

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, February 6, 2021

(USPS-6)

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Solar projects discussed in county

Brandon Martin
Staff writer

The Henry County Board of Zoning Appeals held two public hearings on special use permits on proposed solar farms to be constructed in the Iriswood District.

Both projects would be divided between Henry and Pittsylvania counties.

While the board unanimously approved the special use permit for the first project, a decision was deferred on the second proposal to allow more time for communication between the applicant and adjacent property owners.

Michaux Solar Center, LLC

A 50-megawatt (MW) utility-scale solar energy generating facility being developed by Orsted Onshore North America was the first project discussed.

Ryan Gilchrist, director of development for Orsted, said the company was formerly known as Danish Natural Gas and Oil. Recently, the company divested all its assets in those energy sectors and has since become the largest owner of offshore wind, with plans to further expand into solar energy production.

“One thing I’ll say about the project is it is fully beneficial to the county,” Gilchrist said.

“Solar projects are inherently low-impact. There is no noise, very little visual impact. At the same time, we are creating jobs by the several dozen during construction, as well as a few during operations. There is significant tax and lease revenue for the county without putting any stress on the county with the land itself.”

Gilchrist said solar panels maintain the integrity of the land.

“A lot of times, you have landowners who are looking to divest land, maybe with a younger generation that inherits it will try to sell it or do something with it,” Gilchrist said. “Solar allows them to keep it in the family for generations and actually have a sustainable revenue stream from it. In the long-term, solar can do a good job of maintaining the character of the land.”

Jamie Mears, the project developer, said the total land area for the project will be 600 acres.

She said the 50 MWs are “predicted to power approximately 10,000 homes annually.”

Mears said the project will also bring in \$640,000 annually to both participating counties, with a 50/50 split in revenue.

See Solar, page 5

Crown to make largest initial investment

Crown Holdings, Inc., an industry leader in metal packaging technology, will construct a facility in the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre (CCBC) in Henry County.

The company will invest \$145 million to establish a manufacturing operation at CCBC and create 126 new jobs, with an average annual pay of about \$50,000, Deputy County Administrator Dale Wagoner said.

The company’s capital investment will be the largest initial investment ever in Henry County.

The 355,000-square-foot aluminum beverage can production facility will be built on Lot 4 at CCBC.

The company will use the Commonwealth Centre for Advanced Training (CCAT) facility at CCBC for the initial hiring and training phase as its new facility is constructed.

“We are thrilled to see a longtime Virginia employer and Fortune 500 company like Crown Holdings select Henry County for its new East Coast manufacturing operation,” Gov. Ralph Northam said. “The addition of 126 high-quality jobs is a huge opportunity for the people of Southern Virginia, and the region’s tireless efforts to build a skilled



Crown Holdings, Inc. will invest \$145 million to establish a manufacturing operation on Tract 4 in the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre. The company will build a new 355,000-square-foot aluminum beverage can production facility on the 55-acre lot located in a New Markets Tax Credit Zone.

workforce pipeline will benefit the company for decades to come.”

Founded in 1892 and headquartered in Yardley, Pennsylvania, Crown Holdings, Inc., through its subsidiaries, is a leading global supplier of rigid packaging products to consumer marketing companies, as well as transit and protective packaging products, equipment, and services to a broad range of end markets. Ranked 272 on the Forbes Fortune 500, Crown Holdings has operations in 47 countries employing over 33,000 people. Operating in Virginia for more than 60 years, the company has facilities in Frederick County and the City of Suffolk as well as subsid-

and we are humbled that the company chose us.”

“We are so happy to welcome Crown Holdings to our community. Crown is an international corporation with a tremendous reputation for quality work, and its decision to locate at CCBC is a true indication of the potential this community offers,” said Larry Ryder, chairman of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. (EDC) Board. “We are full speed ahead, and the EDC Board is excited to see what comes next.”

Kate Keller, president of the Harvest Foundation, said “The Harvest Foundation has been a partner with the EDC and Henry County from Day One on Commonwealth Crossing and on our economic development plan. Today’s decision by Crown Holdings to build its latest facility at CCBC underscores how important teamwork is and how it takes a community effort to make days like this possible.”

“PHCC stands ready to work with Crown Holdings in crafting a training program specific to the job skills needed for its Henry County facility. We are thrilled that Crown has selected our community, and I am hopeful that this is just the start of a long and mutually beneficial effort,” said Dr. Angeline God-

See Crown, page 4

BHS students to present virtual one-act play

Brandon Martin
Staff writer

Students at Bassett High School are producing a virtual one-act play to be submitted for a series of accolades.

Under the direction of Theatre Director Justin Kline, the students will perform “Gossip” by Brian Hampton. A recorded version of their 30-minute performance must be submitted by April 10 to be judged on the district level. Winners will have the opportunity to compete on the regional and state levels if they advance.

Kline said one of his primary motivations of joining the theatre was due to the art’s ability to provide commentary on current events and social issues.

“I decided to do a social awareness project because I felt it was important to teach the students about gossip and its dangers, but also have the students become the teachers by performing the play,” Kline said. “They are learning how toxic gossip can be, especially among a close group of friends all while telling the story to the audience.”

Kline said the nature of the act is different from their typical comedy or children theatre performances.

“They’re seeing how emotionally draining acting can be and that experience will make them well-rounded performers and public speakers,” he added.

Caitlin Barker, the central character, will be tasked with personifying the concept of gossip.

In Barker’s perception of the character, Gossip is “devious and manipulative” and “puts on a façade of the bubbly new girl. She’s such a contrast in and of herself, so I’m excited to bring her character to life since I’ve never played such a complex character before.”

Barker, who has been

involved in the Theatre Department at Bassett during her time at the school, has performed in past productions of “Hairspray” and “Matilda.” Barker also participated in past one-act competitions with roles in “The Entire American Revolution in 40 Minutes or Less” and “Alice in Wonderland.”

“Doing Gossip has been a great experience so far because we’ve never really competed with something that touches on real-world topics, so I’m excited to see how everything plays out at competition,” Barker said.

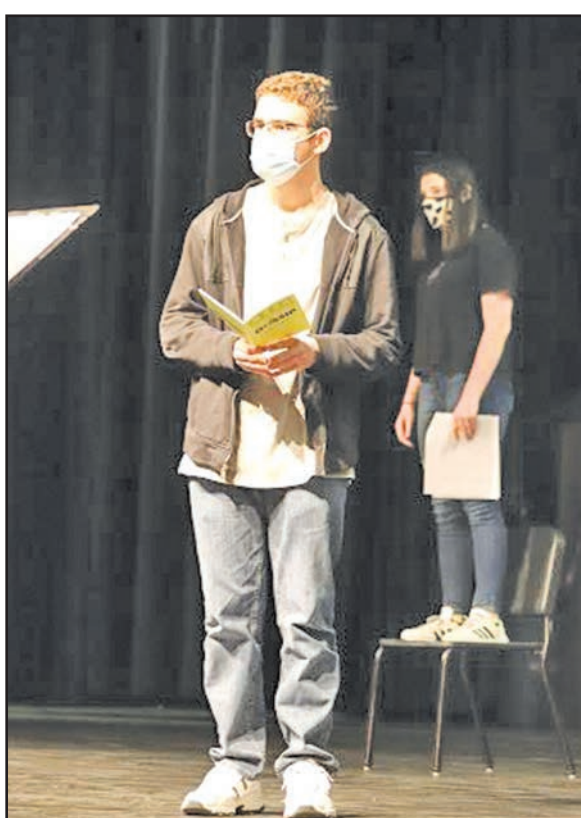
The act’s conclusion will have a lot of people talking, according to Barker.

“Gossip is truly a story that comes full circle, and really shows how the actual concept of gossip can ruin friendships and get twisted, especially in high school settings,” Barker said. “The end of the play will hopefully resonate with a lot of people and tell a story of how true friendship can bring people back together, even if there’s been an outside force, such as rumors and gossip, trying to tear them apart.”

The cast will also feature Eydie Kenny as Andy; Scott Harmon as Tim; Merrie Graham as Dallas; Tahliyah Hodge as Kaine; Naomi Hairston as Candy; and D’Anna Nopala and Kendall Mayes as the ensemble. Grace Webster will be serving as the run crew and Davis Scott is serving as the board operator.

Kline said he really enjoys presiding over the auditions in his role as theatre director.

“As an actor, I know how stressful auditioning can be, so knowing that the students are overcoming that scary time says so much about how strong they are,” Kline said. “Of course, it was a bit different this year. We held auditions over Zoom in December and the students re-



PHOTOS BY C.J. BOWMAN

Students participating in the production of the one-act play “Gossip” by Brian Hampton display their theme of “separate but together” as they prepare for competitions under COVID-19 restrictions.

ally rose to the challenge.”

Kline said in-person rehearsals are currently allowed as long as COVID-19 guidelines are strictly followed.

“The students are showing immense responsibility by making sure their masks are up and they’re socially distanced,” Kline said. “It’s wonderful to get the students back into the building so they can feel that purpose and sense of belonging again after spending so much time away.”

Overall, Kline said the biggest impediment to rehearsing is “learning how to block,” which is a term for “what the actors do onstage and how they interact with their scene partners.” He added the social distancing requirements made the task more difficult.

“We are having to think

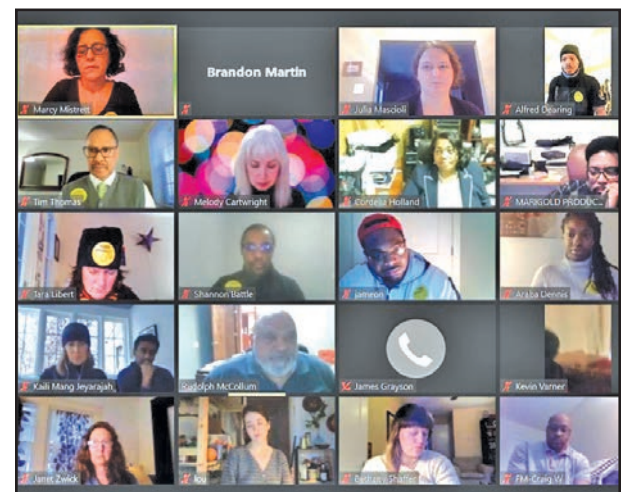
outside of the box in how we plan the actors’ movements while still telling the story effectively,” Kline said.

Barker said the adjustment has “been quite the process to figure out how to make everything seem as natural and ‘normal’ as possible.

“I think having these obstacles thrown at us can serve as a learning experience for everyone, and hopefully having to maneuver around social distancing can help us grow as actors and be more adaptable to changes that may have to take place in future productions,” she added.

Unlike normal one-act performances, a live audience will not be in attendance this year. Barker said this has its positives and

See BHS Play, page 2



Family members and the Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop held a virtual vigil for seven African American men, known as the Martinsville Seven, who were executed in 1951 for allegedly raping Ruby Floyd in 1949. Floyd, of Martinsville, was a white woman.

Vigil kicks off Martinsville Seven Week, other events set

Brandon Martin
Staff writer

Family members of the Martinsville Seven were among those that held a virtual vigil on Feb. 1 for the seven African American men executed in 1951 for the alleged 1949 rape of Ruby Floyd, a white woman.

The Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop also participated in vigil, which was held during the first week of Black History Month. It was designed to honor the men and bring attention to a collective effort by the family members and advocates to obtain a posthumous pardon from Gov. Ralph Northam for the Martinsville Seven.

The men — Frank Hairston, James Luther Hairston, Booker T. Millner, John C. Taylor, Joe Henry Hampton, and Francis DeSales Grayson — were executed on Feb. 2 and Feb. 5, 1951.

Cordelia Holland, director

of the Martinsville Seven Initiative, said the push began because a group of concerned citizens living in Martinsville decided that “this tragedy should not have happened. In Martinsville, there is this unheard and unspoken history of the Martinsville Seven.”

After reading about another group - the Martins-

See Vigil, page 6

Visit
<http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com>
for updates



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Saturday, February 6

Patrick Henry Community College will offer a family day at the Fab Lab, 10 a.m. until noon. Admission is \$15. To pre-register, call (276) 656-0260 or visit ph.augusoft.net.

Tuesday, February 16

Patrick Henry Community College virtual session of "Effective Communication for Virtual Teams" from 3-5 p.m. Admission is \$59. To pre-register, call (276) 656-0260 or visit ph.augusoft.net.

Monday, February 22-23

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) will host a virtual edition of the 2021 Industrial Hemp Summit. Register at www.industrialhempsummit.info or call (434) 766-6605. Tickets are \$50 through February 19.

Thursday, February 25

Longwood Small Business Development Center will hold a virtual "Start-Up Workshop" from 6-7 p.m. for those interested in starting a small business. For more information or to register, visit

<https://clients.virginiasbdc.org/workshop.aspx?key=91410002>.

Friday, February 26

Patrick Henry Community College will hold a virtual session titled "Telework Plus Virtual School...Oh My!" from 12-1 p.m. The discussion is designed to assist working parents balancing work and daily life stressors. Admission is \$29. To pre-register, call (276) 656-0260 or visit ph.augusoft.net.

Ongoing

Blue Ridge Regional Library is offer-

ing a "Blind Date With a Book" in February. With each book selection, the participant's name will be entered into a drawing for a variety of prizes. A list of preselected books is available for curbside pickup. Call (276) 403-5430 for more information.

MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness offers no contact application assistance for Virginia's free or low-cost Medicaid plans (Children's Medicaid/FAMIS, pregnancy Medicaid and Adult Health Care (birth to 64-years-old). Applications completed by phone (no contact). Call or text Ann Walker (276) 732-0509 to see if you qualify.

Thousands in health district register for COVID-19 vaccine

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

An estimated 15,000 people registered to get the COVID-19 vaccine between the online and paper forms since registration opened on Monday, Jan. 25, Nancy Bell, public information officer for the West Piedmont Health District (WPHD), said.

"We didn't know what to expect, but we knew interest in receiving the vaccine was high, especially among the 65 plus population," Bell said, and added that those who registered should wait until they are contacted to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

"Registration puts you in the cue for an appointment. A nurse will call, and the vaccination may be given by the health department, one of our hospital partners, or a physician's office," she said.

Bell advised residents to get vaccinated in the locality in which they live, and to accept the earliest appointment available, "whether that is a pharmacy, phy-

sician's office, or a health department vaccination event. Folks should not call the hospitals and health departments. An abundance of calls is impacting our ability to perform our regular jobs on high call volume days."

Health officials in the district are administering vaccines as fast as possible, according to Bell.

"We didn't get any vaccines one week," she said, adding that the dashboard on the state website is misleading because "all the vaccinations that Carillon did for us were lumped into the Roanoke database. So, we are working, we are vaccinating teachers right now, we're doing a lot of things behind the scenes."

A coalition of hospital, physician, emergency service, and health department partners "currently are working on mass vaccination plans, given ample supply of vaccine and, capacity to hold a large community vaccination event exists," she said, adding those who have registered will be among the first invited to attend.

Entries sought for photography contest

Piedmont Arts is hosting a photography contest based on the artwork of famed American landscape photographer Ansel Adams, whose work is on display at the museum through February 27, 2021 in the exhibit, Ansel Adams: Compositions in Nature.

Students from Martinsville-Henry County in grades 6-12 may enter the contest, which is sponsored by Carter Bank & Trust. Submissions are due by 5 pm on February 19, 2021. Entries will be judged by staff members of Piedmont Arts and Carter Bank & Trust. Contest winners will be notified by phone and announced at the closing reception for Ansel Adams: Compositions in Nature on February 26, 2021.

Prizes:
1st Prize: \$100
2nd Prize: \$50
3rd Prize: \$25

All winning photographs will be printed, framed, and displayed in Piedmont Arts' Foster Gallery.

Contest Rules + Guidelines:

- One entry per student.
- Photographs should be black and white.
- Photographs should look like photographs and should not be distorted through effects to look like paintings or drawings.
- Pay attention to clarity. Ansel Adams rejected soft, ethereal photography. All his images have crisp, clear details in the foreground and background.
- Pay attention to perspective. Ansel Adams kept the horizon line high in his photographs to diminish the sky and emphasize the epic scale of the landscape.
- Evoke emotion. Ansel Adams wanted his photographs to capture the way a scene felt, not the way it looked.

To enter, visit PiedmontArts.org and follow the link under the "Education + Classes" tab.

Piedmont Arts is a nonprofit art museum in Martinsville.

HOROSCOPES

ARIES - Mar 21/Apr 20

Aries, an open discussion with a loved one yields positive results. Take what is said to heart and work on strengthening this relationship even further going forward.

TAURUS - Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, reassess your finances before making a big financial commitment. Start adding things up and comparing expenses to income before signing on any dotted lines.

GEMINI - May 22/June 21

Gemini, some time off spent entirely with family and friends is just what the doctor ordered. Cherish this time and appreciate the opportunity to enjoy it with those you love.

CANCER - June 22/July 22

Cancer, some time alone may be necessary to figure out a problem. Once you can get free of distractions, the solution will present itself rather quickly.

LEO - July 23/Aug 23

Leo, now is the time to begin planning an important project. Your mind is clear and you have the time, so embrace your creative side as you begin to hash things out.

VIRGO - Aug 24/Sept 22

Spiritual endeavors may take up much of your time this week, Virgo. Surround yourself with other spiritual people or examine your faith more deeply on your own.

LIBRA - Sept 23/Oct 23

Libra, a change of scenery can be just what you need. A day trip to enjoy the great outdoors can prove refreshing and provide some new perspective.

SCORPIO - Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, a new person in your life proves invigorating. Foster this relationship and be grateful for the opportunity to invite a new person into your life.

SAGITTARIUS - Nov 23/Dec 21

Sagittarius, a new hobby piques your interest. Introduce others to this activity and enjoy pursuing this newfound passion with someone you care about.

CAPRICORN - Dec 22/Jan 20

It is alright if it seems like you're a beat behind everyone else this week, Capricorn. You will catch up soon enough and others are more than capable of picking up the slack.

AQUARIUS - Jan 21/Feb 18

An attraction to someone you meet this week catches you off guard, Aquarius. Forge ahead and explore these feelings if your situation allows.

PISCES - Feb 19/Mar 20

Offer support to a friend in need, Pisces. This generous offer will be much-appreciated and you will reap the rewards as well.

BHS Play

from page 1



allow "the actors the freedom to explore more in rehearsals" and "see what works and what doesn't."

Kline said the theater department is working with the local production company, Nickolocity Productions, with Nick McCambridge providing video support.

"It's a good feeling knowing that other artists in the community are getting back to work and doing what they love to do the most, which is creating," Kline said.

As she prepares to call curtains on her high school theatre career, Barker is intrigued by not having a live audience and seeing how that "will affect our performance and placement."

"Overall, I'm just excited to have the chance to perform with my favorite people one last time before I graduate, especially given the current circumstances," Barker said.

Kline said he is also looking into securing the rights for the production "to show it to the public after competition season is over."

"I think it's super important to show the area what these students have been working on and how they are overcoming a huge challenge during the pandemic," he added.

"It speaks volumes about how passionate, dedicated, and intelligent this generation is. Once we secure the rights, it will most likely be a virtual viewing, but we hope to open the auditorium up to guardians and other members of the family. It just depends on the guidelines at that time, but we are staying positive."

negatives.

"I think knowing that the judges aren't there in the moment is a relieving feeling but I'm going to miss the atmosphere of being at competition and having the other schools in the audience, as well as watching their productions when we aren't getting ready for our own," Barker said. "Having live reactions from the audience always helps keep the energy up on stage too, so it's going to be interesting without that element."

Kline said that normally spectators "pack into a school auditorium with schools around the region and the plays are judged and critiqued that day."

This year, the cast and production team will record the play without any special editing, and it will be sent to the festival director to be reviewed and scored by a panel of judges.

Kline said the April 10 deadline will allow the production team to "take it slow so we can focus on the small details."

"We are going into our third week of rehearsals and we already have the foundation of the blocking down. My policy as a director is once we block the scene, the next time we come to it, it should be loosely memorized," Kline said.

He added that he likes "to get the foundation down" to

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10					
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CLUES ACROSS
1. Baseball team
5. Hymns
11. Actor Jared
12. Fragrance
16. Von Bismarck, Iron Chancellor
17. Nordic God
18. Weighed down
19. Coppola's mob epic
24. Nanogram
25. Famed street artist
26. Identifier
27. 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet
28. In addition
29. Micturated
30. Shock
31. Accept
33. Allotment
34. Eras
38. Emerges

39. Cape Verde capital
40. United Arab Emirates capital
43. Small amount
44. Back of the foot
45. Pakrit language
49. Home of "60 Minutes"
50. Condemn
51. Ailed
53. Elevated railroad
54. Rebelliousness
56. Ancient Greek city
58. Clothing company (abbr.)
59. Member of the cabbage family
60. Softens or smooths
63. Mass of coagulated liquid
64. Problems
65. Irish Republic

2. Deadly
3. Says aloud
4. PT Anderson film "Nights"
5. Teacher (abbr.)
6. Anesthetized
7. Anno Domini (in the year of Our Lord)
8. and behold
9. French young women (abbr.)
10. Scorch
13. Notre Dame
14. Express disapproval
15. Cars need these
20. Not off
21. Unit of mass
22. You
23. Concealed
27. Parent-teacher organizations
29. Approximately 3,14159
30. Chinese conception of poetry
31. Satisfaction
32. College degree

33. Formerly Ceylon: Lanka
34. Effeminate
35. Something to solve
36. Horses like these
37. Intelligence organization
38. Blood type
40. Exhibition
41. Poisonous plant
42. Aluminum
44. Possesses
45. Penetrate w/ a sharp instrument
46. Ring-shaped objects
47. Speaks at church
48. Form in the mind
50. Selectors
51. Probability of default
52. 2001 Spielberg film
54. Where to get a sandwich
55. Newts
57. Modus operandi
61. Exists
62. Politico-economic union

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Student achievement in city schools recognized

Martinsville City Public Schools' second nine weeks Honor Roll, Counselor's List, and Principal's list students.

Albert Harris Elementary 3rd grade – 5th grade Honor Roll

Jeremiah Baker, Janette Carillo Llamas, Taylor Carter, Nicklas Clark, Ma'Kiyah Craig, Ava Craig-Childs, Fabian Devora Guerrero, Maia Eccles, Ja'Da Eggleston-Wade, Johnny Gamble, Cashante Gordon, Jacorey Gravely, Kaydrin Hairston, Maria Hernandez DeJesus, Alondra Hernandez, Juan Hernandez, Asonti Hodge, Timiyah Jones, Shanyia Kelly, Malaysia Lang, Jayren Marchorro-Macias, Zy'Jerryah Martin, Joshua Medina, Emily Mendoza, Tonydia Millner Moore, Skylar Mitchell, Cameron Moore, Chauniyah Moore, Faith Pack, Camarion Plunkett, A'Yanna Porter, JyMir Pritchett, Nevaeh Redd, Scarlett Rutrough, Tariah Saunders, Kamron Scales, Aeriona Smith, Tiana Smith, Maria Sowers, Ke'Nijah Stone, Tyler Swanson, O'lvia Thomas, Phyllis Thompson, Dayanna Torres-Jose, Jerianna Turner, Ada Vasquez-Lemus, Nathaniel Villaseñor, A'Vari Waller, Ty'Jon Waller, Latreal Wiggins, Christopher Yanez.

3rd – 5th grade Principal's List

Emely Amaya-Turcios, David Argueta, Cristofer Avila-Santiago, Avery Belcher, Joshua Branch, Keimani Brandyburg, Jaryus Brim, Kaleb Briscoe, Alan Carrillo-Tamayo, Malachi Chapman, Jayden Clark, Omarion Cole, William Craig, Cordell Daniels, Princeton Dillard, Destiny Dodson, Layce Everhart, Thailand Finney, Acoma Hairston, Harmoni Hairston, Benji Haley, Jayvion Harris, Leonardo Hernandez Mata, Luis Hernandez, Jonathan Hudson, Phylcity Huff, Jonathan Jaramillo-Mata, Amauri Johnson, Nykira Johnson, Jeronimo Kassebaum-Ortiz, Dariona King, Abraham Leon-Pallarez, Trinity Martin, Renisha Millner, Freddy Munoz, Akaysha Myers, Chamilia Nakhle, Akorea Neblett, Aileen Nolasco, Elijah Penn, Keaija Richardson, Ella Rogers, Ewert Shahini, Aiyana Walker, NyShawn Walton, Breanna Weaver, Gavin Wilson, Marcellous Wilson, Ma'Riyah Wilson, Ashley Yanes Videia.

Patrick Henry Elementary 3rd grade Honor Roll

Kendall Banks, Zariyah Bouldin, Jaydah Burnette, Eve Carder, Ethan Christopher, Jamiyah Dailey, Nina Giles, Coy Grant, Appalania Gravely, Elaina Hairston, Jaymi Henriquez Ramos, Bryan Hernandez Machuca, Kaylee Hightower, Macari Long, Amare Martin, Jewel Martin, Kamren McMillan, Allison Mooney, Bryson Penn, Zion Powell, Quandel Richards, Mariah Thompson.

3rd grade Principal's List

Jaden Briggs, Tayshawn Hairston, James Hall, Daniya Penn, Kendall Price, Zakayah Webster, Jairo Mata, Ariyah Webster.

4th grade Honor Roll

Mahcori Chapman, Nadia Dominguez, Marisol Garcia-Macias, Ayden Hagwood-Scott, Zoey Hannans, Neil Harris, Zackary Harter, Kingston Howard Hamilton, Isaias

Lopez Valentin, Emillio Martin, Amariyah Matthews, Jeremiah Porter, Aurora Rankin, Lesley Ratcliff, Samson Ray, Isabel Troncoso Price, Jasaan Turner, Chiya Williams, Gabriel Wilson.

4th grade Principal's List

Tyliric Barbour, Zyad Bayoumy, Bridgett Brent, Olivia Campbell, Joshua Connelly, Aubrey Davis, Maryam Dhabaan, Kamarii Johnson Clark, Ka'Vaughn Muse, Logan Osborne, Ayden Roberts, Kailyn Venable, Arianna Ybarra.

5th grade Honor Roll

Dylan Arnold, J'Kobe Covington, JKyiah Daniel, Kamari Draper, Gavin Evans, Ny'Kerion France, Amia Holland, Josiah Lucas, McKenna Mahan, Keilaj'ah Morrison, Tameyia Niblett, Jayden Penn, Justine Richardson, Cristian Smith, Symphany Talley, Harlem Wade, Addison Williamson.

5th grade Principal's List

Devin Adams, Rebekah Barrow, William Bela, Abigail Campbell, Brennan Coleman, Kira Compton, Vincent Correa, Jequiwn Giles, Rylynn Gourgoulianis, Hudson Grant, Leeayla Hairston, Levi Hankins, Isabella Hurd, Levi Martin, Vivien Minich, Zion Perkins, Veronica Smith, Ja'Corian Turner, Viet Vo, Lilly Wall, William Wall, Paris Waller, Noah Wright.

Martinsville Middle School 6th grade Honor Roll

Angeliyah Monae Eccles, Ariyana Re Nae Nowlin, Jaden Anthony Porter, Tyrese Lamar Smith, Isaiah Matthew Taylor.

6th grade Principal's List

Noah Oliver Aaron, Tyson Kyrel Hairston Jr., Katherine Kaye Jarrett, Madalyn Keller, Caden Amir Martin, Julie Anna Nguyen, Gillian Katherine Soper.

6th grade Counselor's List

Kavia Neshaye Brim, Parker Zane Calfee, Qa'Sani Marie Calhoun-Davis, Kayra Shawn Carr, Miracle Taylor Grogan, Alyana Nicole Hairston, Jaquilla Aliyah Jimenez, Ky'Asia Lenay Keen, Sariyah Shaniece Little, McKayla Marie Mally, Aniyah Brenae Millner, Tristan Anyvea Niblett, Briana Aniya Reid, My'Nique Lianna Scott, Desmond Michael Snyder, Olivia Rose Turner, Caleb Tyree Valentine, Jarquavis Syncere Vaughn, Jamauri Elijah Williams.

7th grade Honor Roll

Jaden Alexander Ayoub, Kyndall Maliyah Benton, Jaylen Claytor, Chekiya Kailyn Galloway, Layla Renay Garrett, Myssia Tenai Hairston-France, Jordan Markel Haskins, Aeran Elysia Kellam, Michael Deonte Kirby, Jai'lyn Omarion Reynolds.

7th grade Principal's List

Sincere Nasia Cook, Victor Joseph Correa, Marjorie Seleny Davis, Laila Marie Grayley, Evan Denis Pickett, Diamond Lakala Turner, Benjamin Alexander Wood.

7th grade Counselor's List

Gabriel Halom Davis, Allison Michelle Gardner, London Mylan Hairston, Melody Jai'Ana Harris, De'Nyiran Tyjuahn

Hodge, Xavier O'Brian Perkins, Camarie Lewis Preson, Avianna Zanae Watkins.

8th grade Honor Roll

Anne Frances Agee, Yadira Carrillo Tamayo, Quentin Isley Chism, Dale Allen Cochran, Ana Marie Compton, James Robert Connley, Ruby Jacqueline Flores, Gabrielle Aylise Fountain, Lauren Elizabeth Hall, Abigail Fae Haskew, Holden Lane Hendricks, Kennedy Noell McPherson, Skyllar Eva Miller, Jacey Claire Pamintuan, Terriah D'Nae Roberts, Brooke Allison Turner.

8th grade Principal's List

Passion Marie Adams, Caleb William Burgess, Xavier Patrick Dunham, Ava Brooke Grant, Deniyah Shanice Hightower, Isabella Juliann Hood, Gavin Luke Luther, Alondra Machuca Tiznado, Monserrat Machuca Tiznado, John Riley Nguyen, Jala Chantel Niblett, Isabella Haze Vega.

8th grade Counselor's List

Christian Slade Brooks, Keara Lanette Carter, Hayden Jack Cundiff, Sontrell Macchia Daniels, Natalie Kay Delaney, Natalie Gina Marie Dunagan, Cameron Nycole Giles, Jose Manuel Hagy, Aidan Michael Hood, Ny'Qeriyah Brenee Kellam, Honesty Nevaeh Martin, Amondre Lavell Moseley, Connor Wayne Mosley, Colby Hudson Owen, Kendryck De Andre Redd, Erza Lindita Shahini, Jaylen Roy Solomon, Kaya Renee Yates, Noah Alexander Young.

Martinsville High School 9th – 10th grade A

Eyad Bayoumy, Demetri Blackwell, Hayden Calfee, Tyler Carr, Ryan DiMingo, Jkyan Finney, Nadia Flores, Katherine Hall, Arlette Jaramillo Mata, Caleb Joyce, Olivia Keller, Amanda Mosser, Adam Mounkaila, Abbygail Neaves, Anh Nguyen, Joseph Nguyen, Nayti Patel, Cortay Price, Charles Pugh, John Ratliff II, Kaylee Rea, Aysha Robles, KeAundre Smith, Skyler Spence, Christopher Talley, Paige Taylor, Tyra Valentine, Jackson Via, Destiny Witcher, Reagan Wright.

9th – 10th grade AB

Gage Aldridge, Marcisca Becker, Jalik Blackwell, Katelin Boyd, Marissa Espinosa, Jayden Fitzgerald, Paris Fulp, Aleeyah Galloway, Zane Gardner, Matthew Gilbert, Jakiyah Gravely, NiJel Gravely, Trevion Gravely, Latrell Hairston, Gabriel Haley, Betzaida Hernandez Aleman, Sarrah Hoff, Lizbeth Jaramillo Mata, Natalie LaPrade, Mallori Lowe, Azahriauna Mitchell, Javeon Moorcer, Johnny Moxley, Faith Munoz, Myia Pettie, Aubrey Price, Denize Ramos Telles, Deonna Street, Makayla Warren, Ahmyr Washington.

9th – 10th grade B

Jimena Amaya Romero, Mirna Amaya Romero, Ludwin Chavez-Lopez, Gabriel Daughtry, Kaitlynn Daughtry, Nicholas DeJesus, Briana Garcia Macias, Pamela Haddock, Khyleah Hairston, Trenati Hairston, LynAsshia King, Natalia Martin, Kydreiona Moyer, Nadia Moyer, RG Olea, Ashlynn Patten, Papion Ritenour

Shelton, Syriah Roberts, Kameron Robinson, Manuel Rodriguez Perez, Mason Rorrer, Evan Shivley, Kayla Solomon, Keyasia Thomas, Aniya Torrence, Nweike Ugbomah Otunuya.

11th grade A

Keyounah Adams, Alexis Ashby, Savannah Brown, Lorianna Elliott, Assyria Flowers, Traven Gilley, Lauren Hruza, Taiona Martin, Akayla Penn, Nytera Penn, Alivia Stout, Caleb Sunkins, Sidney Tran, Onyinye Ugbomah-Otunuya, Michael Walker, Joseph Ziglar.

11th grade AB

William Agee, Brendan Bower, Symphanie Collins, Michael Gilbert, Ashton Hairston, Omarion Hairston, Spencer Hairston, Edward Harrison, Keyshawn Kirby, Tamiya Leftwich, Michael Tatum.

11th grade B

Madison Barker, Kyarah Broadwater, Alexis Carson, JaMere Eggleston-Smith, Makayla Evans, Audrey Hundley, Mattie Joachin-Lopez, Jayland Long, Jasiyah Moss, Michalin Penn, Nytera Penn, Bryson Stokes, Traeqwun Taylor.

12th grade A

Andrew Carter, Juliana Cox, Daniel Dalton, Leticia Garcia Vergara, Trinity Gravely, NaKieyah Hairston, Benjamin Jarrett, James Li, Daphnie Lintag, Nicolas Lopez, Viktoriya Pickett, JaKyla Sydnor, Cynthia White, Kellene Wotring.

12th grade AB

Eduardo Betanzo, Antwone Callender, Andrew Clerc, Vartaysha Cole, Mackenzie Edmonds, Jalaila Estes, Anthony Hairston, Julius Hairston, Hannah Martin, Jermont Meacham, Tykia Moore, Jazmyne Penn, Dominique Robinson, Katherine Rorrer, Ericson Sigmon, Zoie Smith, Samuel Stewart, Makiyah Stockton, Bryson Stone, Ethan Thomas, Laura Washington.

12th grade B

Dawson Allen, Michael Devora-Guerrero, Taniya Dillard, Kadence Hairston, Kayla Hairston, Da Corieon Jennings, Sheccid Lara Diaz, Kyla Maynard, Felipe Mitchell.

Company partners with health officials to administer vaccines

Walmart store locations in Martinsville and Stuart are among those added to the company's list of locations to administer vaccinations to eligible populations.

Note that vaccines at these locations are for state-designated priority groups, not for the public.

Earlier this week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shared information on the U.S. Federal Retail Pharmacy Program. Through this partnership, Walmart and Sam's Club pharmacies can now accept and administer federal allocations of the COVID-19 vaccine. Walmart and Sam's Club are working with the federal government to help increase access to COVID-19 vaccines at select pharmacies in 22 states once vaccine doses are available, starting late next week, according to the company's corporate website.

In addition to Virginia, other states

added to Walmart's list include Kentucky, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming, bringing the total to almost 190 stores and Sam's Clubs across more than a dozen states and territories.

Once the company has received the vaccines, eligible customers and members can reserve a vaccine appointment directly via a scheduling tool on the Walmart and Sam's Club websites, while supplies last.

In addition to appointments, the scheduler will provide a digital reminder when it's time to return for the second dose of the vaccine for the vaccine to be fully effective.

Once a store or club receives allocation, an online scheduler will be available to make appointments at walmart.com / COVID vaccine and samsclub.com/covid. Eligibility will be determined by the states for who can receive the vaccine.

Three MHS students make All-District Honor Band

Students auditioned to be selected for the District 6 Regional All-District Honor Band on Saturday. Students had to record themselves at home and submit their auditions online.

James Li, 7th Chair Concert Band Percussion, Katie Rorrer, 4th Chair Concert Band Trombone, and

Eduardo Betanzo, 5th Chair Concert Band Tenor Saxophone were all selected for the honor band.

"I am so proud of these students," said Martinsville High School Band Director Brian Joyce. "Being selected to the VBODA

District 6 Regional All-District Band is quite an honor in a regular year. Earning this honor while learning virtually shows the depth of their dedication. We have the best students here at Martinsville High School and I'm so blessed to work with them on a daily basis."

"I congratulate our band program and our students who participate and practice in such a dedicated manner," said Martinsville City Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley. "We especially thank our parents and staff for their great support. MCPS values and supports the Arts."

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ENGAGEMENTS



BIRTHS



ANNIVERSARIES



WEDDINGS



ANNIVERSARIES

OPINION

Dear Mr. Cumberland, I'm sorry I tried to have you killed

Dear Mr. Cumberland, Boy, is my face red. I'm writing to you with my hat in hand, hoping to appeal to your better angels. Your kindness would really mean a lot to me right now.

When I started working at Cumberland's Shoe Emporium four years ago, I thought you were just about the best boss I'd ever had. You were willing to take a chance on me, and I really appreciated that. I also appreciated your competitive wages, lenient policy on breaks, and near-total lack of security cameras. It meant a lot.

But then, when you suddenly accused me of embezzling \$27,000 from your store over a four-year period, I was absolutely shocked. And when you said you were not only going to have me fired but also press charges ... well, I'll admit, it just didn't sit right with me.

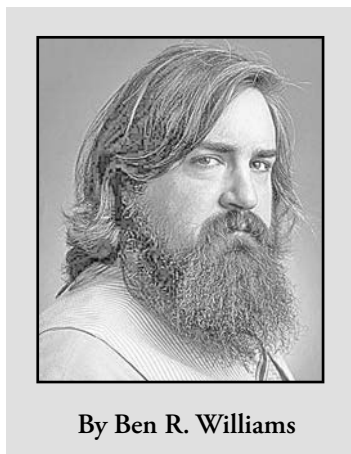
First off, I did NOT em-

bezzle \$27,000 from you. The actual amount was closer to \$40,000, but in my defense, I really needed the money to pay for some unrelated legal expenses I would rather not discuss at this time.

Did I deserve some sort of punishment? Sure, I won't deny that. But losing my job? Legal action? That all seems pretty over-the-top. Whatever happened to a stern talking-to? Maybe some sort of demerit? That seems much more reasonable to me.

I was upset, I'll confess it. Hey, you had really wronged me!

So, I did what anyone would do: I launched an extensive online effort to convince multiple paramilitary groups that you were responsible for everything bad that ever happened to them, and then I told them to meet me in the parking lot of Cumberland's Shoe Empori-



By Ben R. Williams

um at a specific time, and then once they had assembled, I told them to break down the doors, hunt you down, and murder you.

Look, don't pretend like you've never done the same thing to one of your bosses.

Of course, never in my wildest dreams did I think it would go so far. I never told them to break into your office and steal

the pictures of your loved ones off your desk to use as target practice. I never told that one dude who was dressed like a viking to make bathroom on the little putting green your wife gave you for Christmas. I certainly NEVER told the face-paint man to do what he did with that can of Odor-Eaters, although I'll admit, it was pretty impressive to watch.

No, all I told them to do was find you and murder you. I swear, that was my only intent.

Of course, you were able to hide inside that box of those discounted shoes that have the little individual toes on them; a clever ruse, since no one in their right mind would ever look in there. In doing so, you escaped with your life.

So, I mean, no harm done, right?

Let's look at the facts: you want two things in life. One, you want me to no longer be

employed at your store, and two, you want to continue being alive. From where I'm standing, it looks like you got both of your wishes.

As a result, I'm frankly at a loss as to why you're still pursuing this thing. Your continuing efforts to have me face legal consequences seem pretty vindictive, if you ask me. I mean, what even is "attempted murder?" I'm not big on participation trophies.

However, in the spirit of compromise, you will soon be receiving an Edible Arrangements "Be Mine Bouquet" from me to you. I hope the delicious chocolate-dipped strawberries fill you with an overwhelming desire for reconciliation.

Besides, it's been a week. Frankly, it's time to move on.

Sincerely,
Inmate #6141946, Red Onion State Prison

Leading Oversight Efforts on the Energy and Commerce Committee

Morgan Griffith
9th District U.S. Rep.

Throughout my time in the U.S. House of Representatives, I have been honored to serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee. It is the oldest standing legislative committee in the House with broad jurisdiction over domestic policy issues including health, energy, environment, telecommunications, and more.

Many of these issues have a direct impact on the lives of constituents in Virginia's Ninth Congressional District. My position on Energy and Commerce allows me to advocate for our region's priorities and needs.

For the new Congress, I have been named Republican Leader of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations by Energy and Commerce Committee Republican Leader Cathy McMorris Rodgers

(R-WA). I am grateful for this opportunity to serve in a leading role.

The Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations is charged with conducting oversight over areas within the committee's jurisdiction. We investigate problems, ensure that the laws we pass are being carried out, and supervise agencies.

Although it is not tasked with writing legislation, the subcommittee carries out an essential legislative function. Its activities may lead to new laws, highlight problems with those already on the books, or prod the executive branch to better fulfill the responsibilities our laws assign them.

Throughout my time on the subcommittee, we have often acted in a bipartisan manner. Investigations such as those into the origins of the opioid crisis or into mismanagement in the federal bu-

reaucracy impact constituents of Republican and Democrat districts.

As I work with subcommittee Chair Diana DeGette (D-CO), I am confident we can maintain this outlook going forward. We certainly won't always agree, but many of our priorities have little to do with party affiliation. In the past, we have worked together productively on issues including compounding pharmacies and opioids. Further, we both disapprove of government bureaucrats who do not follow the law.

Our first hearing of this Congress will be on the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines. State health officials from across the country will testify on their efforts to distribute the vaccines and the challenges they face.

Since the Food and Drug Administration authorized two vaccines in December, states have

been receiving doses. In keeping with our federalist system of government, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have issued guidance, but states ultimately decide how to administer their doses and who to prioritize in vaccinating.

They have performed with varying degrees of success. For example, West Virginia has led the country in administering its allocation of doses. As an unfortunate contrast, Virginia has long been near the bottom of the rankings.

It will be important to learn from these states to understand what has been done right or wrong in the vaccination process so we can improve the rollout going forward.

Moving onward, I expect the subcommittee will continue its work on the opioid crisis. Earlier

investigations conducted by the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations helped uncover how some small-town pharmacies, including a few in West Virginia not far from the Virginia border, ordered enormous quantities of pain pills without attracting adequate scrutiny from distributors or the Drug Enforcement Agency. As overdose deaths appear to have risen during the pandemic, examining this scourge should remain a priority.

Other issue areas, including cybersecurity and prescription drug costs, also hold out the promise of bipartisan cooperation.

One area I intend to pursue with rigor is oversight over the Biden Administration within our jurisdiction.

When I served on the subcommittee during the Obama Administration, I saw too often executive branch officials and

agencies overstep their bounds or flout the will of Congress in pursuit of a wrongheaded and harmful agenda. Considering that President Biden has signaled the same approach on many issues and even filled his administration with many of the same people, I anticipate that the subcommittee will have plenty to do. This may not be as bipartisan as other topics, but it is no less essential.

I am honored to take on this leadership role on the Energy and Commerce Committee. It will be a meaningful platform to further advance the priorities of the Ninth District in the House of Representatives.

For questions, concerns, or comments, call my Abingdon office at 276-525-1405, my Christiansburg office at 540-381-5671, or via email at www.morgangriffith.house.gov.

Crown

win, president of Patrick Henry Community College (PHCC). The interest in economic development is high, according to County Administrator Tim

Hall. "We've been busier in the last six months than we've ever been," Hall said.

Noting the recent announced

expansion by an existing company - Laminate Technologies, Inc.; Advance Energy Solutions, Inc., plan to locate in the county, combined with Thursday's

announcement of Crown Holdings, Inc., "a worldwide recognized company," Hall said.

He added the trio of an-

nouncements illustrate the county's economic development plan is "hitting all the points. We have had a plan in place for 12 years, and it's working."

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Initial unemployment claims drop for most, but continued claims remain high

During the week ending Jan. 23, local initial unemployment claims decreased from the week before, but continued claims increased, according to data from the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).

For Henry County, the number of initial claims decreased by 22 which gave the county 80 total initial claims during the week.

The City of Martinsville also saw a decrease of four claims, leaving the locality with 63 initial claims.

Patrick County had the biggest decrease of the three localities, dropping from 55 initial claims to 31.

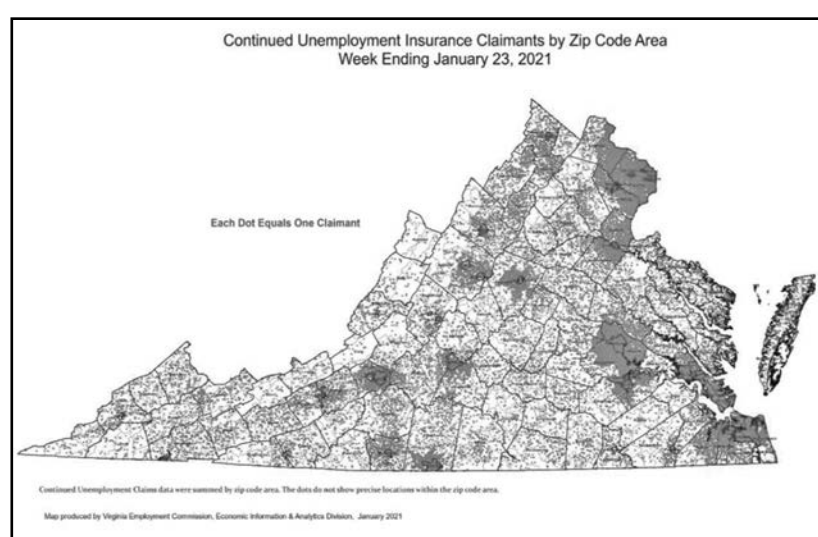
While the initial claims decreased, each locality gained more continued claims during the week. Henry County had an increase of 53 continued claims for a total of 488 claims.

Martinsville tallied 179 continued claims for the week which was an increase of 38 claims from last week.

Patrick County had the smallest increase of continued claims, leveling off at 87 for an increase of 13 claims from the week before.

The VEC suggested the number of initial claims during the filing week remained elevated across the state when compared to recent months' levels.

For the week, the figure for seasonally unadjusted initial claims in Virginia was 18,312. While still elevated compared to recent months' trends, the latest claims figure was a decrease of 2,761 claimants from the previous week. Elevated levels in recent weeks may have, in part, reflected seasonal spikes in layoffs of-



ten seen after the holidays, as well as reapplications for benefits following the government's renewal of supplemental benefits until March 14 as part of the latest stimulus package.

Continued weeks claimed totaled 67,298, which was a 5.4 percent increase from the previous week, but 45,637 higher than the 21,661 continued claims from the comparable week last year. Over half of claims that had a self-reported industry were in the accommodation/food service, administrative and waste services, retail trade, and health-care/social assistance industries. The continued claims total is mainly comprised of those recent initial claimants who continued to file for unemployment insurance benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nationwide, in the week ending January 23, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 847,000, a decrease of 67,000

from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 14,000 from 900,000 to 914,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 873,966 in the week ending January 23, a decrease of 101,498 (or -10.4 percent) from the previous week. There were 229,002 initial claims in the comparable week in 2020. Looking at preliminary data, most states reported decreases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. California's preliminary weekly change (-63,943) was the largest decrease among states. Georgia's preliminary weekly change (-9,255) was the second largest decrease. Texas's preliminary weekly change (-8,189) was the third largest decrease. Pennsylvania's preliminary weekly change (-7,868) was the fourth largest decrease. Virginia's preliminary weekly change (+526) was the eighth largest increase.

Give us your view:

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



Bassett Furniture to be stage sponsor

The Henry County Fair announced that Bassett Furniture signed on to be the Stage Sponsor at the fair upcoming in September.

Live entertainment is scheduled for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday night of the fair. Musical acts are expected to be announced soon.

“We are excited to have Bassett Furniture as our stage sponsor. The

music acts will be one of the highlights of the fair, and their sponsorship helps to bring these acts to the fair. Bassett Furniture has been a part of our community for almost 120 years and we are excited to partner with them on the inaugural Henry County Fair,” said Roger Adams, director of Parks and Recreation and director of the Henry County Fair.

The fair will be held September 22 – 25 on the grounds at Martinsville Speedway, and will lead into the ValleyStar Credit Union 300 race at Martinsville Speedway on September 25. Several other sponsorship levels still remain open. Interested businesses may contact the Henry County Parks and Recreation Office at (276) 634-4640.

Two arrested in connection with city incident

Two Martinsville residents are being held in the Martinsville City Jail without bond following their arrests Friday, Jan. 29 in connection with an alleged shooting incident.

Chavis Devon Martin, 40 of 111 Gravely St. Martinsville, was charged with shooting into an occupied dwelling, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, felony vandalism, malicious wounding, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, discharging a firearm within the city limits, and reckless handling

of a firearm.

Calvin Dominique Beal, 31 of 200 First St. Martinsville, was charged with possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, reckless handling of a firearm, and discharging a firearm within the city limits.

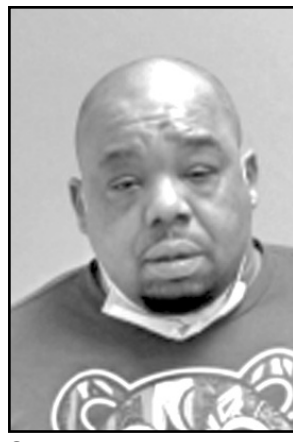
All the charges are in connection with an alleged incident on January 15.

Around 11:49 p.m., the Martinsville Police Department responded to a call of shots fired near the intersection of First St. and B St.

Officers and Investigators processed the scene for evidence and discovered that a home in the 400 block of First St., along with a vehicle, was struck by gunfire.

The incident remains under investigation. Anyone with any other information is encouraged to call Martinsville Police Sgt. Durham at (276) 403-5330 or Crime Stoppers at (276) 632-7463.

Information that leads to the arrest and conviction of those involved are eligible for up to \$2,500 in reward money.



Chavis Devon Martin



Calvin Dominique Beal

Solar

from page 1

Gilchrist said the revenue would be broken down further into a 50/50 split between the lease and taxes. At 25 percent, it would mean \$160,000 in taxes for the county.

“The only tax revenue that I’m aware of that Henry County would realize is in regard to the loss of the land-use taxation status of the properties that are being used for the solar panels,” said Lee Clark, director of planning and zoning. “Help me understand what other tax revenues the county will realize because it’s my understanding that we don’t have the authority to tax the panels themselves.”

Gilchrist said only one part of the equation is the change in land-use status. “Primarily, it is the tax on the equipment itself,” Gilchrist said. “Solar is classified as machinery and tools. There is legislation that passed last year that increased the tax on solar. It used to be you’d only reap 20 percent of that benefit, but now it steps up to 30 percent after five years.”

Besides tax benefits to the county, property owners also would benefit.

Olivia Viperman Wilson, a landowner participating in the project, said her family is looking forward to the project.

“My family purchased our parcel of property as an investment for my husband and I, maybe part of our retirement, but also for our children to have something to lean back on in the future as well,” she said. “When this opportunity presented itself, we did consider it quite a blessing because it will be able to significantly help our family for a long time. If it can provide for my family, the county and other residents then I think it will be a really good project.”

Mears said that the projected construction start date is August 2022, with electricity production to begin mid to late 2023.

Before that can happen, Clark said a few additional requirements would need to be met before issuing a building or land disturbing permit.

“The chain link fence is one thing but that doesn’t really provide what I think, if I were an adjoining property owner, what I would want to see out there,” Clark said. “I want the fencing to be at a height that is at least equal to the panel heights once they are installed. I think that fencing ought to be made opaque, in that it should be like a privacy fence.”

Clark said he would like to see the fencing installed anywhere “there is an adjacent road or residence.”

Another aspect Clark focused on was the decommissioning plan. In documents provided to the board, the developers anticipated making a profit from removing the solar panels at the end of the project. By comparing the estimated price of removal (\$2.6 million) to the total salvage and resale value (\$3.4 million), the developers expect to make \$421,291 by recycling the materials.

“I have a hard time accepting their numbers in that they are actually saying they are going to make more off of the decommissioning of that site than it cost to remove it,” Clark said. “You’re assuming that they know the value of the materials would be 35 years from now. I don’t have a crystal ball. I don’t know what the value of those materials will be.”

Before issuing the necessary permits, Clark requested either a “performance bond, letter of credit, or some other acceptable guarantee” that covers the cost of removing the panels “should something happen to this company” before the end of the project.

Additional requirements are “the site shall be maintained in compliance with standards contained in applicable federal, state, local building codes, and erosion and sedimentation control standards and regulations; existing mature tree growth and natural landforms on the site shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible” and following other applicable requirements.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors also must consider approving the permit.

Axton Solar, LLC

The second project, through the developer Vesper Energy, would construct a 200 MW solar energy facility across 21 discontinuous privately-owned parcels in Henry County. It would also include 16 parcels in Pittsylvania County.

Trey Lopez, the assistant development manager, said a little over half of the project would be in Henry County. He added that 50 percent of the property taxes would also go to the county.

“Based on initial estimates over 35 years, we are looking at an average of \$200,000 per year going to the county in additional property tax revenue,” Lopez said. “It’ll bring in additional construction jobs with approximately 12-14 months of construction. There will be additional revenue from those individuals purchasing food, hotels and that sort of thing.”

He said construction for the project is current-

ly set to begin between October and December 2022, with an operational date in December 2023.

Jonathan Puvak, legal counsel for the project, said more acreage would be obtained than needed for actual usage.

“Another significant benefit to this project for the county is that given its size — 200 MW — that is above what the General Assembly has done in terms of state tax exemption,” Puvak said. “That exemption only applies to projects that are below 150 MW. When you have a project like this, they are paying full freight for taxes.”

He said this included full freight on machinery and tools, as well as real property tax.

“If you take property like this 1,200-acres, it’s not unusual to see that property become reassessed with solar panels up to” \$12,000 an acre, Puvak said. “It’s hard to find that kind of economic development opportunity that has no impact on county services.”

Puvak said before obtaining building permits, the developers would submit a decommissioning plan with “some sort of adequate security,” that would include a five-year refresher to reassess the value of salvageable materials.

He said it would be like “the applicant shall submit the decommissioning plan prior to the building permit. The decommissioning plan submitted by the applicant shall include adequate security to the benefit of Henry County in the amount of the estimated decommissioning cost. The applicant shall agree to update the decommissioning cost estimate on a five-year basis during the life of the project and the decommissioning security shall be provided to the county prior to when the building permit is issued.”

Will Vaughn, president of J&R Management, spoke in support of the project.

“It’s a very rural stretch of property bordered by (U.S. Route) 58, Stoney Mountain Road and there are some residential neighbors but it’s very rural,” Vaughn said. “As a local person, and representative of a local landowner, we are very much in favor of this. In terms of tax and rent benefits but also in terms of green energy. I think that is good for all of us.”

Constance Martin Florence, another nearby landowner, said she is surrounded by solar panels in her residence in North Carolina.

“My light bill is \$23 a month,” she said. “I’m not trying to tell you all what

to do or what not to do, but I’m just letting you know that I have solar panels on my house and not far from where I live, there is a farm. My light bill is dirt cheap.”

While some spoke in favor of the project, the most community feedback came from those who were either partially opposed or that didn’t know enough about it to decide.

Bill Oliver, a nearby landowner, said he agrees with green technology, but objects to “the portion of the property that borders our 80-acre farm” due to permanent destruction of virgin forest, the property being less suitable for a solar farm, changes in noise and wind patterns, displacement of wildlife and property devaluation.

“The entire property in question is covered by timber,” Oliver said. “There is no open property on this particular piece of land. Many creatures live on this property

including deer, fox, bear, coyote, bald eagles, owls and a host of other creatures who are reliant on the self-sustaining woodland that it is a part of.”

His wife, Beth, said “I have ridden on the property for years. I understand the creeks, the valleys, and the rock outcroppings. It bothers me that someone is going to bring equipment in to try and build this across these creeks.”

The most opposition came from landowners who said they didn’t receive enough notice about the project.

Joyce Bennett, an adjacent landowner, said she felt blindsided by the news of the project.

“This is all new to me. I have no idea what this is about,” she said. “I’m not really against the solar if it’s somewhere else. I just got this (notice) a week ago. I know nothing about it. I can’t really say if I’m for it or against it because I know nothing about it.”

Freddy Williams, another adjacent landowner, added that “somebody must have failed somewhere because with this short notice that we got, it seems like there should have been more of a notice than two weeks ago.”

Clark said that the applicants are required to have a community meeting months in advance of the board meeting.

“The way they conducted their public meetings, because of COVID, was online over Zoom,” Clark said, adding that the county received many phone calls after they published the public hearing notice.

Given the number of property owners that felt the application was rushed, the board agreed to defer making a judgment on the special use permit until their Feb. 24 meeting. There will not be another public hearing and the next meeting on the project will only be informational.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS												
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OBITUARIES

Melvin O'Neal Cook, Sr.

Melvin O'Neal Cook, Sr., 67, of Milton, North Carolina passed away Tuesday, January 26, 2021, at SOVAH Health of Danville. He was born October 5, 1953, in Martinsville, Virginia to the late William I. Cook Sr., and Beulah Gilbert Cook. He enjoyed basketball and was a star basketball player for Fieldale Collinsville. He also enjoyed cooking, dancing, telling jokes and spending time with family and friends.



ters, Lecretia Sellers (Bobby), Ebony Graves (Jamie); son, Melvin O. Cook, Jr. (Shavon), sisters, Jackie Mosley, Penny Parker; brothers, Michael D. Cook, Sr. (De De), Marvin D. Cook, Sr. (Leslie), Rickey Cook, Tyrone Witcher; seven grandchildren; better half, Annette Wade; and fur baby Remy.

A graveside service was held on Tuesday, February 2, 2021, at Carver Memorial Gardens with Pastor David Martin of Inheritors Ministries officiating.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at www.wrightfuneralservices.net.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by sisters, Mary Ann Fontaine, Carolyn V. Cook, and Gwendelyn Cook; brothers, William I. Cook Jr., and James E. Cook. Mr. Cook is survived by his daughter,

Joseph Byron "Joey" Campbell

Joseph Byron "Joey" Campbell, 61, of Ridgeway, Va. passed away Wednesday January 27, 2021 at Roanoke Carilion Memorial Hospital. Joey was born September 7, 1959 in Martinsville, Va. to Hardy and Alpha Campbell.



years. In addition to his parents, Joey was preceded in death by his sister, Betsy Gray Campbell.

Surviving are his children, Sara C. McKinney (Matthew) of Martinsville; son, Parker Campbell and (Megan) of Martinsville; grandchildren, Connor McKinney, William Hardy McKinney, Graham McKinney, Arrow Campbell, Arielle Mitchell and Adelyn Campbell; as well as numerous other family members and dear friends.

A private graveside service was held at Horsepasture Christian Church Cemetery. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Hope Center Ministries, 6871 Irisburg Road, Axton Va. 24054.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA

To express condolences online, visit www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com.

He graduated from G.W. Carver High School Class of 1977. Joey worked with his father in the family business and became owner/operator of Campbell's Transmission Service where he carried on a tradition of hard work and a thorough knowledge of automobiles and transmissions.

Outside of work, Joey had a love for racing. Driving for, sponsoring and being involved in local race teams brought him great joy and he was especially honored to be a part of the Billy Martin Racing Team.

Joey also loved music and was a talented singer and musician in his own right. He was a member of the Horsepasture Christian Church where he sang in the church choir for many

Vera Evelyn Martin Vipperman

Vera Evelyn Martin Vipperman, 98, of Ridgeway passed away Thursday, January 28, 2021. She was born February 5, 1922 in Slab Fork, W. Va. to English Ernest Martin and Nettie Williams Martin.



Gloria Faye, all of Ridgeway; 5 grandchildren; 7 great grandchildren; 1 great great grandchild; sister Ella Hall; brother Bobby Martin and his wife Hazel.

A private graveside service was held at Mt. View Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Christian View Christian Church, 543 Anglin Mill Road, Stoneville, N.C., 27078.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA

To express condolences online, visit www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 74 years, Jesse Warren Vipperman, Sr.; brothers Wayne and Ed Martin; sisters, Katherine Nelson and Sadie Wiggington.

She is survived by her daughters, Phyllis V. Clifton and husband Charles, Judy Frazier and her husband Joe; son, Jesse W. (Jay) Vipperman, Jr. and his wife

Free registration underway for youth sports

Henry County Parks and Recreation announced that youth sports will resume play this spring after a year-long hiatus because of health concerns related to COVID-19.

Registration is currently under way for the youth baseball and softball season with a registration deadline of March 12.

Henry County will waive registration fees for both sports, which means children can play for free.

"We are very excited to resume our youth sports programs and provide these leagues that so many

children enjoy," said Roger Adams director of Parks and Recreation for Henry County. "Participating in athletics has a positive impact on the physical and mental health of our youth, and we are excited to move forward."

Six different leagues are offered for boys and girls from ages 7 - 14 (ages as of August 31, 2021).

The registration fee will be waived for baseball and softball this year as an extra incentive to get children back outside playing and exercising.

Certain protocols will be in place to help keep participants and fans

healthy during league play. These guidelines will be provided to the coaches and parents before practice begins in April.

All parents who register their child for the spring sports leagues will be expected to follow these guidelines and ensure that their child does also. Failure to do so could jeopardize the continuation of each league.

Anyone seeking more information about youth spring sports or any park or recreation program in Henry County can contact the Henry County Parks and Recreation Office at (276) 634-4640.

Vigil

from page 1

ville Seven Project - Holland said she was "elated" to have support in "our mission (which) is to challenge and attempt to rectify injustices for people of color in Martinsville and Henry County.

"We want to call attention to the systemic racism created and fueled years ago in our area. We want to see closure for the families and all of Martinsville. The Martinsville Seven were really our families, our cousins, our brothers, our sons. We all feel it. We really need family member participation. Any family members that are out there, we'd love to hear from you," Holland said.

James Grayson, the youngest son of Francis DeSales Grayson, said his father's case was a "miscarriage of justice" which he would later go on to experience himself.

"I was two years old when this thing occurred. Since then, my life has been turned upside down and inside out," James Grayson said. "I feel like all of them were innocent because they weren't really tried legally."

James Grayson said he also was tried and served a 40-year sentence "for a crime that I did not commit.

"Because of the law and the way that it is today, you don't always have a fair chance," he said. "All of this came about because of the Martinsville Seven. During the time of my trial, they used the Martinsville Seven against me to get a conviction. They said, 'like father, like son.'"

The story of the Martinsville Seven impacted another family member in a completely different way.

Rudolph McCollum, great-nephew of Francis DeSales Grayson and nephew of Millner, said learning about his family history pushed him to pursue a law degree. Originally born in Martinsville, McCollum later served as the mayor of Richmond.

"I feel a sense of solidarity here, today, that I've never felt before," McCollum said. "In dealing with this issue for all my life, it's been one that I've dealt with pretty much alone. It was not something that the adults in my family sat us down and talked about. Fortunately, it challenged me to where I wanted to learn about" the executions of the Martinsville Seven "by going through law school. That's where I was able to read more about what happened."

With more knowledge came more frustration, according to McCollum, "because it showed me there is a big difference between the law, which is what I learned, but I didn't learn about justice."

McCollum said if Gov. Ralph Northam grants a posthumous pardon, it would "allow the state to admit it was wrong and right that wrong."

Nick Matuszewski, president of the William and Mary Law Society, discussed some of the arguments in favor of the pardon request

which he helped co-author in December.

"One of the first questions we wanted to focus on was the question of the Martinsville Seven's innocence," he said. "Now, we personally believe the men were innocent and we think there are many pieces of convincing evidence that suggests that they were indeed innocent. For example, during their trials, all of the defendants partially recanted their confessions and some even testified that their confessions had been altered by the police."

Matuszewski said it is impossible to answer whether any of the men were innocent, "but what we do know is there is a large amount of evidence to show that the seven were not given the necessary due process required by law for a jury to determine with any sense of certainty that they were guilty of the crime that led to their executions."

Among other concerns was the treatment of the men by the police, who "acted improperly in their questioning on the accused night," Matuszewski said. "All of the men, except for Francis Grayson, were in their late teens and early 20s at the time of their arrest. Yet, they were all alone during their questioning. They were without the presence of counsel. Additionally, many of the men were under the influence of alcohol while they were being interrogated. That alone should have caused the police to delay the interviews."

Matuszewski said the men were also tried by "entirely white juries" even though "Martinsville was a pretty diverse town at the time."

According to Matuszewski, the punishment also did not fit the crime.

"Before the Civil War, only black men were subjected to the death penalty for rape in Virginia," he said. "Even though that law changed in 1866, the practice of only subjecting black men to the death penalty for rape continued. It was almost exclusively applied when the defendant was a black man, and the victim was a white woman. There have been no examples of a white man being put to death for raping anyone."

The injustices claimed in the case of the Martinsville Seven caused other members of the vigil to reflect on their own experiences with the Virginia Criminal Justice System. Men associated with the Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop, also spoke in support of the posthumous pardon.

"We got involved in this campaign because we wanted to be a voice for justice," says Eyone Williams, a member of and writing facilitator for DC based non-profit organization. "We believe that to move forward and heal, we have to acknowledge the pain and terror of our past. This is a first step."

Jameon Gray, another group member, read a poem entitled "VOICES" which he wrote and dedicated to

the Martinsville Seven.

It states, in part, "Can you hear their voices? Crashing as 7 waves on Virginia's beach. It wasn't me. Washing over the sand. Why won't you believe me. Resending back into the bay. Now we're free."

Alfred Dearing, another member of the Free Minds, said he was impacted by the story of the Martinsville Seven because he also "served 22 years for a crime that did not fit the time."

Speaking directly to the families of the Martinsville Seven, Dearing said "I remember times where I used to ride through Martinsville going to another prison. I used to see the sign for Martinsville."

He said it evoked memories of research he had conducted and gave him "an eerie feeling when I would ride through. God bless you and I hope you get the closure that you are looking for."

Tim Thomas, also of Free Minds, gave a rally cry to those interested in helping the movement.

"This is a call to action," Thomas said. "Justice delayed is justice denied. It's our obligation to call on him (Northam) and make our voices heard that a posthumous pardon is necessary. Seventy years that this justice has been denied. Gov. Northam has spoken about redress and equity. We believe he is on board. We want Gov. Northam on our side, and we want him to live up to his words."

The vigil also was the initial kick-off of several during the week, with the remainder dedicated to activities that promoted the lives of the Martinsville Seven and lobbied for their pardons.

Thomas said the biggest day for activism on behalf of the Martinsville Seven occurred on Wednesday, February 3 during calls to Northam, asking him to "voice his urging ☑ or demand ☑ to give a posthumous pardon to the Martinsville Seven."

Participants were asked post a photo or video of the call and post it on social media with the tag @Martinsville_7 or hashtag #PardonMartinsville7.

Moments of silence were held on Feb. 2 in recognition of the men executed on that day, including Joe Henry Hampton, 8:12 a.m.; Howard Lee Hairston, 8:32 a.m.; Booker T. Millner, 8:49 a.m.; Frank Hairston, Jr., 9:05 a.m.

Moments of silence will be observed on the final day of the week for the remainder of the men who were executed on Feb. 5, 1951, including John Clabon Taylor, 7:41 a.m.; James Luther Hairston, 8 a.m.; Francis DeSales Grayson, 8:15 a.m.

To sign the petition, visit https://www.change.org/p/ralph-s-northam-governor-northam-posthumously-pardon-the-martinsville-7?use_react=false.

For more information about the Martinsville Seven, visit <https://martinsville7.org>. Local residents also may contact Holland at (276) 226-4318.

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PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD TODAY!

Axton Solar, LLC will host a community meeting on Monday, February 15, 2021, at 6 p.m. at the Galilean House of Worship, located at 5078 A.L. Philpott Highway, Martinsville, Virginia 24112. Representatives of Axton Solar, LLC will be present to discuss its proposed solar energy generation facility to be located in the vicinity of Axton, Virginia. Interested members of the public are invited to attend in person. This meeting will be conducted in accordance with all Virginia Department of Health guidelines. To participate by telephone or by computer you may find additional information and instructions here: <https://axtonsolarproject.info/>

COUNTY OF HENRY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **February 24, 2021, at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of Special Use Permits for the following cases.

Case S-21-08 Andy Bowersox / Energize Ministries

A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a campground facility to accommodate up to 15 sites and to construct a performance/presentation/amphitheater area. The property is approximately 63 acres, located beyond the end of Serenity Dr. in the Reed Creek District, is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 19.3/72.

Case S-21-09 Caleb R. Knighten

A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-215 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of an off-site general advertising sign. The property is located at 8636 A L Philpott Hwy in the Collinsville District, is zoned Commercial District B-1, as shown on Tax Map 42.6(6)/1.

The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Lee H. Clark, AICP

Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Les R. Adams Delegated

In my update last week, I briefly touched on the urgent calls from those of us in the House Republicans Caucus for Virginia's government to do what is necessary to improve the execution of an effective COVID-19 vaccination distribution plan, especially for those most at risk. As a representative of our community, I recognize the increasing demand from many constituents that has been frustrated, not only by insufficient executive planning, but product scarcity and logistical limitations.

As some of you know, my office has been in frequent communication with the Department of Health over the past few weeks, requesting that more doses of the vaccine be sent to our region. During this process, reliable information about the specifics of the situation during this roll-out has frequently changed, but you should know that I will continue to advocate, with our local officials, to have vaccines delivered to us as quickly as possible.

In addition, I am glad to report that the House of Delegates has re-

cently passed emergency legislation from the Senate to require the Department of Health to establish a process whereby a wide array of entities may be registered as approved sites for the administration of vaccines. In addition to various health care facilities, these may also include educational and corporate institutions. The bill also requires implementation of a process to enlist qualified volunteers to administer the vaccine. The legislation was supported by both Republicans and Democrats, passing unanimously in both houses.

Another bill that has passed unanimously in the House is one that I sponsored, introduced weeks ago as a direct response to the ongoing pandemic and the restrictions imposed by health care facilities and nursing homes on patient visits from family and friends. House Bill 2154, if also passed by the Senate and ultimately signed by the governor, will grant anyone receiving inpatient services in hospitals, nursing homes, and certified nursing facilities the right to access and use what are known as "intelligent personal assistants" to facilitate communication with their loved ones during those times of patient care.

Personal assistant technology, including "digital assistants" or "virtual assistants," such as an Amazon Echo and the like, have become useful tools for many people trying to maintain contact with those, usually elderly individuals, who are receiving care but are denied visits due to COVID-19 related restrictions. My legislation will direct the Board of Health to develop and implement policies to ensure this patient right, policies that are currently lacking or inconsistent among providers. Indeed, I was motivated to file this bill following the near denial of such family access to a constituent during her final hours of life.

In advancing this legislation, I gained the active support of some Republicans, but also several Democrats, who serve on the reporting committee and joined my bill as co-patrons, thereby increasing its likelihood of success. This effort is a happy example of how bipartisan cooperation can be gracefully achieved to improve the quality of life for the people we collectively serve. Such achievements will continue to be a sincere objective of my ongoing work on behalf of everyone who lives in the district I am privileged to represent.

The Poindexter Report

We have completed the third week of the virtual House of Delegates 2021 Session. Heated discussions continued regarding delays in the rollout of the vaccine and getting shots into arms. During this week, Virginia's rollout performance was reported dead last at 50th in the country. The vaccines were to be parceled out on a percentage of population basis. That clearly did not happen. Regardless, appointment registration is available on the WPHD website.

Regretfully, court packing has arrived in Virginia. Legislation began moving through the General Assembly to increase our distinguished Court of Appeals from 11 to 17 judges. While we may need more capacity in our Appeals Court, this legislation by Democrats in control of the General Assembly will result in the Democrat governor appointing six new liberal judges. This is simply wrong. No party should do this and claim to be a Party of Unity.

Strong evidence suggests it is past time to reopen our schools or provide parents the option to choose an in-person school setting. In the House every effort to do this or to provide a share of funding, including federal CARES stimulus dollars to help parents with virtual needs, day care, or alternative school options have been nixed.

On election integrity, every House bill attempting to restore public confidence in our Virginia elections has been killed. I find it unacceptable that people are required to show a photo ID to receive a vaccine but not to vote.

A bill passed to force Virginia to adopt all aspects of the international and national building standards. The legislation also contains requirements beyond 'green' standards already required by Virginia. For example, all state and local government buildings will have to install charging stations and electronic systems to track and possibly control energy con-

sumption and usage and associated operations. This will make new construction prohibitively expensive, not just for state buildings but also for local government and school buildings.

Anti-police and anti-gun bills continue to progress, especially a bill to ban all firearms in the Capitol, Capitol Square, our office building, and even on the surrounding streets. Delegate Margaret Ransone (R-99th) gave an outstanding Floor speech about personal safety and rights to self-protection. Her question about what women should do when attacked was answered with a dismissive suggestion to call the Capitol Police.

HB2282 dealing with Electrification of Transportation passed. This bill will be one of the top-most consequential bills of this Session. The bill directs the State Corporation Commission to study and make recommendations on how to convert all transportation to run on electricity. The word all means to convert the propulsion of all transportation—cars, pickups, SUVs, vans, large trucks, buses, even trains to operate on electric power. Preposterous!

I voted against the bill primarily because it also specifies that the costs of electrifying transportation shall be absorbed (hidden) in our electricity base rates, not appear in a Rate Adjustment Clause (RAC) where the true costs have to be identified and separated out so Virginians would know the actual costs to come from this unrealistic policy.

Attacks continue against traditional values and religious rights and practices. HB1896 would pay from taxpayer funds some of the costs of managing and subsidizing health plans that cover abortions. I am opposed to this indirect method of procuring taxpayer funded abortions.

The 'Nanny State' HB1864 passed. This bill treats anyone as an employer who hires a full

time, part-time or hourly person as, say, an in-home babysitter, home worker, or tutor. The employer would be subject to discrimination lawsuits from the AG, former hires, or even someone who was not selected for the position. For example, a person who prefers to hire a female rather than a male to care for an elderly mother on a full-time or part-time basis or a Christian parent who prefers to hire and does hire a Christian rather than a non-Christian applicant as a full or part-time nanny could be sued for discrimination. I voted no.

The old Common Law that declared suicide a crime was repealed. This will make it difficult for our police to investigate cases where such events might be a ruse to cover up a killer's actions.

Regarding the actions of the governor and his state agencies, the Teen Sex Text Hotline previously established that allowed teens to call in to discuss sex issues was replaced after receiving thousands of complaints statewide. Inexplicably, that hotline was replaced by at least three similar ways for teens to contact and discuss sex with strangers. Huh?

February 3 was the final date to comment on the Virginia DOE's proposed regulations covering our schools' policies and procedures regarding LB-GTQ+ and general gender issues. Regulations include bathrooms and locker rooms use, males participating in girls' sports, revised gender-neutral pronouns in speech, etc., I am opposed to all.

My HB2024 passed subcommittee and soon will be heard in the full Transportation Committee. The bill would allow a replica of the washed away Bob White Covered Bridge in Patrick County to be constructed using the national standards for pedestrian/non-vehicular covered bridges rather than the standard modern specifications for weight load, materials, size, and approaches.

To contact me, call (540)576-2600 or email delcpoindexter@house.virginia.gov.

Health trends drive move to hybrid instruction

The Henry County School division is moving towards reopening schools on March 10, according to a message distributed to parents Monday.

School staff have been closely following local COVID-19 data as well as division percent positive and quarantine rates since returning from winter break and noted that trends show the division can move toward reopening schools for hybrid instruction.

"Because we feel it is important for each family to choose the instructional plan that best suits their student's needs, we are offering students the option to return to hybrid instruction or to remain virtual learners," the message stated.

As in the fall semester, "a student may move between the formats as needed based on individual circumstances. Any student needing to move between hybrid and virtual instruction should speak with his/her principal,"

the message stated.

Additionally, as in the fall hybrid instruction plan, students in grades pre-K through first grade, and students in specialized classes, will be scheduled to attend four days per week rather than two.

"For planning purposes, students who previously attended four days per week should notify their principal if they only wish to attend two days per week," the message stated.

To share your student's instructional preference for the spring semester, complete a brief survey at https://hcschools.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1BV8J4aVB47WV4V.

Parents who completed the survey in the spring did not need to complete it again.

The division will continue to work to ensure that proper safety precautions and mitigation strategies are in place to support in-person instruction.

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Bryant to seek 4th term in Collinsville

Debbie Hall
dhall@theenterprise.net

Experienced leadership, dedication and the county's success are prompting incumbent Joe Bryant to seek a fourth term to the Henry County Board of Supervisors in the November election.

"There are a lot of things going on that I want to see through," said Bryant, of the Collinsville District.

Continued economic development, completion of the new jail and the City of Martinsville's plan to revert to a town status are among those projects, he said.

"Reversion is going to affect" county and city residents, said Bryant, who is being challenged for the post by Andrew Palmer, a newcomer to county government.

Bryant said the county's role at this juncture "is to try and negotiate the best deal for county citizens, whatever that may be. We will be doing everything we can minimize the effects on county residents. We just need to work together to work this out in a rational way."

If court battles are part of the equation, the costs of litigation would be ex-

pensive for both the county and the city, he added.

In terms of growing the local economy, Bryant said the county has worked with anyone and everyone to make advances in job creation and growing the tax base.

"Teamwork is how we have been able to accomplish" success on that front, he said, noting last week's announcement that Crown Holdings, Inc. will invest \$145 million to establish a manufacturing operation in Henry County. The initial investment is the largest ever announced in the county, officials have said.

That economic development announcement came on the heels of two others. The first is an expansion by Laminate Technologies, Inc. The second was by Vinton-based Advance Energy Solutions, Inc., which intends to locate a solar wind farm protection control panel operation in Henry County.

Many economic development projects announced in the county also mean additional revenue will be generated for the city, due to revenue sharing agreements in place between the two localities, Bryant said.

Interstate 73 remains a concern, and one that the board continues to work on, Bryant said. Currently, there are no new funds for the project, but it remains on the county's radar, he added.

While the new jail will cost an estimated \$70 million, Bryant said the investment was needed due to overcrowding and other issues in the current jail, which opened in 1974.

With a rated capacity of 67 inmates and 120 beds, the jail on average houses 180 inmate, with another 75-100 routinely housed in facilities outside of the area. The county must pay other localities to house inmates, he added.

Before moving forward with construction, and to ensure the county got the most bang for its buck, officials considered multiple sites in multiple areas, and compared sitework associated with each, before deciding on the former DuPont site.

The company also donated a portion of needed acreage for the new jail, and DuPont addressed previous environmental concerns at the site, he added.

While the price is high, Bryant said the county will save money in the long

run, because construction costs have continued to rise since the project was approved.

Bryant also is keen on generating ideas for new projects.

"I was the one that introduced the thought of a county fair. I had no idea" the proposal would garner as much support as it did, Bryant said, and recalled he initially broached the subject many years ago.

At the time, "it fell over like a wet noodle," he recalled with a chuckle. "I've been wanting a county fair since I first got on the board though. Now, we're having one."

The Henry County Fair will be held September 22 - 25 on the Martinsville Speedway grounds.

"I'm really excited about that and seeing it come" to fruition, said Bryant, 65.

"I also bring business experience to the table," Bryant said, and added he has been the owner of Bryant Radio Supply, Inc., for 49 years. "I think my experience has helped the county."

Bryant said he said he has relied on that business background many times during his tenure. For instance, "I am a conservative spender, always have



been. I know from being in business you can't outspend what you take in."

Bryant said he also has learned and continues to learn many lessons while serving on the board, but one of the most important is working as a team.

"There is not one of us on the board who gets their way every time, and there is not one of us that gets things done in the county. In general terms, when one or two of us don't get our way, it's a done deal after we vote on it. We don't ponder about it. We don't have time."

Although "the county

has faced a lot of challenges in the last 10 years or so," Bryant said he enjoys working for the betterment of county residents.

"We as a county have really struggled, but we've also done a lot of good things and worked through the challenges as a team," Bryant said. "I think right now, we've got a good team on the board. I don't know of a weak link we have."

Bryant and his wife, Robin, have a daughter, Tennille Nichols, and a son, Joe "Joey" Bryant Jr. They also have grandchildren.

Danville church donates \$10,000 to training academy



The board is composed of police chiefs, sheriffs, and emergency services directors from the localities served by the academy.

Brandon Martin
Staff writer

Representatives of the Tabernacle Church in Danville presented a \$10,000 to the Piedmont Regional Criminal Justice

Training Academy Board of Directors on Thursday.

Pastor Joey Bray said the check was in appreciation of the contributions of local law enforcement.

"We have a good group of giving people and we

were trying to determine the best way. We knew we wanted to do something for law enforcement," Bray said. "We had six projects designated this year as our annual Christmas offering. I've always been a strong

proponent of law enforcement."

Bray said John Motley, a Danville police officer, gave him the idea to donate to the academy.

"I'm hoping this gift on behalf of the Tabernacle Church will inspire others to do the same," Bray said. "What better way to reach out to the entire community than through law enforcement and proper, well-rounded training."

J. R. Powell, chairman, said the funds will be used to help build an onsite facility for training in defensive tactics.

"To date, the academy has always had to beg and

borrow other facilities within Martinsville, Henry County, Danville or wherever," Powell said. "Thankfully, over the years we've been able to work things out, but some of those facilities are no longer available to us."

Powell said the building committee discussed a new location on Jan. 13, after learning about the donation.

"I think that was a sign from higher up that we are on the right path, and there are some options out there to get that facility done," he said. "I'm 99 percent sure that's what those funds will go to."

The academy serves 13 criminal justice agencies and approximately 750 personnel, including police officers, sheriff's deputies and dispatchers for the Martinsville Police Department, Martinsville Sheriff's Office, Gretna Police Department, Chatham Police Department, Pittsylvania County Emergency Services, Pittsylvania County Sheriff's Office, Danville Police Department, Danville Sheriff's Office, Henry County Sheriff's Office, Danville Emergency Communications, Patrick County Sheriff's Office and Martinsville Henry County 911 Center.

PUP! Grant earmarked for new training equipment

The Harvest Foundation has awarded a \$15,000 PUP! Grant to the Henry County Department of Public Safety (HCDPS) to assist in the purchase of three iSimulate REALITi Simulation Training Kits.

HCDPS will use the new simulators to train healthcare providers on the three different types of heart monitors/defibrillators that are currently being used throughout the Martinsville and Henry County healthcare community.

The portable simulation kits give HCDPS the ability to turn any mannequin into a high-fidelity simulation training mannequin. This makes training more realistic, cost effective and convenient for the department.

These training improvements are crucial as the department is currently responsible for providing continuing education to over 40 career EMS providers, over 300 volunteer EMS providers and partners with SOVAH-Health to provide cardiac education to their staff.

"These kits will enhance cardiac care training from beginners learning CPR, cardiologists treating emergency cardiac cases and nearly every healthcare level in between," said Matt Tatum, director of Public Safety. "This grant not only funds this project, but it also allows us to leverage additional grant funding so we can provide state of the art cardiac

care education."

"The work of our local public safety has always been a valued resource for our community," said Sheryl Agee, senior operating officer at The Harvest Foundation. "The PUP! Grant was a logical fit since the importance of that work has been further spotlighted over the last year amidst the pandemic. We greatly appreciate their partnership and efforts to proactively equip our community with state-of-the-art technology to meet the community's health and safety needs."

For more information about Henry County Department of Public Safety and its programs, visit www.henrycountyva.gov/public-safety.



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PET OF THE WEEK

Billy Bob is a 5-year-old domestic longhair available for adoption at the SPCA. He is described as affectionate, but he requires extra attention due to his feline immunodeficiency virus. He weighs approximately 12 pounds. Cats and kittens are available to adopt for \$20. For information, call (276) 638-7297.