

## HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, December 19, 2020

(USPS-6)

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This year, organizers will repack the annual Christmas Dinner for pandemic safety. (Contributed photo from the 2019 event)

## Dinner to be held with pandemic friendly changes

**Brandon Martin**  
Staff writer

The annual "Richard's Dinner," a meal held on Christmas Day, will still happen this year, after an alternate version of the dinner was approved by Gov. Ralph Northam.

Scott Norman, organizer for the dinner each year, said the formal name for this year's event will be "Richard's Ding-Dong Dash."

Instead of dine-in guests at First Baptist Church, those looking for a hot meal may have them delivered directly to their home.

"It's like the childhood game," Norman said. "After you've ordered your food, the delivery driver will come up,

sit your food down, ring your doorbell and take off. Instead of just an empty porch, the person will see a hot meal on their doorstep."

In addition to delivery, Norman said people will be able to get food at the church in a drive-thru manner that allows for coronavirus guidelines to be followed.

About 200 volunteers help, serving in positions that include trained kitchen staff, servers, delivery drivers and in dispatch.

"It's not just me. We have an amazing crew of volunteers," Norman said. "We honestly couldn't do it without everyone chipping in, and they all do it

See **Dinner**, page 5

## BHS Band ushers in season with pop-up concerts



**Brandon Martin**  
Staff writer

The Bassett High School Band performed a series of public concerts while observing pandemic precautions.

Wearing masks and maintaining social distancing guidelines, the band performed at three locations on Dec. 12.

Band Director Trey Harris said the idea for the pop-up or impromptu concerts came after the school division allowed student athletes, band members, and others to begin after school practices.

"We wanted to give our kids an opportunity to see each other, play their instruments and just be back 'home' in the band room," he said. "We quickly realized that the students were hungry to perform, not just

practice.

"We knew that having an in-house concert was not possible, so we began to think about what was possible in the community where we could play at outside venues where it was safe for the students and audience," he said.

With help from Monica Hatchett, director of communications for Henry County Public Schools, "some great local businesses and partners" agreed to provide a venue, Harris said, adding the band performed at Chick-fil-A, Stanleytown Health and Rehab, and Belk.

Harris said the students worked at home together "to learn the songs because of our limited practice time together."

Since practice has resumed,

See **BHS Band**, page 6



Wearing masks and observing other recommended guidelines to minimize exposure to the coronavirus, the Bassett High School Band performed winter classics during three 'pop-up' concerts in Martinsville.

## City school division gets high marks in virtual instruction

**Brandon Martin**  
Staff writer

With some school divisions struggling with the decision to provide some in-person or full-virtual instruction, Martinsville City Public Schools has experienced a degree of success with their full-virtual model.

During a Dec. 14 school board meeting, Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee "Zeb" Talley Jr. said the division's enrollment outpaced expectations.

"We currently have 101 students more than we anticipated in the city schools," he said. "Our enrollment is up, and we are one of the few. We are the only school in Region 6 that has an increased enrollment since the pandemic. Most school divisions have lost 200-300" students.

"If you multiply that by \$6,000, then that is how much revenue they are going to lose," Talley said, and credited the city division's increased enrollment to community support



The Martinsville City School Board discussed the division's virtual instruction efforts. Yvonne Givens, vice chairman (left to right); Donna Dillard, chairman; Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee "Zeb" Talley Jr.; and Dominique Hylton. Board members Emily Parker and Tony Jones attended virtually.

for its decision.

"I want to thank the parents that had faith in us, even though we are having to do this virtual," Talley said. "Virtual instruction is not the best instruction. We've never said that, and we've never put up that facade. But it is the safest."

Owing to its successes in virtual learning, Talley said the division

will give presentation to the Virginia School Board Association on educational equity.

"Everybody is facing a similar set of problems," he said. "I don't think anybody has a golden caveat or has all of the answers, but we are trying to adjust and do the best we can with safety first and then

See **High Marks**, page 6

## PHCC board recommends mascot change, downvotes name change

**Brandon Martin**  
Staff writer

After receiving public comment in opposition to any changes to the name of Patrick Henry Community College, the school's College Board decided in a 9-4 vote to submit an amended recommendation to leave the school's name "as is."

While the board's recommendation to the State Board for Community Colleges will reflect no changes to the name, another of the recommendations, which passed with only one dissenting vote, will call for the removal of the "Patriot" icon and replace it with a compass.

The variance in the vote could stem from how the recommendations were presented. Instead of voting on all of the recommendations at once, the board took up each recommendation separately.

Chairman Janet Copenhaver briefed the board on how the votes

would take place.

"Each committee will say a very brief summary and present your report as a motion," she said. "I will then call for a second and then open the floor for discussion and after I close the discussion, we will call for a vote on the motion, as presented."

The first recommendation report read was number 418-the Mascot Name Committee Recommendation.

Robert Haley, chairman of the Mascot Name committee, said the committee was making "one change. There is no icon or no personality that can adequately represent what a Patriot is. We think each of us are patriots in our own way. That's why we are recommending the removal of the icon of the Patriot."

"The committee went on to specifically endorse the use of a compass. That's been in use for many years. We've heard lots of

positive feedback over the compass and we wanted to specifically point that out," Haley said.

After the report was presented as a motion, it received a second by William O'Brien.

During the discussion, only Roger Hayden spoke out and voted against the motion.

"I was in favor of leaving the Patriot icon," he said.

Every other member voted "yes" on the recommendation, except for Paul Geib and Wren Williams who were not present for the meeting.

The second item under consideration was the names of various facilities.

The recommendation under Board Report 419 will consider a change in the name of three facilities that are determined to be inappropriately named "because they are no longer used in that same ca-

See **PHCC**, page 3

## School officials plan for next year as pandemic adds to pre-existing pressures

**Brandon Martin**  
Staff writer

In their final meeting of the calendar year, the Henry County School Board addressed several items relevant to future operations in the division at a recent meeting.

Schools are currently slated to return to a hybrid format on Jan. 19, 2021.

Instruction

Ron James, a parent from Ridgeway, outlined concerns with the gap in instruction time that students in Henry County will have due to the number of days spent on virtual instruction.

"After calling 12 school districts in Virginia and 23 different states, I found out that some states are teaching their students on a weekly basis of 1,951 minutes a week, he said. "Our neighboring county, Pittsylvania County, is teaching their kids at 960 minutes a week. We are at 240 minutes a week. This is not enough. I'm watching my kid struggle."

While he said he recognizes the gravity of the situation, James urged the board to act.

"This is not impossible. Other counties are doing it. Other states are doing it and our kids are getting left behind," James said. "Teachers are pushing, and I understand that they are pushing. We just have to push a little harder."

Board Member Ben Gravely, of the Iriswood District, asked if administrators have "any type of recovery plan" planned to address shortfalls in education for students.



Ron James, a parent from Ridgeway, addresses the Henry County School Board regarding instruction time.

Schools Superintendent Sandy Strayer said that the division has many assessments to gauge learning gaps for students.

"Currently, we are administering the SOLs (Standards of Learning) because, as you know, it's very important to have as many students take the SOL as soon as they complete the coursework," Strayer said. "We have a high pass rate."

Students taking a recent reading SOL at Bassett High School "all qualified so they will be able to graduate," she said.

In addition to the statewide tests, Strayer said the schools also have their own performance evaluations.

"Even without COVID, we have deficiencies where we have to look at those assessments, evaluate student performance and then we have to have a plan," Strayer added. "We may possibly have an extended summer school. We always have a sum-

mer school. Many times, we don't have students take us up on that because they feel that they have been in school all year and sometimes, it's not a fit for every kid."

The real assessment of learning gaps will come once students return to school in-person on Jan. 19, according to Strayer.

Cherie Whitlow, at-large board member, noted that with the second semester of last school year being cut short, combined with the first semester of this year, students will have missed almost a year of instruction.

"Where are we going to make up all of those months of instruction

See **Plans**, page 3



# Healthcare workers arm for battle

**Brandon Martin**  
Staff writer

After receiving the first batch of coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccinations last weekend, staff members at both campuses of Sovah Health feel they finally have the artillery needed to properly fight the pandemic.

During a Dec. 16 press conference, many members of the Sovah team drew parallels to wartime.

“This is the first chance that we’ve had to actually be able to go on the offensive with this COVID vaccine,” Alan Larson, market president and CEO of Sovah Health--Danville, said. “We’ve been treating symptoms and helping patients the best we can to recover but this is our first opportunity to actually start preventing spreading.”

John Kent, COO of Sovah Health--Danville, said having the vaccine takes him back to his Army days.

“In the Army, there are two ways you can play,” he said. “You can fight the enemy on the defense, or you can fight the enemy on the offense. We are wildly excited to finally have an offensive weapon to take to the fight and get after it.”

Kent said each campus received shipments of 975 doses of the vaccine.

“We are following the guidelines set out by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and the Virginia Department of Health that healthcare workers, nurses, respiratory therapists, housekeepers that are directly involved in patient care of COVID-19 patients, are the first to be vaccinated. Then, there is an algo-

rithm that goes down the list for other frontline workers and healthcare workers,” Kent said, adding that the community will be receiving vaccinations “hopefully in the spring.”

This first shipment was created by the pharmaceutical company Pfizer. Kent expects to receive another shipment of Moderna as soon as it is approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

“Within our facility here in Danville, we’ve vaccinated a small group of 10,” he said. “Part of this was to try to make sure that we understood the relatively complex process for reconstituting the vaccine.”

Kent explained that the vaccine is stored in -80 degree Celsius temperatures before “it then has to be thawed out to room temperature, diluted with a very specified amount of saline solution, mixed in a very specific way and then it can be drawn and used in a very specified amount of time.”

He said that each one of those steps has its own time and temperature window.

Kent said that Sovah has enough vaccinations to administer to their staff of 2,500 across both campuses.

Dale Alward, CEO of Sovah Health--Martinsville, said his staff administered 15 doses on Dec. 15.

“We are vaccinating in multiples of five,” he said. “There are five doses per vial, so it’s important that we line up five folks at a time to ensure we don’t waste, given that it has a shelf life once it’s pulled out. The goal today and tomorrow is in the ballpark of 20-25.”

A staff member who took the

vaccine detailed her experience. “As a frontline worker, I was vaccinated yesterday and I’m here and happy to be able to speak with you today,” said Dr. Sheranda Gunn-Nolan, market chief medical officer. “I feel great. I had a headache last night, and that is the extent of any symptoms that I had. It didn’t even require a Tylenol ultimately.”

According to Gunn-Nolan, the most common side effects are a sore arm, headache, and fever. Chills and body aches are also possible, but Gunn-Nolan said Tylenol or Motrin can help alleviate any of those symptoms.

Only those over the age of 16 have been approved to take the vaccine, Gunn-Nolan said. Initial recommendations were that women who were pregnant or breastfeeding should not take the vaccine, but Gunn-Nolan said that has since been reversed.

Highlighting the safety of the vaccine, she noted it is effective 94 percent of the time.

“On average, most vaccines are tested in a Phase III trial on 33,000 people. This (Pfizer vaccine) has been tested on 150,000 plus, and we continue to increase that number every day,” Gunn-Nolan said. “There is this ray of hope for the conclusion of a long hard battle, but this is a battle we plan to win.”

She explained the vaccine is not a live vaccine and that mRNA (messenger ribonucleic acid) technology has been used for years in cancer research.

“This vaccine doesn’t have those extra preservatives,” she said. “Those preservatives are

usually what people have reactions to or side effects from.”

The process, she said, as “mRNA is injected into the body and the body uses that, the only job it has is to make some viral protein pieces. These viral protein pieces are what your body makes the immune system respond. Other than that, mRNA is destroyed. Your body has these protein particles and they also get destroyed. That’s your body being able to recognize what it has been exposed to and recognize when it is encountering it in the future.”

It is necessary to administer the vaccine in two separate doses, she said.

“The two shots are because that first introduction is that first greeting your body needs to recognize that it is something stronger than an initial greeting,” Gunn-Nolan said. “That second shot is its second exposure to COVID-19, with a similar process and the similar mRNA that is injected. Your body creates its army, and it is ready to continue that fight.”

In the United Kingdom, she said there were some anaphylaxis in individuals who were previously prone to allergic reactions. When the vaccine is administered, the individual is monitored for 15 minutes to ensure there are no serious allergic reactions.

When addressing the rumors that aborted fetuses were being used to create the vaccination, Kent said “there is some information out there about the way some vaccinations are made. In the case of both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccine” they were found “to have no ethical chal-

enges and no ties back to these cell lines for aborted fetuses.

“The challenge behind that is a concern that vaccines are made using a cell line that originated from an electively aborted fetus,” he said, and added “some of the ones (other vaccinations) to come do have some ties back to abortions that were done back in the 60s in cell lines that have been propagated over time since then. Those are the ones that folks point back to, but specific with what is to come (Pfizer and Moderna), the indication was that they were not tied to those cell lines and therefore did not have those ethical concerns.”

Even armed with the vaccine, Larson said the fight is not over. Even those who developed immunity after a positive COVID-19 diagnosis should still get vaccinated.

“Exposure is not enough to prevent you from getting COVID in the future,” Larson said. “The vaccine is the only way that we have confidence to know that you won’t get sick from being exposed.”

Kent said it also is important to continue to “wear our masks, socially distance, not gather in large groups, wash our hands and all of these things that we have been doing. We need to do that for some time now until we can get back into larger numbers of people.”

If for no other reason, Larson said to take these precautions for the healthcare workers “that are extremely tired of working for the last nine months. There’s a lot of people who are spending extra hours and extra time taking care of these very sick people.”

## Resident warns of government spending in relation to school projects

**Brandon Martin**  
Staff writer

A Collinsville resident is asking for better stewardship of taxpayer dollars following an alleged bad transaction occurring on the former Collinsville Primary property, which has now become the Center for Community Learning.

Doug Stegall addressed the Henry County Board of Supervisors on Dec. 15, specifically about the purchase and demolition of three homes near the site and the sale of three mobile school units once used by the former elementary school.

He said the housing lots, located adjacent to the school on Oakland

Drive, were supposed to be used “to make money for the taxpayers. They said they were being used for storage, but we didn’t see anything being stored in them.”

Stegall said he and others were told “that we would be arrested if we went back on the property. Then they came in and destroyed the houses

and tore them down.” Schools Superintendent Sandy Strayer said the houses were purchased between 2005 and 2006.

Regarding the exact reasoning for the sale and demolition of the houses, “I would not want to speculate because the people on the board now and in the central office are not the same people. At the time, they were going to build a new school on that site,” Strayer said

The houses “were purchased and we never did anything with them,” said Monica Hatchett, director of communications. “When Dr. (J. David) Martin was interim superintendent, they were vacant, empty and the middle of Collinsville.”

After issuing a Freedom of Information Act request, Stegall said the three houses were purchased by the county for \$238,000, adding that it took approximately \$10,475 to demolish the houses.

“I don’t think the houses would have been in the way of what is going on there now,” he said, referring to an apartment complex that will soon be developed at the former John Redd Elementary School.

“We are told that they were sold at quite a bit less” than market value, Hatchett said.

Stegall said three mobile school units near Collinsville Primary went on the auction block on Nov. 27, 2019.

“I had never been to an auction before, so I thought I’d go to it,” he said. “I didn’t like what I had seen right from the start. I told the county that I didn’t like them having an auction on a Wednesday morning at 9 (a.m.) because everybody is working. I didn’t think there would be a lot of people there. They could

have put them on Facebook or had them appraised or anything.”

“A lot of schools have mobile units on their property because there is not enough room in the main building,” Hatchett said. “Recently, we closed Collinsville Primary because that school is no longer in use and it became the Center for Community Learning. They did not have a need for the mobile units on our property anymore because they were able to house everything in the main building.”

David Scott, assistant superintendent of Operations and Administrative Services, said that when the schools have a surplus of an item, it is typical to auction the item.

“The public received notice by an auctioneer that was contracted to work for us,” Hatchett said. “Anybody in the public that wanted to come bid on those mobile units could do so. There weren’t lots of bidders, but the mobile units were bid on and sold.”

One of the units received a single bid of \$100 and then was sold, according to Stegall.

“I think the auction should have been called right there,” he said. “We weren’t getting any bids on it and the taxpayers are going to lose money.”

“I know there are some concerns about the fact that they were sold at a very low price; however, sometimes that happens when you are auctioning a property,” Hatchett said. “The other expenses related to that particular sale, for example paying an auctioneer, was not something that we had to do. The auctioneer receives a fee based on the price paid for the item. We didn’t have to pay anyone, as far as tax dollars go, to remove the fencing or anything like

that because our maintenance staff did that for us. There were no outside costs.”

Stegall also took issue with the length of time that the mobile units remained on the property following the sale.

“Then, I didn’t hear anybody say any rules to it, like ‘you are responsible for what you buy,’ and ‘it’s got to be off of county property within 30 or 60 days, as appropriate,’” he said.

One of the mobile centers remained on the property for almost a year, Stegall said, and added he reached out to multiple county officials asking them “to make (the property owner) move this property and get their property off of county property. I don’t think you can store anything on county property.”

“We do not have a contract that states when they have to be relocated,” Hatchett said. “One of the purchasers had some extenuating circumstances and was not able to relocate their mobile unit in an expeditious manner.”

Stegall said he had discussions with the county and alleged he was told a buyer was “having problems moving it. Or were they having a problem selling it?”

Given his suspicion, Stegall said he kept an eye out online for the units should the county list the property. He said he eventually found the units available for \$3,000.

“They used to tell me that the trailers weren’t worth anything, but I proved them wrong on that,” Stegall said, adding that a marina in North Carolina eventually bought the center. “I just think the taxpayers lost money on that. The county didn’t handle it right.”



Center for Community Learning

**CROSSWORD**

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11
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53				54						55		

**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Selects
- 5. A cutting remark
- 9. Teaspoonful (abbr.)
- 12. Having two units or parts
- 13. Quality perceptible to the sense of taste
- 14. Expression of surprise
- 15. Italian Island
- 16. A coarse cloth with a bright print
- 17. Propose a price
- 18. Sedimentary material
- 19. Tree toad genus
- 20. Passed time agreeably
- 22. Custodians
- 24. 3rd largest city in Zambia
- 25. 18th Hebrew letter (var.)
- 26. Coasted on ice
- 27. Libyan dinar
- 28. Displayed exaggerated emotion
- 31. Andalusian Gypsy dances
- 33. Material
- 34. Article
- 35. Ballplayer Ruth
- 36. 5th largest Greek island
- 39. Hand drum of No. India
- 40. A style of preparing food
- 42. Former ruler of Afghanistan
- 43. AKA Cologne
- 44. Not generally occurring
- 46. Auto
- 47. Print errors
- 49. Interspersed among
- 50. Electrocardiogram
- 51. Churns
- 52. Ice hockey feint
- 53. Drive obliquely, as of a nail
- 54. Dried leaves of the hemp plant
- 55. Ardour
- CLUES DOWN
- 1. Lyric poems
- 2. Hungarian sheep dog (var. sp.)
- 3. A pad of writing paper
- 4. Lists of candidates
- 5. Base, basket and foot
- 6. Samoan capital
- 7. Mythological bird
- 8. Urban row houses
- 9. Sensationalist journalism
- 10. Carried on the arm to intercept blows
- 11. Estrildid finch genus
- 13. PA 18840
- 16. S.W. English town & cheese
- 21. Runs disconnected
- 23. Mourners
- 28. Old world, new
- 29. Atomic #25
- 30. Sweet potato wind instrument
- 31. Legend
- 32. 3rd tone of the scale
- 33. Russian jeweler Peter Carl
- 35. Capital of Mali
- 36. Extremist sects
- 37. Violent denunciation
- 38. Tooth covering
- 39. Music term for silence
- 40. Smoldering embers
- 41. Writer Jong
- 43. Actor Kristofferson
- 45. Adam and Eve's 1st home
- 48. Fish eggs

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# Plans

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that they have not received," Whitlow asked.

Lisa Millner, assistant superintendent of teaching and learning, said that administrators have been planning throughout the year to address the issue.

"We are looking at how things could look different for next year, even possible transition classes," Millner said of elementary-age students. "Some students are going to move right along, and they are going to be on track to go into the next grade level. Some students are not, and they are going to be stuck in between those two grade levels."

In addition to "recovery" courses in the summer, Millner said the division is planning on starting "as early as next semester" for middle and high school students.

"We've also set aside CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) funding to provide opportunities that we may not have been able to provide before," Millner said.

Strayer said more teachers are needed to meet the recovery needs.

"We always have to survey teachers and have them apply for summer school, but we feel like we are going to have way more students," Strayer said. "Summer school is past their contract and they get additional pay. We need to see how many teachers we are going to have available for summer school."

are still going to follow those Phase II guidelines," Scott said.

He added that the level of contact is to remain the same as during conditioning, "so it should not be 5-on-5 scrimmages right now. Or anything remotely close to that."

At most, Scott said that teams will only be playing approximately 60 percent of a normal season.

"We've said that we want to continue to have those teams on the schedule. If they get canceled, then so be it, but we also want to guarantee that their (coaches) pay will not be below 60 percent," Scott said. "Hopefully, if things improve and we start to have more contests then we can discuss the other 40 percent."

Strayer noted that some may question why students would be allowed to participate in sports but not in-person instruction.

"Academics are always first but again, we stopped our in-person learning because of a lack of substitutes," she said. "Our coaches and our students are willing to come."

New guidelines from the state limit 25 spectators for indoor sports. Coaches, players, and referees do not count towards the number, but cheerleaders and parents do. For outside sports, players can bring two guests. All spectators will be required to wear face coverings during the event.

## Budget

Scott said he expects the total revenue to be around \$87 million for fiscal year 2022.

The expenditures are largely problems that the division has struggled with for years, he said and explained that budgetary constraints down into three main areas: compensation adjustments, capital projects and new costs.

Scott said compensation adjustments would account for the most funds.

"We have a lot of commitments there," he said. "We want to be talking about steps for teachers and classified staff. We would like to be talking about percentage increases for transportation staff, as well as administrators."

Scott said the county is currently four steps behind on pay increases for teachers. Funding cuts related to the coronavirus pandemic prevented the board from enacting a plan that would have allowed the division to catch up by three steps in the current year.

As a ballpark number for this year, Scott estimated that each step increase would cost approximately \$350,000-400,000 for teachers. One step would cost the county an estimated \$366,000; two steps would be \$687,000 and three steps would cost \$976,000.

Classified personnel make up a smaller percentage of the division's workforce which will allow for more steps to be taken, according to Scott. A two-step increase would amount to \$123,000 while a three-step increase would be \$179,000.

"We know that we could take more steps there if we needed to without having as much of a financial burden," Scott said.

Bus drivers and aides are also set to get compensation increases.

"We would be looking at percentage increases for those employees," Scott said. "We'd skip right over a one percent increase, and more likely be talking about a two or three percent increase."

A two percent increase would be an additional \$51,000 for the county and a three percent increase would amount to \$76,500.

Scott said that building and division-level administrators could expect a one or two percent increase. The impact to the county would be \$63,000 for one percent and \$125,000 for two percent.

In addition to compensation, capital projects are also set to take a big proportion of the budget.

"From last year, there are three items at the top of that list that have had the most attention recently," Scott said, listing upgrades to the G.W. Carver Elementary cafeteria, the Pupil Transportation Garage, and ceiling repairs at Bassett High School.

The estimated cost for upgrades at Carver is \$1,080,000. The improvements to the garage would cost nearly \$500,000 and the

work at Bassett, \$3.2 million.

Other capital projects that will prove costly are renovation and additions to Sanville Elementary School (\$6.5 million), as well as roof and HVAC replacements for Laurel Park Middle School (\$5 million).

"We know the value of those things, but we also know they probably are not going to be possible within the next year or two years," Scott said. "They are not back burners (projects) but they are a little farther off."

In terms of new costs, Scott expects changes in Standards of Quality Staffing Guidelines from the state.

"There is some legislation out there that would increase the number of school counselors, librarians, nurses, assistant principals and so forth," he said. "That would have a cost impact on us but right now we don't know what that estimate would be."

Additional new costs are an increase in school resource officers by three (\$190,000), staffing and site preparation for a Career Academy Nursing Program (\$184,000), hiring a new Student Information System manager (\$84,000), and a new custodial services contract (\$1.5-1.8 million)

In other matters presented, the school board:

\*Recognized Samantha Law, a student at Bassett High School, for placing first in a virtual floral design competition through the National Junior Horticulture Association.

\*Recognized Magna Vista High School's Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps program for receiving a proclamation from the Virginia General Assembly. Major Phil Corbo was in attendance to represent the team.

\*Announced two awards given to the board by the Virginia School Board Association. The board was awarded the Excellence in Risk Management Award and Gold Certification for the Green Schools Challenge with first place honors.

\*Waived the normal audit fee for Support Groups (boosters and parent teacher organizations) in fiscal year 2020 due to the inability to fundraise because of the pandemic. The normal audit fee

is \$500 per group. Strayer also announced an intent to continue to waive the fee in subsequent years. This saves the groups a total of \$10,700

per year.

\*Appointed Leslie Ramey as clerk of the board and Monica Hatchett as deputy clerk.



Members of the Henry County School Board heard a presentation on the fiscal year 2022 budget. Board members (from left to right), Thomas Auker, chairman and of the Blackberry District; Dr. Merris Stambaugh, vice chairman and of the Collinsville District; Terri Flanagan, of Horsepasture; Francis Zehr, of Ridgeway; Teddy Martin II, of Reed Creek; Ben Gravely, of Iriswood; and Cherie Whitlow, member-at-large.



Samantha Law, a student at Bassett High School, was recognized for placing first in the National Junior Horticulture Grand Championship.



Major Phil Corbo received a proclamation from the General Assembly for the accomplishments of the Magna Vista High School Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps.



Thomas Auker, chairman, accepted awards for Excellence in Risk Management and Gold Certification in the Green Schools Challenge from the Virginia School Board Association on behalf of the Henry County School Board.

# PHCC

from page 1

capacity," according to Monica Hatchett. Those facilities are the Bassett Walker Corporation CAD-Lab, Hooker Furniture Technology Lab, and Francis T. West Industrial Engineering Lab.

That recommendation received no "nay" votes.

The next recommendation was Board Report 420, to remove the building names for the Thomas P. Dalton IDEA Center, owned by the Patrick Henry Foundation, and on the Food Lion building in Patrick County, which is owned by the town of Stuart.

The names of the J. Burness Frith Economic Development Center, the Walker Fine Arts Center, and A.L. Philpott Hall, William F. Stone Hall and Frances T. West Hall will all be retained.

This recommendation was also approved with no dissents.

The final recommendation on the college's name; however, showed some division among members of the board.

Terry Young presented the recommendation in three parts.

First, Young said "Patrick Henry Community College will disassociate itself from the historical figure Patrick Henry by discontinuing the use of the colonial male image in any form, including but not limited to print, social media, athletic representations and mascot persona."

Second, "the Patrick Henry Community College will return to its original nomenclature by adding a hyphen between the words Patrick and Henry on all

print, social media, signage and other representation within a reasonable time period to review the financial requirements for the modification."

Additionally, "the Patrick Henry Community College will continue to engage its equity alliance response team in an ongoing effort to ensure that equity, inclusion and diversity are a part of the core values and authentic cultural dynamics of the college and the local board will request that if the state board of community colleges rejects the local board's recommendation on the naming of the college, the state board will provide the local board with the opportunity to propose a new name in collaboration with the college and the community."

Dr. John McCraw, Jr. seconded the motion to open it up for discussion.

Gary Collins said the board had received clear guidance from the community on the appropriate action.

"Our residents have spoken with a resounding 'do not change the name,' he said. "With that being said, the residents of our area have spoken, but they've also got to realize that it is not our decision. This is only a recommendation from our board. It is totally up to the state board, of which we have no representation in the service area for that. The minutes clearly state that the college was named for Patrick County and Henry County. I have no problems with the other recommendations that we have mentioned in this mo-

tion. It is my feeling that we keep the name as is."

George Hippisley also spoke against any changes to the school's name.

"I read all of the comments from the public and I can do no better than to say they are very cogent arguments for leaving everything alone," Hippisley said. "This is Patrick Henry Community College. It has been Patrick Henry Community College. The name has not stopped people from coming here, of multiple races. I think it is much ado about nothing."

O'Brien asked how much public feedback was used in determining the final recommendations.

"We read all of the comments," Copenhagen said. "We took into consideration everything that was given to us. We also went back and read the resolution from the chancellor. It states that we have to determine the appropriateness of the name Patrick Henry Community College. In our research, we found that the hyphen was there, which clearly shows that it was named after Patrick County and Henry County, and there was no research that showed us when that was taken away. Therefore, that was the result of our recommendation."

Barry Helmstutler said he had a change of heart after hearing from the community.

"I have to admit, I was prepared to vote to add the hyphen because I do think that is possibly our best chance of keeping the name Patrick Henry," he said. "However, after reading the

public comments I feel that I have to change my vote to 'no' just because the public would like us to keep the name. I think it's a fight worth fighting."

McCraw asked to withdraw his second that brought the item up for debate on the floor.

"I made the motion," he said. "Can I withdraw the motion, as read?"

"I don't think we can do that," Copenhagen said. "I think we are going to have to vote on that motion, and if you want to do an amended motion, we can put that on the floor afterwards."

Hayden asked for the entire motion to be reread.

After he read the first portion, Greg Hodges, vice president of Academic and Student Success Services, interrupted to clarify a point.

"We've already approved that element based on the mascot review," Hodges said. "That is almost a moot point. It's just for consideration."

Young then read the other prongs of the recommendation.

Copenhagen recommended the motion as previously read.

The motion was voted down 5-8, with Copenhagen, Hatchett, Denny Casey, Wayne Moore and Robert Vogler in favor.

Collins then made a modified recommendation.

"We leave the name as is. I would also like to add that Patrick Henry Community College will continue to engage our equity alliance response team, in an ongoing effort to ensure equity, inclusion and diversity are part of the core values and

cultural dynamics of the college. I would also like to add that the local board of Patrick Henry Community College requests that the state board of community colleges rejects the local board's recommendations of the naming of the college that the state board will provide the local board the opportunity to propose a new name in collaboration with the college and the community," he said.

O'Brien agreed with the amendment, which did not include language affecting the recommendation to change the school's icon.

"It did not include Item 1 and I agree with that," he said.

Hodges clarified that language from the first recommendation had already been approved to remove the icon of the "Patriot"

The confusion came from similar language also being included in the fourth recommendation for the college to disassociate itself from "the use of the colonial

male image in any form."

Copenhagen noted that the board "voted on the first recommendation as presented. Now, we have a second motion on the floor that takes the hyphen out of number 2."

"We are doing an amended recommendation," Hodges said. "The amended recommendation will remove the hyphen. In other words, the name Patrick Henry Community College will be retained. Board item 3 and 4 on your original recommendation will also be retained."

The board then passed the amended recommendation with Hatchett, Casey, Dr. DelShana LeGrant, and Moore voting against it.

Copenhagen said the reports will go to the state board in February.

"They can accept or reject any recommendations that we have made, and we will not hear any feedback until after that meeting," she said.



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## OPINION

## An open letter to Congressman Morgan Griffith

Dear Congressman Griffith, It's been a couple of years since we last spoke, and I hope you're doing well.

I'd like to preface this column by saying something that might surprise some readers but I hope will not surprise you. Back in my full-time journalism days, I always enjoyed speaking with you. While we're pretty much on the polar opposite ends of the political spectrum, I always appreciated that you would answer my calls and were always willing to sit down and speak with me when you were in town.

I've interviewed a number of politicians over the years, and many reminded me of Greg Stillson, the charismatic populist senator from Stephen King's "The Dead Zone" who seemed friendly on the outside but was secretly itching to cause a nuclear holocaust. I never had that same sense when speaking with you. You always struck me as a student of law and history, someone with a keen interest in science, and someone who was not, you know, an insane demagogue. Despite our differences, I felt we had a good rapport.

And so I write this open letter not to single you out, but because even though I have an extraordinarily low opinion of many of your colleagues, I know you to be a smart man who might actually consider what I have to say.

I'm writing this open letter because as a member of your sprawling 9th Congressional district, I was frankly disgusted to see your name among the 126 Republican lawmakers who wish to have the Presiden-

tial election results thrown out by the Supreme Court.

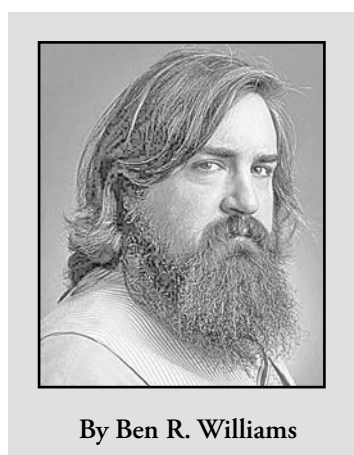
A bit of backstory for readers unfamiliar with this case: Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton filed a lawsuit on Dec. 8 alleging that Pennsylvania, Georgia, Michigan, and Wisconsin somehow worked voodoo on their ballots to produce more votes for President-elect Joe Biden, and as a result, their 62 electoral college votes should be thrown out, thus paving the way for Donald Trump's second term.

Of course, the arguments within this deeply stupid lawsuit have already been rejected in other courts. And of course, Ken Paxton was indicted on felony securities fraud charges more than five years ago and has yet to have his day in court, which might suggest that he would really, really like to get in good with the current President and get one of those pardons that are currently being handed out like flyers on the Vegas strip. And of course, everyone knows this lawsuit is going to get thrown out even by a heavily stacked Supreme Court, and probably before this column even runs.

(A late edit from Ben: the Supreme Court threw it out on the evening of Friday, Dec. 11, about an hour after I finished this column. Call me Nostradamus.)

And so, Congressman, when I saw that you had added your name to this absolute farce of a lawsuit, I wasn't surprised, but I was disappointed. And isn't that so much worse than anger?

Look, I get it. You represent a highly gerrymandered



By Ben R. Williams

bright red district, and as a result, you have to toe the party line, lest you lose your seat to some nutbar who genuinely believes that the Reptilians from Planet Kahomet have invaded the Democratic party. I understand that we've reached a point in this country where politicians of your affiliation can't ever admit that Trump is wrong even if he were to announce that rain falls up and black is white. I realize that denying objective reality is much safer and easier than speaking the truth.

While I would not put words in your mouth, I know you to be a smart man, so I would certainly hope that you also know that the lawsuit you lent your support to wasn't worth the paper it was printed on and that nothing will likely come of it. Perhaps that made it a bit easier to sign off on a lawsuit that, if successful, would incite a civil war.

But having said all that, I still feel compelled to ask: is there no rock bottom?

Merriam-Webster defines "sedition" as "incitement of

resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority." I don't throw the word around lightly, but I sure wouldn't be the first to describe the Texas AG's lawsuit as an act of sedition. As you well know, back when right and wrong mattered, sedition was considered a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

It is darkly amusing to me to imagine what would happen if the shoe were on the other foot. Had Trump won both the popular vote and secured an electoral college victory, and then a state Attorney General had filed a lawsuit to get the election reversed, I have little doubt that you would call the lawsuit undemocratic, un-American, and downright abominable.

And you know what? I'd agree with you. Because even though such a hypothetical situation might run counter to my own desires, and even though I don't think our representative democracy is perfect, I still believe that it's profoundly important. Furthermore, I believe that questioning the legitimacy of a Presidential election — and thereby questioning the will of the American people — is immoral, unpatriotic, and seditious. And I still feel that way even when I don't like the results.

There is a moment I think of often these days. Way back in October of 2008, the late Senator John McCain was on the campaign trail in Lakeville, Minnesota. He was out in the audience, handing the microphone to various supporters to hear their questions.

One woman took the mic and said that she couldn't trust then-Senator Barack Obama.

"I have read about him," she said, "and he's not, um, he's an Arab."

McCain took the mic from her.

"No ma'am," he said. "He's a decent family man and citizen that I just happen to have disagreements with on fundamental issues, and that's what the campaign's all about."

Of course, being Arabic doesn't mean someone can't be a decent family man, but I'll cut McCain some slack since I'm not great at improv either. What's important is that McCain defended his opponent. He acknowledged reality, even though he probably knew it was going to get him booed (which of course it did).

I disagreed with McCain on a lot of things, but I'll always respect him for that moment.

There were obviously other moments in which John McCain told the truth and suffered for it, and I'm sure it wasn't always easy to do the right thing knowing he would be slandered by his own party. But history, I think, will look back fondly on McCain. And I don't think the same will be true for those who slandered him.

There comes a time in all our lives when we need to step back and consider the legacy we're going to leave. It is my hope, Congressman, that over the course of your upcoming term, you will carefully consider your own.

I wish you the best.

Sincerely,

Ben R. Williams

## Candy Apples and Toads

Morgan Griffith  
9th District U.S. Rep.

An analogy I like to use for the legislative process invokes candy apples and toads. Legislation rarely includes only things I like — the candy apples — or omits the things I really dislike — the toads. Considering whether to support a bill usually means weighing whether there are enough candy apples to cover up the bad taste of a few toads.

End-of-year legislating usually provides plenty of

opportunities to apply this test. As the year draws to a close, Congress once again finds itself closing in on a deadline to fund the Federal Government for the fiscal year that began on October 1.

As in previous years, we did not need to be in this situation. Federal law prescribes a budget process of individual appropriations bills that should go through regular order at the committee and floor level.

Just following the rules could help us avoid the

scramble to resolve everything with one bill that, even if read, Members of Congress rarely get to fully scrutinize before having to give it an up or down vote.

Because the omnibus bill funding the government for the rest of the fiscal year ending September 30 has not yet been agreed to by negotiators, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) continuing current funding for just one week.

Like omnibuses, I generally do not find CRs to be a proper way to fund the government. But as with any other bill I vote on, I read this CR.

It included an extension for the Rare Pediatric Disease Priority Review Voucher program for two years. This program encourages the development of new drugs to treat rare pediatric diseases. The innovation promoted by this program can lead to new treatments that help improve and save the lives

of children suffering from rare diseases.

While skeptical of CRs, I support the extension of the Rare Pediatric Disease Priority Review Vouchers, so I voted for this CR. In the best instances, legislation rarely includes everything I want to see or leaves out anything I do not support.

In this case, extending the program for two years was a candy apple that made voting for the one-week toad of a CR acceptable.

The Right Way to Legislate on Marijuana

In my last column, I discussed my opposition to H.R. 3884, a broad bill to legalize marijuana, expunge marijuana convictions, and provide taxpayer support for businesses and individuals associated with the marijuana industry.

It was a sweeping, partisan effort that made major changes at a time when the Congress should have other priorities. Despite my support for changes to marijuana law, it was the

wrong bill at the wrong time.

The week afterward, the House voted on another bill related to marijuana, my Medical Marijuana Research Act. I believe this was the right approach to marijuana legislation.

The Medical Marijuana Research Act would ensure a sufficient supply of research-quality marijuana through the National Institute on Drug Abuse Drug Supply Program. It also authorizes more research so that we understand more specifically the medical benefits and side effects of marijuana on the human body. It would also direct the Food and Drug Administration to issue guidelines on the production of marijuana and encourage authorized manufacturers to produce marijuana for the researchers under the law.

I was an original co-sponsor of the bill in this Congress, and along with a bipartisan team we had introduced it in previous years. Unlike H.R. 3884, it had support that spanned

parties and also different views about marijuana legislation. Whether you want marijuana broadly prohibited, broadly legalized, or fall somewhere in between, you should want to see more data about its effects.

Because of its widespread support, the bill this year had moved through the House Energy and Commerce Committee without opposition and passed on the House floor in the same manner. Its consideration did not take up valuable legislative time in the same way as H.R. 3884.

I was pleased to see the Medical Marijuana Research Act pass the House and hope it will advance into law. It represents the right way to legislate on marijuana — with prudence and based on data.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments, call my Abingdon office at 276-525-1405, Christiansburg office 540-381-5671 or via email at [www.morgangriffith.house.gov](mailto:www.morgangriffith.house.gov).

## Chapter meets, inducts new member

The Colonel George Waller Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution met on December 5, 2020 at the historic Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center and Museum.

The meeting was officiated by Andy Doss, with Robert C. Vogler leading the SAR Pledge, Jamie Hooper leading the Pledge of Allegiance, and Gary Hollandsworth performing the Invocation.

Officers affirmed for 2021 include Andy Doss, President and Registrar; Jarred Marlowe, 1st Vice-President; Jamie Hooper, 2nd VP and Flag Chairman; Gary Hollandsworth, Treasurer

and Chaplain; Mike Bass, Secretary; Robert C. Vogler, Historian and Administration; Eric Monday, Chancellor; W. C. Fowlkes, Veterans Affairs Chairman; and Johnathan Phillips, Wreaths Across America Chairman.

As the only meeting that has been able to be held this year due to the pandemic, the chapter covered all activities that were participated in during the year including local and state level meetings.

President and Registrar Andy Doss did a presentation on the administrative and genealogical duties of the registrar office with regards to recruit-

ing and documenting paperwork for new applicants. Despite having been a member for some time, Jamie Hooper was officially inducted as a member after having been delayed for many months.

Attendees included a mix of members, new applicants, and wives: Arlen Doss, Andy Doss, Lori Doss, Mike Bass, Dave Pendleton, Judson Leviner, Mark Leviner, Lynell Leviner, Jamie Hooper, Gene Reamey, Tom Apple, Roger Broome, Bob Vogler, Gail Vogler, and Gary Hollandsworth.

The next meeting is slated to take place in March 2021.



Existing and incoming members of the Colonel George Waller Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, recently met to conduct business and welcome a new member.

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**Debbie Hall, Editor**  
dhall@theenterprise.net  
(276) 694-3101

**Brandon Martin, Reporter**  
newsreporter@theenterprise.net

**Randy Thompson, Advertising Manager**  
advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com  
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If you have news about or an upcoming event for your organization, company or church, email [dhall@theenterprise.net](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net) and/or call (276) 694-3101

# OBITUARIES

## Charles Marvin Thornton

Charles Marvin Thornton, 66, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away December 14, 2020 at his residence. He was born February 4, 1954 in Martinsville to the late Everette Mitchell and Edna Davidson Thornton, Sr. He had worked at Roselawn Chapel Funeral Home for over 12 years. He was a member of Jones Chapel Church of the Brethren, and was a graduate of Laurel Park High School, Class of 1972. He was a member of Patrick Henry Lodge #82 K of P, Past Chancellor, Grand Lodge Rep., Recipient of Pythian of the Year Award, member of Rajah Temple #195 DOKK, Royal Prince, Imperial Palace Rep., President of the Figsboro Ruritan Club, Co-Captain of Cancer Relay for Life Team.



Thornton, Jr. He is survived by his daughter, Jennifer Thornton Griggs; sisters, Judy Stilwell and Linda Stanfield; and a brother Mike Thornton; five nieces and three nephews.

A Celebration of Life service will be held Sunday, December 20, 2020 at 4 p.m. at Jones Chapel Church of the Brethren with Pastor Tom Auker officiating. The family will receive friends from 3-4 p.m. before the service.

Donations may be made in memory of Marvin to the Jones Chapel Church of the Brethren, 2390 Figsboro Road, Martinsville, VA 24112.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Carlton Lavon Hodge

Carlton Lavon Hodge, 65 of Martinsville, Virginia passed away Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at his home. He was born November 30, 1955, in Martinsville, Virginia to the late Butner Smith Hodge and Katherine Johnson Hodge. He proudly served his country in the United States Marine Corps. He enjoyed westerns, hot chocolate and he loved the Dallas Cowboys. Mr. Hodge loved a good loaf of bread.



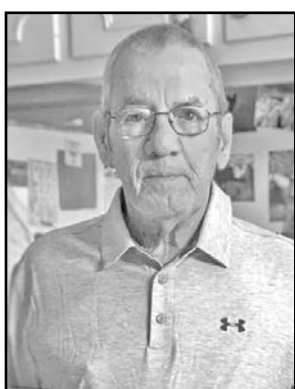
and Carletta Hodge; sons, Chris Matthews Jordan (Hope), and Douglas Waller (Ama); sisters, Sheda Hairston (Fred), Luvenia Niblett (Joe), Lois Ford (Alton), Tina Bowles (Voe), and Freda Hodge; brothers, Bruce Hodge (Rhonda), Michael Hodge, Bernard Hodge; and grandchildren, Ta'Shonie Gravely. Carlton Hodge, Tashena Hodge, Je'Caria Hodge Gravely, Dominique Matthews, Eric Hairston, Paris Waller, and Ladarus Dillard.

A memorial service will be held Friday, December 18, 2020 at 4 p.m. at Wright Funeral Service Chapel.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Leonard Keith Brown

Leonard Keith Brown, 73, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away peacefully surrounded by family on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, at SOVAH Health of Martinsville. He was born December 5, 1947 in Martinsville, Virginia to the late Noah Davis Brown and Clydie Elizabeth Turner Brown.



Brown; mother-in-law, Helen Joyce; and uncle, Obie Turner (Mabel Draper, special friend).

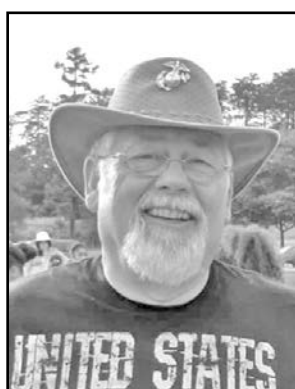
The family will be having a private service due to COVID-19.

Any condolences or donations may be sent to the Community Fellowship, 2674 Virginia Avenue, Collinsville, Virginia 24078.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Taylor Brown Motley

Taylor Brown Motley, 72, of Collinsville, passed away Tuesday, December 8, 2020, at SOVAH Health of Martinsville. He was born February 26, 1948 in Martinsville, to the late Uriah Taylor Motley, Jr., and Doris Philpott Wigginton.



ber of Freedom Baptist Church, was a Deacon and the Head of Security there.

He is survived by his spouse of 53 years, Dolores Young Motley; sons, Jeff Motley and Marc Motley (Elizabeth); brother, Gerald Motley; sisters, Dianna Price (Jim) and Karen Allan-Ballengue (Greg); and grandchildren, Jacob and William Motley.

A Celebration of Life Service was held Saturday, December 12 at Freedom Baptist Church, 790 Irisburg Road, Axton, with Pastor Larry Luffman officiating.

Donations in memory of Taylor may be made to Toys for Tots online at [toysfortots.org](http://toysfortots.org), or Freedom Baptist Church, 790 Irisburg Road, Axton, Virginia 24054.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is honored to serve the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Alice Williamson Penn

Alice Williamson Penn, 94, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away Sunday, December 13, 2020, at SOVAH Health Martinsville, Virginia. She was born May 5, 1926, in Franklin County, Virginia to the late Johnnie Williamson and Mollie Belle Hunt Williamson. She loved cooking, sewing, and making quilts.



Ms. Penn is survived by her sister, Mary Williamson.

There will be a graveside service Saturday, December 19, 2020, at 1 p.m., at Carver Memorial Gardens with the Rev. Lewis Walton officiating. Visitation will be Friday, December 18, 2020, from 6 to 8 p.m., at Wright Funeral Service Chapel. The family will receive friends at the home of Mary Williamson, 490 Halfway Road, Martinsville, Virginia 24112.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Michael Clay Gauldin

Michael Clay Gauldin, 74, of Callands, Virginia passed away December 9, 2020 at Centra Health, Lynchburg Hospital. He was born in Danville, Virginia on May 7, 1946 to late Ernest Clay and Elizabeth Patsy Amos Gauldin. He was a Vietnam Veteran in the Navy and he had worked at Vanity Fair. He loved fishing, Washington Red Skins, hunting, Jeff Gordon, was a Sunday school teacher and an Elder in the church at Matthews Memorial Community Church, a hard worker, good provider, loved his family, and

had a good sense of humor.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister.

He is survived by his wife, Azalia Nola Wagner Gauldin; brother-in-law and caregiver, David Wagner; three children and their spouses; three sisters; one brother; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

His service will be at a later date. Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Dinner

from page 1

with a smile on their face. It's rewarding for us too. Every time we serve someone, we feel like we are the ones being blessed."

This year's meal will consist of ham, turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, cranberry sauce and desserts.

Typically, desserts are donated, a tradition Norman said will continue this year.

He asks that desserts be brought to the back door at First Baptist Church on

Christmas Eve between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

"All I ask is if you do come by, please follow the proper pandemic guidelines," he said. "Don't just walk in without wearing a mask or anything like that."

Norman said it is hard to estimate how many meals will be provided this year, but an addition this year is a partnership with the Henry County Food Pantry, Norman said of the collaboration that will

allow boxes of food to be provided to those in need.

He said each box will include about a weeks' worth of food. Delivery may be available in limited circumstances.

The dinner itself began in the 1980's when Stuart Axelrod and Wayne Odachowski hosted the event at their diner, Sammie's.

"They started it because they really didn't want anybody to be alone on Christmas," Norman said. "That's really the spirit of the meal

each year, and I'm glad that we are able to continue in this year when more people might feel alone than normal. It's a way for us to say we are still thinking about you."

In the early days of the event, Richard Sarver became "the brains of the operation," Norman said, adding that he began coordinating the dinner when Sarver stepped down.

Sarver died in 2011, but his impact was so great that the annual dinner contin-

ues to bear his name. Norman said the dinner normally feeds around 2,500 people each year - a feat he intended to accomplish by himself this year if need be.

"I never thought for a second that we wouldn't provide the dinner this year," Norman said. "If it were just me standing outside alone with my grill, I still would have found a way to have the dinner."

Those interested in receiving a meal, whether

delivery or drive-thru, are asked to pre-register by calling (276) 403-9557.

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# BHS Band

from page 1

Harris said it has remained at only two days per week, and even then, it is held in small groups to limit exposure to the coronavirus.

“We are required to practice with masks at a 6-to-10-foot distance at all times, so we have had limited space,” Harris said. “Each group has one hour to work together to read and learn the songs. Each practice has been limited to an hour, with a 15-minute window of cleaning before the next group arrives for practice.”

That lack of practice has affected instruction in a measurable way, he added. “Playing an instrument is a physical and mental process,” Harris said. “We

won't really know how big the effect is until we get them all back together. The last full band activity was nine months ago, on March 6, 2019. We typically don't go nine days without practice, much less nine months. More importantly, we miss being together as a band. We miss our family.”

When preparing for the pop-up concerts, 20 to 25 students crammed in “a wide selection of winter holiday music” to wow the small crowds that gathered to listen, he said.

“The kids are ecstatic,” Harris said. “I could see the gleam in their eyes when we started talking about ‘public performances.’ Being in the band is a performing

art. It isn't always about winning, but more importantly, about showing your talents when you get the opportunity. That is what they love to do.”

As the band continues to get back in sync, Harris said he isn't looking at competitions, even though the band would have entered the year as defending champions.

“We can only focus on getting better for the opportunities that the future may hold for our students and being ready when that time comes,” he said. “We have learned through COVID that you better perform your best every day, because tomorrow's performance is never guaranteed.”



An audience, careful to observe social distancing guidelines, gathered several feet away as the Bassett High School Band performed winter holiday classics Dec. 12 in Martinsville.

# High Marks

from page 1

educating our students at all costs.”

Talley said Martinsville has been holding “several” workshops with other school divisions.

“It's always a privilege for us to help other school divisions because school divisions are very instrumental in our turn around and success,” he added.

Ama Waller, assistant principal of Martinsville Middle School, said the school's virtual night for parents and students, held on Nov. 23, “went really well.”

In a survey to parents, the top response for positives about virtual learning was “being able to learn in a relaxed environment,” according to Waller.

She said there was a tie for second, between being able to re-watch instructional videos “as they need” and “being able to ask the teachers questions during office hours in a private setting.”

“We've gotten this virtual thing kind of down pat,” Donna Dillard, chairman of the school board,

said. “Moving forward, what do we need to look at next? We're not sure what the school year is going to look like ever again. If we are good at virtual teaching, then what is our next step? What do we need to do for our students and community to make our school division even better? We want to raise the bar.”

Talley said one improvement will be in addressing learning deficiencies.

“All across the country, a third of students or more are failing because of the fact that they cannot get into school,” Talley said. “We've been watching that and benchmarking.”

Many of those failures can be attributed to “students not logging on and not actually doing the work,” he said, and added that outcome was expected when “some parents cannot be home to guarantee” students complete assignments.

“You've got some young people that are going to log on regardless,” Talley said. “But some people need that

extra push. We've been talking about ways that we can motivate students to log on. What we've found out was fascinating. Every student who logged on was doing well. That was the key. Keeping them logged in and engaged.”

Discussions have been ongoing throughout the state on how to better educate students in a virtual setting. In November, members of the school board attended a virtual VSBA Conference. Board member Emily Parker represented Martinsville to gather a list of priorities for the state legislature.

The 2021 VSBA legislative priorities compiled during the conference are “a culmination of things that we discussed over about three days,” Parker said, adding that there were nine “high points” in the priorities: funding/budget, local control, labor relations, school safety, school modernization, broadband connectivity, teacher shortages, COVID-19/student learning.

“Within each of those,

there are subsections,” Parker said. “These are things that the VSBA will take forward to the legislature in January and they include full funding of all mandates and programs passed by the General Assembly. Partial funding, or the absence of funding, for mandates and programs places an additional burden on local school divisions and they want to make sure that we get full funding support for that.”

In addition, Parker said the VSBA is seeking more local control over funding and more studies “to determine the cost of adequately funding our public schools.”

“Also, the VSBA opposed any attempt to divest local school boards of their constitutional authority to supervise schools,” Parker said.

The VSBA is also working to address teacher shortages, according to Parker.

“That is putting into place provisions that will increase funding for teacher compensation to attract qualified teachers, as well as supporting alternative entry routes into the teaching profession to provide localities flexibility in hiring qualified people who have not formally prepared for teaching careers,” Parker said, adding that waivers would be given “to those proven their ability to teach in the classroom and be effective, but have not yet completed all of their teaching requirements.”

Parker said this initiative helps solve teacher shortfalls and support minority recruitment by providing scholarships for minorities trying to enter the profession.

Yvonne Givens, vice

chairman, said a particular theme from the conference struck her most. It was that “of keeping your promises.”

“The part about keeping promises and being there for our students, and being there for others, is really hitting home,” Givens said. “Especially, now locally where we've had so many students who really need somebody and to know that somebody is there. We need to keep our promises when we tell our students that we are going to be there for them.”

Board member Dominique Hylton offered an example of how educators can be mindful by “directing our attention to our experience as it unfolds. It trains us to respond skillfully to whatever is happening, good or bad. It improves our thought process, feelings and concerns of others. It helps us perform better, feel calmer and less depressed.”

Students in the 21st century face a number of obstacles that educators should be aware of, according to Hylton.

“Most kids today present a schedule that is too busy, pressure to perform, too much media, lack of face-to-face relationships, increasing anxiety and depression, and a brain that is in constant state of fight or flight,” Hylton said. “If we take some of those things and think about all of that before we address different scenarios, respond or judge” then “I think we will take a step back and really have more compassion for them.”

In other matters present-

ed, the school board:

\*Received information

on a \$200,000 grant received through the Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) School Security Equipment Grant program. T.J. Slaughter, director of School Safety and Emergency Management, said a bulk of the grant will go to finishing a gunshot detection system in all of the schools.

“A weapon has a certain decibel rate when it is fired,” Slaughter said. “It (the detection system) picks up on that rate of different weapons. What it does from that point is it sends notifications to our 911 center that a detection has been seen. Also, to our law enforcement officers' cell phones.”

Slaughter said that only “one or two” school divisions in Virginia have the detection system, and Martinsville “will probably be the first school division to have it in all of our buildings.”

Some of the funding will go to replace some of the administrators' school radios, while the remaining funds will place cameras on school buses and update old cameras at the high school.

\*Recognized students who placed in the Dan River Association Fall Art Contest. NyShawn Walton received second place in the fourth-grade category and Addison Wilson received third place in the second-grade category.

\*Recognized Kellene Wotring for being the first student in Martinsville High School history to receive the \$1,000 FIRST Robotics scholarship for each year of college.

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<p><b>57 Grocery</b> 7850 Fairystone Dairy Rd. Bassett</p>	<p>1105 Brookedale St., Martinsville  5972 AL Philpott Hwy</p>

# Coat Drive deemed a success

The 24th annual Coat Drive for Kids, a project spearheaded by Debra Parsons Buchanan, was deemed a success, according to organizers.

Buchanan and partners that include Avery Mills, owner of One Hour Martinizing, The Salvation Army and, team up to hold the annual event.

Avery donates his time and resources to clean the donated coats.

The Matthew Wayne Wade Foundation made its annual donation to the 2020 “Coats for Kids” drive last week. The drive is led by Debra Buchanan, vice chairman of the Henry County Board

of Supervisors, in association with Avery Mills, Owner of One Hour Martinizing.

The MWW Foundation thanked those who donated to and supported the Coats for Kids Drive this year. The foundation is a non-profit organization founded in the memory of Matthew Wayne Wade. It has participated in the Coats for Kids drive since 2013.

For more information or how to donate or become a supporter visit <https://www.winebyriver.com/mww-foundation/> or our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100008562576755>.



Debra Buchanan, of the Horsepasture District (left to right), is pictured with Doogie Wade and Debra Wade, both of the Matthew Wayne Wade Foundation; Avery Mills, owner of One Hour Martinizing; Tanya Martin and Brad Hughes, also bot of the Matthew Wayne Wade Foundation.

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### FINANCE OFFICER

The County of Patrick is recruiting for the position of Finance Officer. The Finance Officer performs professional and administrative work to plan, organize, and manage all facets of the county's accounting, payroll, accounts payable, purchasing, and financial reporting functions. This position also facilitates the annual adoption and management of the county's budget. The Finance Officer must possess comprehensive knowledge of general laws and administrative principles and practices of governmental finance, accounting and budgeting. The successful candidate will possess excellent com-

## HELP WANTED

munication skills and the ability to establish and maintain productive relationships with county staff and elected officials. The ability to work independently and meet deadlines is required. Knowledge of RDA accounting software is a plus.

The ideal candidate's prior 3-5 years of experience in governmental finance/accounting would be supplemented by graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree in accounting, finance, business, or a related field.

Patrick County offers a competitive benefits package which includes paid sick and vacation leave and holiday pay, participation in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), group life insurance and health insurance. This position is FLSA exempt. Interested candidates should refer to the de-

## HELP WANTED

tailed position description available on the Patrick County website at [co.patrick.va.us](http://co.patrick.va.us). Completed applications and resumes should be emailed to [dshough@co.patrick.va.us](mailto:dshough@co.patrick.va.us) with a copy to [mtaylor@co.patrick.va.us](mailto:mtaylor@co.patrick.va.us), or mailed to the attention of Donna Shough, HR Director, at PO Box 466, Stuart, VA 24171. The deadline to receive applications is Monday, December 28, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. Patrick County is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.

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# PET OF THE WEEK



Harley is a nine-year-old bulldog mix that was surrendered to the SPCA by his owner. He is already neutered, with most of his life spent outdoors. The SPCA says this means he may not be housetrained. Adult dogs are \$100 to adopt.

# Nominations being accepted for Dalton community service award

Nominations for the 20th annual Jack Dalton Community Service Award will be accepted through December 30, according to a release from Henry County.

Dalton served as a member of the Henry County Board of Supervisors for more than 24 years and was serving as the chairman of the board at the time of his death on May 24, 2000.

The award will be presented to the Henry County resident who best demonstrates the exemplary community service that marked Dalton's years of public service.

Nominations should be based on the candidates' personal volunteer efforts and active involvement in helping promote the quality of life in Henry County. Nominees must have primarily performed the service for which they are being nominated within the calendar year 2020.

The online application and additional information are available on Henry County's website at [www.henrycountyva.gov](http://www.henrycountyva.gov).

All nominations must be submitted online or using the approved nomination form.

Nominations are due by Friday, December 30 at 5 p.m. The Henry County Board of Supervisors will review the nomination and select this year's recipient. That person will be recognized at the Board of Supervisors' meeting in January.

Past recipients include Dr. Calvin Rains, who won the inaugural presentation in 2001; Bill Adkins in 2002, Clay Campbell in 2003, Mary McGee in 2004, Charlie Bradshaw in 2005, Bob Petty in 2006, the Rev. Thurman Echols in 2007, Nancy Bradshaw in 2008, Mary Jordan in 2009, Pat Ross in 2010, Claude Cobler in 2011, Beatrice Bullard in 2012, Barry Nelson in 2013, J. Smith Chaney, Jr. in 2014, Paul Kennedy in 2015, Bob Norris in 2016, John Thomas "Smokey" Peogram in 2017, James L. Franklin, Jr. in 2018, and Dr. Joseph DeVault in 2019.

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# Local groups donate time and cheer to Piedmont Arts

Boys & Girls Clubs, the Martinsville Garden Club and the Garden Study Club donated their time recently to bring some holiday cheer to Piedmont Arts.

Members of Boys & Girls Clubs lent their handiwork to

the museum's Christmas tree in the form of hand-made ornaments. The festive decorations will brighten the Piedmont Arts lobby through the holidays.

Members of the Martinsville Garden Club and the Garden Study Club planted bulbs in

the museum's Gravelly-Lester Art Garden. In the spring, the bulbs will bloom into beautiful daffodils, which will complement the Art Garden's permanent sculpture, Cliffhanger by artist Jeff Fetty. Fetty's sculpture is a 10 ft. tall daffodil, commis-

sioned by local businessman Will Pannill in memory of his father, Bill "DaffyBill" Pannill.

Piedmont Arts is honored to have area service organization's willing to donate their time in support of the arts in Martinsville-Henry County.

A nonprofit art museum in Martinsville, Piedmont Arts is located at 215 Starling Avenue. Museum hours are Tuesday – Friday from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Admission is free. Learn more at PiedmontArts.org.



Piedmont Arts Education Coordinator Sarah Short, (L-R), with Boys & Girls Clubs members Caden Henderson, Alyana Hairston, Boys & Girls Clubs Leader Marlena Jessee and member Carrie Hudson.



Garden Club members (L-R), Sue Rosser, Judy Epperly, Debbie Lewis and Kathy Long.



Garden Club members (L-R), Leslie Hervey, Paige Frith, Sarah Fain, Susan Morris, Cindy Edgerton, Heidi Pinkston and Kathy Long.

## Shopping event brings joy to many

The Patrick Henry Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its partners worked to bring Christmas joy to 70 youngsters in its 'Shop With A Cop' event.

Youngsters selected to participate in the program receive a set amount of funds to spend during a shopping ex-

ursion to Walmart. Law enforcement officers are 'shopping buddies' to participants.

Shopping was spread out this year to prevent groups from being too large, but the need has never been greater, according to the Martinsville Police Department, which is among the agencies

helping with the event.

The Harvest Youth Board, Woodmen Life, Hannah Boyd Photography, Richard Ratcliffe Photography, Vernon W. Peters & Sons Contractor, the Abundant Life Fellowship, and several independent sponsors, also were among those helping with the project.



## SPORTS BRIEFS

### Big game checking to transition next year

The Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) plans to fully transition big game checking to electronic and telephone checking as of September 1, 2021, the beginning of the 2021-22 hunting season.

All hunters (including those who are not required to purchase a license) who harvest a deer, turkey, bear, bobcat, or elk, will need to check their harvest by calling DWR (866-GOT-GAME), logging on to [gooutdoorsvirginia.com](http://gooutdoorsvirginia.com),

or by using their mobile app harvest reporting system, Go-OutdoorsVa (free through the app store).

Since 2004, the agency has offered some form of electronic harvest reporting, and beginning in 2019, electronic harvest reporting options were available for all game species for which reporting is required. Last hunting season, 86% of all deer, 93% of fall turkeys, 100% of spring turkeys, 100% of bobcats, and 58% of all bears

were reported through an electronic harvest reporting system. Mandatory game checking, a cornerstone of DWR's game management program for more than 70 years, will remain vital for game management in Virginia for many years to come. Thus, it is critical that every hunter report their harvest using the electronic or telephone harvest reporting systems.

The department recognizes the traditions associated with paper checking and game check

stations and is exceptionally grateful to check station operators for their decades of service collecting the harvest data that has supported restoration of our deer, bear, and turkey populations. While moving to an electronic/telephonic check system will no longer necessitate official "check stations", those operators who wish to continue offering this service to hunters may do so by assisting with electronic or telephonic checking.

DWR remains committed to a harvest reporting system that is convenient to hunters, obtains reliable data, and maintains the public's trust in information that is of critical importance to sound wildlife management.

For questions or additional information, email [gamecheck@dwr.virginia.gov](mailto:gamecheck@dwr.virginia.gov).

For more information on the change, consult the Electronic Game Harvesting FAQ.

## Wood Brothers Racing honored with FIA Heritage Cup

For 70 years Wood Brothers Racing has excelled in – and transformed – the world of motorsports. As the longest tenured team in NASCAR history, the Wood Brothers have compiled a literal Hall of Fame resume both on and off the track. Beyond their countless trophies and accolades, innovations including the modern pit

stop continue to define the Wood's legacy in racing series across the globe.

For their accomplishments across seven decades, Wood Brothers Racing has been named the 2020 recipient of the FIA Founding Members Club Heritage Cup. The award is presented to an individual, institution, entity or object in recog-

nition of exceptional or outstanding achievement within or contribution to the historic vehicle world.

"It truly is an honor to win this award," said Eddie Wood, Wood Brothers Racing president and co-owner, and son of team founder Glen Wood. "The fact that it's a worldwide honor makes it even more special. We're mainly

known in American motorsports, but this is much bigger than that."

Wood was a child when the team helped Jim Clark win the 1965 Indianapolis 500, but recalls the attention it brought his father's team.

"I was young when Indy was going on, but I remember him talking about the worldwide recogni-

tion they received," Wood said. "He was honored for people around the world to have heard of him and his brothers and what they were doing."

Glen also lent his expertise to the Ford factory team at Le Mans in 1966 when the GT40 Mark II teams swept the top three finishing positions in the iconic 24-hour event. The

team's affiliation with Ford Motor Company continues to this day, seventy years strong.

In support of their nomination for the prestigious award, NASCAR Chairman and CEO Jim France wrote, "Having worked with them for almost 60 years, I can personally attest to their great character and dedication to motorsports. I can think of no group more deserving of the FIA Founding Members Club Heritage Cup Award."

Wood Brothers Racing has always had a knack for attracting the greatest racing talent in the world. Ten NASCAR Hall of Famers have taken the wheel for the team (Glen Wood, Curtis Turner, Junior Johnson, Joe Weatherly, Fred Lorenzen, Cale Yarborough, David Pearson, Buddy Baker, Dale Jarrett and Bill Elliott) as well as some of the biggest names in open wheel racing – A.J. Foyt, Dan Gurney and Parnelli Jones.

The team remains committed to the preservation of motorsports history. Its one-time shop has been converted into a museum that traces the Wood's time in motorsports. They have also built replica cars for the NASCAR Hall of Fame and The Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn Michigan.

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