

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, August 7, 2021

(USPS-6)

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The Martinsville School Board awarded former board member Dominique Hylton with a plaque in honor of his service. From left to right: Jay Dickens, Donna Dillard, Hylton, Yvonne Givens, Emily Parker, and Dr. Zeb Talley, Jr.

School board approves back to school plan

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

The Martinsville School Board approved the back-to-school plan for the 2021-2022 school year at the August 2 meeting.

The school year is set to begin Monday, August 9, with pre-k through 12 grade students returning to in-person education Monday-Friday for five full days of instruction.

Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley Jr. said the plan can be modified at any time based on the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) recommendations.

"The safety of our students is always a priority, and this plan is designed to provide a safe and to healthy learning environment," he said.

Talley said administrators will continue to monitor the COVID-19 case numbers and data to make informed decisions.

"Martinsville is one of the

few areas where 58 percent of people have been vaccinated in the West Piedmont District (WPHD), however there is a significant lack in the areas around us," he said.

To help keep students safe, there will be three-foot distancing between students in the classrooms and on the buses, and six-foot distancing between adults and adults and children.

"Because of this, we're going to modify the classrooms and we're going to have to modify the schedules," he said.

Masks also will be required for all staff and students while on school property, including school buses.

In communal spaces like the lunchroom, students will continue to observe the three-foot distance rule while eating, and glass barriers will be used to help prevent the spread of disease.

Talley said masks should be worn once students are finished eating.

See Plan, page 6

Health officials expect "bad winter" with COVID-19

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

Due to the large number of unvaccinated individuals in the district, officials with the West Piedmont Health District (WPHD) said the region is in for a potentially bad winter.

Public information officer Nancy Bell said the organization is seeing an increase in COVID-

19 cases every day, particularly among those who have not received a vaccine.

"It's repeating the pattern that we had when it first came," she said, and added that the only way to curb the increase in cases is for people to start getting vaccinated.

"In Patrick County, every Monday you could walk in without an appointment from 8:30

a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and get a vaccine. It's not a lack of access," she said.

Despite the vaccine being widely available, people, particularly those in Patrick County, are not getting their vaccine because of false information, she said.

"It's unfortunate. We try to show the science, but not every-

See COVID-19, page 2

A Hope-Spark Igniter: New Uptown Partnership director leads effort to revitalize Martinsville



Kathy Deacon

PHOTO BY SERA PETRAS



Wall Street alleyway now

Callie Heitala
Contributing writer

Kathy Deacon wants to make some magic happen in Martinsville.

As the new director of the city's Uptown Partnership, Deacon is tasked with transforming Uptown into a place that people want to live, work, and play.

"I'd been through Martinsville," Deacon said, "but I'd never found a reason to stop. And that was one of the big things that got me excited about taking the position—finding and creating reasons for folks to stop. That could be kind of my life work, my dream."

Before coming to Martinsville, Deacon was the founder and CEO of Co-Creative Consulting, LLC.

She moved from the Washington, D.C. area to Staunton, Virginia, to be closer to family and became deeply involved with the community there, eventually becoming the Executive Director of the Staunton Creative Community Fund, a microlender focusing on helping build up small businesses.

See Hope-Spark, page 3

Smith River Fest set for August 21

It's almost time to grab the paddles and fishing poles for a day of family fun down by the water at the 13th annual Smith River Fest.

Following a one-year hiatus, this year's event will be back better than ever on Aug. 21, with festivities lasting from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Smith River Sports Complex.

Along with classics such as the Helgramite Hustle Mud Run and the Boat Race, the festival also will feature the Joseph Young Magic Show, free river tubing, and demonstrations for first-time kayakers and fly fishers.

"The Smith River Fest was originally designed as a way to highlight all of the outdoor recreational activities that we created with the trail system and access points for the Smith River Blueway," said Roger Adams, Director of Parks and Recreation. "It has evolved a lot since then and I think this year is set up to be one of the best we've ever had. There is a little something for everybody and this festival is a phenomenal way to showcase our incredible natural amenities."

Admission to the event and parking are free. Event sponsors are Dr. J. Peyton Moore Cosmetic & Implant Dentistry, Sovah Health, the Martinsville Speedway, the Martinsville Eyecare Center and the

Blue Ridge Bank.

Most of the activities are centered on the Smith River itself. Festival-goers can bring their own yoga mat for "Yoga by the River" with Audra Elliot of Yoga Pop Danville or purchase a rubber duck and compete in the Blue Ridge Duck Race presented by the Boys & Girls Club of the Blue Ridge.

Henry County Parks and Recreation will provide free shuttle rides throughout the day for those who take part in river tubing, canoeing and kayaking. The shuttles will run upstream in the morning from the sports complex to Blueway access points on Frith Road or near South Martinsville. The shuttle will run downstream in the afternoon to access points at Marrowbone Creek or Mitchell Bridge.

In addition to the free water activities, Henry County Parks and Recreation and the Dan River Basin Association will hold the annual Boat Race. The race is \$20 for a single entrant or \$30 per tandem entry. Multiple races are scheduled throughout the day.

While the Smith River is the main attraction, it's far from the only way to make a splash.

The festival also features paddling and casting demonstration pools for

See River Fest, page 6



The annual Bassett Highway 57 Cruise-in will be held Saturday, Aug. 21 from 3 to 7 p.m. Cliff Stone, Treasurer of the Greater Bassett Area Community Inc., said between 250 and 350 vehicles are on display during a normal year.

Cruise-in on track for this year

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

After a pandemic-induced hiatus last year, the annual Bassett Highway 57 Cruise-In is on this year.

The event will be held from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 21 at Bassett Furniture.

Cliff Stone, treasurer of Greater Bassett Area Community Inc., said the organization decided to hold the event because limits on the number of those attending a gathering was recently removed.

"We didn't want to be in violation of that (order), especially when we're on Bassett Furniture property," he said.

Stone said the public is invited to attend

free of charge. Attendees are encouraged to bring their antique and classic cars to show off to their next-door neighbors and others attending the event.

Food trucks will be onsite as well as a DJ playing music, and other vendors selling confectionaries like fried pies and doughnuts. A 50/50 drawing will be held to benefit local charities. No pets, tents, or burnouts are allowed.

"It's a family event. We have a lot of family and a lot of children," he said.

While the cruise-in is scheduled to start at 3 p.m., Stone said some arrive around noon to get a good spot.

"It's right by the river, and people jockey for that spot where they can



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"It's right by the river, and people jockey for that spot where they can

get the shade first," he said, chuckling.

During a normal year, Stone said 1,500 to 2,500 people attend the event, with 250 to 350 vintage cars on display.

"We've had people come from Greensboro, Winston-Salem, (N.C.) and we get a lot of folks from the Reidsville area, we get Rocky Mount, a few from Roanoke," he said. Cars from Kentucky, West Virginia, and New York have also been displayed.

While the event last year was cancelled due to the pandemic, Stone said the group does not plan to cancel the event due to rising COVID-19 cases.

"Not unless we get restricted by the governor to do so. I think most responsible people,

and that's the people we kind of hope to attract, has had their vaccine. We hope it's not cancelled," he said.

Other cruise-in events are planned for Saturday, September 18, and

See Cruise-in, page 8

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



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Friday, Aug. 6

Ride 'N Dine every Friday afternoon with members of the Henry County Bike Club. Each week fellow cyclists meet at the Liberty Street access point of the Dick & Willie Trail to put in some miles and to refuel with a delicious lunch at a local eatery. A different lunch locality is chosen each week so that your Friday afternoon is always unique and interesting. For more information, call Marti at 276-358-1312. Rides are year-round but are canceled if it's raining or if the temperature is below 50 degrees.

Sunday, Aug. 8

The Henry County Bike Club will ride at the Mountain Laurel Trails in Ridgeway every Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. Occasionally the Mountain Bike Ride may be held at Cedar Ridge Trails. In those instances, the Henry County Bike Club will post an update on the website as well as

the Facebook page. For more information on the weekly Mountain Bike Ride, call Bob Norris at 276-340-9144 or Tommy at 276-618-0343.

Saturday, Aug. 14

The Smith River Mile will become the UpTown Martinsville Mile. Same distance. New name. New course, at 7 p.m. The Uptown Martinsville Mile is a salute to the historical allure of the one-mile run. This race will not be run on a standard 400-meter track but rather at a unique venue. The UpTown Martinsville Mile will be run in historic UpTown Martinsville. Course is two laps around the central business district. All on mostly level city streets. Race will be run in multiple small heats to facilitate social distancing. COVID-19 precautions will be observed. Liquid refreshments and awards to follow.

Handmade Journal Workshop with Genie, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Spencer-

Penn Center. Pages will be made with 4x6 140-pound, landscape, watercolor paper and hand sewn together. Each cover will be unique and created by the individual with embellishments of their choosing. A secondary class will be scheduled for September as an introduction to line and wash watercolor journaling at an additional fee. All supplies will be provided. Cost is \$20/members and \$25/non-members. Payment is due at registration. If you have any questions, e-mail spc.susan@yahoo.com

Tuesday, Aug. 17

Barn Quilt Class at Spencer-Penn from 1 to 5 p.m. All supplies are provided. Options for the class: 24"x 24" exterior \$65; 36"x 36" exterior \$85; 12"x36" exterior \$75; 12 x 12 exterior kits (to go only) \$35. Class will be filled on a first paid first served basis. Once payment is received by Spencer-Penn, design choice should be sent to the instructor, Lauren at miss-

laurenbyron@gmail.com. Questions may be e-mailed to Lauren or to Susan at spc.susan@yahoo.com. Cut off for registration is Monday, August 9.

Friday, Aug. 20

August Music Night at Spencer-Penn's monthly Music Night. Doors open at 5 p.m. with music starting at 5:30 p.m. Timbre Trail will take the stage at 6:15 p.m. in the Alumni Hall. Concessions will be available. Admission is a \$5 donation at the door. This is a cash only event.

ONGOING

MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness offers "no contact" application assistance for Virginia's free or low-cost MEDICAID plans for Virginians under 65, who meet income requirements. For questions or to apply, call or text Ann Walker at (276) 732-0509.

Beware of third-party mailings during election season

As political campaigns gear up to turn out supporters for the November election, potential voters should exercise caution when responding to "third-party" mailings claiming to ensure one's registration status.

Henry County Registrar Dawn Stultz-Vaughn said her office has recently received complaints from the community about mailings which were sent to the families of deceased residents with enclosed voter applications.

"I want to make it clear that these third-party mailings are not from the Henry County Registrar's office," Stultz-Vaughn said. "We don't do campaigns to sign up new voters, we just process the applications as they come in. We are not behind these mailings so voters should remain hyper-vigilant to protect themselves from potential fraud or scams."

Stultz-Vaughn said that any mail sent from the Registrar's office will have "Official Voting Information" marked on the envelope.

The mailings sent by outside organizations often have include voter registration applications and advice to not "miss the chance to have your voice COUNT." Additionally, the mailings

may contain politically-charged advertisements which is not the practice of local election officials.

"We remain neutral," Stultz-Vaughn said. "If you receive mail that is critical or supportive of one political party over the other, I can assure you that it was not sent by our office. Any inserts or language like that should be a clue to the voter that the mail was sent from a third-party instead."

Given that the mailings have been mostly targeted towards deceased family members, Stultz-Vaughn said that fraud is a concern.

"We work hard to uphold election integrity in this office and voters can remain confident that we don't have dead people voting in our elections," Stultz-Vaughn said. "As we continue to do our part to maintain election security, we ask that our residents also do their part by keeping an eye out for potential scams and misinformation."

Stultz-Vaughn said those who have voted in the last eight years are typically still registered.

to check registration status or change voter information, residents are encouraged to visit <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation>.

Hall, Hodges named to Region 3 Council



Tim Hall

Henry County Administrator Tim Hall and Rhonda Hodges, Vice President, Workforce, Economic & Community Development at Patrick & Henry Community College were among the six new members named to the Go Virginia Region 3 Council.

Other new members include Melody Foster, Executive



Rhonda Hodges

Director, Commonwealth Regional Council; Alfreda Reynolds, Director of Economic Development, Brunswick County; Dr. Keith Harkins, Vice President Academic & Workforce Programs, Southside Community College and Jeremy Satterfield, TechSpark Community Engagement Manager, Microsoft Corporation.

COVID-19

from page 1

one trusts the science or the government, so I just hate that this is happening because people are going to lose their lives because they didn't have the facts," Bell said.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is expected to approve the Pfizer vaccine by Labor Day in hopes that will boost confidence in the prevention effort, according to

online reports. Moderna applied for approval of its vaccine in June, and Johnson & Johnson is expected to file for full approval later this year. All have been under emergency authorization since last year.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, Bell said health officials are telling people to follow the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention) guidance, which includes wearing a mask when outside and around crowds such as in a store or at school.

Because of the increase in case number, the WPHD also put together a Strike team and decided to keep a contract worker on staff.

Protecting oneself is especially important as COVID variants are appearing in the state

and near the district.

"The Delta variant is much more contagious. It has bigger droplets, more droplets, and it's much meaner to your body," she said.

Unvaccinated individuals can pass the Delta variant to others, including vaccinated people, who in turn can pass it to more people, Bell said, adding most vaccinated individuals either have mild symptoms or do not feel effects of the Delta variant if they contract it.

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) website states that the Delta variant is believed to spread more easily and quickly than other variants.

"Early evidence suggests there might be an association with more serious illness or death, but this is being monitored," the website stat-

ed.

"We can still turn this back if people will get vaccinated. If they don't, I fear we're going to have a very unpleasant winter," Bell said.

As of August 3, 32.1 percent of the population, or 5,659 people, has been fully vaccinated in Patrick County. 35.6 percent of the population has received at least one dose, and 42.1 percent of the adult population is fully vaccinated.

In Henry County, 38.7 percent of the population, or 21,707 people, has been fully vaccinated. 42.4 percent of the population has received at least one dose, and 46.2 percent of the adult population is fully vaccinated.

As of Tuesday, August 3 data from the Virginia Department of Health suggested there are 4,753 cases, with 381 hospital-

izations, and 124 deaths in Henry County. In Patrick County, 1,443 cases with 121 hospitalized, and 46 dead from the COVID-19 virus were reported. In the City of Martinsville, 1,644 cases were reported with 171 hospitalized, and 79 dead.

The data also suggests there are 699,342 cases in the state, with 31,470 hospitalized, and 11,536 dead from the COVID-19 virus. Information from the CDC suggested there are 35,171,679 cases in the United States and 611,791 dead from coronavirus.

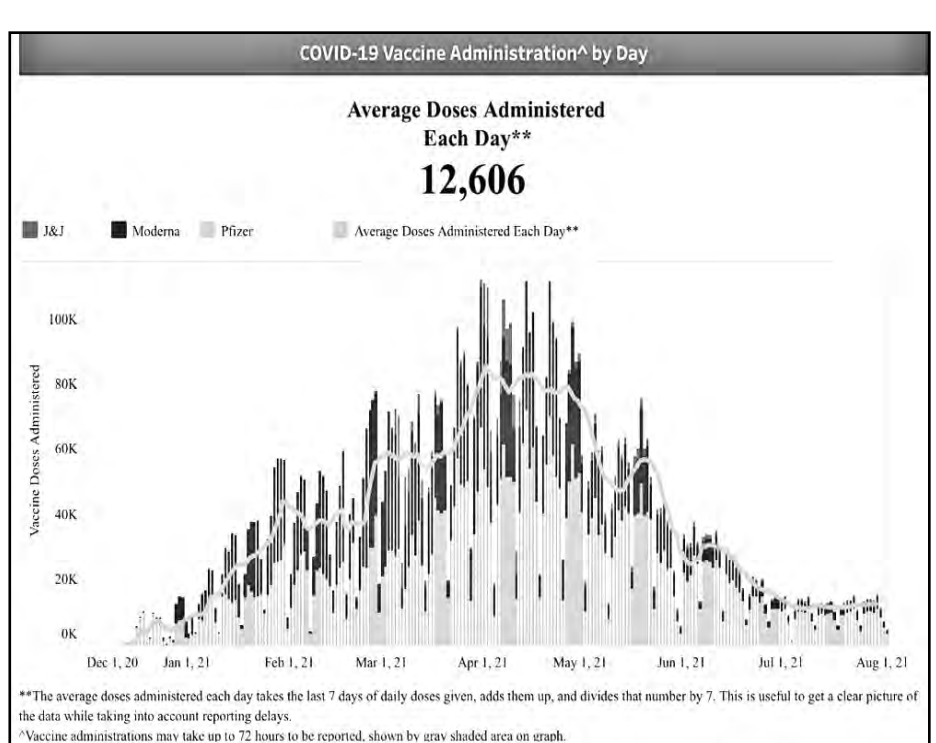
Data also suggests that as of August 3, 4,623,725 Virginians have been fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus.

For more tips on how to stay safe, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov or www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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49	50		51		52			53			
54		55			56				57	58	59
60				61					62		
63				64				65			
66				67				68			

- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Ponds
 6. "Unbelievable" musicians
 9. Invests in little enterprises
 13. Longtime Utah Jazz coach
 14. Small sailboat
 15. "Luther" actor
 16. Round Dutch cheese
 17. Detects underwater objects
 18. Harsh, grating noise
 19. Steward
 21. Fencing sword
 22. Painful places on the body
 23. "Sleepless in Seattle" actress Ryan
 24. Sodium
 25. Engineering degree (abbr.)
 28. Small lump
 29. African antelope
 31. Electronic point of sale
 33. Carefully chooses
 36. Ringworm
 38. Unrefined
 39. Drenches
 41. Type of pants
 44. Son of Noah
 45. Spiritual being
 46. Upton Sinclair novel
 48. Journalist Tarbell
 49. Atomic #21 (abbr.)
 51. Born of
 52. Rich tapestry
 54. S. China seaport
 56. Being without clothes
 60. Surrounded by
 61. Remains
 62. Away from wind
 63. Dried-up
 64. One who can see the future
 65. A very large body of water
 66. Digs up earth
 67. Type of screen
 68. Old Norse poet
- CLUES DOWN**
1. Millisecond
 2. Spanish city
 3. Sudden, very loud sound
 4. Type of chair
 5. Tin
 6. Sea eagles
 7. Broad volcanic crater
 8. Some animals have it
 9. Ottoman palaces
 10. Divulge a secret
 11. "A Doll's House" playwright
 12. "It's a Wonderful Life" director
 14. Poisonous perennial
 17. Gulf in the Aegean
 20. Clothes
 21. Chairs
 23. Family of regulator genes
 25. NY ballplayer
 26. Impressive in size or scope
 27. Jacques ____, Fr. biologist
 29. Manhattanite
 30. Genus of lemurs
 32. Sings to
 34. River in southern It
 35. Supplemented with difficulty
 37. Farewell
 40. Senior officer
 42. Utah resident
 43. Begets
 47. Boy
 49. Violently break
 50. Brief appearance
 52. Expressed pleasure
 53. A light informal meal
 55. Fabric with smooth finish
 56. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
 57. Ancient Greek City
 58. Close tightly
 59. Commit
 61. A way to communicate (abbr.)
 65. Heavy metal



The average number of COVID-19 vaccines administered each day has significantly dropped since the spring. A little more than 4.6 million of Virginia's 8.536 million population has been fully vaccinated.

Community Storehouse celebrates two decades of serving

For 20 years, families across Southside have gained access to healthy, nutritious food thanks to our network of donors, volunteers, and ever-evolving programs that offer a hand up to neighbors in need.

Recently, the Community Storehouse held an anniversary celebration to outline the impacts made in the community and recognize some of the leaders involved in paving the way.

A few highlights made during the celebration include:

- More than 3 million pounds of food provided to the community
- More than 200,000 backpack bags delivered directly to children

in need

- More than 500,000 volunteer hours invested

Several members/volunteers with the organization were recognized, among them:



Valyn Chapman receives the newly named, Margaret Lester Volunteer Award, for her valuable long-standing contributions to our agency. Presented by Executive Director Travis Adkins.



Bobbi Bird receives an award, presented by Travis Adkins, in recognition of her 20-years of volunteer service to the organization. Bird has volunteered more than 40,000 hours of time to the Community Storehouse.



Linda Pulliam receives an award, presented by Travis Adkins, for her years of faithful service as Chairman of the Board of Directors.



Travis Adkins, executive director, was presented an award by Linda Pulliam, chairman of the Board, in recognition of 15-years of service in leadership to the Community Storehouse.

Award will be tapped to close educational attainment gaps

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) received the Gerald L. Baliles Rural Virginia Horseshoe Initiative (RVHI) Award – a \$50,000 award from the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education (VFCCE). The VFCCE provided P&HCC and ten other schools with RVHI awards as a way to help close the educational attainment gap between the Rural Horseshoe region

and the state at large. Named for the 65th governor of Virginia, the award honors Baliles' legacy of promoting educational accessibility. The primary goals of the RVHI program are to reduce the number of rural residents without a high school diploma and to increase the number of rural residents with an associate's degree, diploma, or certificate. "Rural Virginia needs a tar-

geted investment to take care of its next generation so the entire Commonwealth can prosper," said Stewart Roberson, VFCCE's board chair. At P&HCC the funds will be used in two ways to serve two different populations. First, the college will use the funds to support Career Coaches who work directly with high school students to encourage high school completion, transition

to college, and college completion. The remaining funds will be used to provide aid and cover the cost of tuition and books for at-risk students. The funds help meet the financial needs that threaten to inhibit retention and completion of a program. "From our experience and our research, coaching and wrap-around support are truly the two tools that make the

most impact on student retention," says Meghan Eggleston, P&HCC's Director of Dual Enrollment and Off-Campus Administration. "This award enables us to do exactly that." By investing in rural education, the VFCCE is working with Virginia's Community Colleges to promote opportunities to pursue higher education and a more equitable Commonwealth.

Hope-Spark from page 1

When Uptown Partnership began its search for a director, a board member sent Deacon the job description in hopes that she might know some suitable candidates. She applied herself. After a lengthy interview process, Deacon began her new role in May.

Deacon saw potential in Martinsville as she learned the history of the city.

It flourished first around the tobacco industry and when that industry began to fail in the area, the city reinvented itself, finding success in the furniture and textile factories that moved in. Martinsville, Deacon said, is resilient. And it's time for yet another reinvention.

"When you've turned the corner one time, you can do it again," she added.

To help turn that corner, the Uptown Partnership worked with the Main Street Organization to identify specific transformation strategies, all aimed at that goal of encouraging people to live, work, and play in the city.

Housing is a big priority, particularly making sure housing is available to citizens from all income levels. Currently, the former BB&T building and the Chief Tassel building are under renovation, both as mixed-use spaces with apartments and retail space on the bottom.

"We want to make sure that, strategically, we recruit or try to retain business that will support the residents—things like coffee shops, bakeries, dry cleaners, business support centers..., farm-to-table food, a boutique grocery..., things that people want when they're living here."

Part of that strategy

is to work with current building owners to improve their spaces because, as Deacon noted, "people want to live where it's beautiful."

Some Uptown structures have fallen into disrepair, with problems ranging from outdated décor and tattered awnings to more serious interior damage. The Uptown Partnership aims to provide incentives for improvements and repairs which will make the buildings more attractive to potential developers and entrepreneurs to create what Deacon calls "sticky spaces—places that draw people here and make them want to sit and stay for a while."

Uptown Partnership is already at work developing one of these sticky spaces.

Recently, a group of community volunteers power washed and cleaned the alleyway connecting Bridge and Walnut Streets, located behind The Ground Floor. This alleyway will be one of the Partnership's flagship transformation projects. Eventually, the alley will become a gathering place, complete with tables, chairs, planters, and string lights. Perhaps, if funding allows, even move uniform pavement and a mural. The Partnership is working with Martinsville native Courtney Yellock, who won a number of prizes for his artwork from Piedmont Arts during his high school days, to create renderings for the new public gathering space.

In addition, the city obtained a grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development to do an assessment of the warehouse space on Depot Street. Structural and environmental assessments have been com-

pleted with a market demand study to follow soon which will assess the potential to develop an artisan center in that space. If studies suggest an artisan center is not the right fit for the community, Deacon is prepared to adjust course and welcome new ideas. "If not an artisan center, then what," she asked.

Deacon wants to make sure the community has a voice in all the potential changes to Uptown.

The Uptown Partnership received an initial grant from the Harvest Foundation to sustain operations for two years as well as fund a citizen-driven community visioning project, which recently launched.

The project will allow the community to share what they love, what they want to see change, and what challenges and opportunities they believe exist in Martinsville. A door hanger will be placed at the property of each Martinsville resident informing them of upcoming community meetings and online surveys to ensure that each citizen who wants to participate can do so.

Of course, Uptown revitalization comes with some challenges, and getting property owners on board is one of them. Deacon wants to encourage those owners to make their spaces more move-in ready for potential new businesses.

"Even more than just filling up (these buildings) is figuring out how to work with the property owners to ensure that they understand the importance of having not just a functional city but a beautiful one," she said.

Another challenge is the city's history.

"This community has been through a lot of trauma, historically,"

Deacon said, and cited the city's origins in the tobacco industry, built around slave labor, as a trauma. After the loss of that industry, the city rebuilt itself around furniture and textiles.

"Then, after the NAFTA agreement was signed, having that industry move overseas, that has certainly been another trauma," Deacon said.

Even previous aborted efforts to revitalize the city have had lingering effects, she said.

"There have been lots and lots of studies, but even the implementation of those studies has been stalled which is another trauma," Deacon said, but she hopes to break that cycle.

She sees hope in Martinsville's future, which, she says, must happen whether the city reverts to a town.

"Whether one is for reversion or not for reversion, Uptown and Martinsville and Henry County are a hub and it's an important time regardless of whether reversion happens or doesn't, the revitalization still has to take place here in order to create opportunity not just here, but in Henry County," she said.

"Our hope is that all the parties now are coming together and recognizing that the status quo is not going to work anymore. That we're actually going to need to do something for Martinsville, and particularly Uptown, to become a relevant area at a time that's so rich with opportunity," Deacon said. "Our hope is that we and the other partners in the community can be a hope-spark igniter and get people to be a part of the healing process that needs to take place so that hope actually can spring forward."



Artist Courtney Yellock's rendering of Wall Street alleyway.



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OPINION

The tragedy of the internet

The year was 1998, and my family got our first personal computer.

This wasn't the very beginning of the internet — it had been around in various forms for a couple decades — but it was the first time I had easy access to it. Easy was relative back then, of course. That 1998 Compaq Presario still had to slowly dial into the internet on its 56k modem, unleashing a slew of electronic crunches and beeps that made it sound like a gut-shot R2-D2, and it slowed to a crawl at peak times (which was pretty much any time except for 3-4 a.m.). Nonetheless, I was beyond thrilled.

In those days, the internet had limitless promise. It was going to level the playing field. Computers were growing smaller, faster, and cheaper by the day, and the internet was eventually going to allow everyone to access our planet's collective wisdom. You would be able to tour a museum, or take a college class, or learn a trade, and you'd be able to do all of it right at home!

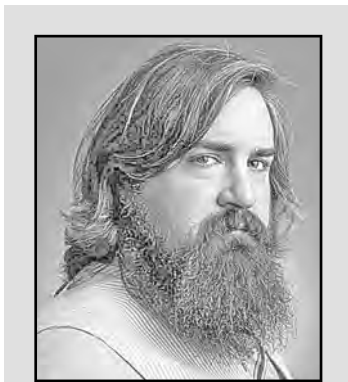
Admittedly, I mostly used the internet back then to obtain the latest up-to-the-minute information on upcoming Nintendo 64 games, but I could still appreciate the potential. Sometimes I'd just sit at the computer thinking of things to search for. I'd open up my search engine of choice (RIP Altavista) and type in "old Cadillacs." Suddenly

(well, not suddenly, but eventually), I'd find dozens upon dozens of websites about old Cadillacs! I'd find photos of stunning ragtop '59 Coupe Devilles! It was like being plugged directly into the Library of Alexandria, assuming it skewed heavily toward 14-year-old boys.

Everything was on the internet, and if you couldn't find something on the internet, you could create your own website and add it. It was beautifully egalitarian.

Of course, my generation was always taught to be wary of the internet. I remember writing papers in middle and high school and having adults tell me and my classmates not to trust everything we read online. If we saw on the internet that Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on April 15, 1865, we were told to double-check that in a book; anyone could have posted that to the web, so how could we possibly know if it was true?

I am far from the first to point this out, but it's now painfully ironic to look back on that advice. Many of the same adults who told my generation not to believe anything on the internet now believe everything on the internet, no matter how ridiculous or outlandish. They believe that Hillary Clinton operated a child slavery ring out of the basement of a Washington D.C. pizza parlor that, for the record, does not have a basement. They believe



By Ben R. Williams

prominent actors and politicians eat children. They believe things so patently insane that they make moon landing deniers seem quaint by comparison.

No one saw the inherent flaw of the internet, and no one could have predicted the damage it would do to our society. The wonderful, terrible thing about the web is that no matter what you're interested in, you're just a few clicks away from a huge group of like-minded people from around the world. If you're interested in repairing old hit-and-miss engines, that's great. If you believe that you're not a human being but actually a 3,000 year old dragon trapped in a human body, maybe it's not so healthy.

In the internet age, anyone who can manage a halfway-respectable looking website is an authority.

Crackpot news sources are virtually indistinguishable from legitimate ones. If you saw screaming human fireplug Alex Jones on the street, you would poke your keys through your fist and give him a wide berth. However, put him behind a desk and throw the videos on infowars.com, which depressingly claims to be the number one independent news source in the world, and suddenly his demented ravings carry an air of legitimacy for many people.

For a long time, the crackpots were almost funny. Maybe they legitimized insane ideas, and maybe they called for violence against imagined enemies occasionally, but it was easy to dismiss them as the fringe.

The pandemic, however, has proven that the fringe is a whole lot bigger than anyone would have believed.

As I write this, Henry County has a COVID vaccination rate of 42.6 percent. Patrick County is worse at just 35.6 percent. When I got my first shot nearly five months ago, it wasn't all that easy to lay hands on it. Today, it's hard to muster an excuse. You can walk into virtually any drug store and they'll be more than happy to give you the shot, completely free of charge.

I've read multiple articles interviewing doctors and nurses in counties with low vaccination rates, and they're all essentially identical. Medical staff were already burned out when COVID blew through last year. They were

battle-scarred and traumatized by all the death and suffering they had to witness. Now the horror is roaring back, but it's a struggle to muster sympathy since it all could have been prevented. About 99 percent of the COVID cases that make it to hospitals are people who never got vaccinated, and the remaining unfortunate one percent are people who got vaccinated but were immunocompromised.

In two separate articles, I've read the exact same anecdote. Two nurses related that they had patients come in struggling to breathe, forced to be connected to ventilators in the hope that they would get enough oxygen to survive the disease. These were patients who read online that the vaccine would harm them or alter their DNA, but when suddenly faced with the real possibility of death by COVID, they begged for the vaccine. The nurses had to explain to them that the ship had sailed; vaccines prevent you from getting an illness, but they do nothing once you've already got it.

We didn't have to beg half the country to get vaccinated against polio or smallpox. Back then, there weren't concerted efforts to skew the truth, or echo chambers where doubters could create feedback loops of misinformation.

No, we largely have the internet to thank for our present situation.

Back in 1998, it seemed like the internet was going to improve our lives. In 2021, it's become clear that it's going to end millions of them.

Charade

Morgan Griffith
9th District U.S. Rep.

I've been reminded recently of my trip to China back in the late 90s with the American Council of Young Political Leaders to study the Chinese government. While there, I learned more about the logistics of how their ruling party operates. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) secures its rule by controlling all aspects of the government.

The ruling party elders decide who gets a seat on the most powerful council in their country. And that election is considered a formality. The Chinese Communist Party reserves two-thirds of the seats in China's legislature, the National People's Congress, for the party's members, but allows only one-third for individuals

that are members of any of China's eight rubber-stamp "opposition" parties.

While the minority parties are permitted to be a part of the National People's Congress and the legislative process, they do not serve as real political opposition. The minority parties can make restrained recommendations and proposals, but the ruling party automatically outnumbers them under the rules of the legislature. The mere presence of the smaller parties is conditional on their support for the Chinese Communist Party.

They are only welcome as long they agree to go along with the charade.

The Chinese Communist Party applauds this one-party rule system. This kind of governance is not for the people. It is not democratic, and it is not unifying. But that's how the Chinese Communist Party runs their country.

But America is a democratic republic that strives

to achieve a more perfect union. As Abraham Lincoln said of America, "A government of the people, by the people, for the people..."

In recent weeks, Speaker Nancy Pelosi has started a committee to investigate the events that took place on January 6th and to ensure nothing like this happens again. Historically in the United States Congress, when a Select Committee like this is created, the majority party picks their members, and the minority party or parties picks theirs.

However, when House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy selected the Republican representatives to serve on the Select Committee, Pelosi rejected two of the five Republican members, Representatives Jim Jordan and Jim Banks. Accordingly, Minority Leader McCarthy appropriately withdrew his entire slate.

Subsequently, Pelosi

added a Republican House Member to join another Republican she had previously appointed as one of her picks. These two were the only two Republicans, in my opinion, who she could count on to toe the Pelosi political line on this matter.

While things are not as bad here as they are in the Chinese National People's Congress, denying the minority a true and independent voice in the Select Committee's work looks more like communist China than the United States of America I was raised in.

The House of Representatives is not supposed to be one-party rule. Currently, the Democrats have a slim majority margin with 220 Democrats and 212 Republicans.

Nancy Pelosi's personally selected committee is a charade.

Inflation Charade
It is no coincidence that consumer prices have

been on an upward trend every month since January. In June, consumer prices increased by the largest 1-month price margin in 13 years.

The price of gas has skyrocketed and everyday household goods like milk, fruit, and bacon -- all have gone up as well.

The Biden Administration continually blames the rising prices on the economy resuming after COVID. However, this is not the only factor. Inflation has increased every month since Biden took office.

Don't be fooled — this steep price increase is fueled in large measure by bad policies of the Administration and this Congress, both of which are controlled by Democrats. While additional spending was necessary due to COVID, the Democrat's reckless increase in government spending continues to escalate the cost of living for hard-working

Americans.

In the following years, it's likely America will reap the economic repercussions of the Democrats' massive spending with more inflation and higher taxes. Republicans will continue to fight for lower spending and lower taxes, but it will be difficult to stop the negative impact of these expenses.

While Democrats tout their big-dollar programs, American families will pay the price. As my mother always told me, "Money doesn't grow on trees son."

Saying inflation is not caused by government policy or is only going to be short-lived is just another Democrat charade.

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

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Nursing Op-Ed

Barbara Seymour
Contributing writer

At a time when our nation faces a critical shortage of nurses, our communities are deeply appreciative of the thousands of young nurses answering this call to service. At Sovah Health, we recognize that while born from a call to service it takes a heart filled with compassion to be a nurse. From this compassion nurses sharpen their minds with academic preparation and clinical experience to live our mission.

Personal story
While I have served in many roles throughout my 24 years in healthcare, I know firsthand that nurses are the backbone of the American healthcare system.

Nurses are among the most compassionate, patient, resilient, and caring individuals I have ever had the privilege of working alongside. They are extraordinary people who share their passion of caregiving to the community.

The last 16 months have

tested each and every one of us in a variety of ways, but our nurses were front and center — comforting patients when families and visitors were restricted, protecting each other and their families, risking their own health to fight an unknown and rapidly evolving enemy, and taking on more stress than they ever signed up for.

As we started to overcome the pandemic, it was our nurses again who mobilized to coordinate vaccination clinics, ease vaccine fears, and serve as trusted sources of credible health information in our communities.

Even during the most difficult days, our nurses are always by our side — caring for someone in need, saving a life, inspiring a patient to keep fighting, or helping a family say goodbye to someone they love. It takes a special person to pursue nursing as a career, and to make it their life's work.

Our communities desperately need more nurses, but I believe the next great generation of heroes is wait-



Barbara Seymour, Chief Nursing Officer, Sovah Health — Martinsville

ing in the wings, ready to make their mark in service to others. Our focus at Sovah Health is our community. We are mission driven to support our community by providing safe, quality and compassionate care.

Join us next week at our on-site job fair on

August 11th at Sovah Health — Danville Hoover Auditorium and August 12th at Sovah Health — Martinsville First Floor Classroom. Both events are from 11 a.m. — 2 p.m. floating — come anytime during those hours. For more information visit SovahCareers.com.

Submit your letters to the editor
to newsreporter@theenterprise.net

P&HCC named "School on the Rise"

The National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) has named Patrick & Henry Community College the July 2021 School on the Rise. NC3 recognizes schools across the nation that have led the charge in innovation, growth, and student success.

"Patrick & Henry Community College has been a driving force for NC3 in Advanced Manufacturing," said Lisa Marshall, NC3 Festo Program Manager. "Their commitment to creating a skilled workforce for the Martinsville, VA community and the region has grown to include many institutions in Virginia and has made them a notable resource for

schools across the country."

Through the NC3 network of certification centers, P&HCC offers industry-recognized credentials that have been vetted by business and industry leaders. With an NC3 credential, students can know that their education meets national skills standards and prepares them for current jobs in the industry.

P&HCC has been a member of NC3 since August 2018. Shortly after joining the coalition, NC3 recognized P&HCC's rapid success by naming the college an NC3 Leadership School in October 2018. Since that time, P&HCC's students have earned well

over 1,000 NC3 credentials. These credentials prepared students to launch their careers in Mechatronics, Industry 4.0, and Information Technology —fields that are in increasing demand in the region.

Another NC3 credential offered at P&HCC is a workforce readiness class designed by the Mike RoweWORKS Foundation. This credential —a little different from the rest—uses Mike Rowe's platform from the popular TV show 'Dirty Jobs' to encourage students to have a good work ethic.

"We are thrilled that NC3 selected P&HCC as their July 2021 School on the Rise," said Rhonda

Hodges, P&HCC's Vice President of Workforce Community and Economic Development. "This recognition really

underscores the value that this program has for our students and our community. These credentials truly help our

students find great jobs and, in turn, these students help businesses run at the capacity and with the quality they desire."



Arrests made in connection with sealed indictments



Earl Antonio Akridge



Megan Elizabeth Arrington



Antonio Demarquee Belcher



Amanda Ann Bryan



Derrick Wilson Bryant



Phillip Daniel Casse



Joseph Andrew Eggleston



Shaquile Adresse Finney



Michael Wendell Hairston



Carlo Lemor Holiday



Marcus Markey Kent



Tony Randall Looney



Chavis Devon Martin



Mark Alexander Martin



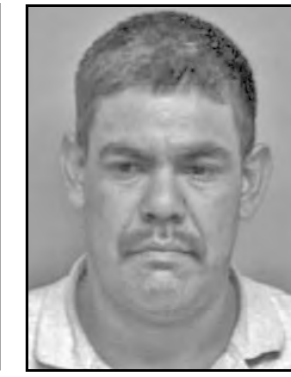
Jerry Wayne Nester Jr.



Crystal Dawn Sink



Cheryl Ann Sowers



Gregorio Corona Valderrama

Grand jurors seated in Martinsville handed down 123 indictments naming 27 people in connection with alleged crimes related to illegal drugs. The indictments handed down on July 26 were sealed by the Martinsville Circuit Court until arrests were made.

Members of the Martinsville Police Department, the Martinsville Sheriff's Office, the Henry County Sheriff's Office, the Virginia State Police, the United States Marshal's Service, and assisted by the Martinsville Henry County 911 Center on Thursday July 29, served 84 indictments on 21 of those named.

An indictment is not an indication of guilt; rather, it is a determination by a grand jury that prosecutors have enough evidence to take the case to trial.

Those arrested include:

*Earl Antonio Akridge, 2nd Street, Martinsville, one count each possess firearm while in possession of a Schedule 2 drug, possess firearm by a convicted felon, possess marijuana with intent to distribute, possess cocaine possess oxycodone and possess alprazolam.

*Megan Elizabeth Arrington, Princeton Street, Martinsville, four counts sale of buprenorphine.

*Antonio Demarquee Belcher, A Street, Martinsville, three counts sale of cocaine.

*Amanda Ann Bryan, Glasgow Drive, Martinsville, two counts each sale of methamphetamine more than 10 grams, one count sale of heroin possess firearm while in possession of Schedule 2 drug.

*Derrick Wilson Bryant, Terry Court, Collinsville, two counts sale of oxycodone, one count each sale of hydrocodone and sale of buprenorphine.

*Phillip Daniel Casse, Auburn Street, Martinsville, three counts sale of fentanyl, 2nd offense and two counts conspiracy to sell fentanyl.

*Joseph Andrew Eggleston, Barrows Mill Road, Martinsville, three counts sale of methamphetamine 3rd or subsequent, one count sale of cocaine, 3rd or subsequent offense.

*Shaquile Adresse Finney, Idlewilde Drive, Fieldale, sale of oxycodone, sale of hydrocodone.

*Michael Wendell Hairston, Greensboro Road, Ridgeway, five counts sale of cocaine 3rd or subsequent offense, one count each conspiracy to sell cocaine, 3rd offense; possess with intent to distribute cocaine, 3rd or subsequent offense; possess with intent to distribute oxycodone, 3rd or subsequent offense and possess with intent to distribute fentanyl, 3rd or subsequent offense.

*Carlo Lemor Holiday, Blankenship Road, Martinsville, one

count each possession with intent to distribute cocaine, possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, possession with intent to distribute fentanyl, possession with intent to distribute marijuana.

*Marcus Markey Kent, Royal Drive, Martinsville, two counts sale of cocaine, 2nd offense.

*Tony Randall Looney, Broad Street, Martinsville, two counts sale of heroin, one count sale of methamphetamine.

*Chavis Devon Martin, Gravelly Street, Martinsville, three counts sale of cocaine, 3rd or subsequent offense.

*Mark Alexander Martin, Belshire Drive, Fieldale, three counts sale of cocaine, 2nd offense.

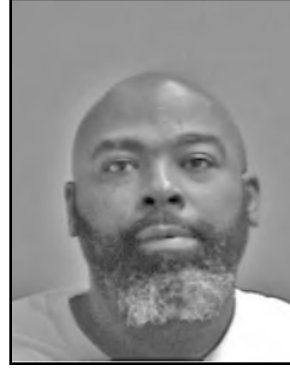
*Jerry Wayne Nester Jr., County Line Road, Patrick Springs, four counts sale of methamphetamine.

*Crystal Dawn Sink, Barrows Mill Road, Martinsville, four counts sale of methamphetamine.

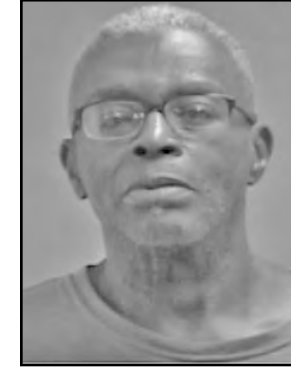
*Cheryl Ann Sowers, Hairston Street, Martinsville, four counts sale of heroin, one count sale of methamphetamine.

*Gregorio Corona Valderrama, two counts sale of methamphetamine more than 10 grams, one count sale of cocaine.

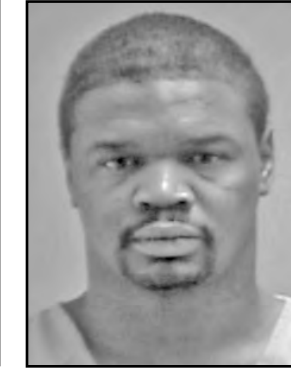
*Demarcus Orlando Walker, Salmon Street, Martinsville, six counts



Demarcus Orlando Walker



Elijah Moore Walker



Akeem Rashawn Watkins

sale of cocaine, 3rd or subsequent offense.

*Elijah Moore Walker, Katheren Street, Martinsville, sale of cocaine, 3rd or subsequent offense, and conspiracy to sell cocaine.

*Akeem Rashawn Watkins, Oak Street,

Martinsville, four counts sale of cocaine.

The indictments on the remaining individuals remained sealed.

The indictments were a result of the police department's continuing effort to fight the distribution of illegal drugs

and their impact on the community, according to Martinsville Police Chief Cassidy. He thanked the community for its support and recognized the work of the Martinsville Commonwealth's Attorney's Office during the process.



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OBITUARIES

Emily Price Dupree

Emily Price Dupree, 84, of Ridgeway, Virginia passed away Wednesday, July 28, 2021, at Blue Ridge Therapy Connection, Stuart, Virginia. She was born January 31, 1937, in Rockingham, North Carolina to the late DeForest and Roseanna Scales Price. She enjoyed gardening, conversing and thrifting at flea markets, flowers, art, fishing, traveling, and bingo. Ms. Dupree also enjoyed singing with a group at assisted living facilities.



tters, Yvonne Joyner, Tammie Carter (Ronnie) and Marsha Celistan; sons, Percy Dupree, Jr. (Christina) and Dallas Dupree; sisters, Carolyn Smith, Peggy Harrison (Aaron); brother, DeForest Price, Jr.; ten grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; and two great-great grandchildren.

The funeral was held July 31, 2021, at Wright Funeral Service Chapel with Pastor Greg Perkins officiating. Burial was in Carver Memorial Gardens.

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

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Percy W. Dupree, Sr., and sisters, Julia Allen and Pearl Ann Harrison. She is survived by her daughter,

Bobby Frank Gregory

Bobby Frank Gregory, 83, of Bassett, VA passed away on Friday, July 30, 2021, at his residence. He was born on August 24, 1937, in Henry County, VA to the late Frank Stone Gregory and Annie Beatrice Eanes Gregory. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his son, William Troy Meadows, and his brother, Robert R. Gregory.



Sharon Jones, Kim Smith, Chris Hall (Tiffany), and Randy Winn (Angela); great-nieces and nephews, Erica Brown, Taylor Gilley (Justin), Colton Hall, and Megan Winn; grandchildren, Kelsey Sierra Chaney, Judson Mahear Holley, Joey Meadows (Melinda), Jake Meadows, Kristin Meadows, Kaitlin Meadows, Jeannette Jones and his great-grandchildren, Rayla Meadows, Gavin Evans, and Waylon Walker.

A graveside service was held on August 4, 2021, at Roselawn Burial Park with Rev. Randy Winn officiating.

Memorials may be made to the Figsboro Ruritan Club, 3125 Figsboro Road, Martinsville, VA 24112.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Gregory family. Online condolences may be made at www.norrisfuneral.com.

Mr. Gregory was of the Baptist faith and worked at the City of Martinsville. He was a founder and member of the Figsboro Saddle Club and member of Figsboro Ruritan Club.

He is survived by his wife, Donna Joyce Gregory of the home; daughter, Donna Renee Chaney (Todd) of Ferrum, VA; son, Edgar Lacy Meadows (Pattie) of Figsboro, VA; sisters, Jean Jones, Ann Gregory, and Lois Hall (David). Also surviving are his nieces and nephews, Little Bobby Gregory,

Plan

from page 1

Buses and the dining area will be cleaned after each use, and classrooms will be sprayed clean at the end of each day.

"Visitors will be screened through the health monitor, and we've limited the amount of visitors to each building," he added.

Talley said school counselors will be available to address the

social and emotional needs of students, and an ongoing evaluation of academic, social, emotional, and mental health occurring throughout the year is planned.

The plan can be viewed on the school website at <https://www.martinsville.k12.va.us/>, and is available in English and Spanish. Other languages are available upon

request.

In other matters, the board:

- *Reappointed Donna Dillard as the chairman.
- *Reappointed Yvonne Givens as the vice-chairman.
- *Reappointed Janie Fulcher as the Clerk of the Board.
- *Set the regular meeting schedule for the 2021-2022 school year

as the second Monday of each month at 6 p.m.

- *Presented a plaque to former board member Dominique Hylton for his service.
- *Heard instruction plans from school principals.
- *Approved the action agenda.
- *Approved the consent agenda.
- *Appointed Yvonne Givens as

the board representative on the Governor's School Board.

- *Appointed Emily Parker as the delegate to the assembly for the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA).
- *Approved the personnel report.
- Anthony Jones attended the meeting via phone call.

River Fest

from page 1

newcomers. The paddling demonstration pool will provide shallow water for guests to gain experience paddling and maneuvering through water on a kayak. Similarly, the 40-foot casting pool will allow guests to test their aiming skills with a fly-fishing rod and bait.

Away from the water will be hammock villages, a mobile bike barn, a bounce house, a petting zoo, a water gun battle

station, a beer garden and music, courtesy of DJ What! and the Glen Shelton Band.

The 2021 Helgramite Hustle Mud Run 5k kicks off at 11 a.m. The course will include a series of mud pits, a slide, and a romp through the creek. Registration is \$35 through Aug. 20, and \$40 on race day.

For more information, visit www.smithriverfest.com.

Ten tips to keep youngsters safe as they head back to the classroom

As students, parents and teachers await the start of a new school year after months of virtual learning, the American Red Cross wants to make sure your student is safe, should they be heading back to the classroom as planned.

"Parents and kids are both eager to return to the classroom as a new school year starts," said Allison Taylor, Regional Executive Greater Carolinas. "Whether returning to virtual, hybrid or in-person learning, safety should be a top priority."

The American Red Cross offered the following tips to help make the trip back to the classroom a safe one.

*If your student rides a bus to school, they should plan to get to their bus stop early and stand away from the curb while waiting for the bus to arrive.

*Students should board the bus only after it has come to a complete stop and the driver or attendant has instructed them to get on. They should only board their bus, never an alternate one.

*All students should stay in clear view of the bus driver and never walk behind the bus.

*Cross the street at the corner, obey traffic signals and stay in the crosswalk.

*Never dart out into the street or cross between parked cars.

*If children go to school in a car, they should always wear a seat belt. Younger children should use car seats or booster seats until the lap-shoulder belt fits properly (typically for children ages 8-12 and over 4'9"), and ride in the back seat until they are at least 13 years old.

*If a teenager is going to drive to school, parents should mandate that they use seat belts. Drivers should not use their cell phone to text or make calls and avoid eating or drinking while driving.

*Some students ride their bike to school. They should always wear a helmet and ride on the right, in the same direction as the traffic is going.

*When children are walking to school, they should only cross the street at an intersection, and use a route along which the school has placed crossing guards.

*Parents should walk young children to school, along with children taking new routes or attending new schools, at least for the first week to ensure they know how to get there safely. Arrange for stu-

dents to walk to school with a friend or classmate.

In addition, parents of younger kids and those headed to school for the first time, should also take a few special steps. Make sure the child knows their phone number, address, how to get in touch with their parents at work, how to get in touch with another trusted adult and how to dial 911. Teach children not to talk to strangers or accept rides from someone they don't know.

Drivers should be aware that children are out walking or biking to school and slow down, especially in residential areas and school zones. Motorists should know what the yellow and red bus signals mean. Yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is getting ready to stop and motorists should slow down and be prepared to stop. Red flashing lights and an extended stop sign indicate the bus is stopped and children are getting on or off.

Motorists must stop when they are behind a bus, meeting the bus or approaching an intersection where a bus is stopped. Motorists following or traveling alongside a school bus must also stop until the red lights have stopped flashing, the stop arm is withdrawn, and all children have reached safety. This includes two and four-lane highways. If physical barriers such as grassy medians, guide rails or concrete median barriers separate oncoming traffic from the bus, motorists in the opposing lanes may proceed without stopping. Do not proceed until all the children have reached a place of safety.

Know what the emergency plan is at your child's school in case a disaster or an unforeseen event occurs. Develop a family emergency plan so everyone will know who to contact and where to go if something happens while children are at school and parents are at work. Details are available at redcross.org/prepare.

The Red Cross First Aid App provides instant access to information on handling the most common first aid emergencies whether it be before, during or after school. Download the app for free by searching for 'American Red Cross' in your app store or at redcross.org/apps. Learn and practice first aid and CPR skills by taking a course (redcross.org/takeaclass) so you can help save a life.

Proposal designed to make college more affordable

Virginia plans to use \$111 million in American Rescue Plan funding to increase access to financial aid for low- and moderate-income undergraduate students, Gov. Ralph Northam said in a recent announcement. The proposal designates \$100 million for public higher education institutions through the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia, and \$11 million for private institutions eligible for the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant program.

"The economic uncertainty of this pandemic has led many to question whether a college degree was still an affordable reality," said Northam. "Our Administration has worked hard to make higher education accessible to every Virginian, and this targeted investment represents a significant stride towards that goal. Increasing access to financial aid will help create more equitable pathways to opportunity and put a world-class

education within reach of even more students."

"In order for Virginia to be the best-educated state in the nation, we must continue to invest in financial aid and improve access to affordable higher education," said Secretary of Education Atif Qarni. "It is critical that we dedicate federal relief funds to build on our past investments in financial assistance and bolster our education and talent pipelines."

This proposed investment supplements more than \$833 million that will be made available to Virginia colleges and universities through the American Rescue Plan Act's Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III. These funds will be received directly by institutions of higher education and must be used for financial assistance for students as well as for qualifying institutional purposes.

The Governor's proposal also commits \$10 million to enhance the Online Virginia Network, which facilitates online coursework and degrees from George Mason University, Old Dominion University, James Madison University, and community colleges.

"Higher education faced numerous challenges over the past 16 months and it was an especially difficult time for our students," said

Timothy Sands, President of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. "For many who were already facing financial strain, the impact of COVID-19 threatened to push their higher education dream out of reach. We are grateful to the Governor and General Assembly for these additional funds to support financial aid at this critical time, and for their continued investment in the future of our students and the Commonwealth."

In May, Northam and General Assembly leaders released a joint statement outlining shared priorities for allocating the \$4.3 billion in federal funds available to the Commonwealth from the American Rescue Plan. Throughout this week and in advance of the August 2nd special session, Governor and legislative leaders are highlighting proposals for allocating these funds and have announced \$250 million for school modernization and air quality improvements in school buildings, \$411.5 million to reduce water pollution and increase access to clean water, \$935.6 million to replenish the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund and accelerate critical upgrades to the Virginia Employment

SUDOKU

			9				2	
3							7	
4		5	6		3			
6		3	8	9	1			
		7		6			3	
		4					8	
				4				
	1	6					7	
7							8	9

Level: Advanced

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

7	4	2	5	1	6	8	9	3
9	1	6	2	3	8	7	5	4
5	3	8	7	4	9	1	6	2
2	9	4	3	5	7	6	8	1
1	8	7	4	6	2	5	3	9
6	5	3	8	9	1	2	4	7
4	7	5	6	2	3	9	1	8
3	2	9	1	8	5	4	7	6
8	6	1	9	7	4	3	2	5

ANSWER:

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

M	E	R	E	S	E	M	F	S	B	I	C
S	L	O	A	N	P	R	A	U	E	L	B
E	D	A	M	S	O	N	A	R	R	A	S
C	A	R	E	T	A	K	E	R	S	A	B
S	O	R	E	S	M	E	G	I	N	A	
M	E	M	G	O	B	N	Y	A	L	A	
E	P	O	S	S	E	L	E	C	T	I	V
T	I	N	E	A	R	A	W	S	O	A	K
C	O	R	D	U	R	O	Y	S	S	H	E
D	E	I	T	Y	O	I	L	I	D	A	
S	C	N	E	E	A	R	R	A	S		
M	A	C	A	U	N	A	K	E	D	N	E
A	M	I	D	A	S	H	E	S	A	L	E
S	E	R	E	S	E	E	R	O	C	E	A
H	O	E	S	L	C	G	S	K	A	L	D

Funding aims to strengthen behavioral health system

Federal and state funding totaling \$485 million will be committed to address pressing challenges in Virginia's behavioral health system. The plan includes targeted investments to alleviate pressure on state mental health hospitals, strengthen community-based services, and increase support for substance abuse treatment and prevention programs, according to a release from Gov. Ralph Northam.

He recently made the announcement at the Arlington County Community Services Board as part of "Investment Week," during which the Governor and legislative leaders are highlighting proposals for allocating the \$4.3 billion in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding available to the Commonwealth in advance of the August 2nd special session.

"Every Virginian should have access to the behavioral health care and treatment they need, either in their home communities or in a state-operated facility," said Northam. "The pandemic has led to increases in depression, anxiety, substance use disorders, and other mental health issues in Virginia and across the country, which has added to the strain on our behavioral health system and the valued people who work within it. This funding package is a down payment that will significantly increase support for our state hospitals, community-based providers, and substance abuse prevention and treatment programs so they can best help those who rely on their services."

The plan solidifies the Commonwealth's ongoing commitment to increasing access to community-based services and ensuring the safety of staff and patients in Virginia's 12 state hospitals and centers. Additional capital investments will support improvements to state facility infrastructure, including water treatment, ventilation, and sewer systems.

"COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on both the mental and physical

health of Virginians," said Secretary of Health and Human Resources Daniel Carey, MD, MHCM. "These investments will mean Virginians will receive the care they need in the communities where they live."

The \$485 million investment includes state funding as well as federal dollars from the ARP and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act and is broadly focused on three areas—state mental hospitals, community-based services, and opioid and substance abuse treatment.

Virginia's mental health hospitals have faced high census levels for a number of years and the pandemic has made the situation more challenging. The funding package has nearly \$200 million for staffing at state behavioral health facilities and intellectual disability training centers. This includes \$45 million to continue staff bonuses and an additional \$154 million in the two-year budget Northam will submit in December for salary adjustments.

The funding proposal also includes \$150 million to increase access to community-based crisis services and child and family support services, and provide dispatcher training for the Marcus Alert program, a new statewide mental health alert system designed to ensure behavioral health experts are involved in responding to individuals in crisis. An additional \$5 million dollars will be dedicated to providing permanent supportive housing in Northern Virginia to assist with bed shortages.

The plan also allocates \$103 million for opioid and substance abuse treatment services. In 2020, Virginia saw nearly 2,300 overdose deaths, a 41 percent increase from the previous year, and the 2021 number is projected to be even higher. This funding will support community-based prevention, peer counseling, and harm reduction services.

Free meals to be offered in city schools

Martinsville City Public Schools announced its policy for providing free meals to all children served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

Each school and/or central school nutrition office has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party.

All schools in the division will be participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) as implemented under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

Enrolled students will be provided a nutritious meal for breakfast and lunch each day at no charge to the household. Households will not be required to submit a meal application form to receive meals at no charge. Each household will receive a letter informing them of the program, including contact information for any questions. Any questions can be directed to Sheilah W. Williams, Director of School Nutrition Services, 800 Ainsley Street, Martinsville, VA, 24112; phone (276) 403-5800 or email swilliams@martinsville.k12.va.us.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race,

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To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

All real estate advertised in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitations or discrimination based on race, color, sex or national origin," or an intention to make any such preferences, limitation or discrimination. Our readers are informed that all dwellings advertised in this paper are available on an equal opportunity basis. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate or employment which is in violation of the law.

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HELP WANTED

FERRUM COLLEGE

Ferrum College has an opening for an Academic Support Counselor. Job duties include working with the College students, faculty, and staff to: provide academic counseling using student success strategies, to students on academic warning, probation, or referred to the Carter Center for Academic Success through an academic alert. In addition, job duties include organizing and supervising the PAL tutoring program.

This is a full time, 40-hour a week position with regular evening hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Background check required.

We offer competitive pay, an excellent benefits pack-

age including medical, dental, life, STD/LTD insurance; paid holidays, personal and sick leave and vacation; tuition waiver and tuition exchange; and a 403(b) plan.

Interested candidates should submit a resume with references to resumes@ferrum.edu or to Human Resources, Ferrum College, P.O. Box 1000, Ferrum, VA 24088.

Ferrum College is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Educator.

We are an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, veteran status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status or disability (in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act) with respect to employment opportunities.

P&HCC

Patrick & Henry Community College in Martinsville, VA has the following job openings: Early Childhood Education Faculty, Nurse Aide/Practical Nursing Faculty, Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance/Head Baseball Coach, Upward Bound Assistant Coordinators, Educational

HELP WANTED

Talent Search Advisor, Science Lab Assistant, Re-Employing Virginians (REV) Coaches, Career Services Specialist, MHC After 3 Program Leader, MHC After 3 After School Instructor, and Adjunct Faculty in English, NCCER Plumbing, and Nursing Adjunct Instructor. For details and application information please visit <http://patrick-henry.edu/>, scroll to the bottom of the page, and click on Employment Opportunities. Patrick & Henry Community College is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, or veteran's status. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

FOR SALE

FOR SALE

Farm Equipment Items- King Kutter 36-inch scoop, Double plow point, 5ft scrap blade, 250 lb. fertilizer spreader, 6 X 8 ft utility trailer, 7 ft. pulverizer large yard tool. If interested, please call (276) 956-4331

New Delta variant, record-breaking gas prices cause some to reroute travel plans

Summer travel has hit a roadblock this year, but not in the amount of people driving. It's in the distance people are willing to go. GasBuddy released the results of its first ever Midsummer Travel Survey, revealing that 10 percent fewer Americans are now planning to take a road trip this summer than were in May. Yet, demand for gasoline last week hit the highest level of 2021, according to Pay with GasBuddy transaction data.

So, what gives?

While the recent spike in demand shows that Americans are still determined to get out this summer, wavering confidence in road trips says people might be worried about budgeting for high gas prices and seeking adventures closer to home.

In early May, 57 percent of Americans were planning to take a road trip, according to GasBuddy's

2021 summer travel survey. Since then, gas prices have risen to a seven-year high, a new variant of Covid-19 has spread throughout the country and a pipeline shutdown brought gasoline shortages to the Southeast. Currently, only 46 percent have or are still planning to hit the road. Gas prices have been steadily climbing since early November to prices we haven't seen since 2014, with a national average of \$3.14 per gallon. Fifty percent of Americans now say high gas prices are deterring them from taking a road trip, up from 46 percent in May.

"With new Covid cases rising and gasoline prices at their highest level since 2014, some motorists appear to be re-thinking their summer travel plans," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "However, while some may be trimming sum-

mer road trips, demand for gasoline remains strong across the country, with GasBuddy data showing that last week's consumption reached a 2021 high, topping the busy July 4 holiday weekend. That will keep prices from falling much even as Covid anxiety rises." The spreading Covid-19 Delta variant may not keep people from driving, but it is affecting Americans' decision to take road trips. The percentage of people who are taking less road trips due to Covid-19 concerns increased from 22 percent to 28 percent from May to July.

The GasBuddy Midsummer Travel Survey was completed by 2,409 GasBuddy members between July 15 - July 19, 2020. Summer travel is defined as the period between May 31 - Sept. 6, 2021 (Memorial Day through Labor Day).

Submit your community news and photos to newsreporter@theenterprise.net

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 **August 25, 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-21-15 Amanullah Sarwary

A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the property to be used for special events, weddings and social events. The property is located at 4447 Preston Rd in the Horsepasture District and is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 39.7/104.

Case S-21-16 Herbert M. Kendall

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 on the south side of the highway, just east of 4061 A.L. Philpott Hwy in the Iriswood District, is zoned Commercial District B-1, as shown on Tax Map 44.9/49A/49X.

Case S-21-17 Henry County Parks and Recreation

A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-902 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the use of the property to conduct the Henry County Fair. The property is located just east of Speedway Rd. in the Ridgeway District, is zoned Commercial District B-1, as shown on Tax Map 52.8/101,103,104.

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



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In addition to Henry County Enterprise, which covers Martinsville and Henry County, our other Virginia publications include: The Enterprise (which covers Patrick County/Stuart - including Meadows of Dan and other communities near the Blue Ridge Parkway); Salem Times Register; Fincastle Herald; New Castle Record; News Messenger; News Journal; Vinton Messenger.

Our publications in West Virginia are: Pocahontas Times; Parsons Advocate; Calhoun Chronicle; Clay County Free Press; Shinnston News; Harrison County Journal, and our flagship paper, Mountain Messenger.

Whether in or out of state, most of our coverage area is within a comfortable driving distance to Martinsville and Henry County.

Visit <https://theenterprise.net/advertise/> to view the available sizes/placement of online ads.

Cruise-in

from page 1

Saturday, October 16.

"At the October event, we will have the old-time race car drivers, the champions of the past. Some of them even have their modified and late models, and different cars that they ran," Stone said.

At the last October event, 20 to 22 old champions including Johnny Bryant and Paul Radford, showed up, he said.

For more information, go to www.bassettcruisein.com or the organization's social media page at <https://www.facebook.com/BasnettCruiseIn/>.

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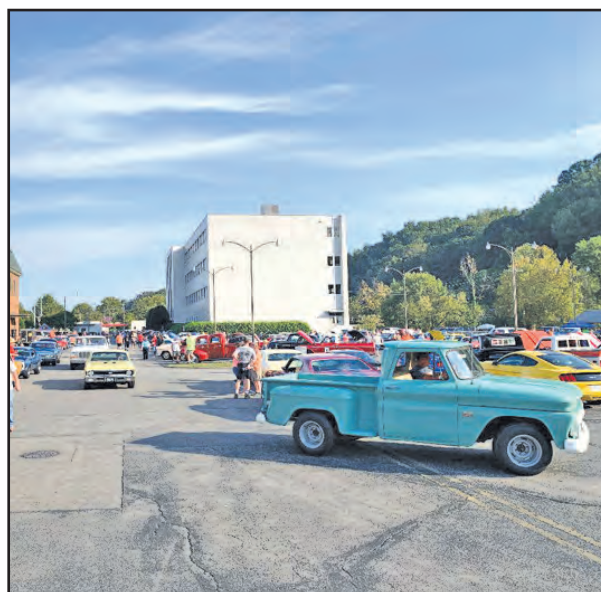
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The Bassett Highway 57 Cruise-in will be held from 3 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 21.

SMITH RIVER FEST

August 21, 2021
10 AM - 4 PM
Martinsville-Henry County, VA!
Southern Virginia's Premier Outdoor Recreation Festival
Races, Vendors, Free Rides, Music & More!
Presented by J Peyton Moore DDS
SMITH RIVER SPORTS COMPLEX

ADMISSION IS FREE! | SmithRiverFest.com | 276-632-8006

SMITH RIVER SPORTS COMPLEX
1000 Irisburg Road, Axton, VA 24054

Schedule

- 9:00 am - 10:45 am: Helgramite Hustle Registration (At Entrance)
- 9:30 am - 12:00 pm: DJ WHAT?!
- 10:00 am - 4:00 pm: Festival & Vendor Booths Open!
- 9:30 am - 11:30am: River Race Registration (At Entrance)
- 10:00 am: Yoga on the River (Free)
- 10:30 am - 3:30 pm: River Tubing (Free)
- 11:00 am: Helgramite Hustle Mud Run
- 11:00 am - 4:00 pm: Beer Garden Open
- 12:00 pm: Kids Mini Mud Run (Free)
- 12:15 pm - 1:00 pm: Joseph Young Magic Stage Show
- 1:00 pm: Last River Race Shuttle Departs
- 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm: Joseph Young Magic on Grounds
- 1:15 pm: Safety Meeting at Starting Line (Mandatory for River Racers)
- 1:30 pm: River Race Begins
- 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm: Live Music - Glen Shelton Band
- 2:00 pm: Trailside Bike Repair Clinic (Free)
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm: River Racers Arrive at Finish Line
- 3:30 pm: Awards Ceremony for Mud Run & River Race/Boys & Girls Club Duck Race
- 4:00 pm: Festival Closes - See You Next Year!

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