and Henry County, I have bought a new vehicle (well, it's a 2011, but that's pretty dang new by the standards of my generation).

I decided to privately sell my old vehicle, and I come before you today armed with hard-won wisdom. Join me as I provide a step-by-step guide to privately selling an automobile.

Why a private sale?

When most people decide it's time to buy a new car, they simply trade in their old vehicle as a down payment on the new one. However, did you know that if you privately sell your vehicle, you can spend several months haggling with strangers and being miserable before giving up and selling your car for fifty bucks more than what the dealership would have offered you in the first place?

If you want to earn the worst \$50 of your life, read on!

Creating an ad

The first thing you want to do is get your vehicle professionally cleaned and detailed and take pictures of it. Take the pictures

quickly, because the moment you clean your vehicle, a bird with severe food poisoning will travel as much as 1,000 miles just to desecrate it.

After taking your photos, it's time to put together an advertisement. Reputable upstart newspapers are a great place to buy ads, and there are also internet-based options.

The great thing about placing an ad on the internet is that some websites allow the potential buyer to click a button which automatically sends the seller a message that says, "Hello! Is this item still available?"

You will receive hundreds of these messages, usually between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. At first, you will reply, "Yep, it sure is!" Later, you will simply reply "Yes." After the 300th message, you will reply, "THAT DEPENDS, DO YOU SEE IT?"

Don't worry, though; no matter how you reply, you will never, ever hear from the buyer again.

Wherever you place your ad, you should be honest. You don't want to waste a buyer's time. Be sure to list any known issues with the vehicle you're selling. This makes it easier for potential buyers to insult your vehicle and tell you you're asking too much for it.

The fine art of haggling

Make no mistake, haggling is an art. Here are some common

ways that potential buyers will try to haggle, along with a recommended response.

Buyer: I'll give you (half of your asking price), CASH.

Response: I'm not going to sell you my car for half of what I'm asking for it, you clod. Also, since I'm not a bank and I can't offer you low-interest financing, how else would you pay for it? With the gift of song?

Buyer: I'll trade you for this 1987 Buick Skylark that looks like it was dredged from a swamp because it was.

Response: While I appreciate the offer, my problem is that I have too many cars, and I want to have fewer many cars. Your proposed solution does not address this issue.

Buyer: What's the least you'll take?

Response: "Ugh, I'm too lazy to negotiate, so why don't you just negotiate against yourself?" That's what you sound like. You clod.

When to lower your price

When selling a car, you need to write down two prices. The first price is your initial selling price, which should be on the high side. We'll call this "the sucker price." It gives you some room to haggle.

The second price is the least you'll take for the vehicle. We will also call this "the sucker price."

After you have written these two prices on a sheet of paper, fold

(See Auto p. 4A)



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INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Sharon Jones

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course examines current theories and models pertaining to substance use disorders. It explores interventions from a strengths perspective and evidence-based treatment techniques for working with individuals and their families. The course integrates theory and practice skills to teach social workers to critically examine the practice, policy, and research issues involved in substance use disorders and treatment methods. Issues of social work values and ethics, social and economic justice, populations at risk, and diversity across multiple dimensions are integral to this course.



For more info — <https://tinyurl.com/y8lezmkg>

Social workers with a Master's of Social Work earn \$15,000 more a year.

Taxpayer aid available through local VITA service

By Ginny Wray

Low-income area residents who need help filing their tax returns can get assistance from VITA.

VITA stands for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance. It is a national program of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that is administered locally by the United Way of Henry County and Martinsville.

It offers free help with preparing and filing income tax returns for anyone making \$55,000 or less if filing jointly. The income limit is much lower for individual filers.

This year, VITA is located at 283 Commonwealth Blvd. in the former Texas Steakhouse building. Mondays between 1 and 4 p.m. are reserved for clients with appointments. Walk-in clients are welcome between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays and from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays.

VITA also is offered at the Martinsville Commissioner of Revenue office in the Municipal Building on Church Street from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appointment only, and a Mobile VITA service is available for places of business, agencies, health care centers or churches. Call 403-5976 for more information.

Clients should bring their driver's licenses or photo IDs; Social Security cards for themselves and any dependents they are claiming; any 1099, W2 or other tax forms; insurance information; and any other pertinent documents, according to Lisa Frick, community impact coordinator for the United Way and site administrator for VITA.

If someone is not sure whether to bring a particular form or information, they should bring it to the VITA site or call and ask a representative, Frick added.

Last year, the local VITA site filed 1,795 tax returns, up from the year before. Federal refunds from those returns totaled \$1,700,638, with returns averaging a little over \$1,000 each, according to Philip Wenkstern, executive director of the area United Way.

That figure includes the Earned Income Tax Credit, which provides a larger refund for qualifying low-income working residents.

"It is a way for the government to encourage individuals to enter the workforce" even if they do not make higher wages or work significant hours, Wenkstern said. "The credit is a chance for them to help build financial stability. Typically low-income people don't get much refund. This gives them a larger refund."

About 27 percent of the office's clients qualified for the Earned Income Tax Credit and received an average refund of about \$1,400 last year, he said. That totaled about \$600,000 in refunds.

VITA also saves filers an estimated \$360 each in the cost of preparing and filing their returns. That creates a total savings of \$359,000 through the service.

Volunteers are the backbone of VITA. Last year, local volunteer tax preparers' hours totaled 3,798 and screeners, who check clients' documents and paperwork before they see a tax preparer, logged another 510 hours.

The local office has about 20 volunteers and could use more, Frick said. No special skills are needed to volunteer, and all volunteers go through online IRS training and must be certified by the IRS each year. Some put in more than 40 hours a week with VITA during tax season.

Some volunteers have been with the VITA service for years. Frick said they enjoy helping others and the camaraderie they have with other volunteers. Most are retirees and did not necessarily work in financial careers.

Rachel Young of Henry County is in her 11th year volunteering with VITA. In the 1980s she worked as a tax preparer but stopped to be home with her children. But she missed the work so when she saw a notice in the newspaper seeking VITA volunteers, she said she thought, "Why not?"

"I enjoy meeting people. They

are so thankful when they get refunds. They are thankful they don't have to pay," she said, adding that she also likes that as a volunteer, she can set her own schedule.

Some clients' stories stay with Young. For instance, there was the woman whose employer incorrectly marked her W2 form with "unearned income" when it should have been "earned income." Young got the employer to fix the error and the woman "got a couple of thousand dollars she would not have gotten otherwise," Young said. The money meant a lot to the client, who was a single mother.

Now, that woman waits in line to have Young prepare her taxes. "She's almost become a friend," Young added.

She also recalls working with a man who has lost his job after the 2008 stock market crash. He was working on his own but never fell into the earned income bracket, she said.

The man thought he was going to have to pay more taxes, but Young determined he qualified for a \$3,000 to \$4,000 Earned Income Tax Credit. His first reaction was to use the money pay his landlord the back rent that he owed, and his wife wanted to buy their daughter a prom dress.

"That's the kind I like," Young said of the clients.

Sometimes clients get mad about their tax responsibility, but Young said she tells them, "I just put in the numbers. I don't make the rules. I have to live by them."

Young recommends others volunteer with VITA, calling it rewarding work with smart people.

"I have met what I consider to be lifelong friends by doing this. ... You learn something every day about tax law or I get to tell people something new every day," she added.

Greg Peitz of Henry County is a United Way board member. After he retired from DuPont, "I was looking for something to be active with, to keep my mind active and help people in the community," he said.

He had done his own taxes in the past but did not deal with them on his job. He said it took him about three days to study the training materials and take the test, and now he is in his second year volunteering with VITA.

The best part of the work is "helping people find their best economic refund," Peitz said. "A lot of people don't understand the tax laws and they need help to optimize their tax situation."

It takes about two hours to work with a client and put their information into the IRS' VITA tax system, he said. The information also is reviewed by another person to make sure it is accurate.

"People are grateful. They appreciate that it doesn't cost them anything and they have someone asking them questions with care about their life situation to optimize their taxes," Peitz said.

One of his best experiences with VITA was with a mother and her older dependent who came in to file. The mother said she wanted to file jointly with her as the head of household. After looking at her information, Peitz said he suggested looking at having each of them file independently.

The result was that between them, they got almost \$2,000 more than they would have filing jointly.

"She was (saying), 'Thank you, thank you,'" he added.

In addition to IRS support, VITA receives grants and assistance from the Virginia Community Action Partnership, area banks and businesses. Supporters include The Lester Group which donates its space in the former steakhouse; BB&T; SunTrust; myfreetaxes.com; H&R Block; United Way, WW Sale Foundation, The Lacy Foundation, the Harvest Foundation and Virginia Cash Campaign, according to the VITA website.

Fundraising also is done to cover VITA's utility costs and other operating expenses, Wenkstern said.

For more information about VITA, call 403-5976.



U.S. Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.) makes a point during a recent discussion with Martinsville and Henry County officials. At left is Iriswood District Supervisor David Martin.

U.S. Sen. Mark Warner praises progress, offers his help to area

By Ginny Wray

When Sen. Mark Warner visited Martinsville and Henry County recently, he found a far different scene than the one he had known here as governor, when factories were closing and unemployment was in double digits.

Now, he found Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre with two graded lots, the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Training (CCAT) under construction and Press Glass' plant to follow soon.

He found the Harvest Foundation's SEED program making a community college education — and hope — available without charge to hundreds of area residents.

He found the quality of life enhanced through such things as the Smith River Sports Complex, the Philpott Marina, Dick & Willie Passage trail and a growing number of canoe and kayak access points in the Smith River.

"Congratulations. This is a much different presentation" than he had heard on previous trips, said Warner, D-Va. "Congratulations on your perseverance."

Warner came to the area Feb. 20 and met with members of the Henry County Board of Supervisors and county staff; Martinsville Mayor Kathy Lawson; Harvest Foundation President Allyson Rothrock; Patrick Henry Community College President Dr. Angeline Godwin; New College Institute Executive Director Dr. Leanna Blevins; and others.

He said he came to check on the status of Commonwealth Cross-



Henry County Administrator Tim Hall (standing) briefs Sen. Mark Warner and local officials on the development of Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre.

ing Business Centre (CCBC). He left with a to-do list of issues he may be able to help with.

First on his list was exploring the possibility of working with North Carolina legislators on resources for improving the roads leading to Commonwealth Crossing. The majority of the 750-acre CCBC is in Virginia, but the entrance to the park is in North Carolina.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is planning to improve the connector road to link CCBC to the four-lane U.S. 220, but Henry County Administrator Tim Hall said after that, help will be needed to build interchanges and other amenities as new companies locate in Commonwealth Crossing.

"We need a conversation with the federal government" on funding possibilities for the park's entrance, he said.

Hall gave a presentation on Commonwealth Crossing and its development, including the construction of CCAT and the decision by the Poland-based Press Glass to locate there on part of Lot 1. Godwin explained how Patrick Henry Community College will tailor training programs for the CCAT

tenants, who must be companies locating in the business park.

Hall noted that Press Glass' announced \$43.5 million investment at CCBC is more than the \$42.5 million invested in the development of the business park. Press Glass will be the first industry in the business park.

The construction of the CCAT facility and Press Glass announcement have resulted in a "pretty good uptick" in interest in the rest of Lot 1 and Lot 4 at Commonwealth Crossing, Hall said.

A \$27 million Appalachian Power substation also is needed at Commonwealth Crossing, and a bill awaiting Gov. Ralph Northam's signature would help fund that through a maximum 50-cent rate adjustment on utility bills for a limited time. The bill only affects three megasites, including Commonwealth Crossing, and would allow a utility to build an electric transmission system for the site before there is a public announcement of a possible tenant.

Warner asked if there had been opposition to the bill locally and Hall responded there had not. "I'm shocked, but pleasantly" at that, he added.

(See Warner p. 7A)

Tourism grant to help bolster area attractions, displays in state

By Ginny Wray

A new state grant will help spread the word about "hidden gems" and other attractions in Martinsville and Henry County.

The Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp.'s Tourism Office recently was awarded \$5,000 from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) to help increase visitation and tourism revenue.

VisitMartinsville partnered with the Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH) Foundation and Rooster Walk Inc. to supply matching funds for the grant. It will be used to heavily promote the Rives Theatre and VMNH as well as oth-

er possibly lesser know attractions in the area.

"The idea of this project is to help showcase some of the hidden gems that Martinsville-Henry County has to offer," said Beth Stinnett, assistant director of tourism and Film Office coordinator for VisitMartinsville. "We are known and loved for Martinsville Speedway and are proud to say that there are many other 'winning' attractions here as well. We hope that this marketing campaign will help spark visitors' curiosity to learn more about visiting Martinsville-Henry County."

"We want people to realize all the fun things that we have to offer and to also see

how affordable it can be to spend their vacation time here with us, without sacrificing the 'fun,'" she added.

The award was funded through the Virginia Tourism Corporation Leverage Program grant fund. In total, VTC awarded more than \$625,000

(See Tourism p. 6B)

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

CHANGING WITH THE TIMES



Todd Cassell, career development coordinator for the Martinsville City Schools who heads the robotics program, shows a tower for the upcoming robotics competition. The robot has to place the ball into the hole. Beside Cassell are the program's robots from the past two years.



Todd Cassell (right) discusses the operation of the robot on the table with students Will Jarrett (left) and Noah Snell. They are in the section of the Chester R. Lane Vocational Educational Building on the MHS campus that was redone for the robotics program.

Growing robotics program revamps part of the building

By Ginny Wray

For years, Martinsville High School students in the robotics program, said Todd Cassell, career development coordinator for the Martinsville City Schools who heads the robotics program.

MHS's 10-year-old robotics program previously operated out of a 600-square-foot classroom in the school. But last summer, members of the robotics team — called MADawgs

FIRST Robotics Team 3258 — pitched in to create a workshop from a four-bay area in the

productivity and quality of work for students in the robotics program, said Todd Cassell, career development coordinator for the Martinsville City Schools who heads the robotics program.

MHS's 10-year-old robotics program previously operated out of a 600-square-foot classroom in the school. But last summer, members of the robotics team — called MADawgs

FIRST Robotics Team 3258 — pitched in to create a workshop from a four-bay area in the



Part of the Chester R. Lane Vocational Educational Building on the MHS campus has been redone for the robotics program. The building previously housed auto body classes.

Students also learn skills that few may associate with robotics. For instance, students learned to sew on a machine in the workshop so they could make covers for the robots' bumpers. There also is a 3D printer, electronic die cutter and embroidery machine in the workshop.

Many of the team members are involved in other activities in the schools and out, such as sports and Scouts. Cassell said the coaches and mentors work together to try and schedule things so the students can take part.

"Robotics is an integral part of Martinsville High School," he said. "It is an important part of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math). The skills they are learning will catapult them into 21st century."

And while the students do not get academic credit for their work with the robotics team, they get something else — a family. Cassell said his wife, a science teacher at MHS, has become involved in the program, and both he, Jarrett and Snell said former team members often come back to see how the group is doing.

The robotics program is expensive, Cassell said, so it has several sponsors, including Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative, Microsoft, Eastman Chemical, Radial, Martinsville City Schools, MHC After 3, Patrick Henry Community College, Dr. John Wheless DDS, ValleyStar Credit Union, 3rd Bay Cafe, D & A Cafe and Martinsville High, according to its website. Also, the 2018 robotics group made a donation to the current program.

In addition, Cassell said the city schools' administration, including Superintendent Zeb Talley and MHS Principal Aji Dixon, are "real believers" in the program and have come to its competitions.

Cassell said in the future, he would like to add welding to the robotics program but also as a certificate program for students and adults. That might be possible in other parts of the Chester Lane building that remain idle, he said.

"It's extremely satisfying," he said of his work with the robotics program. "I love to seek the kids have that 'aha' moment when they see something work."

Auto

(cont. from page 2A)

the sheet into a paper airplane and throw it out the nearest window. As it catches an updraft and sails far, far away, wave to it. "Goodbye, my friends!" you can say, "it is a shame I will never see either one of you again!"

How to keep the buyer on the hook

While showing your car to a potential buyer, you may notice that they're starting to lose interest. Here are a few things you can say to keep them on the hook:

1. "The previous owner was this odd guy who put all his money in gold. On an unrelated note, the only

problem with the car is that it gets terrible gas mileage, almost like it has extra weight hidden somewhere."

2. "You know, this car was the original 'Knight Rider.' I know it was a Trans-Am on the show, but when they shot the series pilot, they used this 1979 AMC Pacer."

3. "Who's your favorite celebrity? Jimmy Buffett, you say? You're not going to believe this, but this car once ran over Jimmy Buffett."

Sealing the deal Eventually, you will find the right buyer and seal the deal. Unfortunately, I can't offer any advice on that part because I haven't gotten that far yet.

Monthly

(cont. from page 1A)

the surrounding areas," Showell said. "We responded by publishing the Henry County Enterprise on a quarterly basis. Now, because of the strong interest that generated, we are increasing our publishing schedule to once a month. We appreciate the confidence and trust that so many readers and advertisers have placed in our people and organization. It has taken your support and involvement to make it successful. We look forward to sharing with you each month the Henry County Enterprise."

Debbie Hall, editor, agreed.

"The community's reaction to the publication has been so positive that we are happy to respond with a monthly newspaper," she said.

The Henry County Enterprise currently is available free of charge in some stores, restaurants, businesses, service offices, governmental facilities,

libraries and other locations.

The Henry County Enterprise and The Enterprise in Patrick County both are owned by Virginia Media Inc., a subsidiary of Mountain Media LLC, in Lewisburg, W.Va. The company owns and publishes newspapers in both states. The company's newspapers in Virginia include The Salem Times Register, The Radford News Journal, The News Messenger in Blacksburg, The Fincastle Herald and The New Castle Record. The Enterprise in Patrick County is based in Stuart and covers the communities in Patrick County. Its first edition was printed in 1876, making it among the oldest continuously operating businesses in that county. For more information about either Enterprise or to suggest story ideas, call Hall at (276) 694-3101 or email dhall@theenterprise.net. Visit our website at <https://henrycountyenterprise.com/>.

Chester Lane Building. Lane was a teacher and head of the industrial arts department at MHS for 40 years. He died on Sept. 11, 2011.

The students redid the floors, painted the walls, built storage areas and created a 3,000-square-foot workspace for their program.

One wall features a giant mural of the team's new logo, created by a previous team member and mentor and painted by Robin Bescher, mother of team member Noah Snell. The logo is a bulldog, reflecting the MHS mascot, with the numbers 3258, which indicates that the team was the 3,258th group to join FIRST Robotics. There now are about 8,000 teams in the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics program, according to Cassell.

"You won't see many teams with a lab like this," said Snell, a senior at MHS.

There are 32 students in grades 7-12 in the school's robotics program, Cassell said. That number has doubled since last year. Students in grades 9-12 take part in the team's competitions, although the younger students sometimes attend the events to gain experience, he said.

In January, the students began working on their robot for the 2019 competition, called Destination Deep Space and sponsored by Boeing. The students had six weeks to build their robot for district competitions on March 1 in Richmond and March 28 in Blacksburg. There, teams earn points to participate in the state competition in April at James Madison University in Harrisonburg.

Last year, the MHS team progressed to

the world competition which pitted 400 teams from 60 countries.

This year's competition involves a "rocket," or tall wooden tower with circles cut out at several intervals. The students have to build a robot that can place a hatch or plastic cover over one of the holes on the rocket. Then the robot has to take a large ball and insert it into a corresponding hole so the hatch will keep it from falling out to the floor. The process has to be repeated at all three levels of holes on the rocket.

Finally, the robot has to "climb" to different levels of platforms. "It's a huge challenge to get a 125-pound robot to climb," Cassell said.

In its new workspace, the MADawgs team and its four mentors, who are local adults who work with the group, have constructed a robot called LugNut that can extend to 7 feet tall. That elevator system, as Cassell calls it, will enable the robot to reach the highest holes on the rocket. At the beginning of February, the students were building prototypes of arms that LugNut will use to push the ball through the holes.

They have created a mock field to test and practice their creations and a 10- by 10-foot pit area where they will work on their robot at the competition. Criteria are set for everything from the size of the pit area to the height and weight of the robot.

The robotics program is an extracurricular activity, Cassell said. Students work with it after school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and all day Saturdays.

"I basically have to force them to leave," he said.

Snell put it this way: "Robotics is one thing I drop everything to do."

Snell and Will Jarrett are seniors at Martinsville High School who became involved in the robotics program because their friends were into it and, as Snell said, "It looked cool." He started with the Lego program in the eighth grade and moved into the robotics program.

He likes to build things and work with his hands. "He likes to push the limits. I tell him to fail often" in the workshop but not in competition, Cassell said. "Failure is part of the process."

This is Jarrett's fifth year with the robotics program. He also became involved in the group to pursue career options, but he took a different path with it than Snell.

"I found I wasn't as hands on" as some of the others when he joined the group, Jarrett said, so he has focused on marketing the team.

That illustrates the diverse nature and skills learned in the robotics program, Cassell said. "We call it a varsity sport for the mind," he said.

Both Jarrett and Snell said they see parallels between their academic knowledge and robotics, whether it is solving math equations when building the robot or communicating better with other students at the competitions.

Snell hopes to attend Patrick Henry Community College and then transfer to a four-year institution to pursue a career in engineering. Jarrett hopes to attend a four-year institution to seek a business degree.

He already is on that career path with an internship with the Martinsville School, learning and using marketing skills to benefit both the school system and MADawgs.

Event

(cont. from page 1A)

likely will continue those traditions. From 4 to 7 p.m. March 6, a total of 140 booths will feature goods and services of businesses, nonprofits and local organizations at the former Sears store at the Village of Martinsville (formerly Liberty Fair Mall), 240 Commonwealth Blvd.

Admission will cost \$2 or two nonperishable food items that will be collected for the Community Storehouse to give away. Shepherd added that the recipient of the food items rotates each year.

Children age 6 and under will be admitted free.

An invitation-only VIP Business Night will launch the trade show from 4 to 8 p.m. March 5. That night includes "The Taste of the Region" in which area restaurants and caterers are invited to serve samples of their food.

VIP Business Night promotes networking among business-to-business contacts. The next night, March 6, the trade show opens to the public for business-to-consumer contacts.

VIP night usually attracts about 3,000 people, and the public night draws about 1,500, Shepherd said.

Exposure to such large crowds is one of the main benefits of the event for vendors, she said.

"In two days they get a lot of opportunity to show what their product is and what they do," she added, whether that is a product or service people use every day or perhaps a service to the community.

For the chamber, Fast Track "gives us an opportunity to show Martinsville-Henry County what



all is here. We have tremendous business and industry here but a lot of folks don't realize what is here," Shepherd said.

She added that even though she has been with the chamber for 11 years, she still learns things about the area's businesses, industries and services at each Fast Track event.

The expo also gives the chamber an opportunity to network with its 638 members, Shepherd said.

Many exhibitors give away items such as pencils and rulers while others distribute information about their organization.

"Somebody might not need gutters or legal help now, but they might pull out something (they received at the trade show) in six months when they do," Shepherd said. Fast Track will help them "know what services are here."

Some exhibitors have taken part in Fast Track for years and change

their booths each time, Shepherd said. New vendors also help the expo offer a fresh experience year after year, she added.

For instance, "to me it's very interesting to see what the city and county schools do because it reflects" what is happening in the classrooms, she said. Patrick Henry Community College and the New College Institute also have new booths each year, and the tourism section of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. "always has something fun, interactive, to get people involved."

Judges award ribbons for the first-, second- and third-place winners in the profit and nonprofit categories, as well as a best in show award. Vendors vote on an exhibitor's choice award recipient.

The best in show winner gets a free booth in the next year's trade show.

Connect

(cont. from page 1A)

their heads due to medical problems, Harris said. "When you show up with puppies in bow ties, with good obedience and working the crowd, it changes the opinions of people. ... We break that stereotype."

"The SPCA is a fun place. Sometimes we come in contact with sadness but we focus on the victories," Harris added.

The SPCA will showcase its animals at Fast Track 2019, to be held March 5-6 at the former Sears store at the Village of Martinsville (formerly Liberty Fair Mall), 240 Commonwealth Blvd. March 5 is a VIP, invitation-only night; on March 6 Fast Track is open to the public.

Both nights, businesses, industries, nonprofits, educational institutions and others will fill 140 booths to distribute information about their goods and services.

The event is an "ideal venue to meet face to face in a fun, social environment with customers," said Kim Adkins, vice president/director of marketing for Carter Bank. It is an opportunity to cultivate relationships with other companies as well as the public, she said.

"If they're looking to change banks, this is a good opportunity" for people to consider Carter Bank, which has been in the area since 1974 and a Fast Track participant in each of the expo's 25 years, Adkins added.

Carter Bank has been a sponsor of the event for many years. Sponsors' booths are the first trade show visitors see when they enter the expo through what is called "Sponsorship Row."

"We get a high level of exposure with Sponsorship Row," Adkins said. Sponsorship also reflects the bank's long-time support of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce, which organizes the event, she said.

Fast Track "lets the citizens of Martinsville-Henry County see the different services from different companies here," said Charles Bradshaw, vice president of Triangle Electric Corp. in Ridgeway, which has taken part in the trade show for at least the past 15 years. "The trade show here is interesting. People want to come and see what new services are here and what is being offered."

Triangle Electric uses the same basic format for its booth each year, but it adds different features to keep it fresh, Bradshaw said. This year, people are using more LED lighting and surge protectors for computers, so Triangle will feature its services in those areas, he said.

It also is a time to "meet people you didn't know" as well as others who recognize company employees, he said.

Harris agreed. She said during the VIP night, the SPCA "advertises things our organization is doing and presenting ourselves to business and industry leaders" who might be aligned with the SPCA's mission and values. It looks for potential sponsors and partners and ways to collaborate or cooperate with other groups, she said.

On the show's second night when the public comes in, "we shift gears" and present the SPCA as a resource in the community. Harris said. That means talking about services the SPCA provides and coordinates, such as spaying and neutering and outreach programs, she added.

Last year, the SPCA's booth won first place in the nonprofit category. This year, the organization will promote its largest fundraiser, the Fur Ball Gala, to be held April 13. Its trade show booth will mirror the gala's theme of "Hollywood," with "glam decorations" and promotions of the use of fur ball proceeds for the spaying and neutering program. That service has been revised this year to stress pet owners building relationships with veterinary services, Harris said.

S&K Office Supply in Martinsville has taken part in all but the first Fast Track trade show, according to President Cindy Summit. S&K has been one of the sponsors of the event since sponsorships began because it gives the business greater visibility at a booth near the entrance, she added.

"That's what it's all about — getting our name out there, reminding people we're still here and the products we carry," Summit said.

S&K starts planning its booth in January and puts in 25-30 hours in the entire event, she said. "The exposure alone is worth the time and effort," she said, adding that the booth changes each year.

"I like to have new products, things people don't usually see. ... We love bringing in new products, new technology, new furniture," Summit said.

People often tell Summit they remember seeing her at Fast Track.

"They remember us for the toilet tissue," she said, referring to the rolls of toilet paper that S&K has given away some years. "They'll come up to us and say, 'You're the girl who gives out toilet paper.'"

Carter Bank also changes its booth each year, Adkins said. "We have a marketing team now" and many employees in the region who want to help coordinate and partic-

ipate in the expo, she said.

"It's one of those special events we look forward to," she added.

Charles Whitfield, president and owner of Charis Enterprises Inc. in Martinsville, will be part of the trade show this year for the fourth time. This year he is expanding into a second booth at the expo.

"I want to expand our airport shuttle footprint. I want to give life to that" at the expanded booth, said Whitfield, whose business is five years old. "We've found over the last few years it (the trade show) is a good way to meet new people and interact with existing customers."

Charis Enterprises is a contract passenger carrier that offers shuttles, limos and other transportation to regional airports and rail services, among other things. Whitfield said he can point to at least four corporate contracts he landed with local businesses as a result of Fast Track.

Harris at the SPCA also said she can point to specific rewards from Fast Track. One year, the organization launched its "No Kill" effort and gave out yard placards and other materials to support it.

"Within days half the community was calling" with with questions about the program, she said. "We know everything we handed out there provided that interest. The information got out and created a good echo effect."

Adkins said Carter Bank also evaluates each show, determining if it generated more interest and customers at the bank.

Stifel Nicolaus & Co. Inc. in Martinsville has been a trade show exhibitor since Fast Track began 25 years ago, according to Gary Collins, senior vice president/investments with the company. He said participation is not an attempt to drum up business, although that sometimes happens.

Stifel Nicolaus is involved with the expo because of "civic pride. It helps the chamber and helps the community. It's not for us trying to get business," Collins said, adding that the staff sees existing customers and often is asked to explain the name of the business that has changed several times over the years.

"Stifel is not a household name, so people go, 'What's a stifle?'," Collins said.

The office does not change its booth from year to year.

"There are only four guys in the office. We're not out to win the prettiest booth," Collins said. Laughing, he told of the year when then-chamber president Amanda Witt "bought yellow ribbon and gave us

(See Connect p. 7A)

Exhibitors for Fast Track 2019

Following is the list of exhibitors for the 2019 Fast Track trade show March 5-6. They are listed alphabetically:

- AirCare - Wake Forest
- AirLife Virginia
- American Cancer Society
- American National Bank
- AmeriStaff
- Arts at the Rives
- Ashbrook Audiology
- Assured Comfort
- Access Staffing
- BB&T
- Bassett Office Products
- Bassett Physical Therapy
- Bath Fitter
- Bayberry Retirement Inn
- Berry Elliott
- Blue Ridge Bank
- Blue Ridge Therapy Connection
- Boxley
- Brand Builders
- Budget Blinds
- Carlisle School
- Carter Bank & Trust
- Charis Transportation
- Chick-fil-A
- City of Martinsville
- Comcast Business
- Comcast/Xfinity
- Community Alternatives Virginia SW (Rescare)
- Debbie's Staffing
- Del. Danny Marshall
- Disabilities Rights & Resource
- Eastman
- The Enterprise
- EyeSite
- Farm Credit
- Fidelity Bank
- First Piedmont
- Friedrichs Family Eye Center
- Gateway Streetscape
- Gunter Nissan of Martinsville
- Gunter Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram of Martinsville
- Guy M. Turner
- Henry County
- Henry County Bike Club
- Henry County Public Schools
- Hill - H&H
- Hill Court Apartment
- Hometrust Bank
- James River Equipment
- Jeweler's Edge
- Jones & DeShon
- Kindred Hospital
- King's Grant
- Lawless Welding
- LeafFilter
- Lester Group
- Longwood Small Business Development Center
- Lowe's Home Improvement
- Martinsville Bulletin
- Martinsville Health & Rehab
- Martinsville Mustangs
- Martinsville Speedway
- Martinsville Schools
- MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness
- MHC Economic Development Corp.
- Martinsville Henry Patrick Counties Association of Realtors
- Mehaffey Financial Service/Bookkeeping Tax Solutions
- Mountain Valley Hospice
- Nationwide Custom Homes
- New College Institute
- Patrick Henry Community College
- Piedmont Community Services
- PrivaCare
- PuroClean
- Quality Inn/Dutch Inn
- Radial
- ReBath of SW VA
- RES
- Ridgeway Signs
- Results Companies
- S & K Office Products
- Sabin Law Office
- SCORE
- Southside Survivor Response Center
- Sovah Health Martinsville
- SPCA
- Spencer Penn Centre
- Stanleytown Health & Rehab
- Stifel
- Symphony Placements
- TekaByte
- Telamon Corp.
- Triangle Electric
- Trinity Support
- Uptown Pinball
- United Way of Henry County-Martinsville
- U.S. Cellular
- ValleyStar
- WeCare, Inc
- WIB (Workforce Investment Board)
- WoodForest Bank
- Woodmen of the World
- Workforce Unlimited
- YMCA
- Kenny Webster Photography

CAREER ACADEMY

Old school gets new use for specialized areas

By Ginny Wray

Several years ago, young children learned their A, B, C's and their 1, 2, 3's at Figsboro Elementary School. When their lessons ended, they played outdoors on the school's fields.

Now, high school students learn to rewire video game consoles and style hair in those classrooms. Outdoors, cows graze on the fields.

Figsboro has been transformed into the Henry County Schools' Career Academy, providing hands-on and classroom work in agriculture, cosmetology, heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and industrial maintenance.

About 90 students from Bassett and Magna Vista high schools ride a bus to Figsboro each day for 2 1/2 hours of instruction in those fields.

"The premise behind the program" is providing the same opportunities to all county students, regardless of which school they attend, said Monica Hatchett, spokesman for the Henry County Schools. It is called equity.

For instance, cosmetology formerly was offered only at Bassett High School, and Magna Vista students could not go there for part of the day to study in the program. Now, students from both schools can study in the two-year cosmetology program at the Career Academy.

In some of the other fields, the foundation classes are in the high schools and the upper level classes are at the Career Academy. Academy Principal Mike Minter added that as a result, more upper level courses are offered.

Hatchett said discussions of equity began years ago, and it now is a priority for Henry County Schools Superintendent Sandy Strayer. Hatchett said the school division wants "to equip all students fairly to make sure they're ready" for whatever future they pursue.

Darryl Holland, an agriculture teacher at the academy, has followed the trend in his career. He started teaching in Laurel Park High School, which served one-fourth of the county students at the time. Then he moved to Magna Vista High School, which served half the student population. Now, he said it is exciting that all county high school students can take agriculture classes and be part of FFA (formerly Future Farmers of America) at the Career Academy.

"This is the future of Henry County students," he said. "It's the direction it's been going in."

Minter was asked to pursue the idea in 2017 and that fall, cosmetology became the first program at the school.

Students, taught by Amber Waller, work in a 16-station salon with an adjacent classroom.

The agriculture, HVAC and industrial maintenance students followed a year later. Separate buildings have been erected for those programs and the real-life skills taught there. Some students will use those skills in their careers; others will use them regardless of their career paths, Minter said.

As Holland put it, "Everybody these days is into virtual. We're into reality. We show them how to raise cattle. Hands-on is the way to go. It always has been."

It is definitely hands-on in the barn where students tend to four cows. They also have helped put up fences and livestock panels for the programs, Holland said.

In a recent lesson, two students got a loan from the Farm Bureau and went with Holland to a livestock auction where they bought two cows, according to agriculture students Billy Fulcher and Logan Hodges, both students at Magna Vista. After the animals were processed, the meat was sold for \$4.25 a pound. The money was used to repay the loan, they added.

Hodges said he wants a career in agriculture. Farming, he said, is his "dream job."

In the HVAC and industrial maintenance area, teacher Jerry Byrd discovered that the wiring for video and other games was similar to some HVAC wiring, so the program formed a partnership with Uptown Pinball to repair its games. Sometimes the students have to play the game to see what is wrong, which is fun for them, Minter said.

Also, games and cabinets have been purchased and students are learning to assemble them in hopes of selling them, Minter said.

Those programs use a former shell building where the students installed the heating and air conditioning systems. Among other projects, they are welding "goats" — metal parts combined to resemble the animal — which will be sold, including one to Minter's wife.

Minter said such community involvement in the programs is important, whether it is by having students repair items, selling or donating what they have made, or buying goods and services locally. "It showcases what the kids can do," he said.

An example of that will be when the cosmetology students work with residents of the memory care unit at Kings Grant Retirement Community. Minter said the students will do the residents' hair and nails during a "pampering



Student Billy Fulcher (left) feeds the cows at the Career Academy's agricultural area. At middle right, student Ally Ingram works on a wig in the cosmetology area. At left middle, student Tyler Craig adjusts a pinball machine which students work on. Below is Career Academy Principal Mike Minter stands in a shop area created from a former shell building for the Career Academy.



day." The academy gets high marks from some of the students there. Ally Ingram, a junior at Bassett High School, is in the academy's cosmetology program, learning how to style hair, etiquette, dealing with clients and especially how to disinfect equipment, she said.

She noted that there is a lab next to the classroom, which the program did not have at Bassett High School.

Ingram wants to pursue a career in cosmetology and will have her license if she passes the state board exam and have put in the required hours by the end of the two-year program.

Tyler Craig, a senior at Bassett High School, is in the HVAC program. At the end of the semester he will take a test to become

certified in HVAC. "I'm glad it's here," he said of the academy. "It's a different environment. It's less crowded and we have our own work space."

Fulcher, a senior at Magna Vista, has been in the agriculture sciences program since the sixth grade. He praised the smaller classes, with 11 or 12 students each, at the academy and the opportunity for more hands-on learning.

"You're not stuck in a classroom all the time," he said, adding that he was among the students who helped turn the former school's baseball fields into cattle fields.

Both Craig and Fulcher noted that students can do more hands-on work at the academy because there is more room.

Fulcher got his pesticide applicators license when he was in

the 10th grade, and now he is considering a career in agriculture. He said he likes working with animals and seeing where his food and other agricultural products come from, such as lumber and clothing.

Figsboro Elementary closed during a 2004 county school consolidation, Hatchett said. After that, it housed the Center for Community Learning (CCL), which provides adult education, alternative programming for students and regional programs.

However, a centralized location was needed for the CCL, so last summer it was moved to the former Collinsville Primary School, which had closed when Meadow View Elementary opened. That left the Figsboro school available for the Career Academy as well as the school

system's nutrition offices. All but three classrooms are in use, Hatchett said.

The Career Academy can serve a total of 120 students, and it plans to hold open houses to drum up interest. Minter has made videos that he posts on social media showing the students at work, and he hopes word of mouth also will increase awareness of the academy.

Holland said elementary school students will come to the academy for "animal days," and he may explore dual enrollment opportunities for high school students.

"I'm excited about where we can go but I'm also excited about where we are. We have a great staff. ... The students have a lot of pride in their work," Minter said. "We want the community to see it" at an open house.

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VMNH

(cont. from page 1A)



Jean Adams

estimated to have been 20 to 24 feet (6.1 to 7.3 meters) when its feathers were included, and its weight is estimated at 48.2 to 88.4 pounds, the websites stated.

Scientists with the Virginia Museum of Natural History have unearthed a Pelagornis bone in 14 million-year-old layers at Carmel Church quarry near Richmond, according to Ryan Barber, deputy director of the Virginia Museum of Natural History, and VMNH information. While it cannot be determined if it was from a Pelagornis sandersi, he said, it is in the same family and shows Pelagornis flew over Virginia.

The museum is collaborating with



This sketch shows the new Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion to be built at the Virginia Museum of Natural History. It is the horizontal building between the two existing wings of the museum. The circular feature on the ceiling is where the replica of the Pelagornis sandersi will be placed.

Research Casting the Field Museum in International, a world-renowned exhibit design firm based in Ontario, Canada, to design and build the model.

It will be a full 3-D, fleshed-out model, not a skeleton, and weather-resistant, Barber said.

"RCI played a major role in the design and development of many of our current permanent exhibits, as well as exhibits at other elite museums, such as the American Museum of Natural History in New York and

the Field Museum in Chicago," he stated.

In addition to the life-sized model of Pelagornis sandersi, the Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion will include flexible-use outdoor seating and exhibit materials interpreting the natural features and ecology of Wilson Park.

The roughly 1,500- to 1,800-square-foot pavilion will be U-shaped, Barber said. It will back to the Hall of Ancient Life and have buildings on each side. It will be open air but with a roof and

three sides and tie into the stairs to Oakdale Street, overlooking J. Frank Wilson Park, he said. It will be used for educational functions, camps, festivals and the Paleo Cafe, he added.

"The pavilion will serve an important need, as the museum has grown leaps and bounds since it first opened its current facility in 2007 and additional space for visitors and school groups has become essential," said Barber. "The flexibility of the space allows it to not only house additional exhibit experiences for visitors, but provides additional space to implement educational programs during school group visits and a relaxing seating environment for visitors who are wishing to take a break from touring the main exhibit galleries."

Eventually, the hope is to tie the museum in with Wilson Park through the construction of one of the largest treetop canopy walks on the East Coast, Barber said. "It's nice to have that vision of really big projects," he added.

The total cost for the Jean S. Smith Educational Pavilion is estimated at \$150,000. The Harvest Foundation has contributed \$30,000 or 20 percent, and the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission has contributed \$75,000, Barber said. Bill Mayer of North Carolina, a member of the VMNH Advisory Board, has made a five-figure contribution.

George Adams of Martinsville, the husband of the late Jean Adams, also made a five-figure donation. The pavilion will be named in his wife's honor in recognition of that gift, Barber said.

Other donations have been received to cover other expenses, and the campaign for the Pelagornis sandersi is seeking \$25,000.

An architect has been secured for the project and is working on designs. Ground-breaking is scheduled for June 11, according to Barber, and completion is anticipated in spring 2020.

JEAN ADAMS' IMPACT ON VMNH

Jean Adams and her husband, former Martinsville city councilman and mayor George Adams, have been long-time contributors to and supporters of the Virginia Museum of Natural History. Their names are on space in the mu-

seum building for curator Jim Beard and on bricks at the building's entrance. Her name also is on other areas she was involved in at the facility, George Adams said.

Jean Adams was born in Bozeman, Mont., where her father owned a hardware store that also dealt with farming equipment. She and her brothers earned extra money for the family by refurbishing and reselling homes, and she brought that affinity for building and making things to the VMNH, her husband said.

But when Adams told her father she wanted to become an expert in astronomy, he told her no woman could get a job in that field in the 1930s. Then she decided she wanted to be an architect, but her father's reaction was the same.

"Finally she decided she would work in the textile business," George Adams said. She received a degree from Montana State University, got a master's degree in retailing at NYU and became a designer of knit children's clothing for the Buster Brown Textile Co. in Chattanooga, Tenn.

After she met George and they married, they moved to several places before settling in Martinsville where he worked for DuPont. They had three children.

When Noel Boaz opened the Virginia Museum of Natural History in 1985, Jean Adams got on board, raising money for the facility on Douglas Avenue in Martinsville. Later, she was involved in efforts to keep the museum in Martinsville at what became its current site on Starling Avenue, George Adams said.

Jean Adams served on the boards of both the museum and its foundation, Barber said.

The museum reflected her interest in ancient history, according to her husband. She couldn't be an astronomy expert or an architect, but "here she could do what she felt she needed to," he said, recalling how he would go on digs with Jean and Beard on the banks of the James River.

Jean Adams died on June 13, 2018.

Later, Keiper visited George Adams with a brochure about plans for the pavilion. Adams sent the information to the couple's three grown children and

suggested they donate money to the pavilion so it would be named for Jean. They agreed.

"She would think it would be great," George Adams said of his wife. "I would never have been as good a supporter of it if she had not been my wife. It's one thing she did because she felt it was important."

Tim Gette was the executive director of the museum from 2004 to 2009. Now retired and living in Arlington, Texas, Gette recently reflected on Jean Adams' work with the museum and her legacy through the pavilion:

"Jean Adams was a great supporter of the Virginia Museum of Natural History and a dedicated volunteer. ... Jean, as a member of the VMNH Foundation Board of Directors, often offered advice regarding fundraising opportunities for the museum, which was extremely valuable to me. But Jean was most devoted to the children who came to the museum and was a frequent volunteer helping sell memberships in the museum and helping with the groups of children who toured the museum.

"Personally, I enjoyed visiting with Jean, who like so many other supporters in Martinsville, loved VMNH and what it represented. Her support, like that of so many others, was critical in getting the new building for the museum and keeping it in Martinsville.

"I was saddened to learn of Jean's death recently in a Facebook post but was so pleased that this remarkable lady is being honored with the Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion which is scheduled to open in Spring 2020. Jean would have liked that.

"I am especially pleased that the Jean S. Adams Education Pavilion will help the museum highlight the beautiful J. Frank Wilson Memorial Park for which I had the opportunity to chair a city committee to improve. I have always seen the park as a natural extension of the museum and I know many members of the museum family, including Jean, have spent many volunteer hours helping to improve and interpret the natural features and ecology of the park," Gette wrote.

For more information on the project, visit the museum's website at www.vmnh.net/education-pavilion or contact the museum at (276) 634-4163.

Connect

(cont. from page 5A)

the award for the most consistent booth."

"We have fun doing it. It's great to see new industries. I wish more industries would do it," he said.

Other agree that the trade show's 25-year tradition speaks well of the community.

"I think it shows we still have good businesses right here in the community and I hope it shows customers that they need to support those businesses," Summit said. "It's vital we keep as much business local as possible."

Whitfield noted that the public sees the trade show as a showcase for new businesses, nonprofits and things going on in the community. Businesses see it as an opportunity to capitalize on new clients, and some people see it as a gift bag, he said.

"For the community, I've seen excitement. Also, I've seen where businesses like myself see the opportunity for new business," he added.

Harris grew up in Martinsville-Henry County and admitted that she did not understand what the

trade show represented when she was in high school.

Now, "I realize (now) how rich we are with resources and industry in Martinsville and Henry County. It's very humbling to walk around the trade show and see what industry in Martinsville and Henry County has to offer," she said.

And all of those surveyed agreed that they learn something about companies and their services at every Fast Track.

"I even see businesses I wasn't aware of" at each expo, Summit said. "If there's something I need for home or the business I've got a name and contact. There are a lot of connections that can be made."

Harris added: "it's very progressive for our area to continuously put on the trade show."

The event also speaks well of the chamber, said Adkins, who formerly headed that organization. The trade show has changed over the years to respond to exhibitors and the public, and its 25-year track record "says the chamber remains relevant in the community, and this is a venue that the community looks forward to and wants to support," she said.

unbelievable," she added.

Warner asked about quality of life amenities in the area, and Hall described the sports complex, river access, trails and other features. He also noted the importance of Hamlet Winery and Mountain Valley Brewing, the county's first craft brewery.

Lawson agreed with Hall on the importance of the amenities and efforts in the county, saying she knows the trails are bringing people into the area. "It's a win-win for the city in partnership with Henry County. ... Their success is our success," she added.

Hall said Henry County also works with other neighboring localities to share best practices and cooperate on issues. They all are in the same boat, with stagnant populations and the need for better jobs, he added.

The third item on Warner's to-do list is finding ways to encourage suppliers to companies such as Amazon to locate outside northern Virginia and other population centers, he said.

And "I'm not shy if you've got a good prospect you want me to call," he said, and Hall responded, "We'll talk about that."

"You should be very proud of what you've done. You've come a long way from 16 years ago" when the area was in a downturn, Warner said. So if he can help, "count me in."

Warner

(cont. from page 3A)

Also on Warner's to-do list is gathering more information on the SEED (Student Excellence in Education) program, which will make the first two years of college at PHCC free for qualifying local high school graduates. The \$3.1 million Harvest grant also helps fund career coaches at Bassett, Magna Vista and Martinsville high schools in conjunction with the state Rural Virginia Horseshoe Initiative.

The SEED grant was announced in November 2017. A total of 368 students applied for the program for the fall 2018 semester. Of those, 268 were enrolled in SEED; 49 did not meet the high school GPA requirement; and 51 enrolled in other institutions or pursued another direction, DeWitt House, senior program officer for The Harvest Foundation, has said.

Godwin said the program has "exceeded our expectations" and brings hope to young people, showing them that college is possible. Regardless of the students' economic status, "when I hand them that certificate, they are immediately in the middle class," she said.

Rothrock added that "from the funding side, the strength of the program is the wrap-around services" available to students facing issues such as transportation and child care. PHCC's "support staff is

Center

(cont. from page 1A)

when needed.

"I enjoy doing it, and what would I do if I were home," Ross asked rhetorically. As Snead put it: "This is her bridge; this is her golf; this is her extra-curricular activity. It's her third child, always in her mind. This is where she likes to be. Aside from her family, this is where her heart is."

HISTORIES MERGE

Ross has lived virtually her whole life in Bassett. She graduated from John D. Bassett High School Class of 1960. She left only to attend Mary Washington College where she first majored in music but changed to psychology. After graduating, she returned home and worked in the advertising department at Bassett Furniture Industries from 1964 to 1969.

She met her husband, Paul, who had lived in Martinsville all his life, after both returned home from college. He now is retired and they have been married for 53 years. They have two daughters, Snead and Anne Marie Ross, an associate professor at Rockingham Community College, and one grandchild, Rob Jordan.

Ross stayed home when the girls were little, but as they grew up and her empty nest loomed, she began to look for something to do. She was an assistant organist at her church, tutored and did volunteer work, but she wanted more. So when Martha Wells Clark, a childhood friend, suggested she take a part-time job at the Bassett Public Library, Ross agreed. The job enabled her to work but also to be present for her daughters after school.

That was 37 years ago, and she has worked in the same building ever since as assistant librarian, librarian, director, volunteer director and now director emeritus of the historical center.

When Ross joined the staff it was the Bassett Public Library. She and Clark worked well together and planned projects of all sizes, but when Clark passed away, Ross was left to do them on her own. "I accomplished what

we set out to do," she added.

In 1987, after a flood damaged the genealogy room in the basement of the library, it was decided to construct a building addition so the genealogy section could be moved upstairs. At that time the library and its children's section moved across the street, and that same year it became the Bassett Branch Library of the Blue Ridge Library Association.

The historical center remained in the original building at 3964 Fairystone Park Highway and continued to grow in statistics as well as books, Ross said. For instance, she told of a Wisconsin resident who formerly lived in the Bassett area who offered 50 years of genealogy records to the center with the stipulation that it also take family pieces. That way, Ross said, the woman's family members could find all their history in one place.

As a result, the center became home to a basket which was brought to the United States from Germany in 1728 by Hans Jacob Koger, Ross said. It is the oldest item at the center, she added.

Koger built a house in what then was Halifax County. "He never moved but he lived in four counties" when county lines were redrawn, she said. Today, his house remains in the Blackberry area of Henry County with one brick wall remaining from the original house, she added.

With that collection also came a diary that, it turned out, was written by William Lee, who was Snead's second great-grandfather. Lee was one of three brothers who fought in the Civil War. They all were captured and only Lee survived.

"When she told me this I had chill bumps. I couldn't speak," Ross said.

The historical center continued to grow during the 20 years it remained with the Blue Ridge Library System. It underwent two more additions with the last one, in 2009, doubling the size of the building, according to Scott, who also served on the Blue Ridge Library board.

The center split from the library in 2012. Scott said the two entities had different

philosophies and the union "didn't work."

Since the separation, the Bassett Historical Center has done "wonderfully well," Ross said. "We do what we should do. What we need to do is preserve history."

It receives some support from Henry County but mostly it is funded by donations and some grants. It receives no state or federal funds and has no memberships. The only thing it charges for are copies from files or books because nothing can be checked out of the center.

Its collections and documents are massive, and Ross said it has the largest genealogy collection east of the Mississippi. In all, Snead said the center has more than 10,000 family history files, more than 20,000 books and manuscripts, more than 3,000 history files and more than 1,000 family photograph files.

Between 500 and 600 people use the center each month and more place calls and send emails to seek information, Snead added. People come from all over the U.S. and 16 different countries.

It also has one of the largest Native American collections, comprised of about 4,000 books, and Ross said she understands it has the third largest collection of Civil War books, behind only the Library of Virginia and Virginia Tech.

Collections and histories have come from families, researchers, yard sales, estates, things people find thrown on the side of the road and even a bag of family photos found at the dump, Ross said.

The center is filled

to capacity now, Snead said, but Ross said she still has trouble turning things down. "It's history and the history of this area. As soon as you say 'No thank you, there's no place to put it,' a question will come up" about the items, she added.

The center is used by "anybody and everybody," Snead said. Many people come to research their family histories, and Scott said some come to do medical research of their family. The center has helped research families of MIAs and POWs, including that of a Korean War MIA whose remains were located and brought home and now are in Roselawn Burial Park.

"The family was so appreciative," Ross said. She, Snead and Scott all went to the man's funeral.

The toughest inquiry Ross said she worked on was from an adopted boy trying to find his birth mother. Their search was successful, she said.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Snead's interest in history began when she was in the fourth grade and found a book put out by First National Bank in Bassett with the names of David Lee Ross and Daniel Ross. She asked her father if they were related and that "sent us on many field trips here," she said.

When her mother went to work at the library in 1981, Snead spent time there after school and volunteered there in the summers. When she was old enough, she got a summer job there. Her love of history grew.

"I kind of feel like I grew up here but growing up I never felt like I would work here," she

said.

Instead, she taught at John Redd Smith Elementary School for 21 years. But when she decided she needed a career change, Snead turned to the historical center and was hired 4 1/2 years ago as director in training/operational manager.

She was named director effective Jan. 1, and knows she has a hard act to follow.

"I'll never fill her shoes," she said of Ross, whom she calls a "walking encyclopedia."

"I'll never know as much as she does," Snead added. But "I do know where to go to find answers (and) the people to ask for answers."

An attraction of the job for both mother and daughter is that no two days are the same and no day is dull. "Unless you're down here, people don't really grasp what happens here," Snead said. "I appreciate that every day is different."

THE FUTURE

The center's future looks much like its present and past — busy with projects to help people learn and understand history.

For instance, it is working with Netflix on a documentary on the history of furniture making and with the Mormon Church on the

history of a local family. Snead is working on a Persian Gulf War display and recently finished the Vietnam War Memorial project at the center. The staff also is working with the National Registry on research into historical sites in Martinsville.

Funding always is a challenge for the center, Snead said, so it also is planning a fundraiser March 30 at Bassett High School. It will feature the Church Sisters of Danville, who perform Gospel and country music; the Joyful Sound; and Sarah Robertson, who impersonates Minnie Pearl.

Snead, Ross and Scott all praised the center's staff of two full-time and two part-time employees as well as the director. There also are about 10 volunteers.

"The staff and board could not have been more supportive," Snead said of her new role as director. "It's like walking into something I've been in all my life."

And Ross has been at the center of that.

Her mother, Snead said, "is very humble. She won't take credit (for accomplishments at the center). She has taken the ball, with help and support, and run with it, and the center today is the center today because of her."

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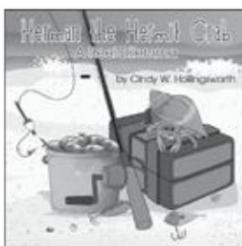
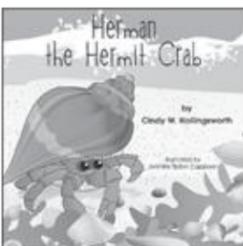
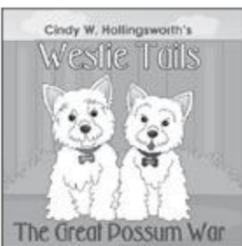
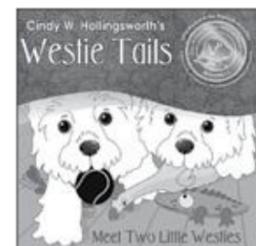
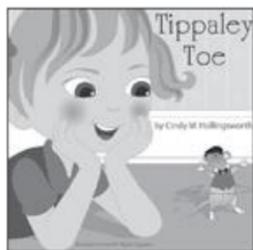
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Edwards Adult Day Center celebrates 30 years



Edwards Adult Day Center participants take part in activities while their health needs are being monitored by professionals.

By Becky Lovell

For 30 years, the Edwards Adult Day Center has provided day services to hundreds of dependent adults and their families.

The center, at 431 E. Commonwealth Blvd., Martinsville, has 63 participants and can accommodate up to 70, according to Executive Director Patsy Dillard. It provides a safe place for dependent adults where they can socialize, make friends and participate in group activities while their health needs are being monitored by health professionals.

"In addition to providing an outlet for participants, the center also provides caregivers an opportunity to continue to work, attend appointments, or just to take a much needed break from the demands of providing daily care for their loved ones. Edwards Adult Day Center has served hundreds of individuals and their families over the past 30 years and continues to be a win-win for participants, caregivers, and the community," Dillard said.

Dillard spoke during an anniversary celebration for the center on Dec. 17. About 100 people attended the event, including community leaders, founding board member Milton Davis, and other past and present board members and supporters.

The idea for the adult day care arose in 1988 when a group of community-minded individuals from First Presbyterian Church saw the need for day care services for elderly adults in Martinsville and Henry County. At the time, several members of the congregation were full-time caregivers for parents and other dependent family members. They saw day care services as a possible alternative

to nursing home care. Due to an increase in the average life expectancy, there also has been an increase in the need for more caregivers.

As a result, the Martinsville & Henry County Adult Daycare Center was organized and opened in late 1988.

The early plan was for the center to be located in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church, however, the former Martinsville Athletic Club building located on Commonwealth Boulevard was available, so it became home for the Martinsville adult day care center.

In 2006, after outgrowing that location with 25 daily participants, a new facility was built next door to expand services to meet the growing need. The new center was named Edwards Adult Day Center in honor of Oliver and Mildred Edwards and the many other supporters of the center.

Today, the Edwards Adult Day Center has 26 employees who care for participants and their changing needs. Several long term employees were recognized at the December celebration, including Phoebe Carter, Dennis Hairston, Faye Ingram, Robert Spencer, Donna Whitener and Kim Witcher, along with weekly scheduled volunteers Matt and Nancy Festa.

Dillard encouraged everyone to help get the word out about the Edwards Adult Day Center so it is not the "best kept secret" in Martinsville and Henry County. She ended with a quote from Anne Frank: "Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much."

For more information about the center, visit www.edwardsadc.org or call 666-9400.

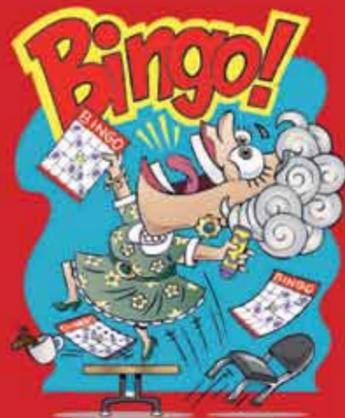
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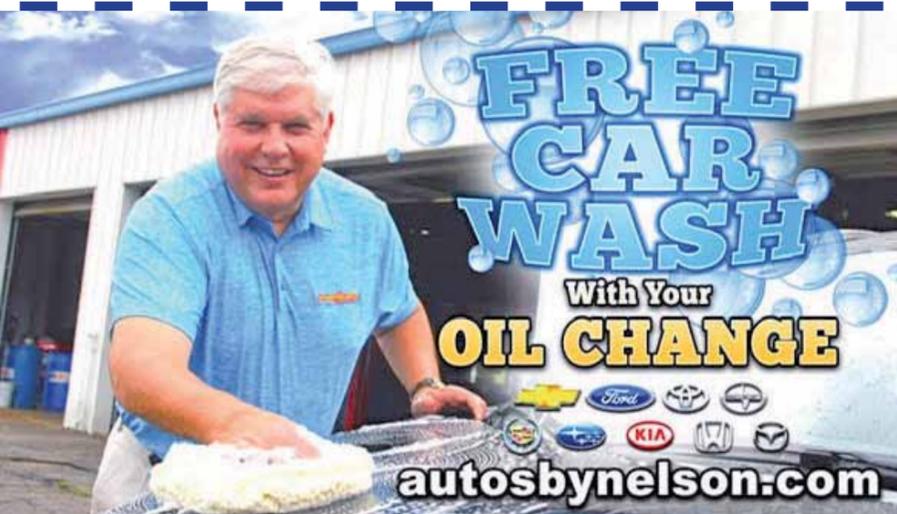
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Hometown Team



Driver Ty Gibbs is shown in Victory Lane after he won The Icebreaker Late Model Stock race at Myrtle Beach Speedway. Gibbs, 16, is the grandson of Joe Gibbs, NASCAR Cup Series owner and Super Bowl champion coach of the Washington Redskins.

Conversation led Nelson to create LMS team

Barry Nelson spent much of his youth tinkering with race cars and visiting race tracks but as an adult, he became so wrapped up in work, family and community endeavors racing became an afterthought.

Until he had a chance meeting with NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series driver Timothy Peters in 2013 the thought of starting a race team hadn't crossed his mind. But after a conversation with Peters, his wheels immediately began turning, and the result is what he likes to refer to as the "Hometown Team," a

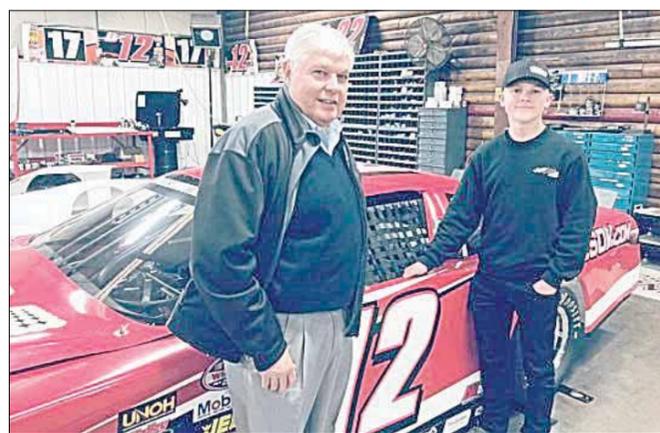
Late Model Stock program that has quickly blossomed into one of the most respected in racing.

While anchored by regional talent like Peters and Bobby McCarty of Summerfield, N.C., Nelson Motorsports has attracted national NASCAR talent like Kyle Busch and Denny Hamlin for one-off events.

The Martinsville-based operation made national headlines again earlier this year when it was announced that 16-year-old Ty Gibbs had signed with the team for at least six races this summer. Does the last name

sound familiar? It should. Ty is the grandson of Joe Gibbs, NASCAR Cup Series owner and Super Bowl champion coach of the Washington Redskins.

The youngster, a developmental driver for Joe Gibbs Racing, had been competitive at weekly racing tracks in North Carolina, but the Nelson partnership has taken him to another level. In his initial outing with the team three weeks ago, he won one of the most



Ty Gibbs (at right in photo above) has signed with the Nelson Motorsports team for at least six races this summer. The team was started by Barry Nelson (left), who has built a small family car dealership into AutosbyNelson, a group of seven dealerships in southern Virginia and North Carolina. At left, Nelson (left) is hugged by Joe Gibbs after Gibbs' grandson Ty — driving for Nelson Motorsports — won in Myrtle Beach.



prestigious Late Model Stock races in the country, The Icebreaker at Myrtle Beach Speedway. "It's an honor that Coach (See Hometown p. 5B)



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Runners gearing up for half marathon, 5K

THE MARTINSVILLE HALF MARATHON & 5K

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Martinsville
HENRY COUNTY VIRGINIA



By Ginny Wray

Area runners are in high gear, training for the ninth Martinsville Half Marathon and 5K on March 30.

The 13.1-mile half marathon and 3.1-mile 5K are part of the seven-race Miles in Martinsville series that raises funds for Martinsville-Henry County Family YMCA scholarships and other items.

The event typically attracts several hundred runners, and it has drawn as many as 500 competitors in the past, according to Joe Philpott of the local YMCA who has been running, on and off, since 1958.

The 5K usually attracts more runners than the half marathon, and it includes both running and walking divisions. The latter is named the Sheree Poe Memorial 5K Walk for the late co-pastor of Mercy Crossing Church.

People can sign up to run or walk up as late as the morning of the runs, Philpott said.

Runners come from throughout the region, with most entries from within an hour's drive of Martinsville, and Miles in Martinsville also tries to promote the event across Virginia and adjoining states. Philpott said that as of early January, 70 percent of the people who had signed up for the March races were

from outside Martinsville and Henry County. He attributed that to the fact that out-of-towners often make decisions on which races to enter earlier than local residents, he said.

Both the March 30 runs start and finish at the YMCA on Starling Avenue. Half marathon runners will wind through uptown Martinsville before entering the Uptown Connector Trail that leads to the Dick & Willie Passage rail trail. They will run the length of the trail and then retrace their steps.

The 5K participants will run and walk through uptown Martinsville.

Philpott said anyone who is just getting started in running should consider the 5K rather than the half marathon. He called the half marathon's 13.1 miles an "epic distance."

For a dedicated runner who already has a good level of fitness,

training for a full 26.2-mile marathon takes four to five months, he said. While a half marathon "is still a big distance and takes a lot of training and effort, it is doable for the average person," he added.

Typically, a casual jogger would take 10 to 12 weeks of increasing training mileage to be ready to run the half marathon, he added.

For casual joggers, those who run 2-3 times a week, 2-3 miles around their neighborhood, Philpott suggests a training plan which includes slowly increasing their mileage each week to acclimate them to the stresses of running the full 13.1 miles.

He added that there are different training plans available, ranging from those for novices to advanced runners. Many are free; some are for sale. By surfing the Internet or talking with an experienced runner, the right plan can be determined.

A typical training plan for a novice runner might include the following elements:

Weeks 1 and 2: One day a week, run 4 miles and then take a shorter run/jog 2-3 miles three times that week. Cross train rather than running on one of the days by riding an exercise bike or elliptical machine, swimming or some other exercise. Rest 2-3 days.

Week 3-4: Extend the

long run to 4.5 or 5 miles, adding half a mile each week. Weekly short jogs should grow to 3.5 miles.

Week 5: Extend the long run to 6 miles and shorter runs from to 4 miles. Continue to cross train and rest 2-3 days a week.

Week 6: This is similar to Week 5 but rather than the long run, if possible take part in a 5K run. Philpott said a 5K may be shorter than a half marathon but it involves more cardiovascular effort. "It's kind of good to blow out the soot, so to speak," he added.

Week 7: Take a 7-mile run with three days of 4.5-mile run/jogs.

Week 8: Extend the long run to 8 miles.

Week 9: Try to back up and run a shorter distance but run harder, possibly in a 10K race. Or substitute the weekly long run with a 5- or 6-mile run at a pace a bit faster than your typical long run. Increase the shorter runs by half a mile.

Week 10: Long run should be 9 miles; short runs are 5 miles.

Week 11: Long run should be 10 miles.

Week 12: Do an easy 3-mile run on Monday, 2 miles on Tuesday, 1

(See 5K p. 4B)

Fees, packets

Early bird registration for the March 30 Martinsville Half Marathon and 5K has expired. Standard registration, in effect through March 29, is:

- 5K running, \$30
- 5K walking, \$30
- Half marathon, \$50

Virtual half marathon, \$50 (In this category entrants run the official course within the week before live race and submit their

time via a running app on their phone or upload from their GPS watch. Entrants still get T shirts and finisher medals but no age group awards are given. It is a way for someone who has a conflict with actual race date to still be a part of the event.)

The fees rise by \$5 each on the day of the race. Fees apply to participants of all ages.

Packet pickup will be held from noon to 6 p.m. March 29 at the Martinsville YMCA and on race day from 6:30-7:30 a.m.



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Running changed Crouch's life

Five and a half years ago, Ashley Crouch put down cigarettes and picked up 30 pounds of extra weight. Today, her weight is not an issue and she has completed a 100-mile run en route to an ultramarathon this June.

Running, Crouch said, changed her life. "It was the best thing I ever did," she added.

Crouch, 38, of Bassett, began her transformation around 2013 when she quit the pack-a-day smoking habit she had since she was a student at Fieldale-Collinsville High School.

"I woke up one day and said, 'I'm done smoking.' Just like that. I never smoked again," she said.

But she did gain about 30 pounds, reaching a weight of 140 which, she said, was a lot for her small frame.

"During the process my mother-in-law made the comment that if I was going to be miserable about quitting smoking and gaining weight, why not do it all at one time," Crouch recalled.

So she did, and took up running to help lose weight, despite the fact that she had never been athletic or played sports. But losing weight was not her only reason.

"With seven kids at home, running was the one thing no one wanted to do with me," Crouch said. "It was the first time in 22 years I was alone. It was fabulous."

A friend gave her an old treadmill, which suited Crouch fine because she said she was too embarrassed to run outdoors. "I told myself that when I could run three miles on the treadmill I would go outside. It took about six months," she said, adding that she used an online challenge that added accountability to her motivation.

That was in October. When the weather turned warm that spring, Crouch started running outdoors on Bassett streets and at Bassett High School. When she could run three miles without stopping, which took about seven months, she did a color run with her brother.

That was her first 5K, a 3.1-mile run. "There was no pressure. It was a lot of fun," she said.

Her second race was the local Harvest Moon 10K. "I realized there is a lot of difference between a 5 and 10K," she said, with what she called "real racers" in the longer run.

Crouch ran her first marathon, a 26.2-mile event, on the first anniversary of when she started running. Eventually, she started ultra running.

"Racing is pretty intimidating in the beginning because they call it racing," she said. "It took time to find out where I fit in. What I found was the longer I run, the better I am."

"I'm not getting any younger," she said. "I was beating myself up trying to keep up with ultra fast runners. What I learned was that I can go for hours at my own pace and not get tired. At ultra running, that's what you need. My body seems to handle that," she said.

Crouch has found that

many of the people in her age group (30-50) run longer distances.

Last September Crouch completed a 100-mile race that took her 26 hours. She did it, she said, "to see if I could."

As a result, she will compete in the 100-mile Western States Endurance Run to be held June 29-30 in California. She said it is the oldest and most prestigious ultramarathon in the nation.

According to the Active website, ultramarathons are between 26.2 and 100 miles long. More than 70,000 athletes compete in ultra races each year, the site added.

Crouch said she has won races and received awards, but they are not her motivation to keep running.

"I really don't think it's winning that's great. It's just the accomplishment. If I looked at myself 10 years ago and said, 'When you're 37, 38 you'd be running hundreds of miles,' that would have been insane," she said.

As Crouch continued to run, her self-image changed.

"I'm way stronger. I can do way more than I thought I could. I say my grandkids are going to hear great stories" because of her running, she added.

Her family also has changed. All her children now are "excellent runners," she said.

That includes three high schoolers who run cross country and track, an eighth grader who takes part in Girls on the Run and plays soccer, a seventh grader who runs cross country, and a 7-year-old.

Three years ago, Crouch made a deal with her now 16-year-old son that if he ran a half marathon, he could play lacrosse or do something else he chose. "We trained together," she said, adding that he was 13 at the time. At age 15 he ran a 50K.

"We'd feed off each other" for motivation, she said. "My son was the first to take it to that extreme and be that good at it."

Her two youngest daughters became involved in the Girls On the Run program, which Crouch started coaching a year after she started running.

Girls on the Run, through the Martinsville-Henry County Family YMCA, teaches life skills through lessons and running for girls ages 8 to 13.

"I love coaching because I want others to take that leap as well," challenging themselves and training for longer runs, she said. The first girls she coached with Girls on the Run now are on high school track teams, said Crouch, who still coaches with the program.

Her husband, Travis, is the sole exception in the family of runners. The couple operates a nursery and landscaping company, Everything Outdoors.

"My husband doesn't run but he is an excellent cheerleader," Crouch said. "When I do a 100-mile or 60-mile run, he's my crew guy," making sure she has food, shoes and everything else she needs along the route.

My husband calls himself

my sponsor," she said. "He doesn't really understand why a person does this but he does understand how much I love this. ... He's very supportive."

Crouch plans to remain involved in some aspect of running as long as possible.

"I don't think 100-milers will last very long but I'm really enjoying them while I can. I hope to keep in running as long as I can" through running and coaching, she said.

She plans her year out in December so she can race once a month, which is the most she and her husband agree that she can be away from home.

So she will take part in the Martinsville Half Marathon and 5K on March 30 and also will coach the runners she has worked with in a training program for that event. She is planning to take part in two 100-mile races this year, and will do her first half iron



Ashley Crouch is shown with her husband Travis. Ashley began running 5 1/2 years ago after she stopped smoking and gained weight, and now she is preparing for an ultra marathon this June. Travis does not run, but is her "crew guy" during races and an "excellent cheerleader," she said.

man competition, a triathlon involving swimming, cycling and running.

Crouch's advice to people who are considering running is to find a friend or group to provide a support system.

"When you have kids, have a job, have a husband, have a home, it's hard to say 'these

30 minutes are mine. I'm going for a run.' I had to fight for that and sometimes still do. It's hard to take that control, even 30 minutes a day, without feeling guilty. It helps to have a friend saying 'you're doing the right thing. Take time for yourself,'" Crouch said.

Runners share tips

One of the best ways to learn about running is from people who do it.

Here, four area residents of varying degrees of experience share their top tips for people who want to start running.

JASON DOVE

Jason Dove, 59, lives in Collinsville and has a State Farm agency in uptown Martinsville. He has been running since he was 12 years old (1971); ran cross country in high school; and continued running in college. He was not on a team but competed in many road races.

He has run two New York City Marathons. The first was his senior year of college in 1980, when he ran it in 3 hours and 33 minutes. He ran his second New York City Marathon in 1986, finishing in 3 hours and 8 minutes.

Dove has continued to run and enjoys it, adding that it has become a way of life. He has taken part the first three or four half marathons in Martinsville but does most of the local 5 and 10 K races through "Miles in Martinsville."

His advice to others is:

1. "I encourage new runners to pace themselves when they start. In other words, build a base, a foundation for your training. Don't do 4 or 5 miles the first day and 8 or 10 the second day. Start off doing what you are comfortable doing (1, 2 or 3 miles) and stay with that until it begins to feel routine. When you feel ready to move up to more miles, 'listen to your body' and increase as you feel comfortable.
2. "Mix up your runs; run on different surfaces. I love dirt trails and golf courses if you can. They are much softer on the legs!
3. "I would put my miles on a calendar so you can track your progress. As you are doing that, you also will not want to try and "save" money on shoes. Invest in your running shoes. Get quality shoes or you will regret it.
4. "Finally, just use common sense, and enjoy it. It will pay you back many times over, hopefully for many years.

JOHNNY PINKARD

Johnny Pinkard, 66, lives in southwestern Henry County. He was a partner with four others running a sawmill, Pine Products Inc., until he retired about six months ago.

He started running when he was 55. "Both of our kids ran cross country when in high school and continued to run after they finished college. One day I saw an ad for the Marine Mud run up in Salem and it looked like fun. Thinking that I was fast approaching the age when I would no longer be able to run, I asked the kids if they wanted to form a team of five and enter the race. They thought it would be great to run with the old man, so with a month to train, I started running. That was 11 years ago and I'm still at it," he wrote.

Pinkard said he has finished first in his age class a few times in local races, although he adds that is because there are few others in his age class.

He has run several 5Ks, some 15Ks, all the Martinsville half marathons and one Roanoke Foot Levelers Half Marathon. He ran the Richmond Marathon in 2014 and 2015. In the 2015 marathon he crossed the finish line with his son. He also tries to run in Tampa, Fla., each February. "The year before last, my daughter and I finished the Gasparilla 15K together. Photographs of those finishes with his children "are all the honors I need," he added.

His suggestions for beginning runners are:

1. Get online and pick out a training schedule for the distance you wish to run/

walk. If you are willing to put in some effort and the time, you will succeed and finish the race.

2. Don't worry about race day. If you adhere to the training schedule (or close to it), you will make it just fine on race day. The distance is the same for which you have trained so the race just another day on the trail. Don't be nervous because when it comes down to it, you are out there for exercise, and most people out there are just like you. Some will finish before you — big deal. Race against your best time in practice and don't worry about the other runners. Goodness knows I would have quit long ago if I was concerned about my place among the other runners.

3. Remember Nike's slogan: JUST DO IT! If you are out there "doing it," you will finish far ahead of those at home, sitting on the couch, watching the TV.

4. Come out and have fun walking, jogging or running. Enjoy the fresh air and good companionship. In addition, you get a cool T-shirt and lots of after-race snacks.

FELECIA WATKINS

Felecia Watkins, 47, of Martinsville, is the director operations for the Southside Survivors Response Center.

She has been running for 18 months and said she began for "more of a spiritual thing than anything else. I had been working out for maybe a year. It needed something else as a stress reliever," she said, due to the stress of her job. "It was more something to do so I could think and get some of that out."

She has participated in six or seven races; two 5Ks; a full marathon; two half marathons; and other smaller events. She won third place in her age group in her first race, which also was her first half marathon, in Danville.

Her tips include:

1. Cross training is very important. Try anything that is going to help with your core and hips.
2. Be mindful of nutrition. "I eat clean," with no processed foods but enough protein and carbs.
3. Be patient with yourself. Some people get started and try to go out real fast. That may be okay for a while but you may have setbacks. Some runners get discouraged and quit. You have to be patient with yourself.

GREGG DEAN

Gregg Dean, 42, of Henry County, teaches history at Martinsville High School. He formerly coached cross country and track.

He ran in high school and college but he did not become serious about it until 8-10 years ago. Four years ago he started running marathons and locally, he has won more than 30 races, mostly in Martinsville and Danville.

When running marathons, he first broke three hours in 2015. He qualified for the Boston Marathon in 2016 and plans to return there to run in April. He also has qualified for Boston next year.

His recommendations for others are:

1. To start, find a group or friends who are runners to help you stay motivated.
2. Do not just run. Workouts can include cross training and lifting light weights (body weight) to strengthen your legs.
3. Set goals. Dean said after his last marathon in November he didn't have another one scheduled. "Without a race goal, for me it's just going through the motions," he said.

"Outwardly I'm not competitive. But people who know me enough as a runner know I want to be better than so and so," he added.



Joe Philpott of the local YMCA — himself a veteran runner — hands Ashley Crouch a medal after she finished a race on March 19, 2016. She ran the half marathon in 1:59:15, her first time breaking two hours.

NCI to host workshop

A six week self management workshop will be hosted by the New College Institute on Wednesdays March 13 through April 17, from 9:30 a.m. to noon at 191 Fayette Street Room 104 in Martinsville.

Participants will receive a free book, "Living a Healthy Life," learn about living with heart issues, diabetes, chronic pain and other health concerns, learn ways to improve your communication with your healthcare provider and more.

Parking is available in main lot across from Farmers Market.

Registration is required. To register or for more information, call Donna Allen at (276) 632-6442.

Admission is free and light refreshments will be provided.

YMCA hosts balance workshop

The Collinsville Family YMCA will host a four week workshop, A Matter of Balance, on Mondays and Thursdays, March 4 through March 28, from 10 a.m. to noon at 395 John Redd Blvd. in Collinsville.

Topics of discussion will include fall prevention, setting realistic goals for increasing activities, promoting exercise to help increase strength and balance, and more.

Registration is required. To register, or for more information, call Donna Allen at (273) 632-6442.

SAAA seeks volunteers

The Southern Area Agency on Aging (SAAA) is seeking volunteers, and invites you to join their next leader training session.

It will be held on March 21, 22, 28 and 29 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at a location to be determined.

During this four day training session, learn how to create healthy action plans for success, strengthen patient-provider relationships, implement self-management strategies for health conditions and more.

Training and program materials are free.

Must attend all four days to become certified.

To register or for more information, call or email Donna Allen, SAAA program coordinator, at dallen@southernaaa.org or (276) 632-6442 no later than March 8.

SEED

(cont. from page 1A)

but also to build the workforce," he said. "I do think getting as many people in the (employment) pipeline is a step in the right direction" to improving the area's economy.

House said 58.1 percent of the SEED participants are pursuing transfer studies to enable them to move to a four-year college or university and teacher education; 20.5 percent are pursuing health and public safety fields; 7 percent are pursuing business fields; 2.6 percent are studying information technology; and 1.3 percent are studying the arts.

When students transfer to four-year institutions after getting associate degrees at PHCC, they still will be tracked to determine what fields they entered and their job prospects, he added.

In addition, SEED students are exceeding the retention rate of non-SEED students at PHCC. In the program's first year, 87.7 percent of SEED students were retained, compared to 71 percent for the entire community college, excluding SEED participants, House said. In addition, nine SEED students completed their degrees in the fall because they had been dual enrollment students.

SEED participants must complete eight hours of community service. So far, that has totaled 3,940 hours in local organizations such as community centers, churches, schools, nonprofits and other groups and events.

House said PHCC has done "an incredible job of putting data systems in place so we can easily track data for the program," and it is working with Harvest to fine-tune the program as needed. He added that may include determining how to help students who applied for but did not qualify for the SEED program.

Of the 49 students in that category, 37 still are enrolled at PHCC, Hodges said.

The SEED program cost \$235,000 in its first year, less than the \$250,000 that was budgeted, according to Hodges. He added that the difference is attributed to scholarships and other financial help that students receive before Harvest funds kick in.

"One hundred percent" because of the SEED program, PHCC's enrollment increased in 2018 for the first time in seven years, Hodges said.

5K

(cont. from page 2B)

mile on Thursday, rest on Friday and take part in the half marathon Saturday.

Philpott said most coaches would suggest that runners not increase their long run or weekly mileage by more than 10 percent in any week. Too much too soon may result in injury, illness or burnout.

Philpott added that runners do not have to work up to a training run of 13.1 miles to race 13.1 miles.

"If one can run 10 or 11 miles in training, they can go out on race day and run 13.1 miles," he said. "Adrenaline and the excitement of competition take over. ... It won't be easy for the last few miles but they can do it."

For more advanced runners, there are many types of training that can be mixed in to any program, Philpott said, citing tempo, interval and long runs. At the end of the day, advanced training plans and those for the novice runner are similar in that they all build up and increase both the long runs and shorter efforts each week, he said.

After taking part in a half marathon, Philpott advises taking some time off to recover. "My recommendation is a couple of weeks," he said. "Maybe jog but no long runs or hard runs. You need a couple of weeks to get your legs back under you. It takes a toll on the muscles, no

question."

Locally, the Martinsville Half Marathon and 5K offer a training team program to help runners prepare. It began in January and February for the March race. The program offers training plans, friendship and support from fellow runners as well as lots of information on running.

"If you've never done anything like this, it's nice to have friends to share the challenge with," Philpott said. "Training for and completing a long race such as the half marathon is quite emotionally meaningful to people who go through it," he said.

Running — even a half marathon — changes people's lives, he said. "Many times I've seen runners cross the finish line of a half marathon or marathon and simply break down and cry. A 5K can be meaningful too. However, people who step up to a longer race are shocked at what they can do" when properly trained, said Philpott, who wrote a book on running based on his experiences.

For more information on the Martinsville Half Marathon and 5K and other local races as well as the training programs and more, visit the website milesinmartinsville.com.

Griffith visits Magna Vista



Ninth District U.S. Rep. Griffith, R-Salem, has made it an annual practice to visit with a government class at Magna Vista High School to discuss current events, policy, and governmental procedure with seniors.

Griffith recently visited with Joshua Schaller's government class. Topics of discussion ranged from Griffith's background to the wall and his philosophy on governmental procedure.

Total enrollment of 1,669 credit-bearing students was up 8 percent over fall 2017, he said.

PHCC is "thrilled with the enrollment boost," Hodges said. "We're happy that the barrier of finances has been removed" from higher education locally.

He explained that full-time federal financial aid for students, called PELL Awards, do not cover 15 credit hours — the amount needed to get an associate degree in 2 or 2 1/2 years — plus textbooks. So many students only take 12 hours to be full time but then it takes them 3 or 3 1/2 years to complete an associate degree, Hodges said.

National statistics show that the longer it takes to complete a degree, the less likely a student is to do so, he said.

"By removing the barrier of finances, they can complete a degree in a timely fashion and transition to work or transfer to a four-year institution," he added.

The SEED program has "risen the education conversation in our community," Hodges said, by improving accessibility to higher education.

Students were recruited for the program at events at each high school campus and at the community college, he said. Also, "we test all rising juniors during their 10th grade year to see if they are eligible for dual enrollment. To be tested, they have to complete a community college application, so most of the students already were enrolled" in PHCC, he said.

With that in place, SEED enrollment "takes less than 15 seconds on a phone," Hodges said.

SEED participants are not publicly identified, even to faculty, Hodges said. Administrators know who they are because they track their data, he added.

So far, 200 students have completed the SEED application for fall 2019, and Hodges expects that number to rise. Because the program was announced in November 2017, recruiting got a late start for the fall semester, he said.

"By this time last year only a handful of students had completed applications" but now more than 200 have done so, he added.

There is no limit on the number of students who can be accepted into the SEED program, Hodges said. He added that both PHCC and Harvest eventually want to start talking about the program to middle school students to spark their inter-

est.

The program also now is part of recruiting efforts by economic developers, Hodges said. SEED means companies will find a better-educated workforce here, and companies' employees may qualify for the SEED program if they are in this community at least a year, he said.

"We've talked for 20 years about the economic devastation that hit our community. I think 20 years from now when we talk about economic recovery, we will talk about SEED as the center of the cog of the wheel that led to change in the community," Hodges said. "I know that sounds almost Pollyanna-ish, but I've said it publicly."

Isaiah Young said he learned about the SEED program from his college advisor, Ally Clement. He had been accepted at Virginia Commonwealth University but it did not offer the musical theater major he wanted, so she suggested he attend PHCC for a year and take the time to find the right college with the right major.

When he told his parents that the SEED program would cover his tuition, fees and books at PHCC, "they were like, 'Well, that's what you're going to do,'" he said.

Young added that he has a brother who has been out of college for a

few years and "still is in debt. He took the same exact courses I'm taking, the same general classes ... except I'm getting it for free."

"The reason a lot of people don't continue their education is they can't afford it. SEED takes that off the brain. You're going in just solely focused on getting an education," he said, adding that he also is saving money for his expenses when he transfers to a four-year university.

PHCC was a good stepping stone for Young, he said.

"I think the biggest thing for me is how a lot of times, it is a complete world change when you go straight from high school to a big university in a big city with people from all over. At PH, you don't feel like you're being thrown to the wolves or babied either," he said. "All the staff really wants to see us succeed."

Young was a dual enrollment student at Bassett High School, class of 2018, so he is on track to receive an associate degree in general studies this May. He plans to audition in February with hopes of attending James Madison University, Elon University or Emory and Henry College next year.

"My ultimate dream is to be on Broadway" and if not on Broadway, "at least to have a steady career performing in professional theater," he said.

FFA students test their skills

Students in Bassett High School's inaugural agriculture and horticulture program have put their skills to the test in two recent competitions.

At the 2018 Virginia State Fair, Bassett High School entered individuals in three FFA competitions: the Junior Dairyman's contest, the Junior Forester's contest and Horticulture Demonstration.

Contestants in the dairy event were Jade Hughes and Bailee Surber. Junior Forester's contestants were Hughes, Sadie Perry, Olivia Keaton and Hannah Lewis. Perry and Keaton also competed in Horticulture Demonstration. Coaches for the dairy and forestry

teams were Alyson Martin and Darryl Holland, with horticulture coach Megan Wells.

Also competing in dairy judging at the State Fair were Billy Fulcher and Tyler Hylton, both representing Henry County's new Career Academy at Figsboro.

Following these September career development events was October's District FFA Forestry contest at Fairystone State Park. Bassett's senior team placed second and included Hughes, Lewis, Brian Moran, Dyland Nutter and Surber. The junior team, represented by Alexis Boardwine, Kaden Collins, Keaton, Perry and Conner Webber, advanced



FFA State Fair Dairy Team (from left): Bailee Surber and Jade Hughes of Bassett FFA and Billy Fulcher and Tyler Hylton of the Henry County Career Academy.



Bassett State Fair Forestry Team (from left): Coach Alyson Martin, Sadie Perry, Jade Hughes, Olivia Keaton, Hannah Lewis and Coach Darryl Holland.



Bassett Senior Forestry Team (from left): Dylan Nutter, Bailee Surber, Hannah Lewis, Jade Hughes and Brian Moran.



Bassett Junior Forestry Team (from left): Conner Webber, Olivia Keaton, Alexis Boardwine, Sadie Perry and Kaden Collins.

Hometown

(cont. from page 1B)

Gibbs and his family would think enough of us to allow Ty to race with us," said Nelson. "He is such a great young talent. He's going to compete at the highest levels in NASCAR and it's a privilege for us to help him along with the journey.

"When I started Nelson Motorsports, a big part of the goal was to create something that would show people everywhere that Martinsville and Henry County can produce good and positive things. It feels good to attract the attention of one of the top teams in NASCAR and for him to let his grandson race with us, run our equipment and trust our guidance."

Nelson's racing accomplishments should not come as a surprise; he's no stranger to success. He built a small family car dealership into AutosbyNelson, a group of seven auto dealerships representing 13 manufacturers in Southern Virginia and North Carolina.

"Racing is like the car business. It's all about people and I've got the best people," said Nelson, who has five fulltime employees in his race shop, located in Bassett Forks.

Peters, who planted the seed for Nelson's race team and has been a constant since its inception, heads up Nelson's group of "best people" as the team's general manager. He also drives in bigger events for Nelson Motorsports and still competes in the NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series on a part-time basis. He won one truck series race in 2018 while making just five starts. He has a total of 11 career wins in the series.

Peters was Nelson Motorsports' lone driver in the beginning and scored some big Late Model for the team. He captured the Denny Hamlin Short Track Showdown in 2015 and the ValleyStar Credit Union 300 at Martinsville Speedway in 2017.

Those two wins propelled Nelson Motorsports into the national spotlight. It wasn't just the victories, but the quality of the equipment, workmanship and management that

drew interest and respect. That was the reason two of NASCAR's top stars, Kyle Busch and Denny Hamlin came calling a year ago. They both wanted top-notch entries for the Denny Hamlin Short-Track Showdown, the annual invitation-only race that pits top short-track talent from across the country. The race is a fundraiser for the Denny Hamlin Foundation.

"It was all about networking," Peters said about attracting the Cup stars. "I knew Denny from back in the day when we were racing Late Models against each other. I know both of them from racing against them. And they know that we put a good product on the track."

Peters and his crew immediately went to work building out two new Late Models for the NASCAR Cup stars and their workmanship didn't disappoint. Hamlin won his namesake race, Busch finished second, and Peters finished third in another Nelson entry.

"When we started in 2013, if I had told him (Nelson) Kyle Busch and Denny Hamlin would be driving his cars, he wouldn't have believed it," said Peters. "He has given us all the tools and the infrastructure to do this."

While Nelson Motorsports has built a national profile, it has remained a steady performer at weekly race tracks throughout the region.

In 2017 McCarty won four races at South Boston Speedway and captured the prestigious Hampton Heat at Langley Speedway. Last year McCarty won four of 16 CARS Response Energy Tour races and claimed the series championship.

He's returning to that series this season, and along with Gibbs and Peters will run other select events throughout the region, like the annual Fourth of July 200-lap race at South Boston Speedway and the ValleyStar Credit Union 300 at Martinsville.

And of course, no one will be surprised if some more big names come calling to partner with Nelson again in 2019.

to regionals, placing fourth at Chatham's White Oak Mountain Wildlife Management Area.

These are historic events because these FFA competitions and the BHS students are the first from Bassett to participate in FFA events in more than 100 years. According to Holland, it seems Bassett High School has never had a Future Farmers of America chapter until 2018.

The August 2018 opening of the Career Academy marked the first time an agriculture and horticulture program has been offered to all high school students in Henry County Public Schools. Previously, the agriculture and horticulture programs existed only at Magna Vista High School and Laurel Park Middle School.

Now, students take the introductory level classes at Magna Vista and Bassett and go to the Career Academy for

the upper level classes taught by Holland. Because this is the first year for the agriculture program at Bassett, it only has the introductory classes. Next year, those students may move to the Career Academy for the upper level classes as well, though opportunities still will be available at the home schools, Holland said.

The academy, located in the former Figsboro Elementary School, has new livestock facilities, a new lab for the veterinary science class and a new classroom for the program, according to Holland. The academy also houses a cosmetology program and one for HVAC/industrial maintenance, which include welding, machine maintenance and related fields, he said.

"It's kind of exciting," Holland said of the academy were Michael Minter is principal. "It's like the old day trades concept with a 21st century twist."

Bassett FFA has deep roots, rich traditions

By Darryl Holland

Bassett High School entered FFA Dairy Judging, Forestry Judging and Horticulture teams at the 2018 Virginia State Fair. I had my suspicions that these were the first FFA competitions for Bassett and that there had never been a Future Farmers of America chapter at the school, so I went to the archives at the Bassett Historical Center for confirmation. While there, I uncovered some fascinating material not at all related to the FFA.

First, yearbooks from Bassett High School only go back as far as 1935, but the school's roots go deeper, as many of the earlier editions include "history sections."

For example, several schools have served the Bassett community over the years, most on land donated by the Bassett family. The first was a one-room log cabin founded prior to 1900 and later abandoned, and another structure, completed in January 1915, was staffed by only five teachers.

And while Bassett has not had an FFA chapter in 100 years, early yearbooks share that Bassett did have FHA – the Future Homemakers of America – as the school first offered home economics between 1917 and 1919 when Miss Kate Dickerson was principal. Another early club was the Industrial Arts Club, which began in the fall of 1935 under the direction of Mr. Douglas Phillips. But again – no FFA.

"The River Ripples" – the school's first newspaper, was printed in 1925, and 10 years later "Timber Tints," the school's first yearbook, was published. During this time,



Victory Club

there was no school mascot so a contest was held. Charles Eugene "Gene" Clay, a 1932 Bassett graduate, came up with the nickname "the Bassett Bengals," and the Bengal remains Bassett's mascot.

Still searching for an FFA chapter but having no luck, I came across information from 1936 on the Bassett "Hiker's Club." Miss Virginia Romm was the faculty sponsor of this all-girls organization, and the first president was Sunshine Jones. This unique band had more than 20 members and had its own song, its own colors (green and white) and its own motto: "Not hitch-hikers, but hikers."

The "Keep Virginia Green" KVG firefighting crews were part of the FFA and agriculture for many years and while Bassett did not have the course in its curriculum or an organized FFA chapter, Bassett High

School did have the "Fire Fighting Rangers," organized in 1940. By 1947, it was recorded that Bassett's "Rangers" was one of 11 crews in Henry County.

In 1943, a few freshman boys interested in aviation organized the "Model Airplane Club." They went to the former Industrial Arts Shop during their study hall to build scale models "for the Army and Navy, the purpose of which is to train our boys to recognize both allied and enemy planes," according to a yearbook. Willis Adams was president, Billy Young was the vice president and the principal, Mr. E. Carl Hoover, was the sponsor.

Another club organized in late 1943 was the nationwide "Victory Corps," whose purpose was to "promote instruction and training for services critically needed in war time," a yearbook

(See Bassett p. 7B)

Ice cream shop to open in April at Collinsville site

Livy's ice cream shop plans to open in mid March for a couple of weekends prior to its official opening, in which they are aiming for April 1.

The shop is located at 2842 Virginia Ave. in Collinsville. It will be open seven days a week, starting at 4 p.m. and later on the weekends. Livy's ice cream shop will share this space with Chris Starnes State Farm, which has embraced our theme of an old county store. State Farm is providing rocking chairs and picnic tables for families to enjoy their favorite award winning Home-

stead Creamery flavors.

Livy's will serve Homestead Creamery ice cream in 16 different flavors, milkshakes, cookies and sundaes.

Rodney Billings, owner, said prices range from \$2-\$5 and that an average family of four can enjoy premium ice cream for less than \$20.

For the full menu, visit them online at www.livysicecream-shop.com.

The entire menu can be found online. Livy's is currently accepting applications online at www.livysicecreamshop.com

Museum will host spring break camp

Science experiments, nature exploration, games and crafts are in store for young spring-breakers this year at the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

The museum will host its first Spring Break Day Camp for youth ages 6 to 11 on March 26 and 28 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"Spring Break Day Camp is going to be a fast-paced adventure for all of the campers," said Christy Deatherage, education manager at the museum. "Campers will participate in a variety of scientific experiments, explore the diversity of flora and fauna in nearby Wilson Park, and take a step back in time to the age of dinosaurs. Campers will come away with a lot new knowledge, but it's

spring break and we're going to make sure they have a ton of fun, too."

Parents can choose to have their children participate in one or both days of the camp.

"Both days will have unique experiences independent of each other, making the camp a fulfilling adventure for each camper whether they choose to attend both days or just one," said Deatherage.

Spring Break Day Camp costs \$30/day, with a \$5 discount for museum members. A limited number of scholarships are available for those who qualify. Pre-registration is required. A morning and afternoon snack will be provided by the museum, and campers are asked to bring their own bagged lunches

and water bottles.

For more information about the camp, to register or to learn more about scholarships, contact the museum at 634-4185 or discover@vmnh.virginia.gov.

For more information about the museum, go to www.vmn.net.

The Virginia Museum of Natural History, located on Starling Avenue in Martinsville seeks to increase understanding of, and appreciation for, the natural history of the commonwealth through education, research, collections, publications and exhibits. It is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, a distinction earned by fewer than 10 percent of museums in the United States.

Tourism

(cont. from page 3A)

for 33 tourism marketing projects statewide. The local organizations match the grant funds to support marketing projects. In this funding cycle, the local partners will match the VTC grant dollars with more than \$2.1 million, providing more than \$2.7 million in new marketing.

Ultimately, the program will impact at least 135 other statewide tourism entities.

Locally, the largest part of the grant will help cover the cost of the advertisement that VisitMartinsville, Rives and VMNH have worked together to place in the 2019 Virginia Travel Guide. This is the state's official travel planning guide, and it is found in all state welcome centers and certified visitor centers. The guide also is available online at www.virginia.org/travelguide, and people can request that free copies be mailed to them worldwide.

According to the local Tourism Office's 2017 Conversion Study, 33 percent of local visitors used the guide to plan their stays.

The funds also will help cover the cost of "window clings" that VisitMartinsville has displayed at the Lamsburg and Rocky Gap state welcome centers. Window clings are high quality picture/film that goes over a window or glass area.

"We have had lots of travelers

reach out to us and request more information on Martinsville-Henry County after seeing our window clings displayed at the front of those welcome centers," Stinnett stated.

Finally, the money will help with the cost of design and printing of the 2019 Martinsville-Henry County Activity Guide, which is the Tourism Office's top piece of marketing collateral, according to Stinnett. It is distributed at all state visitor and welcome centers, rest stops along Interstates 77 and 81, and area hotels, bed and breakfasts, campgrounds and attractions. Copies also may be requested at www.visitmartinsville.com/forms/brochure.

Under the Marketing Leverage Program, at least three entities must partner financially to apply. Partners may consist of Virginia towns, cities, counties, convention and visitors' bureaus, chambers of commerce, other local or regional destination marketing organizations, private businesses, museums, attractions, cultural events, and other tourism-related entities.

Research shows that every VTC dollar invested in grants resulted in \$16 of direct visitor spending. Marketing campaigns that received Marketing Leverage Grants increased visitation by 15 percent.

For more information, go to www.VisitMartinsville.com.

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Bassett

(cont. from page 5B)

stated. It was noted "the school has participated in the collecting of different metals and other scrap materials and has especially emphasized the selling of war savings stamps and bonds." Inez Koger was the "Victory Corps" first president.

Though not mentioning an FFA chapter at Bassett, there was a reference to the "Bassett 4-H Club." A yearbook stated "no organization in the country is doing more to raise the standards of rural life and to enrich the outlook of farm boys and girls than the 4-H clubs." The earliest Bassett 4-H president appears to have been Nancy Marie Cruise in 1951. 4-H was revived at the school in 1965, and it was noted in the 1966 yearbook that 4-H "stimulates agricultural interests." But again, no FFA.

Finally, in 1972, an "Environmental Science Club" was formed, "encouraging conservation," with Bill Creal as student president and Betty Dodson as vice president.

In addition to this "environmental club,"

many of the other clubs mentioned — 4-H, industrial arts, the fire-fighters and the hiking club — have traits and characteristics similar to the Future Farmers of America, but none was the genuine article. Even the airplane and Victory Corps have an FFA flavor as leadership, patriotism and good citizenship always have been an integral part of the agricultural curriculum.

Yes, it is true there has never been an FFA chapter at Bassett, but there is one now, and this is only the beginning.

(Darryl Holland teaches agriculture at the Henry County Career Academy.)

These photographs of Bassett High School clubs and organizations came from old school yearbooks.



Fire Fighting Rangers



Hikers Club



Airplane Club

DAR learns about plants

Beth Cahill taught members of the Patrick Henry chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) about history and plants on Feb. 20. Her program, entitled The Brother Gardeners, chronicled the interlocking workings of gardeners responsible for introducing many American trees and plants to English gardens. England, with only four native evergreens, is now graced by beautiful magnolias and pines, thanks to her former colonies. Cataloging, propagating and transplanting many trees and ornamental plants, is the work of dedicated gardeners beginning in the late 1600s. Today, the Chelsea Flower Show held each May in England has the most preeminent garden displays in the world.

The Indian Minute presented by Helen Hensley, revealed that Pilot Mountain, N.C. (Mt. Pilot to fans of Andy Griffith) was once a guide of the Cheraw Indians whose lands stretched from modern day Galax to Myrtle Beach, S.C. Later used as a marker by pilots in the early days of aviation, Pilot Mountain has long been a treasured landmark of travelers.

Deloris Broyles reported that in the President General's message that the DAR membership form has

been simplified. More new member applications were verified in January 2019 than in any month since 2016.

Regent Marcia Bauserman has been notified that she will serve as state vice chair for the Virginia DAR for the 2019-2022 term. She will

serve with the Virginia State Conference Committee. Marcia also shared a history of the local DAR Patrick Henry Monument on Old Liberty Road that she recently compiled.

The meeting adjourned until March 13, 2019.

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HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

henrycountyenterprise.com

Monthly Publication
Published The First Friday Of Each Month

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The Henry County Enterprise encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publication. The Henry County Enterprise reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

If you have news about or an upcoming event for your organization, company or church, email dhall@theenterprise.net and/or call (276) 694-3101

March 15

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS, ACTIVITIES

(The following information is from [vismartinsville.com](http://www.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.)

March 1
 • "Don't Drink the Water" Broadway hit comedy will be presented by TheatreWorks at the Black Box Theatre, 44 Franklin St.; 7 p.m. Tickets: \$16. For more information, call 632-2800.

• The Commonheart concert at the Rives Theatre, 212 E. Church St., 9 p.m. Admission \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door; season passes accepted. Call 403-0872 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.

March 2
 • Fab Lab Family Days: 3D Doodler Pens, 10 a.m. to noon at the PHCC Dalton IDEA Center, 26 Fayette St. 3D Doodler Pens let you draw sculptures and create 3-D designs. Instructor is Christopher Wagner. Cost: \$15. Preregistration required at ph.augusoft.net or 656-5461.
 • Intermediate Adobe Photoshop: 10 a.m. to noon at Patrick Henry Community College. Instructor is Rick Dawson. Cost: \$60. Learn to use Photoshop tools, overlays and textures. Bring a portable jump drive with images to enhance. Preregister at augusoft.net or 656-5461. For more information call 656-5461.
 • Board Game Day at the Blue Ridge Regional Library, 310 E. Church St. Bring a game or play one from the library. Free; 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call 403-5430 for more information.

• "Don't Drink the Water" Broadway hit comedy will be presented by TheatreWorks at the Black Box Theatre, 44 Franklin St.; 7 p.m. Tickets: \$16. For more information, call 632-2800.

March 3
 • "Don't Drink the Water" Broadway hit comedy will be presented by TheatreWorks at the Black Box Theatre, 44 Franklin St.; 2 p.m. Tickets: \$16. For more information, call 632-2800.
 • 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.

March 4
 • Storytime at Spencer-Penn Centre, 475 Spencer-Penn Road; 10:30-11:30 a.m. Carole Anne Penn will read a story and lead songs, crafts and play time. For more information, call 957-5757.

March 5
 • Southern Gentlemen will perform at Bassett Historical Center, 3964 Fairystone Park Highway; 10 a.m. Free.
 • Zumba, 6 p.m. at the Spencer Penn Centre, 475 Spencer-Penn Road. Instructor is Julie Brown of

Patrick County. Fee: \$5. Call 957-5757 for more information.

March 6
 • Fast Track 2019 trade show open to the public, 4-7 p.m. at the former Sears store at the Village of Martinsville on Commonwealth Boulevard. Admission is \$2 or two non-perishable food times. Children age 6 and under are admitted free.

• Henry County Bike Club variety ride on the Fieldale Trail. Call 618-0343 or check the bike club's Facebook page for ride locations and times.

March 7
 • Thursday Trail Trekkers, 1 p.m., Gravelly Nature Preserve. Contact Paul Johnson at kpj24112@gmail.com with any questions. Seniors 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.

• Painting with Paul Gowen, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Piedmont Arts, 215 Starling Ave. Subject: Back Country Path. Register online or call 632-3221. Advanced registration required before noon the day before the class. Fee: \$75 for PAA members, \$85 for non-members.

• Classes and groups at Spencer-Penn Centre, 475 Spencer-Penn Road. To sign up or clubs or for more information, call 957-5757:
 — Chair aerobics, 11:30 a.m.; sponsored by the M/HC Coalition for Health & Wellness and taught by Paula Battle.

— Martial Arts classes, 6 p.m., taught by Sifu Kristian Gordon. All ages and all fitness and experience levels welcome. Monthly fee: \$40 for Spencer-Penn members, \$65 for non-members.
 — Photography Club, 6:30 p.m. Professional photographer Lamont Devins teaches how to best capture a particular subject each month and winning works are chosen. Fee: \$12 a year.
 — Aerobic exercise class, 6:30 p.m.; sponsored by the M/HC Coalition for Health & Wellness and taught by Anita Hooker.

March 8
 • Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, 10:30 a.m. (See listing above.)
 • Spencer-Penn Centre Music Night of bluegrass and Gospel bluegrass music, open mic 5:30 p.m., Timbre Trail 6:20 p.m.; and Marshall Brothers and High Road 7:40 p.m. Concessions available. Fee: \$5. Call 957-5757 for more information.

March 9
 • Pickers and Fiddlers Bluegrass Gospel and Mountain Music Songfest, 10 a.m. at Pocahontas Bassett Baptist Church. Free. Bring instruments to take part. Call 629-5395 for more information.

• Movie in the Library, 10:30 a.m. at the Spencer-Penn Centre. Free. Call 957-5757 or email spc.susan@yahoo.com for more information.

March 10
 • Henry County Bike Club's Sunday Road Ride, 2 p.m. starting at the Ridgeway Library. 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. (See listing above.)

March 11
 • Storytime at Spencer-Penn Centre, 475 Spencer-Penn Road; 10:30-11:30 a.m. (See listing above.)

March 12
 • Fab Lab Family Days: Learn to use the Showboat CNC Router, 5:30-7:30 a.m. through April 16 at the PHCC Dalton IDEA Center, 26 Fayette St. Cost: \$104. Enroll at ph.augusoft.net or 656-5461.
 • Zumba, 6 p.m. at the Spencer Penn Centre; fee \$5. (See listing above.)

March 13
 • Henry County Bike Club variety ride on the Fieldale Trail. Call 618-0343 or check the bike club's Facebook page for ride locations and times.

March 14
 • "A Beautifully Broken Virginia" photography exhibit of works by John Plashal, 5:030 p.m. at Piedmont Arts, 215 Starling Ave. Call 632-3221 for more information. Free.
 • Second Thursday Science Talks, 6 p.m. at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Ave.
 • Second 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.
 • Thursday Trail Trekkers, 1 p.m., Waid Park. (See listing above.)
 • Spencer-Penn Centre classes and groups (see listings above):
 — Chair aerobics, 11:30 a.m.
 — Martial Arts classes, 6 p.m.
 — Aerobic exercise class, 6:30 p.m.

March 15
 • Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, 10:30 a.m. (See listing above.)

March 16
 • Basket-making class at the Spencer-Penn Centre, taught by Hazel Coleman of Ashboro, N.C., from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Preregistration required; fee is \$25 for a small basket and \$35 for a larger basket. Call 957-5757 or 957-1521 for more information.

March 17
 • 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. (See listing above.)

March 18
 • Storytime at Spencer-Penn Centre, 475 Spencer-Penn Road; 10:30-11:30 a.m. (See listing above.)

March 19
 • History of Martinsville Speedway and the Economic Impact of the speedway, noon to 1 p.m. at New College Institute, 191 Fayette St., Martinsville. Speedway President Clay Campbell will present the program. For more information, call Ruby Jones, 403 5605.

March 20
 • Henry County Bike Club variety ride on the Fieldale Trail. Call 618-0343 or check the bike club's Facebook page for ride locations and times.
 • Latin Dance Workshop, 6-7 p.m. March 20-April 24 at Stone Hall 103 at Patrick Henry Community College. Fee: \$30. Edgar Ornelis will teach Salsa, Bachata, Merengue, Cumbia and Kizomba dances. Suitable for beginners; no partner needed.

March 21
 • VMFA On the Road: An Art Mobile for the 21st Century, hosted by Piedmont Arts, 215 Starling Ave., Martinsville, March 21-23. Exhibits include photography, paintings, printmaking and other mediums. For more information, call Piedmont Arts at 632-3221.
 • Thursday Trail Trekkers, 1 p.m., Collinsville Jaycee Park Nature Trail. (See listing above.)
 • Spencer-Penn Centre classes and groups (see listings above):
 — Chair aerobics, 11:30 a.m.
 — Martial Arts classes, 6 p.m.
 — Aerobic exercise class, 6:30 p.m.

March 22
 • VMFA On the Road: An Art Mobile for the 21st Century, hosted by Piedmont Arts, 215 Starling Ave., Martinsville, March 21-23. For more information, call Piedmont Arts at 632-3221. (See listing above.)
 • Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, 9:30 a.m. (See listing above.)

March 23
 • NASCAR Gander Outdoors Truck Series 250. For more information, visit www.MartinsvilleSpeedway.com or call 877-722-3849 or 956-7200.
 • VMFA On the Road: An Art Mobile for the 21st Century, hosted by Piedmont Arts, 215 Starling Ave., Martinsville. For more information, call Piedmont Arts at 632-3221. (See listing above.)

March 24
 • STP 500 at Martinsville Speedway. For more information, visit www.MartinsvilleSpeedway.com or call 877-722-3849 or 956-7200.
 • 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. (See listing above.)

March 25
 • Storytime at Spencer-Penn Centre, 475 Spencer-Penn Road; 10:30-11:30 a.m. (See listing above.)

March 27
 • Henry County Bike Club variety ride on the Fieldale Trail. Call 618-0343 or check the bike club's Facebook page for ride locations and times.

March 28
 • An Evening with Maestro David Stewart Wiley, 7-9 p.m. at Piedmont Arts; \$35 general admission. "Classical Meets Jazz" program will feature Wiley with the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. For more information, call Piedmont Arts at 632-3221.
 • Thursday Trail Trekkers, 1 p.m., Lake Lanier. (See listing above.)
 • Spencer-Penn Centre classes and groups (see listings above):
 — Chair aerobics, 11:30 a.m.
 — Martial Arts classes, 6 p.m.
 — Aerobic exercise class, 6:30 p.m.

March 29
 • Ride 'N Dine on the Dick & Willie Trail, 9:30 a.m. (See listing above.)

March 30
 • Martinsville Half Marathon and 5K, starting and ending at the Martinsville-Henry County YMCA. For more information, visit www.milesinmartinsville.com.

March 31
 • 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. (See listing above.)

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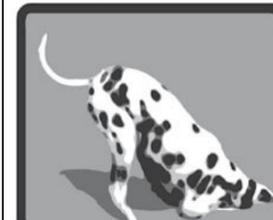


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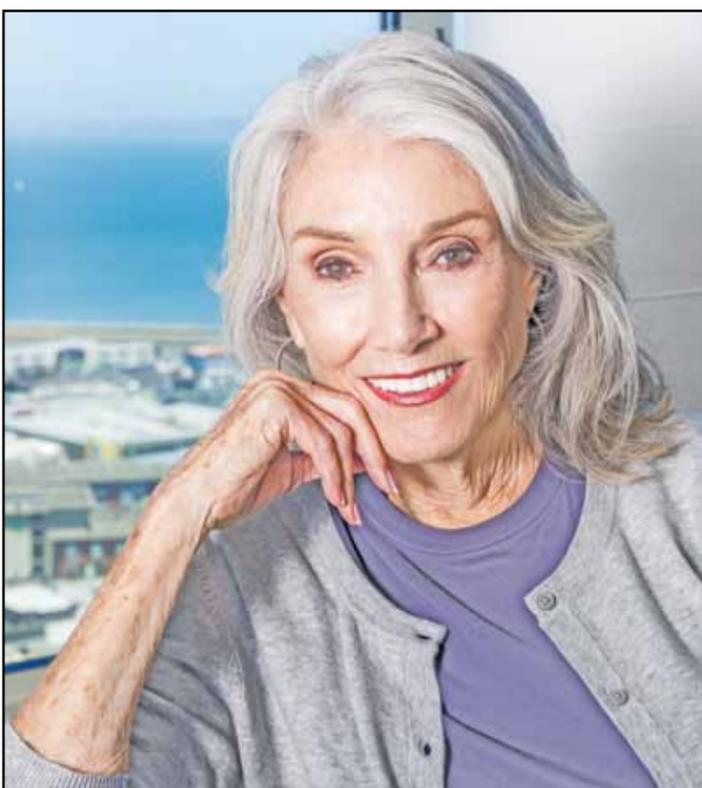
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