

## HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, October 23, 2021

(USPS-6)

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**The Commission on Local Government (CLG) heard two days of testimony from city and county officials and the public on the issue of reversion at New College Institute in September. On October 15, the commission released its report and recommendations on the Voluntary Settlement Agreement. From left: Policy analyst Cody Anderson, CLG staff J. David Comny, Commissioner Dr. Ceasor Johnson, Commission Chairman Dr. Stephanie Dean Davis, Vice Chairman Diane M. Linderman, Commissioner Rosemary Mahan, Policy Analyst W. Legrand Northcutt, and Policy Analyst Grace Wheaton.**

## City schedules public comment hearing on reversion

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

A public hearing on reversion will be held on Tuesday, October 26, beginning at 7 p.m. in the Martinsville City Council chambers.

Both the city and county are required to hold one additional public hearing each to take input on the reversion process before the creation of a three-

judge panel provides final adjudication of the issue.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors has not yet set a date for its hearing, though it will likely be held sometime in November, according to County Administrator Tim Hall.

He said the supervisors will hear from its attorney, Jeremy Carroll of

See **Reversion** page 6

## Experience, economy, and smart spending highlights of Bryant's reelection bid



**Name: Joe Bryant**  
**Age: 65**  
**Occupation: Army Reservist for 20 years, president and owner of Bryant Radio Supply.**  
**Education: graduate of Laurel Park High School.**  
**Family: wife of 42 years, one daughter, one son, and several grandchildren, all of whom live in Henry County.**  
**Hobbies: fishing, sports, golf.**

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Joe Bryant thinks life is good in Henry County and he wants to help keep it that way if he is reelected to the Henry County Board of Supervisors on November 2.

Bryant, an incumbent, is being challenged by Andrew Palmer for the Collinsville District seat, which Bryant has held since 2010.

"If you take a look at the county on the whole, right now it's doing good," Bryant said, noting that the county's unemployment rate is currently at 4.4 percent and its fund balance has increased over the last several years.

"We have been able to

fund every department that has come to us with a request for funding over the last several years that I've been in office. We've been able to fund the sheriff's department, public safety, administration, parks and recreation at 100 percent of what they asked for," Bryant said.

Some departments received more money than they spent, he said of Henry County Public Schools. Those unspent funds were returned to the county and later reallocated to the school system.

The county's financial success has largely been reached without an

See **Bryant**, page 8

## Localities, district on track to double predicted COVID-19 surge, could see nearly 1,500 new cases by the end of October

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Internal data from the West Piedmont Health District indicates the area is on track for 1,500 new COVID-19 cases during the month of October, according to Public Information Officer Nancy Bell.

She said the district is currently averaging about 40 new cases per

day, primarily among unvaccinated individuals.

Two weeks ago, the University of Virginia's (UVA) COVID-19 model projected that the area would see a surge of nearly 600 new cases by October 31.

The actual numbers reported by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) illustrate the stark contrast between predictive models and real recorded data.

"The model may be helpful in some contexts," Bell said, "but VDH doesn't use it."

UVA's model uses vaccination trends and other data, including death rates and hospitalizations, to predict possible caseloads in Virginia.

The VDH website indicates that, in Henry County, 44 per-

See **Surge**, page 4

## County career fair highlights careers in public service in wake of staffing shortages



**Allen Hall, Rob Gillespie, Brian Lawson, and Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry were among agencies seeking employees at Tuesday's Henry County Career Fair.**



**Several emergency vehicles were on display, including Henry County Public Safety's mobile command unit and an armored S.W.A.T. vehicle owned by the Henry County Sheriff's Office.**

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Henry County's Career Fair at Jack Dalton Park on Tuesday showcased careers in public service that are currently available in the county.

Representatives from Henry County Public Schools, Public Safety, and the sheriff's office attended to discuss the benefits of going to work for their respective institutions. The fair was held as the county struggles with the same employment issues currently facing the rest of the nation—though there are jobs open, there aren't enough applicants to fill them.

The general disinterest in finding employment was exemplified by the lack of public interest in the fair itself. Few jobseekers visited during parts of the 4-hour event. Representatives from the school system packed up several hours before the event ended.

At a recent meeting of the Henry County Board of Supervisors, Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry described the double-digit job losses faced by his office and asked for increased starting salaries for law enforcement officers. The board directed county staff and Perry to meet and discuss options.

At the hiring event, Perry said his department had a "positive meeting with the county administration" and that county officials now have several

See **Career Fair**, page 7

## Palmer promises transparency, public involvement in bid for supervisor seat

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Andrew Palmer, a candidate for the Collinsville District seat on the Henry County Board of

Supervisors, believes that relationships will help solve the biggest issue currently facing Henry County—reversion. "We have got to get along better with the members of city council

and see if we can try to get on some common ground," said Palmer, who is running against incumbent supervisor Joe Bryant.

Palmer said he believes if city and county officials started the reversion process on a level playing field, "the process would have been a lot simpler."

He said he has already built good working relationships with some city council members as well as Virginia legislators.

"We need proven leadership that can guide Henry County through the process of reversion to make sure we are getting our fair share, that the city doesn't run all over us," he said, adding that "the way that the legislation is written for a city to revert to a town in the Commonwealth of Virginia is bad legislation. It is not fair."

Though it may be too late for Henry County, "I want to make sure that as a supervisor, I'm staying plugged in with our Virginia legislators that represent us in Richmond" in part to change that legislation to help other localities that might have to confront reversion in the future, he said.

Budgeting and taxes are another huge challenge, Palmer said.

"We need somebody that can look at this budget, cut out wasteful spending, and keep this budget as conser-

vative as we can get it," he said, adding that it seems to him money is currently being spent in certain areas that would be better directed to elsewhere, including making sure Henry County deputies receive fair and competitive pay.

However, Palmer said he wants to make sure he provides for first responders without having to raise taxes for county residents.

One way he sees to tackle the issue is through a program rewarding fiscal conservation, he said. When the Board of Supervisors gives money to institutions like the public school system and sheriff's office, any money that is not spent reverts to the county.

See **Palmer**, page 7



**Name: Andrew Palmer**  
**Age: 30**  
**Occupation: Vice President of Lester Development Corporation.**  
**Education: graduate of Bassett High School, associate degree in Business Administration from Patrick & Henry Community College.**  
**Family: wife and daughter.**  
**Hobbies: Working in real estate—fixing and renting houses, bluegrass music.**

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

(Event information/calendar items must be received by 5 p.m. on the Tuesday before the desired publication date. Email to [news-reporter@theenterprise.net](mailto:news-reporter@theenterprise.net))

## Saturday, Oct. 23

It's time to relax by the river! Join the MWV Foundation at the Smith River Sports Complex festival grounds for the 7th Annual Wine by the River from 2-7 p.m. Come for a good cause, support the community, and enjoy wine, brews, live music, games, artisan vendors, food vendors, and much more! Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$25 at the door. Non-taster tickets are \$10. Advance tickets can be purchased on Eventbrite or via [winebytheriver.com](http://winebytheriver.com).

Join in on the fun of the 24th Annual Great Goblin Gallop presented by Henry County Parks & Recreation. Participants are encouraged to dress up in their favorite costume. Call or stop by the HCPR office to register today! Race starts at 10 a.m. Awards will be held after the race, when food/snacks will also be available. Race location and packet pickup location: 746 Indian Trail Martinsville.

## Tuesday, Oct. 26

Martinsville City Council will hear public comment on reversion beginning at 7 p.m. in council chambers.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will hold its regular meeting at 3 and 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building.

Dan River Year AmeriCorps is holding a tutor recruitment event from 4-8 p.m. at the Blue Ridge Regional Library in Martinsville (310 Church Street.) The group is looking for tutors to help students at Martinsville Middle, Laurel Park Middle, and Fieldale-Collinsville Middle Schools. Benefits include a stipend, travel reimbursement, and professional development trainings. For more information, email [dana.silicki@ialr.org](mailto:dana.silicki@ialr.org).

## Wednesday, Oct. 27

The Martinsville Speedway will host Track Laps for Charity from 7-9 p.m. This event offers fans the opportunity to drive their personal vehicles around Martinsville's historic half-mile during race week of the NASCAR Playoffs for a \$25 donation. All proceeds support the Annual Christmas Toy Drive for the Grace Network of Martinsville-Henry County. For details, rules, and restrictions, visit [www.MartinsvilleSpeedway.com](http://www.MartinsvilleSpeedway.com)

and click on the Events tab.

Longwood University's Small Business Development Center presents a free Zoom class, CO.STARTERS Get Started with Brandon Hennessey, Longwood SBDC Director of Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship. What if you could spend all your time doing what you love? Or finally stop talking about that idea you've had and start moving toward actually doing it? The CO.STARTERS Get Started Workshop is here to help. Whether just getting started, stuck on a particular issue, or in need of a refresher, this workshop will provide the jumpstart needed to get you moving. This interactive workshop will take place from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more information or to register, visit [sbdc-longwood.com](http://sbdc-longwood.com).

The Henry County Board of Zoning Appeals will hold public hearings beginning at 1 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building in Collinsville. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of Special Use Permits for several cases. The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

## Thursday, Oct. 28

Piedmont Arts will host a pumpkin painting class as part of its Wee Create! Programming. Wee Create! Is open to youngsters ages 2-5 with adult supervision. Two sessions of the pumpkin painting class will take place from 10:30-11 a.m. and 3:30-4 p.m. The class is free for members at \$10 for non-members. Advance registration is required. To register, visit [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org) or call (276) 632-3221.

## Saturday, Oct. 30

Henry County Parks & Recreation holds its annual Halloween Hayride at Jack Dalton Park, from 6- 8 p.m. The hayrides around the park will get spookier and spookier as the evening goes on. Trunk-or-Treating will also be offered in the parking lot.

## Wednesday, Nov. 3

NCI LIFE will host a talk from health and fitness coach Janet Steward, "Stress. . . The #1 Cause of Disease." Learn what stress is and how it affects your body. Walk away with valuable tips on how to manage your stress. RSVP by October 27 by calling (276) 403-5605 or email [emcdaniel@newcollegeinstitute.org](mailto:emcdaniel@newcollegeinstitute.org).

## Friday, Nov. 5

C-PEG and Martinsville UpTown are hosting First Fridays November 5, and December 3 from 4-8 p.m. at the Uptown Martinsville Farmer's Market. Join in as many of your favorite Oktoberfest vendors sell products the First Friday of October, November, and December. There will be arts, crafts, food, and more.

## Saturday, Nov. 6

Horsepasture Christian Church is hosting a spaghetti dinner from 4:30 to 7 p.m.

## Thursday, Nov. 11

The 73rd annual Veterans Day Service will be held at 11 a.m. at the HJDB Event Center in Bassett. Awards will be presented for Veteran of the Year and Outstanding Veteran. The event is free and open to the public.

Piedmont Arts will host a one-man play, "Brown v. Board of Education: Over 50 Years Later" on Thursday, November 11. In 1952, the Supreme Court heard a number of school segregation cases, including Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. It ruled unanimously in 1954 that segregation was unconstitutional, overthrowing Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), which set the "separate but equal" precedent. In this one-man play, Mike Wiley recounts the effects of the decision on the families who participated in the original court case, the impact of the ruling on school systems at the time and the challenges still being made today. There will be a reception at 6:30 p.m. and the performance will begin at 7. Tickets are available at [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org).

## Friday, Nov. 12

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive at Hillcrest Baptist Church (18075 AL Philpott Highway) in Ridgeway from 1-6 p.m. To make an appointment to donate, visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

## Saturday, Nov. 13

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive at County Line Christian Church (12711 Chatham Road) in Axton from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. To make an appointment to donate, visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

## Sunday, Nov. 14

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society will celebrate its 25th anniversary with "Silver Anniversary of a Silver Lining" at 3 p.m. at the M-HC Heritage Center and Museum. Phillip Stone will be the speaker and proclamations will be presented by the City of Martinsville and Henry County. The program will include music, cake, and a few surprises.

## Thursday, Nov. 18

Piedmont Arts hosts Painting with Karen Conner from 1-4 p.m. Instructor Karen Conner will lead students in creating a unique painting. The theme for this painting is "snowman." The class is appropriate for ages 12 and up. Cost is

\$30 for members and \$35 for non-members. Advance registration is required. To register, visit [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org) or call (276) 632-3221.

## Saturday, Nov. 20

Piedmont Arts hosts Painting with Karen Conner from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Instructor Karen Conner will lead students in creating a unique painting. The theme for this painting is "cardinal on a lamppost." The class is appropriate for ages 12 and up. Cost is \$30 for members and \$35 for non-members. Advance registration is required. To register, visit [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org) or call (276) 632-3221.

## ONGOING

Horsepasture District Supervisor Debra Parsons Buchanan and the Salvation Army are hosting the 26th annual Coat Drive for Kids. Anyone wishing to donate a new or gently used coat can drop them off at Hollywood Cinema, the Salvation Army, or at One-Hour Martinizing on Rives Road. You can also call Debra at (276) 358-1463. The deadline for donations is November 30.

The Blue Ridge Regional Library offers free one-day passes to the Virginia Museum of Natural History and the Henry County YMCA with your library card. The passes are good for one day and exclude special events. There is a wait period before you can check out the pass again. For more details and exclusions, visit [brrl.lib.va.us](http://brrl.lib.va.us).

The Fontaine Ruritan Club hosts Bingo every Tuesday at its headquarters (1903 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville). Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and games begin at 7. Money from Bingo supports community service awards, scholarships, and other community efforts.

MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness offers no contact Medicaid application assistance for eligible Virginia residents from birth to 64 years of age. No sign-up fees, no premiums, no deductibles. Including Children's Medicaid/FAMIS, Pregnancy Medicaid and Adult Health Care -19 to 64 years old. Questions can be answered, and applications completed by phone. In-person application assistance is available from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursdays at The Community Storehouse.


Call or text Ann Walker (276) 732-0509 to see if you qualify.

The Henry County Adult Learning Center offers free in-house and online classes to help prepare for college, career, or earn your high school equivalency or GED. Classes can help improve your digital literacy, job skills, English language skills, and earning potential. Contact the Center for Community Learning (15 Primary School Road, Collinsville) at (276) 647-9585.

The Martinsville Farmers' Market is open every Saturday from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. through November 20. Shop with SNAP/EBT and receive up to \$20 in free fruits and vegetables each week. To shop market vendors online, visit [martinsvilleuptown.com](http://martinsvilleuptown.com).

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Get your mammo



Your health means everything.


If you're 40 or older, get your annual mammogram. It can help detect cancer early, when treatment can be most effective. Our 3D mammography can improve detection by up to 40%.\* But there's danger in delay. Don't make your health wait. Schedule yours now!

Learn more by watching our mammogram video at

[SovahHealth.com](http://SovahHealth.com)

Schedule your 3D mammogram today!

Call [844.GO.SOVAH](http://844.GO.SOVAH)



\*Source: cancer.org

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Break  
7. Ruled Russia  
13. Having several lobes  
14. Walked around proudly  
16. Atomic #77  
17. Largest living land animals  
19. The Great Lakes State  
20. A type of toast  
22. Partner to feather  
23. Bristlelike  
25. Bowfin  
26. Distributes  
28. Hairlike structure  
29. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)  
30. Where wrestlers work  
31. Blood relation  
33. A great deal  
34. Round Dutch cheese  
36. Move further away from  
38. Type of wrap  
40. Furies  
41. Removes from the record

CLUES DOWN

43. Young salmon  
44. Feline  
45. Skin decor  
47. Disfigure  
48. They \_\_\_  
51. Formal term for "on"  
53. Weight of precious stones  
55. Traveled rapidly  
56. Long-winged aquatic bird  
58. Prickly husk  
59. Expressed pleasure  
60. Exclamation of surprise  
61. Most irritable  
64. Virginia  
65. Optimistic  
67. Humorous works  
69. Arranged systematically  
70. Emerges

CLUES DOWN

1. Wives of a polygamous man

CLUES ACROSS

2. Where hurt ballplayers land  
3. Single-celled animal  
4. Rhythmic pattern  
5. One from Utah  
6. A group of seven  
7. Refrains from inflicting  
8. Light brown  
9. Humanistic discipline  
10. Emits coherent radiation  
11. It says who you are  
12. Roundworm  
13. Group of Native Americans  
15. Makes wider  
18. Headgear  
21. One who sets others free  
24. Form of communication  
26. A Brit's mother  
27. Title of respect  
30. Famed modernist painter  
32. One-time province of British India

CLUES DOWN

35. Prosecutors  
37. Motor vehicle  
38. Non-religious  
39. Native Americans of Colorado and Wyoming  
42. Pouch  
43. Touch gently  
46. Chose  
47. Actress Tomei  
49. Former Broncos coach  
50. Icelandic poems  
52. More decent  
54. Grillmasters use it  
55. Self-immolation by fire rituals  
57. Expression of annoyance  
59. \_\_\_ Spumante (Italian wine)  
62. Consumed  
63. Body part  
66. Thus  
68. Rupee



# Prescription Drug Take Back Day set for Saturday

Residents will have an opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs during the Prescription Drug Take Back event from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 23.

To participate in the event hosted by Drug-Free MHC Coalition, Martinsville Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), bring pills for disposal to the Martinsville Fire Department, at 65 West

Church Street. (The DEA cannot accept liquids or needles or sharps, only pills or patches.)

The service is free and anonymous, with no questions asked.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. has seen an increase in overdose deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 96,779 Americans overdosing during the 12-month period ending March 1, 2021, a 29.6 percent increase.

The National Prescription Drug Take Back Day addresses a crucial public safety and pub-

lic health issue. According to the 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 9.7 million people misused prescription pain relievers, 4.9 million people misused prescription stimulants, and 5.9 million people misused prescription tranquilizers or sedatives in 2019. The study shows that a majority of abused prescription drugs were obtained from family and friends, often from the home medicine cabinet.

In April of 2021, at the 20th National Take Back Event, Americans turned in 839,534

pounds (420 tons) of prescription drugs at 5,060 sites operated by the DEA and 4,425 of its state and local law enforcement partners. Overall, in its 20 Take Back events, the DEA and its partners have taken in more than 14 million pounds—more than 7,200 tons—of pills. The Take Back events provide an opportunity for Americans to prevent drug addiction and overdose deaths.

If you are unable to attend this drive-through event but would like to get rid of unwanted medications, contact Tobie

Panos, the coordinator for Drug Free MHC, at tpanos@piedmontcsb.org about medication disposal kits or visit one of the local permanent drop box locations at the Henry County Jail or Martinsville City Police Department between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Drug Free MHC is a substance abuse prevention coalition through Piedmont Community Services. For additional information about the disposal of prescription drugs or about the Take Back Day event, go to www.DEATakeBack.com

# Trio partner to host food box distribution event on Oct. 27

As the NASCAR Playoffs come to Martinsville Speedway, God's Pit Crew and Mercy Crossing are partnering with the track to distribute food boxes to benefit families in Henry County on Wednesday, Oct. 27 from 2 to 6 p.m.

"We are grateful to once again partner with God's Pit Crew and Mercy Crossing to support families in need in Martinsville and

Henry County," said Martinsville President Clay Campbell. "God's Pit Crew is a Virginia organization that has had a positive impact in the lives of families in need across the nation since 1999. We look forward to working together to give back to our community leading into the holiday season."

There will be 1,000 food boxes distributed to residents of

Martinsville and Henry County. The food boxes will contain 30 pounds of fresh produce, meats and dairy products. Recipients will also receive a case of Gatorade. Henry County residents will enter from 220 Business on Industrial Park Road, turn right on Clover Road and follow signs to the food distribution sites.

"We are thankful to continue to partner with Martinsville Speedway

to help and support our neighbors in Martinsville and Henry County with food boxes," said Randy Johnson, founder and president of God's Pit Crew. "As we enter the holiday season, God's Pit Crew is honored and blessed to be able to help provide families with this food assistance."

God's Pit Crew is a non-profit, faith-based crisis response team whose mission is to bring

hope, healing, and restoration to hurting people in times of crisis. Since 1999, God's Pit Crew has responded to over 140 disasters in 28 states and 13 countries and also distributes millions of food and drink products in their local region through their bi-weekly distribution program. So far in 2021, God's Pit Crew has responded to five disasters, including the winter storms that

impacted Virginia and Texas, severe flooding in Kentucky, and most recently the tornado outbreak that caused damage in Alabama and Georgia.

To learn more about God's Pit Crew and how to get involved in their relief efforts, visit godspitcrew.org.

NASCAR race tickets are available for purchase via phone at 877-RACE-TIX or online at martinsvillespeedway.com.

# COVID-19 testing still critical to managing pandemic

The White House recently announced a new \$1 billion investment to increase the supply of rapid, at-home COVID-19 tests to more than 200 million per month by December. It is a signal from the Biden administration that although U.S. cases continue to decline, aggressive public health initiatives and mitigation measures must still be pursued — including testing.

Health experts advise that testing can provide some valuable peace of mind, especially for people traveling to see family and friends during the upcoming holiday season.

"When you're gathering around the holidays, you have to assess the circumstances. If you have younger kids who are unvaccinated with older

relatives who are vaccinated, but still could be vulnerable from a breakthrough infection, using testing... makes a lot of sense," former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said recently.

But as testing ramps up to better meet continuing demand, Americans will still have to navigate a maze of testing options and protocols. For those wondering what type of test is best for them, experts recommend framing the search for a test around one central question: why do you want to get tested?

Rapid antigen tests, the type promoted by the Biden administration, can be particularly effective at helping someone determine within minutes whether they are putting themselves and others at risk. These affordable tests

"have a very unique ability to detect what matters most for public health, which is to answer the question, 'Am I infectious?'" said Dr. Michael Mina of Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health at a recent UC San Francisco online forum. As UC San Francisco department of medicine chair Robert Wachter told the Wall Street Journal, rapid tests allow you to "hop on the virus early so it doesn't have the chance to replicate and descend into your lungs."

In a recent New York Times essay calling for the United States to prioritize rapid testing, Mina and Dr. Stephen Phillips opined that the "regular use of rapid tests can make schools and workplaces safer," and "make everyday activities — including indoor

ones, such as dinner parties, play dates, weddings and visits with grandparents — less risky."

Rapid antigen tests may sometimes fall short for people traveling internationally. That's because many over-the-counter tests do not deliver the verified test results required by the CDC for border entry. To meet this need for verified test results, new telehealth companies like eMed (www.emed.com) offer at-home rapid testing with the added convenience of a virtual test guide who can provide certified results suitable for passengers re-entering the U.S.

For people who have COVID-19 symptoms, the general consensus is that a PCR test is in order, regardless of vaccination status. PCR tests require that a sample be



analyzed in a laboratory setting to determine if any of the virus's genetic material is present. While PCR test results generally take between a couple of hours and a few days to deliver, they are highly reliable, according to the CDC. For individuals without symptoms, a PCR test still might be

necessary to meet entry requirements for some concerts, sporting events and more.

Even with the Biden administration's efforts to boost test availability, supply chain difficulties or spikes in demand might limit testing options available locally.

- Pinkston News Service

# September revenue increased more than 18 percent

Gov. Ralph Northam announced that September General Fund revenue increased 18.4 percent from the previous year, continuing Virginia's economic momentum.

"Our economy continues to show signs of a strong recovery," Northam said. "Our strategic and proactive decisions are paying off. In this strong economy Virginia will continue making critical investments in our communities, our public

schools, and statewide infrastructure to bolster our growing economy. Our fiscal responsibility is paying off for Virginians."

Collections of payroll withholding taxes grew 9.9 percent in September. Collections in nonwithholding grew 25.2 percent since September of last year. Collections of sales and use taxes, reflecting August sales, grew 20.6 percent in September. Collections of corporate income tax

increased by 41.3 percent in September. Collections of wills, suits, deeds, and contracts—mainly recordation tax collections—were \$60.1 million, compared with \$56.6 million in September of last year. The first estimated payment of nonwithholding and corporate income tax collections for the fiscal year were due in September.

"September completes the first quarter of fiscal year 2022 and is a signifi-

cant month for revenue collections," said Secretary of Finance Joe Flores. "Overall, this quarter's revenue performance was strong. It is important to remember that we are comparing this quarter's performance to the heart of the pandemic closures last year when there was still not even a vaccine on the horizon."

On a year-to-date basis, collections of payroll withholding taxes—62 percent of General Fund

revenues—grew by 9.7 percent, well above the annual estimate of 1.7 percent increase. Sales tax collections—17 percent of General Fund revenues—increased 16.7 percent through September, far outpacing the annual forecast of a 4.2 percent decline. On a fiscal year-to-date basis, total revenue collections rose 10.6 percent, well ahead of the

annual forecast of an 8.0 percent decrease. Through the first quarter of the fiscal year, corporate income tax collections rose 36.5 percent, exceeding expectations of an annual 16.1 percent decrease. The collections of wills, suits, deeds, and contracts were up 9.0 percent in the first quarter, outperforming the forecasted 31.3 percent decline.

# Phifer makes Dean's List at University of Maryland Global Campus

Kiana Phifer, of Martinsville, made the Dean's List for the summer term at University of Maryland Global Campus. To be eligible for the honor, a student must have completed at least six credits during the term, earned a grade point average of at least

3.5 for the term, and maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at UMGC.

Established in 1947, University of Maryland Global Campus is a world leader in innovative educational models, with award-winning online programs in disciplines including bio-

technology, cybersecurity, data analytics, and information technology that are in high demand in today's increasingly technical, global workplace.

With an enrollment of some 90,000 students, UMGC offers open access with a global foot-

print and a specific mission-to meet the learning needs of students whose responsibilities may include jobs, family, and military service. The university offers both undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs, including doctoral programs.

# Congressional staff to hold office hours

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith's staff will be available in Stuart and Martinsville on Oct. 27.

Staff will visit Patrick County

from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Patrick County Administration Building

Conference Room, 106 Rucker Street in Stuart.

Hours in Martinsville are 2 to 3:30 p.m. in City of Martinsville City Hall Council Chambers, Second Floor,

55 W. Church Street.

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# OPINION

# On the myth of poisoned Halloween candy

Halloween, my favorite holiday, is fast approaching! It's that magical time of year when the weather starts to turn chilly, youngsters begin putting together their spooky costumes, and law enforcement agencies across the land issue press releases warning parents to check and make sure their children's Halloween candy isn't poisoned or psychedelic.

You've probably seen a few of those press releases, or at least a few Facebook posts on the topic. Some of the warnings are the same ones I remember from when I was a kid, tales of poisoned candy or caramel apples riddled with razor blades (although I've never gotten a satisfactory explanation for how someone could push a razor blade into an apple deep enough to conceal it without doing themselves grievous harm as well). Other warnings have been modernized, alerting the populace that evildoers

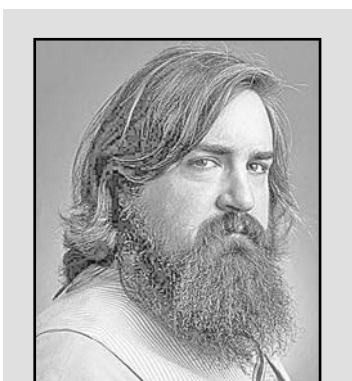
will be handing out marijuana edibles that look just like candy to unsuspecting trick-or-treaters.

If you're deeply concerned that your children will receive tainted candy on Halloween night, I have some excellent news! The odds that your child will receive poison candy from a random madman are equal to the odds that they'll be attacked by a Bigfoot while wandering the suburbs.

That is to say, neither of these things have ever happened.

It may seem unimaginable, but there has never been a single recorded case of a crazy person randomly poisoning children's Halloween candy. Not one! So how did this myth get started?

While the myth existed as far back as the 1960s and possibly earlier, the most famous case of poisoned Halloween candy occurred in 1974, when a young boy died on Halloween night after eat-



By Ben R. Williams

ing cyanide-laced Pixie Stix. Tragically, it quickly became apparent that the treats were poisoned by his own father, who wanted to cash in on his son's life insurance policy and make the death seem like the work of a random evildoer.

Four years earlier in 1970, a five-year-old died of a heroin overdose after eating tainted Halloween candy. Sadly, it turned out that he had accidentally gotten into

his uncle's heroin stash, and when the family realized he'd overdosed, they sprinkled the drug on the child's candy after the fact to protect the uncle.

There have been other unusual cases, like the 1991 death of a 31-year-old Washington D.C. man who died after eating some of his child's Halloween candy. Parents throughout D.C. threw out their children's candy ... and then it was determined that the man's death wasn't candy-induced, but a case of coincidental heart failure.

Perhaps the strangest case occurred in 2000 in a town in California, when parents discovered that their children had received little packets of marijuana made up to resemble Snickers bars. The illicit goods were traced back to a truly baffled homeowner who had no idea what had happened. As it turns out, the homeowner was a postal employee who had snagged

a box of Snickers bars from the dead letter office at work and decided to hand them out to trick-or-treaters, assuming (like anyone would) that they were actually Snickers bars and not bags of pot.

While I suppose there's a first time for everything, there has never been an actual verified case of a lunatic handing out tainted Halloween candy. Additionally, I can not begin to imagine why anyone would buy expensive marijuana edibles and then hand them out to unsuspecting children. There are far cheaper and more logical ways to get arrested.

Having said all this, I still encourage parents to go through their children's Halloween candy at the end of the night. Because it's important to filter out the granola bars, toothbrushes, and boxes of raisins.

The folks who give those out to trick-or-treaters are the REAL monsters.

# Hearing From You

**Morgan Griffith**  
*9th District U.S. Rep.*

Representing approximately 700,000 people in the U.S. House of Representatives can mean I receive a lot of correspondence. Constituents contact me with numerous concerns, whether by phone, email, letter, or social media message.

Your comments and inquiries are an asset as I do my job. While I cannot read or respond to each individually, my team collects them and lets me know what people in Virginia's Ninth Congressional District think about the issues facing our country and our region. When we respond, we strive to do so with as much specificity as possible.

Much of the correspondence my office

receives addresses a general topic or issue, but some encourages me to support a specific bill. In two recent instances of veterans' affairs bills, I added my name as a cosponsor after they were brought to my attention by constituents.

One is H.R. 5073, the Revising and Expediting Actions for the Crisis Hotline (REACH) for Veterans Act. The other is H.R. 4571, the Supporting Expanded Review for Veterans In Combat Environments (SERVICE) Act.

The REACH for Veterans Act seeks to improve the mental health support our country provides active servicemen and -women and veterans. The Veterans Crisis Line offers a free, confidential, around the clock resource for them, and

the REACH for Veterans Act would enhance this service by boosting staff training and promoting quality control.

The SERVICE Act would extend certain health care services to a group of veterans that had previously not been protected. Female veterans who had encountered burn pits and other toxic exposures during their service are more susceptible to cancer, but mammogram screenings are not covered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The SERVICE Act would fix this gap in coverage, making sure these veterans are not deprived of the health care services they need.

These bills are worthwhile efforts to fix problems afflicting men and women who risked their lives to protect us. I

appreciate those constituents, some of whom may have personal experience with the problems they aim to correct, who took the time to contact my office in favor of this legislation.

Other messages urge me to oppose bills that could come up for vote or to speak out against proposals from presidential administrations.

Lately, I have heard overwhelming opposition to a proposal from the Biden Administration that would empower the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to monitor the bank accounts of average Americans with account balances of over \$600, or simply more than \$600 in transactions during a year.

The Administration suggests this would help crack down on tax evasion among high earners, but the preposterously low threshold would ensnare many working people and place a tremendous burden on com-

munity banks and other small lenders. Further, the immense quantities of data that would be collected under this proposal would be at risk of exposure or misuse.

Many constituents have contacted my office to express their concerns about this proposal. I agree that it would be an invasive and unnecessary expansion of power for bureaucrats who have not shown they can be trusted with it.

The proposal has not been finalized and is still under consideration by the Biden Administration and congressional Democrats as they write their multi-trillion-dollar reconciliation bill, but anything they come up with along the lines they have suggested would have my opposition.

Similarly, the Biden Administration's vaccine mandate proposals have met with significant negative constituent feedback. I am vaccinated and

encourage others to do so, but a government mandate is just plain wrong.

Like the IRS bank account monitoring proposal, these mandates infringe on the privacy rights of Americans. It is as if the Biden Administration's personnel read George Orwell's 1984 and came away thinking Big Brother is the hero.

The government is your government. Representation in our republic based on democratic principles depends upon an active and informed citizenry making its views known. I cannot personally respond to each contact my office receives, nor will I agree with every request or concern, but I am listening.

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

## Surge

from page 1

cent of the population (including 51.9 percent of the adult population) is fully vaccinated, while in Martinsville, 51.2 percent have been vaccinated,

including 65.4 percent of adults. Patrick County has a lower vaccine rate, with only 36.8 percent of the population and 43.1 percent of adults having

received a full course of COVID-19 vaccine.

To find a local COVID-19 vaccination site, visit [vaccine.gov](https://vaccine.gov). To learn more about the sta-

tus of COVID-19 in the state and in our communities or to view the latest UVA COVID-19 prediction model, visit [vdh.virginia.gov](https://vdh.virginia.gov).

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# HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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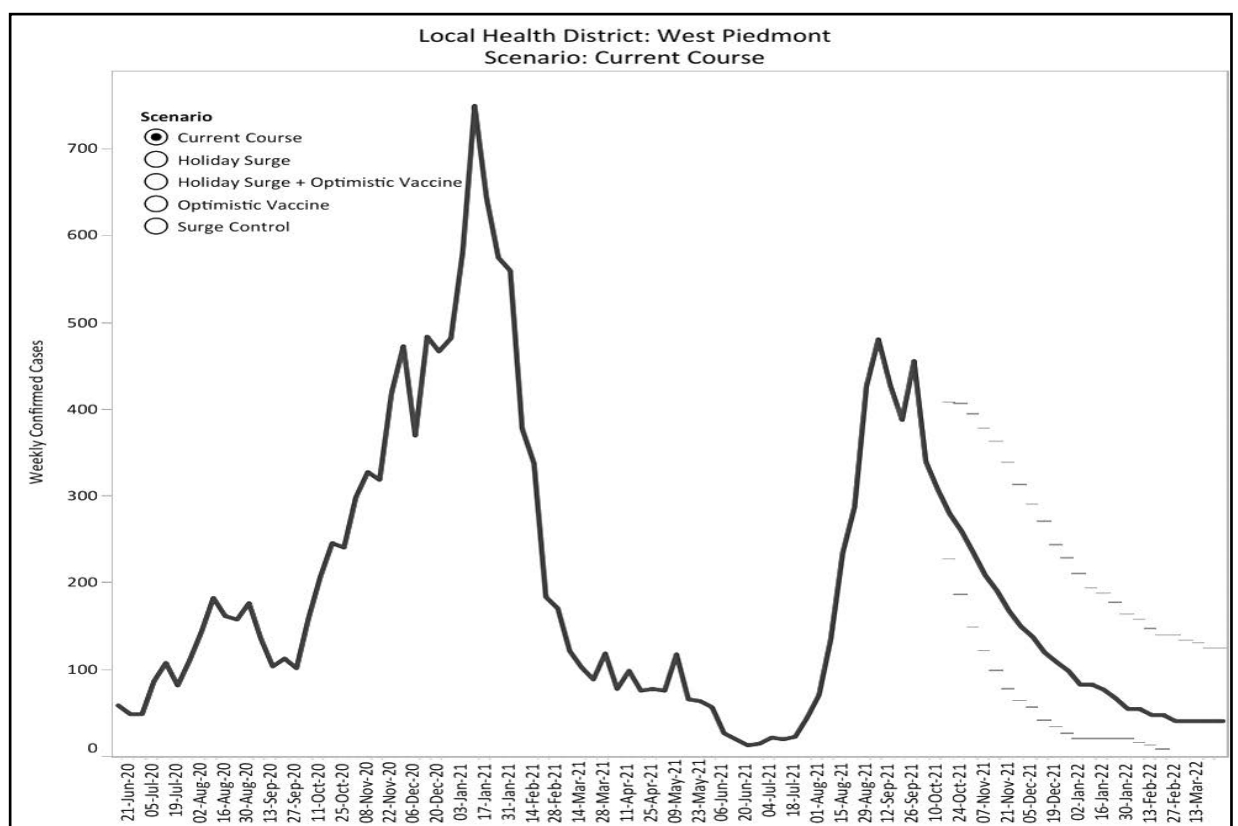
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If you have news about or an upcoming event for your organization, company or church, email [dhall@theenterprise.net](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net) and/or call (276) 694-3101



**The University of Virginia's COVID-19 prediction model suggests that the West Piedmont Health District could miss the surge of nearly 600 cases it predicted just two weeks ago. Actual VDH case counts, however, indicate, that the district will likely more than double that initial projection, reaching nearly 1,500 new cases this month alone.**

Submit your letters

to the editor to

[dhall@theenterprise.net](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net)

# OBITUARIES

## Laura Edwards Ashby

Laura Edwards Ashby, 87, of Penhook, VA passed away on Wednesday, October 13, 2021, at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. She was born on July 30, 1934, in West Virginia to the late George Buford Edwards and Maggie Moore Edwards. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her brothers, G.B. Edwards, Harvey Ray Edwards, Robert Edwards, and Johnny Edwards.

Mrs. Ashby was a member of Traditional Christian Church in Collinsville and retired from Tultex.



She is survived by her husband, Jimmy Lester Ashby of the home; son, Buford Boitnott of Axton, VA; grandchildren, Jimmy Boitnott (Alice), and Krystal Halsey (Chris); and great-grandchildren, Emma and Brooks Halsey.

The funeral was held at Norris Funeral Services on Sunday, October 17, 2021, with Pastor Don Pruett and Dean Ashby officiating. Burial was at Roselawn Burial Park.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Ashby family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Betty Reynolds McDaniel

On October 13, 2021, Betty Reynolds McDaniel, 81, of Martinsville, VA was called home to be with the Lord, where she is safe in his loving arms. Mrs. Betty Reynolds McDaniel was born to Robert Edwin Reynolds and Nannie Richardson Kendrick Reynolds in Pittsylvania County where she resided for almost twenty years before marrying her husband, Eugene Marvin McDaniel, of sixty years. They married on May 20, 1961, and began to start a family.

Mrs. McDaniel is survived by her husband, Eugene Marvin McDaniel as well as her five children, E. Mark McDaniel, John Anthony McDaniel, Melissa Dawn Eanes, Melaina Beth McBride (Robert), and Michele Nan Wright (Chris).

Other surviving family members are her seven grandchildren, Robert Nathaniel McBride, Macy Dawn McBride, Hannah Faith McBride, Daniel Wayne York, Megan Taylor Eanes, Matthew Christopher Wright, and Jacob Aaron Wright.

Betty was a member of County Line



Christian Church for many years alongside her family. She worked at Lee telephone company, which is now Century Link, from 1958-1965, she then worked as a secretary at Chatham Heights Christian Church from 1988-2020. She took joy in spending time with her loved ones and traveling the world. She also took pleasure in reading the Bible. Some of her favorite verses were, Isaiah 41: 10,13, Isaiah 40: 28-31, Proverbs 3: 5,6; Revelations 21: 1-7; and 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18.

The funeral was held on Saturday, October 16, 2021, at County Line Christian Church. Minister Dean Ashby officiated.

If you wish to express your condolences by sending flowers, you may address them to County Line Christian Church 12711 Chatham Rd, Axton, VA 24054.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is respectfully serving the McDaniel family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Jackson Kenneth Reid

Jackson Kenneth Reid, 65, of Ridgeway, VA 24148, passed away on Wednesday, October 13, 2021. He was born on January 22, 1956, in Martinsville, VA to the late Robert Emmitt Reid, Jr. and Katharine H. Fraser Reid.

He is survived by his son, Kevin Reid (Whitney); siblings, Katherine JoAnne Kamminga, Robert William Reid (Jeannie), and Jeanne Reid Baker (Scott); granddaugh-



ter, Adalyn Reid; nephew, David Kamminga; and his nieces, Kathy Kamminga and Stephanie Reid Baker.

A graveside service was held on Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at Roselawn Burial Park, with Minister Lee Ashley officiating.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Reid family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Paul Edward Moore

Paul Edward Moore, 81, of Martinsville, VA passed away on Saturday, October 16, 2021. He was born on July 21, 1940, to the late George W. Moore and Betty C. Moore. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sisters, Louise Adkins, Katie Nichols, and Geraldine Martin; and brothers, Frank Moore and Donnie Moore.

Mr. Moore was retired from Hooker Furniture.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret Hodges Moore of the residence; daughters, Pamela M. Crowder (Frankie) and Kimberly M. Lowery (Tracey); son, David W. Moore (Patsy); grandchildren, Wayne Moore, Melissa Brown, Matthew Moore (Amy), and Peyton Lowery (Sarah); sisters, Juanita Drewery, Virginia Quesinberry, and Mae Moore; and brothers, Rural Moore, Roger Moore, and



Bobby Moore.

A funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. on Friday, October 22, 2021, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel, with Pastor Paul Hooker officiating. Visitation will be held from 12 to 1 p.m. prior to the service. Interment will be at Roselawn Burial Park.

The family would like to give a special thanks to the following: Mountain Valley Hospice, Dr. James Isernia, and Dr. Francis Walsh.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Mountain Valley Hospice, 730 E Church St, St #13, Martinsville, VA 24112 or to Better Life Ministries Church, P.O. Box 772, Fieldale, VA 24089.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Moore family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Robert Leon “Bobby” Harris

Robert Leon “Bobby” Harris, 64, of Axton, VA passed away on Wednesday, September 22, 2021.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at 2 p.m. at Mercy Crossing Church, with Pastor Tim Nuckles officiat-



ing. Visitation will be held from 1 to 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at Mercy Crossing Church and other times at the home.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Harris family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Vanessa Devoine Manns

Vanessa Devoine Manns, 54, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away on October 10, 2021, at her residence. She was born December 11, 1966, in Martinsville to Roy Akers King and the late Margaret Louise Williamson King. She had worked at Radial. She was a member of St. Paul Pentecostal Holiness Church. She loved the Dallas Cowboys, to travel, loved to fish, and loved the beach and dolphins.

In addition to her mother, she was pre-



ceded in death by her husband, Leonard Manns; and a sister, Veronica Stanley.

In addition to her father, she is survived by a sister, Valerie Hill; brothers, Dustin King, Donald King, Leroy King; step-brothers and sister, Marcus Daniel, Micah Daniel and Malinda Daniel-Davison.

All services will be private.

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

## Karen Harris Mays

Karen Harris Mays, 65, of Collinsville, VA passed away on Saturday, October 9, 2021. She was born on August 11, 1956, to the late Robert Lee Harris and Louise Eagle Harris. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her sister, Linda Susan Hubbard and brother, Robert Leon “Bobby” Harris.

Ms. Mays worked at the City of Martinsville for over thirty-five years and attended Mercy Crossing.

She is survived by her daughter, Alicia Mays of Collinsville, VA; sisters, Rhonda Murray of Martinsville, VA, and Janice Harris of Martinsville, VA; and sister-



in-law, Brenda Harris of Axton, VA. She is also survived by her granddaughter, Chelsea Stanley; nephew, Justin Harris (Tara), and great-niece, Lilah Harris.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at 2 p.m. at Mercy Crossing Church, with Pastor Tim Nuckles officiating. Visitation will be held from 1 to 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at Mercy Crossing Church.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Mays family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

Submit your community news and photos to [newsreporter@theenterprise.net](mailto:newsreporter@theenterprise.net)

# Students in Virginia outscore nation on college admissions test

Virginia students outperformed their peers nationwide by significant margins this year on the ACT college-admissions test, but the number of high school seniors who took the ACT in the commonwealth was down by more than half compared with participation among 2020 graduates.

Nine percent of Virginia's 2021 graduates took the ACT, compared to 19% of 2020 graduates. ACT attributed the decline in participation in the state and nation to factors related to the pandemic.

The percentage of Virginia's 2021 graduating seniors who met the ACT's college-readiness benchmark in each content area was 30 or more points higher than the percentages for graduates nationwide, with students performing as follows:

seniors met the benchmark in English, compared with 56 percent nationwide;

75 percent met the benchmark in reading, compared with 44 percent.

68 percent met the benchmark in mathematics, compared with 36 percent.

67 percent met the benchmark in science, compared with 35 percent.

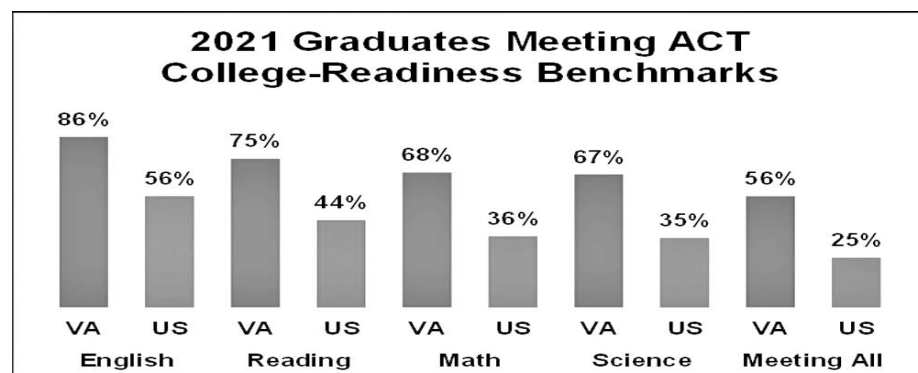
56 percent met the benchmarks in all four subjects, compared with 25 percent.

“Given the impact of the pandemic on participation, the latest ACT results represent a snapshot of achievement during a challenging year,” Superintendent of Public Instruction James Lane said. “But even so, the ACT – like the more widely taken SAT – shows that Virginia students continue to demonstrate a much higher

level of college readiness than their peers nationwide.”

The college-readiness benchmarks identify students whose ACT scores indicate that they are prepared for first-year college English composition, reading, algebra and biology. ACT results are reported on a scale of 1 to 36, with 36 being the highest score. Virginia students achieved an average composite score of 25.5, compared with 20.3 for graduates nationwide.

| CROSSWORD ANSWERS |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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# Federal grant tapped to train workers for defense manufacturing industries

Federal grant tapped to train workers for defense manufacturing industries

Virginia has received a \$5 million Department of Defense (DoD) grant to train workers for Virginia's defense manufacturing industries in Danville and Hampton Roads.

The grant will go to the Virginia Defense Manufacturing Community, which brings together the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Southern Virginia, and Old Dominion University's Maritime Industrial Base Ecosystem, according to a release from Gov. Ralph Northam.

With the \$5 million grant, the Virginia Defense Manufacturing Community will create a K-12 to university training pipeline, helping students in the Danville and Norfolk areas gain the skills needed for defense manufacturing industries. It will ensure Virginia has the advanced workforce these industries require. The training pipeline will increase manufacturing capacity, capability, resiliency, and diversity in the maritime defense industrial base.

"Our maritime defense manufacturing industry is vital to the nation's security and a critical part of our econo-

my," Northam said. "Virginia is a recognized leader in defense manufacturing. This groundbreaking partnership will help diversify and modernize the nation's best maritime workforce to build and sustain the world's best Navy, while providing young people a pathway toward fulfilling jobs in a high-tech, well-paid industry."

"This initiative presents a tremendous opportunity to strengthen our country's defense workforce," said Acting Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs Kathleen Jabs. "The entire grant development process required and fostered collaboration among federal,

state, and local entities as well as private businesses, academia, and regional economic alliances. We're excited about the investment in the future beginning with Virginia's youngest learners."

The project will create a Manufacturing Engineering Technology community college to university pathway that awards credentials to manufacturing engineers.

Students will be introduced to the manufacturing workforce opportunities in elementary school. As they get older, they will have access to curriculums related to their preferred manufacturing discipline, and access

to employment opportunities at the high school, community college, and university levels.

"We are eager to extend our advanced manufacturing training and engineering programs across the Commonwealth in order to advance Virginia's maritime workforce to industry 4.0 standards and beyond," said Institute for Advanced Learning and Research Executive Director Mark Gignac. "We aim to integrate K-12, community college, and university programs with cutting-edge training resources to deliver the strongest, most diverse, and most adaptable manufacturing workforce."

# Public-private broadband investment announced

Virginia has received a record number of local and private sector applications to match state broadband investments, putting the Commonwealth on track to become one of the first states to achieve universal broadband access by 2024, according to Gov. Ralph Northam.

Virginia anticipates more than \$2 billion in total broadband funding, thanks to local and private sector matching funds that go beyond the \$874 million in state appropriations since Northam took office in 2018.

"Broadband is as critical today as electricity was in the last century," said Northam. "Making sure more Virginians can get access to it has been a priority since I took office, and the pandemic pushed us all to move even faster. Virginia is now on track to achieve universal broadband by 2024, which means more connections, more investments, easier online learning, and expanded telehealth options, especially in rural Virginia."

The Virginia Telecommunication Initiative is the Commonwealth's broadband program. It was started in 2017 to fund public-private partnerships to extend broadband service to areas unserved by an internet service provider. When the most recent application round closed last month, the program received 57 applications from 84 localities, requesting \$943 million to connect more than 250,000 Virginia homes and businesses. These applications leverage \$1.15 billion in private and local matching funds. The Department of Housing and Community Development is reviewing applications and expects to award the funds by the end of the year.

Virginia has taken dramatic steps on broadband since Northam took office in 2018, according to a release. He set out a clear goal: achieve universal access to broadband within 10 years. The goal was bold, as Virginia's broadband program was investing just \$4 million a year and 660,000 Virginians did not have access to high-speed internet.

Since then, Northam and the General Assembly have awarded \$124 million in grants to connect more than 140,000 homes, businesses, and community organizations. The Virginia Telecommunication Initiative has awarded 39 projects in 41 different counties, supported by over \$94 million in matching private and local funds. Along with private investment and federal broadband grants, the Commonwealth has reduced the digital divide by 65 percent. Plans accelerated further in August, when Northam and the General Assembly allocated \$700 million in American Rescue Plan funding to broadband, moving the original goal for achieving universal access to 2024.

The overwhelming response to this year's Virginia Telecommunication Initiative grant round demonstrates that Virginia has built an innovative and successful model for bridging the digital divide.

## Reversion from page 1



**A crowd of more than 100 gathered at NCI for the public hearing before the Commission on Local Government. Of the 33 speakers to address the CLG, many indicated that they felt their voice had not been heard or the citizens had been kept in the dark about the reversion process. The CLG's report recommends creating a panel of city and county residents to help provide input as the reversion process moves forward.**

Guynn, Waddell, Carroll & Lockaby, during the 3 p.m. portion of their regular meeting, which will also be held on Oct. 26 in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building.

The Commission on Local Government (CLG) released its review of the Voluntary Settlement Agreement (VSA) and recommendations about reversion on October 15, including a proposed effective date for reversion of July 1, 2023. The city had asked to revert on July 1, 2022, while the county preferred July 1,

2024, or later.

In its report, the CLG found that Martinsville's reversion and the existing VSA are both in the best interests of the city, county, and Virginia. The commission found that reversion would reduce the amount of fiscal stress on the city and provide long-term financial benefits to the county, which will ultimately help to offset any new monetary burdens the county will shoulder.

While the commission noted that reversion could lead to a higher fiscal stress score for the county, "this will likely be minimal, if

realized at all."

The report noted incentives enacted by the General Assembly to "encourage reversion of independent cities and to financially assist the counties affected by such actions," including a Virginia law ensuring that "for a period of 15 years, the county will continue to receive at least as much funding from the Commonwealth as the existing city and the county together would have received."

The commission also noted that the city and county plan to jointly request that a school-

based incentive in which state assistance for a school division is calculated using the lowest composite index score of merging school divisions. That money "would be instrumental in easing the transition to the merged school division."

In previous reversion cases considered by the CLG that included a moratorium on annexation, as the Martinsville-Henry County VSA does, the commission recommended that that moratorium be drastically reduced, if not eliminated.

In the case of Martinsville's reversion, the CLG found that the 10-year moratorium, coupled with the proposed revenue sharing agreements in the VSA, is a "reasonable compromise."

Outside of its findings on the VSA, the CLG also included several recommendations in its report that focused primarily on issues of equity which were "the most consistent topics that the commission heard during the public hearing and overall public comment period."

Martinsville, the report noted, "is one of the most racially diverse areas in the region and hosts a primarily Black or African

American population compared to the county." The report noted comments the commission heard during the public hearing - that reversion would negatively impact Black students, community engagement, and "the impact on the city's voting power" as it relates to representation on the board of supervisors and school board.

The agreement between the two localities provided for the redrawing of election districts to include at least one district drawn entirely within the boundaries of Martinsville, thus ensuring at least one representative from the former city on both the board of supervisors and school board. The CLG encouraged the localities to consider increasing the number of districts drawn within Martinsville to increase the city's representation in local government.

Regarding the lack of public input conveyed to the commission, it recommended that both communities develop a plan to regularly engage the public "so that this process may unfold in the most transparent manner possible." The group suggested the establishment of an appointed body of city and county residents to advise the localities on the reversion process.

The report noted that "the commission does not reach or suggest any conclusions about the legality of any of the terms of the VSA or the process that the two jurisdictions used to come to said agreement. Such findings of law would be beyond the powers of the commission," which is charged with making findings of fact rather than law.

The commissioners also chose to include in its report a paragraph noting the "discord among certain factions of the city and county, including among local and ministerial officials," and encouraged the communities to engage with cultural leaders to cultivate a spirit of unity. The report cautioned that "this hostility" would "spill over into the general sentiment of the

public at large and runs the risk of poisoning the well in a community that, in the commission's view, needs unity in the face of significant headwinds."

"It is understandable that emotions may run high," it continued, "and distrust may ensue through something as significant as reversion . . . but the commission would like to remind all parties of their primary duties to serve and lead the citizens and not their own self-interests."

City officials released a statement following the ruling, which said, in part, that it looks forward "to continuing our dialogue with the county on how best to ensure a smooth transition to town status."

Donna Dillard, chairman of the city's school board, said the board's "focus is always on the best interests of our students. It is also very important that the right process be followed. I am hopeful that this recommendation will give Martinsville City Public Schools a voice in the process and an active role in making educational decisions for the future of our students. We will continue to do everything that we can to ensure the continued success of our students and will remain available to coordinate a path forward with Henry County Public Schools."

Monica Hatchett, director of communications for Henry County Public Schools, said, "we are encouraged that the CLG recognized the importance of deferring reversion until at least 2023 because of the work that will be involved in ensuring a smooth transition. We look forward to receiving more information following the panel's final decision as we continue to support students as they learn and grow in our community."

The county declined to issue a public comment until staff have had time to evaluate the final version of the commission's report.

To read the CLG's full report on the reversion issue, visit [www.dhcd.virginia.gov/reversion-city-town-status](http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/reversion-city-town-status).

|   |                |               |                  |                 |
|---|----------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Pursuant to Section 30-140 of the Code of Virginia as amended, authorities such as the Henry County Public Service Authority are required to present a summary statement of financial position. The following schedule is a summary of the Henry County Public Service Authority's Statement of Net Position for 2021 and 2020:   |                |               |                  |                 |
|   | <b>2021</b>    | <b>2020</b>   | <b>\$ Change</b> | <b>% Change</b> |
| Current Assets  | \$ 22,394,283  | \$ 19,061,568 | \$ 3,332,715     | 17.48%          |
| Net Capital Assets  | 74,478,652     | 75,311,811    | (833,159)        | -1.11%          |
| Other Noncurrent Assets   | 2,304,892      | 2,242,851     | 62,041           | 2.77%           |
| Total Assets  | 99,177,827     | 96,616,230    | 2,561,597        | 2.65%           |
| Deferred Outflows of Resources  | 1,104,080      | 767,985       | 336,095          | 43.76%          |
| Total Assets and Deferred Outflows of Resources   | \$ 100,281,907 | \$ 97,384,215 | \$ 2,897,692     | 2.98%           |
| Total Liabilities   | \$ 27,966,582  | \$ 25,986,674 | \$ 1,979,908     | 7.62%           |
| Deferred Inflows of Resources   | 113,333        | 288,144       | (174,811)        | -60.67%         |
| Net Position  |                |               |                  |                 |
| Net investment in capital assets  | 52,295,937     | 54,730,761    | (2,434,824)      | -4.45%          |
| Restricted for debt   | 2,304,892      | 2,242,851     | 62,041           | 2.77%           |
| Unrestricted  | 17,601,163     | 14,135,785    | 3,465,378        | 24.51%          |
| Total Net Position  | 72,201,992     | 71,109,397    | 1,092,595        | 1.54%           |
| Total Liabilities, Deferred Inflows of Resources, and Net Position  | \$ 100,281,907 | \$ 97,384,215 | \$ 2,897,692     | 2.98%           |
| The purpose of the Authority is to provide water and sewer services to communities in Henry County, Virginia. Total assets consist of cash and capital assets including land, buildings, and work in process utilized to improve water and sewer facilities. The liabilities included accounts payable related to improvements to the Authority's capital assets. A copy of a detailed financial statement may be obtained by contacting Tim Hall, General Manager, Henry County Public Service Authority, P. O. Box 7, Collinsville, Virginia 24078. |                |               |                  |                 |



# Career Fair

from page 1



Visitors to the Henry County's Career Fair had an opportunity to climb inside the S.W.A.T. vehicle and even try out the battering ram.

options to explore.

In the interim, he has asked his staff to be patient as work on the issue continues.

Perry said that while few people attended the job fair, his office has received some applications to help fill vacant positions.

Matt Tatum, director of Henry County Public Safety, said the county's EMS division is facing job loss on a scale similar to that of the sheriff's department, though it does not have as many employees.

Currently, six of 28 full-time positions in public safety are vacant, he said. That represents a little more than a 20 percent reduction in staff with no reduction in the number of calls for service.

Usually, Tatum said, EMS likes to keep four ambulances staffed to share

the incoming call volume over the course of a day. On Tuesday, only two were staffed.

Additionally, Tatum said that he has seen a decrease in the number of volunteers who donate time to EMS. The lack of full-time staff and volunteers has led to an increase in call response time or, in some cases, asking for help from EMS personnel from the city or surrounding counties.

Shortages have also caused staff who are still with the department to become exhausted due to everything from overwork to working for 12- and 14-hours, wearing PPE, without a break to constantly worrying about bringing COVID-19 home to their families, he said.

Although jobs in the private sector may have higher pay rates, Tatum said the benefits, retirement pack-

ages, and job security that come with a job in the county should be enticing to job-hunters considering a career in public service.

"I've always felt that government positions were a calling to serve," he said, adding that the rewards for his chosen career path aren't just financial ones.

"It's really only in the first responder world that you have the opportunity to know you pulled somebody out of a fire or helped someone who was trapped in a car," Tatum said, and added an additional payoff is often reaped months or even years later.

Then, to see that person walking down the street and know that they are there because you saved their life, "It comes in more payments than financial," he said.

# Palmer

from page 1

"It's my understanding that if they don't use all of it, it goes back to Henry County and then they (the county) can do something else with that money," Palmer said, adding that he preferred to create a program through which institutions like those mentioned are rewarded for saving, hopefully moving away from the mentality that every penny given to a department has to be spent in that budget year.

"If they don't spend all of their allocation, let them have it and roll it over to their budget for next year," he said. That way, "if the county gives them the same amount of money as we gave the year before, they've already got a surplus" because of the money saved from the previous year.

During his time knocking on doors and talking to residents during his campaign, Palmer said he discovered many feel they do not have a voice in their local government, and that most decisions made by the county are made without representation from taxpayers.

He wants to see more public involvement in the process. "I want to make sure to be a voice for the residents of Collinsville," he added.

Palmer would like to see supervisor meetings filled up with residents who are engaged and participating. If elected, he plans to host quarterly town hall meetings, centrally located in Collinsville, to let residents know what the county government is doing and to hear what his constituents would like to see get done.

"We have to be 100 percent transparent," Palmer said. "There's too much that goes on in county government without the citizens or taxpayers being informed." He hopes the town hall meetings will help people feel like they are being heard.

To increase transparency and public involvement, Palmer said he would like to explore changing the date and time of the supervisors' meetings, which are currently held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 3 and 6 p.m. with a closed-session meet-

ing in between. Much of the business of the supervisors takes place at the 3 p.m. meeting, which is difficult for many to attend if they work regular hours.

Also, Palmer said, "I think it's poor practice for us to have our meetings the same day (Martinsville City Council) is having theirs."

City council meetings begin at 7 p.m., making it difficult for those who own property or businesses in both city and county to attend both meetings. Palmer proposes holding the monthly meetings on a different day to avoid overlap with the city and moving the time of the meetings to make them more accessible to the public.

While Palmer commends the county on the work it has done constructing and attracting business to Commonwealth Crossing, he feels the county needs "more representation to attract retailers, restaurants, and housing" to the area. "It's great to strike a deal with a manufacturer that will hire 350 people, but we have to have somewhere for (those workers) to live, somewhere for them to eat, and somewhere for them to shop."

He said that, as he sees it, county and economic development officials are not concerned about providing any of those resources when working to attract new businesses, so employees are living and spending their tax dollars in other communities while commuting to Henry County to work.

Palmer said he has experience bringing restaurants and retailers to the area and helping with development from the ground up.

He said what separates him from his competitor is that Palmer will be more aggressive in recruiting these types of businesses to the area and helping them get established. Since he has done this type of work in the private sector, "I see how hard it is for these people to get what they need done through the county government side.

"I see the complications and I want to be a voice for the people so I can spur more development," Palmer said, adding that "a vote for Andrew Palmer is a vote to give you a voice on the Henry County Board of Supervisors."



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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.

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COUNTY OF HENRY  
REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **November 10, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. Following these public hearings, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on each application to the Board of Supervisors.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct public hearings on the following applications on **November 23, 2021 at 6:00 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 input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearings.

**Case R-21-18 Lisa Lancaster**  
The property is located at 246 Meadow Ln in the Collinsville District. The Tax Map number is 29.4(41)/1. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of this property from Suburban Residential District S-R to Office and Professional District B-3. The owner wishes to convert the existing residence into an office/counseling business.

**Case R-21-19 Jason E. and Pamela K. Mabry**  
The property is located at 2541 Bassett Heights Rd., just north of its intersection with Homewood Dr., in the Horsepasture District. The Tax Map number is 15.3(46)/75X. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 2.559-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Mixed Residential District M-R. The applicant wishes to place a double wide manufactured home on the property with a permanent masonry foundation.

**Case R-21-20 Carver Memorial Gardens, Inc.**  
The property is located in the south east corner of the intersection of Carver Rd and Parkway Dr, in the Horsepasture District. The Tax Map number is 40.8(49)/A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 2.85-acres from Commercial District B-1 to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant wishes to expand the adjacent cemetery into this property. Once rezoned, an approved Special Use Permit is also required.

**Case R-21-21 Dana S. Wade**  
The property is located at the former 107 Carson Dr, in the Reed Creek District. The Tax Map number is 15.7(18)/5. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 0.3-acre from Suburban Residential District S-R to Rural Residential District R-R. The applicant wishes to allow for the placement of a single wide manufactured home.

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



# DRBA’s free First Saturday Outing at Great Blue Heron Loop Trail

The Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) will hold its First Saturday Outing on November 6, a guided 3.5-mile hike on the Great Blue Heron Loop Trail at the Iron Ore Access of the Haw River State Park, 6068 North Church Street, Greensboro, N.C. The outing is free and open to the public.

Participants will meet at 9 a.m. at the public parking lot at the end of the North Church Street access road. Coordinator for the outing is Wayne Kirkpatrick, an avid hiker and DRBA board member. The easy to moderate hike passes through a variety of ecosystems. Its southern path includes meadows and upland mature Piedmont forests of pine and hardwoods. The northern portion of the trail drops down and overlooks extensive wetlands that border the Haw River.

Opened in 2016, Iron Ore Belt Access is located near the northern end of the

North Carolina Piedmont’s iron ore deposits. From the 1770s to 1798, ore from the area’s mines was taken to Troublesome Creek Ironworks in Rockingham County for processing. During a second period of activity in the 1870s and 1880s the ore was shipped to a foundry on the western side of Greensboro. Some mining pits have been located on or near the park property, and veins of iron are found along ridge lines, which yield pebble-to boulder-sized rocks with deep red lines running through them.

Participants who attend the outing are asked to bring lunch, water, and hiking poles and wear hiking boots or walking shoes. Dress in layers of synthetic fabric or wool, and be prepared for wind or rain. All participants will be asked to sign a waiver. For safety, and to respect outing participants, DRBA requests everyone wear a mask that covers

the nose and mouth when gathered as a group. Also, since guidelines may vary, visit [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org) by Friday, November 5, to confirm whether the outing will be held.

To reach the park from US 220 (I-73), turn east onto Rt. US 158. Drive 7.9 miles, and turn right onto Church Street Ext. Drive 0.8 miles to the park entrance on the left.

From US 29 south of Reidsville, take Exit 145 onto US 29 Business. Drive 0.5 mile north, and turn onto Flat Rock Road. Drive 4.8 miles, and turn left onto Rt. 158. Drive 3.5 miles, and turn left onto Church Street Ext. Drive 0.8 miles to the park entrance on the left.

From Greensboro, drive north on North Church Street. Cross NC 150, and continue for 1.4 miles. The park entrance is on the right.

For more information, contact Kirkpatrick at (540) 570-3511 or email [wynbtyk@embarqmail.com](mailto:wynbtyk@embarqmail.com).



The Great Blue Heron Trail offers a variety of woods, meadows and a wetlands overlook for hikers.

## Bryant

from page 1

increased cost to its residents, Bryant said.

“I pride myself, and the board of supervisors, that in the last twelve years, we’ve only had an increase one time in our taxes” and are still able to maintain one of the lowest tax rates in the area, Bryant said.

He said he understands the gravity of the recent requests for increased fund-

ing from the sheriff’s office and volunteer fire departments.

“This is a competitive world, and if we’re not offering competitive salaries, then (deputies) may go to different places,” he said, adding that county officials met with representatives from the sheriff’s department last week to come up with a temporary solution

to stop the loss of employees who are leaving for better-paying positions.

This is, he acknowledged, just a band-aid to “slow the bleeding down” until the two departments can come up with a more permanent resolution.

The same applies to the requests from the volunteer fire departments.

“We know that this is a

problem and we’re trying to see how we can address it.” However, he said, it may take time.

“I won’t spend millions of dollars of the taxpayers’ money unless I have a great idea of whose hands it’s going to be placed in,” he said.

Bryant said he is realistic about how raises for the sheriff’s department and the

costs of reversion will affect taxpayers.

“On the long term, funding for the sheriff’s department and others, you’re probably going to see a tax increase because there’s no other way we can do it without a tax increase,” Bryant said.

The unknown effects of reversion, including the county assuming responsibility for services previously provided by the city, as well as the education of Martinsville’s children, also will most likely necessitate an increase in taxes for county residents, Bryant said.

in the last ten years for this county that it’s unreal,” he said, estimating there were “50 or better job announcements” just in the past several years, including Crown Holdings’ \$145 million - which is “the largest investment the county’s ever seen. We managed to do that because we had the foresight to build Commonwealth Crossing,” which also attracted Press Glass with a \$53 million investment.

He also said the board helped plan for the first fair in several years, and currently is working on creating new apartments to expand housing options, and an expansion at the Blue Ridge Airport as a few things he has helped accomplish during his tenure. He said the county is working hard to ensure job security, improve everyday life for its residents and attract new business to the area.

“I hate the phrase ‘tax increase,’ I really do. I hate to even think about putting more taxes on the people of Henry County,” he said, but added that any decisions he makes in terms of increasing taxes will be shouldered by Bryant and his family too.

“I am a citizen of Henry County, I own a business in Henry County, I own property in Henry County,” he said, adding that he has a son, a daughter, and grandchildren who live in the county, all of whom would feel the effects increased taxes.

Bryant would like to see more public involvement in local governing.

“We have a board meeting every month and the public is invited to every meeting we have, but we have very little participation from the public,” unless there is a specific issue they want to hear about or address, he said.

“If anyone wants to know what goes on in the county, they should come to the board meetings,” to see their elected officials in action and how their tax money is being spent, he said.

He also pointed to low attendance at the town hall meetings he has held periodically throughout his time as supervisor.

“Typically, only 10 to 15 people show up at any of those meetings, when it should be a packed house,” he said. “People are content with what they’ve got until there’s a problem.”

Despite lack of resident participation in meetings, Bryant said he makes himself as available as possible in the interest of transparency.


“I own a business here in Collinsville, I’m here six days a week,” he said, adding that his home number, cell number, and both store numbers are all publically listed should anyone want to reach out to him with questions or concerns.

Noting recent economic development announcements as highlights of his political success, Bryant also is careful to point out that everything was accomplished by the supervisors and county officials working together as a team.

“We have done so much

“There’s not a supervisor on the board that does not have the best interests for Henry County, and we are trying to be good stewards of the money that Henry County entrusts to us for us to spend for them,” Bryant said. “I would ask the people of Henry County, ‘are you ready for the changes that (new supervisors) might bring forward? Are you happy with the way things are running in the county, are you happy with the way we’re looking after your money?’”

As voters head to the polls to select their next supervisor, Bryant wants them to remember this: “I am trustworthy and honest.”




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