

## HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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## Creation of mental health crisis hotline drives dialing changes

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

A statewide effort to expand mental health services to Virginians is driving changes to the way telephone numbers are dialed.

J.R. Powell, Jr., director of the Martinsville-Henry County 911 Center, recently detailed the changes to members of Martinsville City Council.

In July, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) "adopted 988 across the nation as the 3-digit number for any citizen in the U.S. dealing with a mental health crisis, behavior health crisis" or who may need suicide prevention assistance, Powell said.

A side effect of this effort, Powell said, is that residents must remember to dial the applicable area code (276 locally) when placing a local call.

The need for mental health-specific call centers stems from the recogni-

tion that a different kind of response is sometimes needed for a mental health crisis than is provided by the traditional 911 call center, Powell said.

"Across the nation, we've heard of cases of citizens who are dealing with mental health crises and behavior health crises," Powell said, and added that when 911 is called, "the response in just about every jurisdiction is to send a police officer to find out what's going on."

However, "we've found out that that's not always the best answer," he said, and explained that a law enforcement vehicle, uniform, firearm "can trigger someone who's dealing with a mental health crisis and cause the situation to spiral very quickly."

Powell recounted the story of Marcus-David Peters, a Richmond area teacher, who was experiencing a mental health crisis when killed by authorities.

See **Hotline**, page 2



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATARINA KOSIĆ FICCO

**Dr. Alex Hastings, Fitzpatrick Chair of Paleontology at the Science Museum of Minnesota, gets one of his first looks at the skeleton of an ancient cat, named Petra by the excavation team, which has rested for thousands of years in the depths of Burja Cave in Lee County, VA.**

## Ancient cat skeleton discovered in cave inspires questions, reveals few answers

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

After lying in darkness for thousands of years, the skeleton of a large ancient cat discovered in 2016 has been excavated from Burja Cave near Natural Tunnel State Park in Lee County, VA, and brought

to its new home at the Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH) in Martinsville.

The discovery of the skeleton, named Petra by the crew that brought it out of the cave's depths, has yielded only more mystery and tantalizing questions to the team working on it.

"This was a definite

active predator," said Dr. Alex Hastings, former VMNH Assistant Curator of Paleontology and current Fitzpatrick Chairman of Paleontology at the Science Museum of Minnesota.

Hastings made the com-

See **Discovery**, page 3

## Christmas parade brings snow, smiles to Uptown

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Though no snow was in the forecast, it fell in abundance on about

12-feet of Martinsville when the 2021 AmeriStaff MHC Christmas Parade kicked off celebrations of the holiday season.

In keeping with this

year's "Let it Snow" theme, snow machines were used to add to the wintry atmosphere of the night. Hundreds lined the sidewalks in Uptown

Martinsville to watch as floats, trucks, cars, and even horses paraded through the streets, eliciting smiles of delight from those gathered to take

part in the festivities.

The winners of this year's parade were:

Best in Show - Teresa's School of Baton and Dance;

First place, Commercial - Lawless Welding;

First place, Religious - Chatham Heights Baptist Church.



The Martinsville High School band marched and performed in the 2021 AmeriStaff MHC Christmas Parade.



Martinsville Fire Chief Ted Anderson flashed a 'thumbs up' from an antique 1934 fire engine during the annual Christmas Parade.

## Baliles, Reynolds to be honored at dedication event

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) will hold a dedication event on Tuesday, December 7, at its training facility in Stuart, unveiling the new name which will honor two major donors.

The facility, located at 221 Wood Brothers Drive (the former Food Lion building), will officially be named The Gerald L. Baliles and Richard S. Reynolds, Sr. Learning Center during the event that begins at 2 p.m.

A brief reception and a tour of the facility follow.

The college officially began using the space in 2019 to expand its offerings in Patrick County. However, the facility has gone unnamed.

After the ceremony, the college anticipates the facility will be unofficially referred to as the Baliles & Reynolds Learning Center.

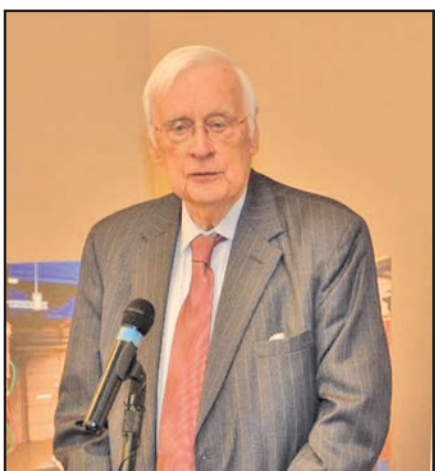
P&HCC is dedicating the space to commemorate the donors who have not only made the expansion possible but have also been avid supporters of the college's efforts to create accessible education in Patrick County.

"It is a banner day for Patrick County," Ron Haley, chairman of the

PHCC Foundation Board, said. "As the chairman of the PHCC Foundation and a Patrick County resident, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the impact that these two men have had in my hometown. Education is the bedrock of personal and community growth, and these men have championed education in this county."

"Former Governor Baliles and Major

See **Honored**, page 4



**Former Governor Gerald Baliles (pictured), and Major Richard S. Reynolds, Sr. will be honored at a Dec. 7 dedication ceremony in Stuart.**

## Bassett prepares for annual Christmas Parade

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Plans for the annual Christmas Parade in Bassett are underway, with Paul Kennedy Jr. and Shirley Amos at the helm.

Entries are still being accepted, Amos said, and added there is no entry fee.

The festivities begin at 2 p.m. on December 4, Amos said, and added this year's grand marshal is Barry Nelson of the Nelson Auto Group.

"He's so well-known in the community," she said.

Though the COVID-19 pandemic "pulled us back," Amos said organizers wanted to host the parade to help lift spirits after a difficult year.

"It may not be as big as normal," she said, "but it'll be something to help pick people up a little."

Current parade participants include the Bassett High School Marching Band and JROTC students, Bassett Fire Department, Bassett Rescue Squad and fire departments/rescue squads from neighboring communities, the Patrick Henry Saddle Club, several antique cars, the Shriner's Club, Teresa's School of Baton and Dance, and Daniel's Auto Glass Service.

Amos said that Santa and Mrs. Claus will make an appearance in an antique yellow Volkswagen with black fenders, a car owned by Odell Luther.

Luther "takes pride in his cars," she said.

Amos reminded parents to keep close watch on youngsters as vehicles move along the parade route.

"We let our entrants throw candy," she said,

and while organizers ask for goodies to be thrown to the sidewalk, Amos said children sometimes run into the road near moving parade vehicles to gather the treats.

Anyone wishing to participate may call Amos at (276) 629-1888 or Kennedy at (276) 252-1864.

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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 newsreporter@theenterprise.net)

## Saturday, Nov. 27

The Chamber of Commerce reminds you to support your local small businesses on Small Business Saturday (and every other Saturday!) Make sure to use your free \$10 voucher (available at the MHC Visitor Center) at participating local restaurants! Get out and shop your favorite, locally-owned businesses to help support our homegrown business community.

## Friday, Dec. 3

C-PEG and Martinsville UpTown are hosting First Fridays, from 4-8 p.m. at the Uptown Martinsville Farmer's Market. Many favorite Oktoberfest and Farmers' Market vendors sell their products, with arts, crafts, food, and more!

Uptown Martinsville Tree Lighting, 5:30 p.m. on the city's municipal building lawn. Bring your friends and family to celebrate the season on this festive occasion!

## Thursday, Dec. 2

Piedmont Arts' annual lighting of the Art Garden Christmas Tree. Enjoy holiday music by the First Baptist Church and Chatham Heights Baptist Church choirs, cookies and hot cocoa, and a visit from Santa. Visits with Santa (and the chance to take your own pictures!) will be 4-6 p.m., a Christmas wreath ornament craft session will begin at 4 p.m., story time with "Elsa" at 5 p.m., and the tree will be lit at sunset.

## Saturday, Dec. 4

Bassett will ring in the holidays with its annual Christmas parade beginning at 2 p.m.

The Martinsville-Henry County SPCA hosts its annual Pictures with Santa, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. No appointment is necessary. Photographs will be taken by Dawson Photography for \$10 per pose. Families, children, and pets are all welcome.

The Fab Lab at P&HCC's Dalton IDEA Center in Martinsville is hosting DIY Ornaments at Fab Lab Family Day, from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. Participants will use the Fab Lab's laser cutter to create unique, custom-designed Christmas ornaments. Tuition is \$15. Registration ends Friday, Dec. 3 at 11:59 p.m.

The Martinsville Speedway will host the 17th annual Christmas Toy Drive from 6-9 p.m. Donate unwrapped toys or \$25 and drive laps around the iconic track in your personal vehicle. The Toy Drive benefits the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County.

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive at Stanleytown Elementary School (74 Edgewood Drive, Stanleytown) from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. To make an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

## Sunday, Dec. 5

The Roanoke Symphony's Holiday Pops by the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. David Stewart Wiley conducts. Tickets available at Piedmont Arts and piedmontarts.org. \$15 general admission, \$25 reserved, \$5 K-12 students.

## Tuesday, Dec. 7

Martinsville City Council will

hold a community conversation about reversion. The topic of this week's meeting is schools. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in city council chambers. Each meeting is limited to twelve participants per session. Anyone who wishes to participate must pre-register by emailing name and address to town@ci.martinsville.va.us, calling (276) 403-5182, faxing (276) 403-5280, or mailing the City of Martinsville, attn: Karen Roberts, P.O. Drawer 1112, Martinsville, VA, 24114. Registration is required by noon the day before each session. Spots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to city residents. The meetings will also be televised on MGTV-21 and linked on the city's website and social media.

The Martinsville Wrestling Academy is hosting boys and girls wrestling for all sizes in Philpott Hall on the campus of Patrick & Henry Community College in Martinsville. Classes begin Dec. 7 and will be held Tuesdays and Thursdays. Grades 2-6 will meet from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and grades 7-12 will meet from 7-8:30 p.m. The cost is \$30 per month. Temperatures will be taken before all practices. Bring wrestling shoes. No street shoes on the mat. Parents may stay for their child's first practice, but must be masked. Club fees are due the first Thursday of the month. USA Wrestling card required. To obtain card visit www.usawmembership.com. Join the only wrestling club in Martinsville, Henry, Floyd, Patrick & Pittsylvania counties.

## Thursday, Dec. 9

The Henry County School Board will hold its regular meeting at 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building. Closed session follows. Patrick & Henry Community

College will present a Lunch & Learn via Zoom entitled "Setting Achievable Goals." Pre-registration is required. To learn more or to register, visit ph.augusoft.net or call (276) 656-0260.

Piedmont Arts hosts Wee Create! This class is for tots ages 2-5 and their trusted adult(s). Spend time making simple crafts with seasonal and exhibit themes. For December, young artists will use printmaking to create holiday cards. Sessions are from 10:30-11 a.m. and 3:30-4 p.m. Advance registration is required. Call (276) 632-3221 or email bjohnson@piedmontarts.org to reserve a spot.

## Saturday, Dec. 11

Piedmont Arts hosts Winter Barn Quilt Painting from 10:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. for artists and aspiring artists ages 12 and up. Participants will paint a 12x12 inch barn quilt with instructor Lisa Martin. Choose from 8 design options! All supplies will be provided. The cost is \$30 for members and \$35 for non-members. Advance registration is required by visiting PiedmontArts.org.

## ONGOING

Horsepasture District Supervisor Debra Parsons Buchanan and the Salvation Army are hosting the 26th annual Coat Drive for Kids. New or gently used coats may be dropped off at Hollywood Cinema, the Salvation Army, or at One-Hour Martinizing on Rives Road. Call (276) 358-1463 for more information. The deadline for donations is November 30.

Piedmont arts is hosting two exhibits, "Print/Imprint: Asheville Printmakers" and "Carl Chiarenza," on loan from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Both exhibits are on display

through January 8.

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.

The Fontaine Ruritan Club hosts Bingo every Tuesday at their headquarters (1903 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville.) Doors open at 5:30 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.

# Letters from Santa

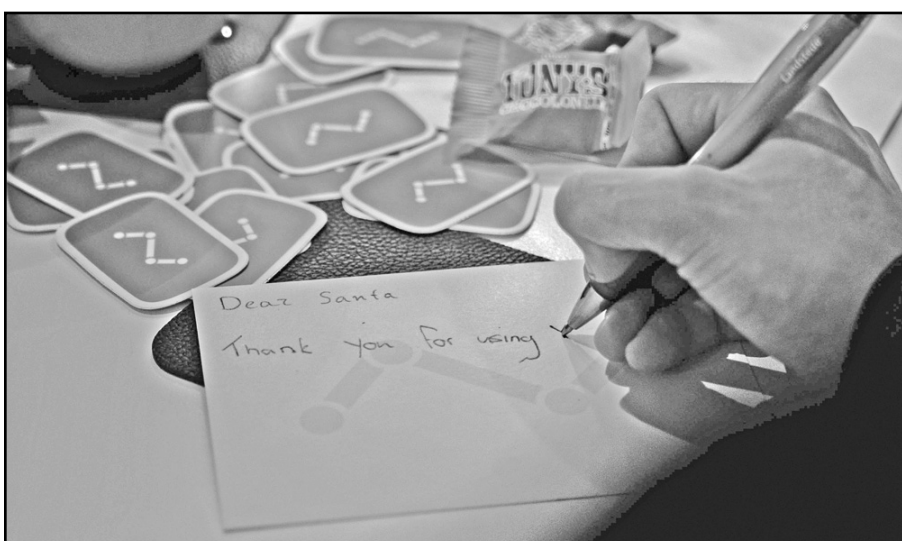


PHOTO BY CARDMAPR

Henry County Parks and Recreation has made special arrangements with Santa Claus and his elves for area children to receive a personalized letter from Santa's Workshop. Anyone wishing for their child,

relative or friend to receive one a personalized letter may contact the Henry County Parks and Recreation Office at (276) 634-4640 to obtain a form. The registration deadline is December 10th.

# Hotline

from page 1

When the incident occurred, authorities were responding to a 911 call from Peters' coworkers, who were unaware of any mental health issues Peters may have had, Powell said. Initially, non-lethal force was used to subdue Peters, but the situation escalated and resulted in Peters' death.

As the new 988 call centers are being established, Powell said that Gov. Ralph Northam required localities create a way through which 911 centers could be made aware of residents who may have behavioral issues, mental health issues, brain injuries, "or anything that could affect the way they're thinking."

Then, if they or a family member dials 911, or if an officer encounters a person and runs their name through a database, "we are aware that this person has a mental health issue or may be having a crisis," Powell said.

As a result, the local 911 center has created a voluntary, completely confidential database, called the Marcus Alert, where residents can provide information about themselves or someone in their care, including the name, associated phone numbers and address. The database is accessible to residents through both Martinsville and Henry County's official websites, Powell said.

The database will note those details if 911 is called "so we can provide that information to responders—police, fire, or rescue" to let them know they may be encountering someone with "a mental health issue, behavior health issue, developmental or intellectual disability, or brain injury," Powell said. "It's completely confidential," Powell said, adding that the database was created by in-house IT staff. An outside company is not used to store the data. Only Powell and the center's deputy director can access the information.

"It's very helpful for a police officer to know ahead of time if a citizen has a mental health issue or disability," Powell said, and added that some residents are already providing information.

The legislation includes a requirement that a child's birthdate must be included when a parent fills out an entry for their child, Powell said. When the child turns 18, the information will be removed from the voluntary database unless the person decides to remain, or if their legal guardian has documentation requiring that they remain in the program.

Much work remains to get the 988 call centers established within a short timeframe, Powell said, and added centers must be established across all five regions of the Department of Behavior, Health, and Development Services (DBHDS), which is working with the Department of Criminal

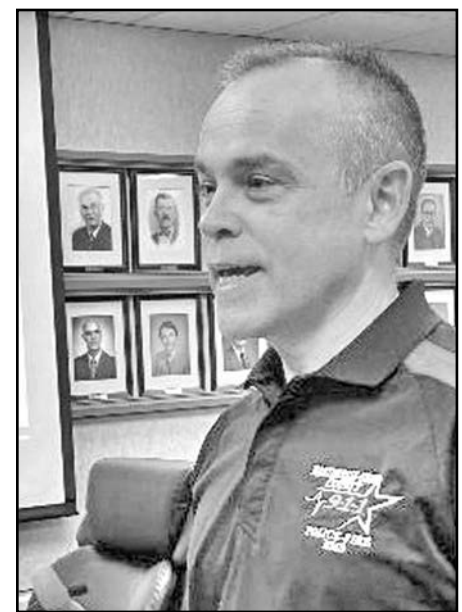
Justice Services to lay the foundation of what is expected with the creation of these centers.

Part of the effort includes working with local law enforcement and 911 centers in each locality to explain and help establish community care teams, which will be charged with responding to mental health crises, he said.

Teams are defined as "mental health service providers that may include registered peer recovery specialists and law enforcement officers as a team with a mental health service provider leading the team to help stabilize a citizen involved in a mental health crisis," Powell said.

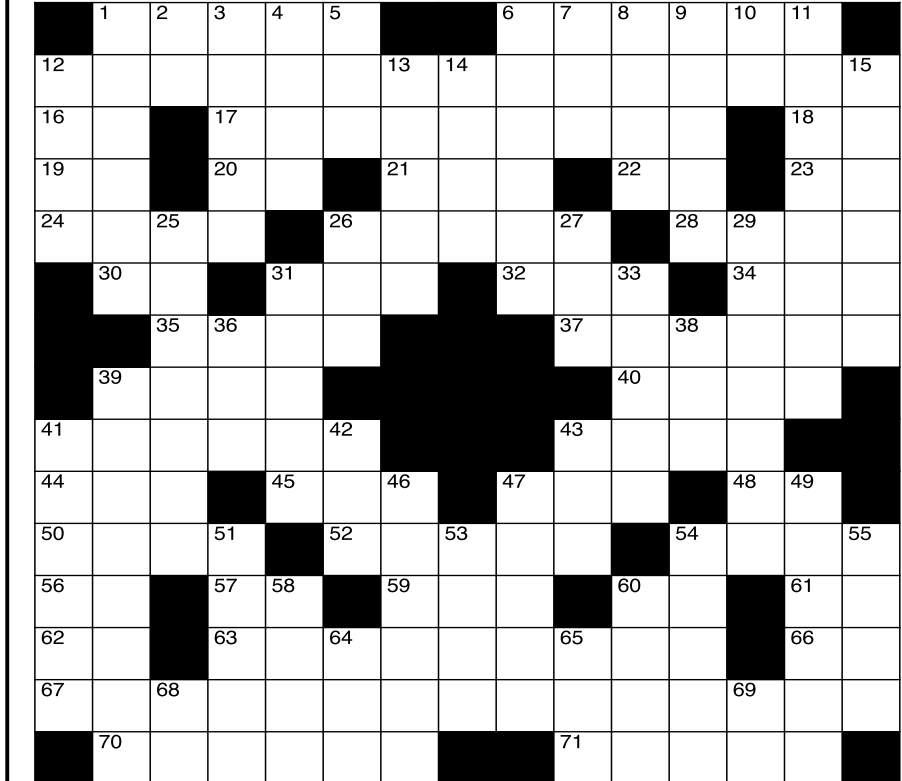
For the 988 number to work nationwide, companies that provide phone service to transfer any 988 calls to either the national 988 hotline or the state's 988 line, once established. In Virginia, he said, there are 2 area codes—276 and 804—that, in some locations, use 988 as a prefix. To prevent local calls from being transferred to the crisis hotline, residents will now have to dial the correct area code when placing calls.

Powell said the new call centers must be established in Virginia by July 1, 2023. Discussions are ongoing about where the nearest will be, but the Salem/Roanoke area is a possibility. Regardless of location, "it's definitely going to help our law enforcement officers once it's in place."



Martinsville-Henry County 911 Center Director J.R. Powell spoke with city council during their Nov. 9 meeting about the creation of new 988 call centers to help people experiencing mental health crises. Powell said the newly created voluntary Marcus Alert database, which can be accessed through both Martinsville and Henry County's official websites, allows people to input their information confidentially so that, when an officer is responding to a call, they can know if they may be encountering an individual with mental health issues.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- CLUES ACROSS**
- Member of Jamaican religion
  - Explodes
  - "Walter White" produced this
  - Promo
  - In a harmful way
  - Aluminum
  - Cerium
  - Female title
  - Singer DiFranco
  - Beloved alien
  - Free agent
  - Tax
  - Change
  - Heaviness
  - Third note of the solfège
  - Printing speed measurement
  - Pouch
  - Brew
  - Female of a horse
  - Platforms
  - Type of hemline
  - "Traffic" actor Guzman
  - Counts on
  - Inhabitant of Media
  - Pitcher's statistic
  - Beloved dish \_\_\_ and cheese
  - An association of criminals
  - Samarium
  - Describes an action
  - About oviduct
  - Holy fire
  - Audio frequency
  - Stephen King novel
  - Rocky peak
  - South Dakota
  - Gallium
  - Larry and Curly's buddy
  - One-dimensionality
  - Soldier
  - Act of foretelling future events
  - Envisaged
  - Establish by law
  - CLUES DOWN
  - Regain possession of
  - Indicates position
  - Con games
  - Checks
  - Atomic mass unit
  - Large groups
  - Utah athlete
  - Abnormal sound
  - Scandal vocalist Patty
  - Atlanta rapper
  - Takes without permission
  - Apple computers
  - Hymn
  - Clue
  - Makes happy
  - Close to
  - Mimic
  - Cool!
  - Simplest
  - Preface
  - Represents the Tribe of Judah
  - Boxing great
  - Birth control means
  - English cathedral city
  - Refurbish
  - Test for high schoolers
  - "Boardwalk Empire" actress Gretchen
  - Most adorable
  - Large Pakistani tribe
  - Enemy to grass
  - Along the outer surface of a hull
  - Travels on water
  - Innermost Greek temple sanctuaries
  - Fire and \_\_\_
  - Singer Turner
  - "\_\_\_ the Man" Musial
  - \_\_\_ de plume
  - Frozen water
  - An alternative
  - Intensive care

# Discovery from page 1



**Hastings and VMNH Paleontology Research Technician Lucy Treado unwrap layers of paper towel and toilet paper from Petra's skull in the museum's Elster Foundation Paleontology Preparation Lab.**

ment as he and VMNH Paleontology Research Technician Lucy Treado carefully unwrapped layer after layer of bubble wrap, foam padding, damp toilet paper and paper towels from Petra's skull in the museum's Elster Foundation Paleontology Preparation Lab hours after last month's arrival of the skeleton in Martinsville.

"It is exceptionally rare in Virginia to find these, especially to find whole bodies like this," he said. "We're barely missing anything if anything at all. At bare minimum, this is going to be an amazing record of its species for its time because there just aren't many of these. So, to a certain extent, it doesn't matter how old it is, it's going to be significant. It doesn't matter which species it is, it's going to be one of just a handful for its type."

Petra was discovered in 2016 when Katarina Kosić Ficco, karst protection specialist for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)-Natural Heritage Division, and her husband, Mike Ficco, chairman of the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias, were searching for new caves. They discovered what they

eventually named Burja Cave while hiking along a limestone ridgeline in Lee County. The cave, Kosić Ficco recalled, was a technical one, extremely muddy, and featured several steep drops and narrow passageways.

As Kosić Ficco and her husband returned to the newly discovered site with a group of fellow cavers, she recalled seeing a note left behind by another group of cavers. The note cautioned other cavers to be careful around the bones.

Kosić Ficco was initially confused by the message—she said the bones of bats and other small, cave-dwelling creatures were often found on explorations.

She recalled that upon entering the room that housed Petra's skeleton, the bones were impossible to see because of the mud.

But "once you're at ground level and it's right in front of you, you can see the whole structure," she said, adding that she first noticed the skull, "and then you slowly start to look, and you suddenly see the spine, the legs, the tail. This is a natural, fully preserved skeleton. For us, it was mind-blowing."

Though all in her party were highly skilled and experienced cavers, no

one in Burja Cave that day had a paleontology background. However, Kosić Ficco said the group reached a few conclusions.

"Considering that the skeleton was really big, and it was obviously a cat, and we knew that it must be something older because we know that cougars have not been present in Virginia for over 100 years. We knew that it must be something older than recent history," she said.

Kosić Ficco said she realized the team would need to find a paleontologist who had the physical strength and skill to traverse the cave and reach the skeleton. Eventually, she was introduced to Hastings through her supervisor, and he learned about the discovery.

"He got super excited," she recalled, adding the initial excitement grew when he saw images of the skeleton.

Though Hastings had been in caves before, he said "I'd never done ropes work," which was required to descend into the cave where the skeleton rested. Hastings trained for about a year to get familiar with the gear necessary to access the site.

"Your gear gets com-

pletely inundated and impregnated with mud in a way that makes it basically not work," he said, "but your life depends on it. So, you have to be so comfortable with your gear and how it works and what you do when it doesn't work that you can be safe in that situation."

Kosić Ficco and her husband took Hastings to a series of caves to build up his skills.

"We took our time," she said, though added that it was still a relatively fast course.

Hastings also worked to secure funding for the excavation. Initially, he applied for a grant from National Geographic, but was rejected. Eventually, the Cave Conservancy of the Virginias stepped in as one of the project's largest funders. The excavation was also made possible through the support of the U.S. Forest Service, The Science Museum of Minnesota, the VMNH, and DCR- Division of Natural Heritage.

Just as it looked like everything was in place to finally bring Petra into the light, the project suffered several setbacks. Hastings accepted a new position at The Science Museum of Minnesota. Luckily, Kosić Ficco said, his new home was near to Joe Myre, who was already involved in the project and helped continue Hastings' training.

With everyone satisfied with Hastings' readiness and funding in place, plane tickets were purchased, and Petra's extraction was scheduled for April 2020. Then came the COVID-19 pandemic. After several rescheduled dates, a fully-vaccinated field crew of 11 people — Hastings, the Ficcoss, Myre, Tom Malabad, Dave Socky, Lauren Satterfield, Wil and Zenah Orndorff, and Mike and Andrea Futrell — in early October made their way down an incredibly steep mountain slope to the entrance of Burja Cave.

The cave itself had narrow passages full of mud. At least four rope drops were required to reach the bottom. The team worked its way down a passage to find Petra, laying on its side in a layer of calcified mud.

Hastings said the calcification presented an

issue. Essentially, a thin layer of rock had formed underneath the skeleton, sticking everything together and making the already-delicate extraction more difficult. The skeleton's size — about 4-feet in length — meant it would have to be removed from the cave in sections. The crew had to use strategic break points separate sections of the skeleton without causing catastrophic damage during the process.

After two long days of work, eight sections of carefully wrapped cat skeleton were hoisted from the cave's depths, headed to the VMNH.

The discovery was significant, Hastings said.

"As we're trying to understand particularly the progression of carnivores across Appalachia from the Ice Age to present, having more records of that really helps fill in that picture and will help us better understand what a healthy ecosystem in Appalachia would look like and possibly even help us with future conservation efforts," he explained.

Once in the museum's paleontology lab, Treado slowly and painstakingly began preparing the skeleton, removing the calcified layers to expose the bones beneath. Once that work is completed, the team will be able to identify Petra more precisely.

"I would be absolutely astonished if it's less than 10,000 years old," Hastings said, adding that he currently believes the ancient cat is likely an American cheetah.

Nearly two months after Petra's arrival at the museum, progress has been made, but there is still much to be done.

"You'd think that this would be the time that new answers start coming out," said Dr. Adam Pritchard, VMNH Assistant Curator of Paleontology. "But at this point, we're actually developing all kinds of new questions, and that is really the beauty of science, learning what questions there are to ask."

Some of the mysteries the team hopes to answer are the exact age of Petra, "how long her remains stayed locked inside of that cave," which Pritchard said can be addressed through carbon

dating. Museum staff also hope to learn what led to Petra's fate and how she came to be entombed in Burja Cave. Pritchard said the team will study the skeleton to look for markers of disease or injury to learn what may have occurred.

"We also have the question of what kind of world Petra was living in," Pritchard said. "One of the things that has emerged from the initial preparation of this specimen is more animals embedded in the mud surrounding Petra."

He said he and Treado have found tiny leg bones and jaw bones from ancient bats and, just a few days ago, a partial skeleton embedded in the mud on one side of Petra's head.

"There is almost an entire ecosystem embedded inside of that mud," he said.

Kosić Ficco also wonders how the cat reached its final resting place.

The room where Petra's remains were discovered was incredibly difficult to reach, and Kosić Ficco said the cave would not have changed significantly between when Petra walked the earth and her discovery. Additional explorations have revealed no additional entrances to the cave, and the passageways are too narrow for an animal that size to have crawled through.

Kosić Ficco thinks Petra must have entered the cave the same way she and her husband did when they initially made the discovery, but there is a significant drop immediately upon entering the cave's depths.

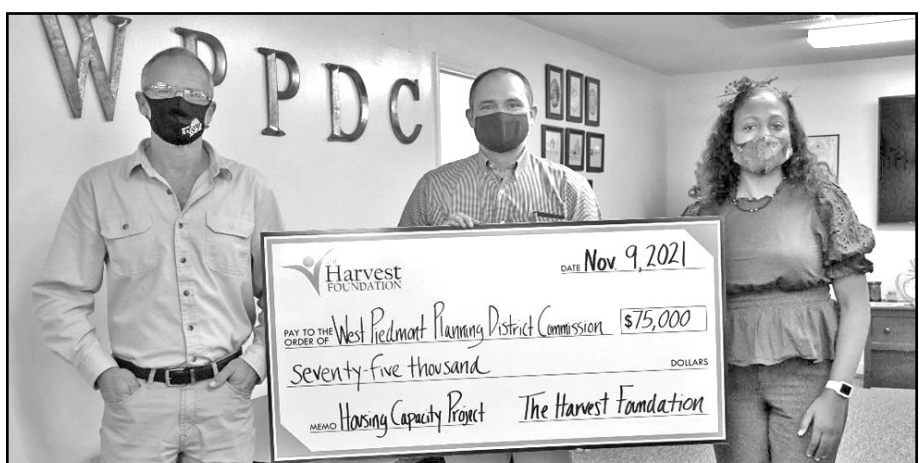
She speculates that a cat, particularly a large cat, could have navigated down due to the slope of the cave walls.

But "the question is how she bypassed the canyons we have to bypass and the shafts. At the moment, we don't have an answer," Kosić Ficco said.

Currently, the only thing that does seem certain is that this incredible discovery, which rested in darkness for so long, still holds so many mysteries.

Visitors to VMNH may be able to glimpse Treado working on Petra's skeleton — windows offer views into the paleontology lab from the museum's Hall of Ancient Life.

## Local commission creates new housing position in partnership with The Harvest Foundation



**The Harvest Foundation will fund a three-year investment of \$75,000 at the West Piedmont Planning District Commission to support the addition of a housing planner at the organization. Pictured from left are WPPDC staff members Sean Campbell, housing programs director, Michael Armbrister, executive director, and Brandy Dudley, regional housing planner.**

The Harvest Foundation is funding a three-year investment of \$75,000 at the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) to support its Regional Housing Initiative by adding a housing planner to the organization.

"This is a unique opportunity for Harvest to invest in a regional position shared among several organizations and service regions," said DeWitt House, senior program officer at The Harvest Foundation. "With multiple funding partners at the table, this position is poised to maximize resources and

leverage more dollars back into our community. We are excited to build capacity at the WPPDC and support housing from a regional perspective."

House also said an added benefit to supporting this initiative is the chance to partner with Danville Regional Foundation, which provided a matching grant to fund the housing planner position.

The WPPDC was created by local governments to find regional solutions to challenges that impact its member jurisdictions, which include Franklin,

Henry, Patrick and Pittsylvania counties, the cities of Martinsville and Danville, in addition to Rocky Mount.

As the need for quality housing grows throughout the region, the WPPDC Housing Initiative will launch with three key programs: a regional housing assessment and plan, a \$2 million Affordable Housing Development Program, and capacity building to ensure that there's someone thinking about regional housing opportunities every day.

Michael Armbrister, WPPDC's executive direc-

tor, said their goal is to develop a housing department that can facilitate the ongoing regional discussion around housing challenges, generate attainable solutions, and implement those solutions by obtaining funding and administering projects.

"Our housing team will bring together a network of partners across the region to serve as experts with common goals and the ability to partner on real solutions for housing," Armbrister said. "The grant from The Harvest Foundation is critical to the success of the WPPDC Housing Initiative, and we value the foundation's support of our communities."

During the first two years of the housing initiative, the housing planner will focus solely on housing projects in Henry and Pittsylvania counties and the cities of Martinsville and Danville. In the third year, the planner will explore housing development opportunities in other WPPDC localities. The commission plans to fully fund the housing planner position in year four and beyond.

In addition to working on housing production/cre-

ation, and creating homeownership opportunities, this position will work with local governments to create a strategic pipeline and source funding for housing projects that will address a broad range of housing

needs in the area.

To find out more about the WPPDC, visit westpiedmontpdc.org. Visit theharvestfoundation.org for additional information on the foundation and its programming.



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# OPINION

## An email from Vampire Hunter HR

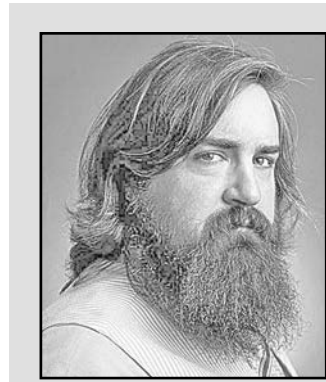
Hello employees! It's your favorite human resources director checking in with some exciting news!

First off, I recognize that it's been a difficult year for us all. Despite our best efforts, the number of vampires has exploded. There are currently more than 700,000 vampires in Romania, with the highest concentration in the Transylvania region, of course. I know we've lost a lot of vampire hunters over the last quarter, some to attrition, some to vampirism. We all knew the risks when we started. And hey, more vampires means more job security, right?

It's nearly become a cliché at this point, but we didn't take on this job to become rich; we became vampire hunters

because we felt it was important work. Children should be able to walk home at night without fear of being snatched up by the living dead. Young maidens should be able to stand in their gardens wearing flowing, gauzy nightgowns without having to worry about being seduced by beast-men. And I think we can all agree that sales of window locks are higher than they should be in a just world.

At the same time, this is a draining career, both mentally and physically. According to the latest survey email I sent out, during the last quarter, 23 of you lost your loved ones to vampirism, and of that number, 17 of you had to drive a stake through their hearts and behead them. That is obvi-



By Ben R. Williams

ously a traumatic experience, and corporate was more than happy to reach out with a little pick-me-up.

However, when you've just had to annihilate a loved one who has become a murderous undead ghoul, a \$25 gift card

to Applebee's just isn't enough to ease the pain. That's why corporate has decided to offer ALL of our employees a free mental health webinar!

Our statistics have shown that during these trying times, many of you have turned to alcohol to cope with your stress. Others have begun using drugs, and still others have begun dabbling in necromancy. We hope that this free webinar will help ease your burdens.

During the free mental health webinar, scheduled for this Thursday at 7 a.m., you'll learn valuable coping skills such as meditation and simple yoga positions that anyone can do, whether safe at home or while traveling the dreaded Borgo Pass. You'll also receive a 15-minute presentation about "mindfulness," which is the state of being conscious. You'll also be able to share

your fears and concerns with a certified mental health professional. Whether you're worried about putting food on the table, or whether you're worried about being held in an antechamber within a rambling castle, slowly drained of blood by a count's inhuman brides until you're reduced to nothing more than an empty shell to serve as his thrall, our psychologist is ready to hear your concerns.

I really hope that all of you take advantage of this wonderful opportunity that corporate has generously offered. I feel certain it will make all of your lives a little easier.

On a side note, I've received a number of questions recently about overtime pay and insurance. Unfortunately, we cannot currently offer either.

Happy hunting!  
HR

## The First Thanksgiving

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

Four hundred years ago, the Pilgrims of Massachusetts held their first Thanksgiving.

Four hundred and two years ago, the first American Thanksgiving was held.

What's the distinction? Read on.

Most Americans recall the story of the Pilgrims who crossed the Atlantic on the Mayflower in 1620 and arrived in what is now Massachusetts – although their original destination was Virginia. After a difficult year establishing Plymouth Colony, they held a Thanksgiving feast with the Native Americans who had been indispensable to the colony's survival.

Without doubt, the Thanksgiving in Plymouth was an impor-

tant event in American history. It simply wasn't the first Thanksgiving.

A year before the Pilgrims departed for North America, a group of 35 settlers and their leader, Captain John Woodlief, set sail from England for the New World aboard a ship named the Margaret. They were bound for land in Virginia along the James River. This settlement would be known as Berkeley Hundred.

The Margaret departed Bristol, England, on September 16, 1619. The 35-foot-long ship took more than two months to cross the Atlantic, but its navigators, unlike the Mayflower's, were accurate and arrived at the desired destination. It finally arrived in Chesapeake Bay on November 28. After lingering in that area for a few days, weathering a

fierce storm, the Margaret arrived at Berkeley Hundred on December 4.

When the settlers disembarked, they knelt and Captain Woodlief prayed, offering words that had actually been provided by the Berkeley Company which funded the settlement: "We ordaine that this day of our ships arrival, at the place assigned for plantacon, in the land of Virginia, shall be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of Thanksgiving to Almighty God."

Unlike the Thanksgiving at Plymouth in 1621, there was no feast that year. Thanksgiving was celebrated the next year with the original and additional settlers. The idea that we should set aside time for an expression of gratitude for our blessings became an American ritual.

The Berkeley settlement only lasted a few years, not surviving a

conflict with local Native Americans, and so its first Thanksgiving disappeared from the history books.

In 1931, William & Mary's former president (and son of John Tyler, the ninth president of the United States under the Constitution) Dr. Lyon Tyler uncovered records of the first Thanksgiving. It entered our historical memory, but still lingers in the shadow of Plymouth. Sometimes people need to be reminded of Berkeley's importance.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy, a native of Massachusetts, began his Thanksgiving proclamation: "Over three centuries ago in Plymouth, on Massachusetts Bay, the Pilgrims established the custom of gathering together each year to express their gratitude to God . . ."

A former Virginia state senator named John J. Wicker Jr. (D-Richmond) contacted the White

House to complain. He received a response from presidential aide Arthur Schlesinger Jr.: "You are quite right. I can only plead unconquerable New England bias on the part of the White House staff."

That bias was checked in the following year's Thanksgiving proclamation, which more accurately began: "Over three centuries ago, our forefathers in Virginia and in Massachusetts, far from home in a lonely wilderness, set aside a time of thanksgiving."

Much has changed since that first gathering at Berkeley Hundred. Those settlers offered thanks for crossing an ocean and arriving in a wilderness far from home. Today, most of us enjoy Thanksgiving surrounded by family in our home or that of a relative. The feast has become a centerpiece when Berkeley Hundred's Thanksgiving was primarily a religious observance.

Nevertheless, in our yearly observance, we are still connected to that first Thanksgiving. Among the things we can be thankful for is the spirit that filled the early settlers in Virginia and in Massachusetts – their daring in leaving their homes, their persistence in enduring the hardships of life in the early settlements, and their foresight in establishing the institutions and customs that would build our great country.

So, as we have done in Virginia for 402 years, on this Thanksgiving, let us take stock of our blessings and together offer our gratitude for them to God.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments, call my Abingdon office at (276) 525-1405, my Christiansburg office at (540) 381-5671, my Washington office at (202) 225-3861, or via email at [www.morgangriffith.house.gov](mailto:www.morgangriffith.house.gov).

## Honored

from page 1

Richard S. Reynolds, Sr. have both been incredible supporters of all that we do," P&HCC President Greg Hodges said. "Because they believe in the power of education and because they invested so much of their time, their attention, and their philanthropy efforts into raising Patrick County's educational attainment levels, many lives have been changed for the better. They believed in the people of Patrick County, and they believed in what education could do for them."

The dedication ceremony will also be one of the many events associated with the Smithsonian's "Crossroads: Change in Cultural America" exhibit coming to Patrick County December 4 through January 9. The Smithsonian's exhibit highlights many initiatives that have had a great impact in the

Patrick County area – and many of those initiatives are ones that Baliles or Reynolds were involved in. Supporting P&HCC's expansion and mission to serve Patrick County students was one of the many ways Baliles and Reynolds have worked to make Patrick County a better place.

Of the Reynolds family legacy, Stewart Roberson, the chairman of the Patrick County Educational Foundation said, "the Reynolds' family impact upon Patrick has been deep and transformational for generations. We have this additional opportunity to celebrate their effect on the lives of Patrick citizens – past, present, and future – through the naming of the Center."

The dedication of the Learning Center "is a fitting tribute to the statesman and the person, par-

ticularly as we embrace the values and vision that Governor Baliles promoted for the Patrick County Education Foundation and the place he proudly called his home," Roberson said.

For the last year, P&HCC has used the facility to house its Electrical Groundsman, Commercial Driver License, and Mechatronics programs – all of which were identified as high-demand career fields by local business leaders and county officials.

The training space is roughly 5,000 square-feet. It is situated directly across the street from the college's initial Patrick County facility. The space and its dedication are possible due to a partnership of the PHCC Foundation and the Patrick County Education Foundation.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

As I read Ben Williams' humorous, albeit round-about, article of dismissing Critical Race Theory in the Virginia school systems, I was reminded of Donald Rumsfeld's famous 2002 quote, "There are known knowns... there are also known unknowns." Can you imagine the response an article would get if its writer took five-hundred words to finally say, "Covid-19 does not exist in Virginia despite the Democrat's talking points?" Given the recent Florida reports some might believe such an article.

There's a difference in saying something is not as bad as it's hyped up to be and outright saying something does not exist at all. To say the latter is irresponsible writing. Obviously, Covid-19 is a real virus, but considering the fact that it has a survival/recovery rate

of at least 90% I say I don't believe it to be as bad as American media would claim. This is a reason, separate from C-R-T, for my voting for Youngkin & Sears: no Covid mandates from the Governor's office.

Voddie Baucham recently wrote a book entitled, "Fault Lines: The Social Justice Movement and Evangelicalism's Looming Catastrophe" (that title is about as long winded as William's article). After producing ample evidence that C-R-T is in the public school system, Baucham goes on to promote homeschooling one's children. I've been voting with homeschool rights in mind since 2012 (my first election as a voter). Youngkin is a supporter of "school choice," which is another reason why I voted for him.

In "Fault Lines"

Baucham also notes that C-R-T is in the Southern Baptist Convention. Talk about a plot twist! In June 2021 the Wall Street Journal issued an article entitled, "Our Lord Isn't Woke." One of its discussed issues was C-R-T in the S.B.C. I find it hard to believe that something that's dividing the Southern Baptist Convention is only a figment of the Republican's imagination.

William's assertion of C-R-T being totally absent from the Virginia school system was not the only moment of irresponsible writing, but also the assertion of C-R-T being the singular issue of Youngkin's campaign. Why does Williams believe that Winsome Sears took that photo holding an AR-15? Was that directed at C-R-T and the Virginia school system? While The Left might believe every gun owner

is a potential school shooter, it's as far from the truth as Williams' entire article premise.

In 2019, I did not just attend the Henry County Supervisors meeting regarding sanctuary status for the second amendment, but I spoke my mind at the microphone. The fact that we even had to have such a meeting as if we would not uphold the Second Amendment is one reason why I voted for Youngkin & Sears in the 2021 election.

It's nice that we have local outlets where citizens like Williams and I get to voice our opinions. I just hope that we all try to be more responsible with said privilege. I also hope that we can read articles of differing opinions with open minds.

Caleb Robertson,  
Martinsville

Submit your letters to the editor

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

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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

# Foundation endows scholarship with \$25k donation

For more than a decade, the Bobby Scruggs Charitable Foundation been changing the lives of college students by providing money for scholarships through a yearly donation.

This year, the foundation took a big step further.

With a \$25,000 donation to the Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation, the donors have endowed the scholarship – ensuring it will provide students with access to education in perpetuity.

To commemorate the occasion, Scruggs' wife, Dr. Jackie Scruggs Taylor, presented a check to the Patrick & Henry Community College on behalf of the foundation. The donation will ensure the Bobby Scruggs Memorial Scholarship is

one that students can apply for year after year. This scholarship will cover \$1,000 of tuition expenses for one student in P&HCC's Racing College.

This endowment will enable the foundation to continue the work that it has already started. Over the last 15 years, the Bobby Scruggs Charitable Foundation has awarded more than 120 scholarships to students from Henry and Patrick counties and the City of Martinsville through annual donations.

"We are thrilled to have the Bobby Scruggs Memorial Scholarship endowed with this donation," said Tiffani Underwood, executive director of P&HCC's Foundation. "This endowment will ensure so many students will have access to

education – something they may not be able to have without the support of people who believe in the power of education. We are extremely grateful to the Scruggs family and are excited to see all the success that students will have thanks to the scholarship that will make college attainable."

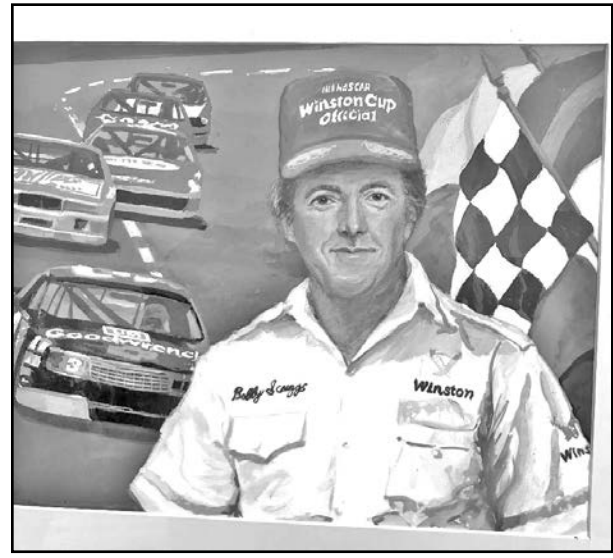
Bobby Scruggs was a NASCAR enthusiast. For nearly forty years, he worked as an official on the track. Even though Scruggs lost his battle with cancer in 2005, his legacy remains strong. Now, in his memory, the Bobby Scruggs Memorial Scholarship will help the next generation of NASCAR officials, pit crewmen, technicians, and NASCAR enthusiasts graduate from P&HCC's Racing College.



The Bobby Scruggs Charitable Foundation gave a \$25,000 donation, which endows the Bobby Scruggs Memorial Scholarship at P&HCC.



Pictured, (from left to right), are Dr. Scruggs Taylor, Denver Smith and Talmage Thomas (Motorsports Faculty), Tiffani Underwood (P&HCC Foundation director).



Bobby Scruggs was a NASCAR enthusiast and worked as an official on the track.

## Martin II elected VSBA President

Teddy Martin II, who has served on the Henry County School Board since 2017, has been named president of the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) at the association's annual convention, which took place November 17-19 in Williamsburg, VA, as well as streamed online.

Martin has served four years on the Henry County School Board and held several leadership positions with the VSBA, including serving as president-elect, chair of the Blue Ridge region, served on the VSBA Executive Committee and serves as co-chair of the VSBA Task Force on Workforce Readiness.

"I am deeply honored to accept this important role and to serve the Virginia School Boards Association

membership," said Martin. "Now more than ever, it is critical that we all step up to do our part to support one another as we strive to both advocate and do what is best for the students and families in the school districts across this great Commonwealth. I look forward to collaborating with educational partners to ensure that our students and school staff members feel empowered to achieve their goals."

In addition to Martin, David Woodard of Tazewell County was elected president-elect, and Sherrie Page, Orange County and Raymond Whitaker, Essex County were elected as members-at-large. The VSBA's 2020-2021 president, Janet Turner-Giles of Nelson County, will serve on the VSBA Board of Directors as immediate

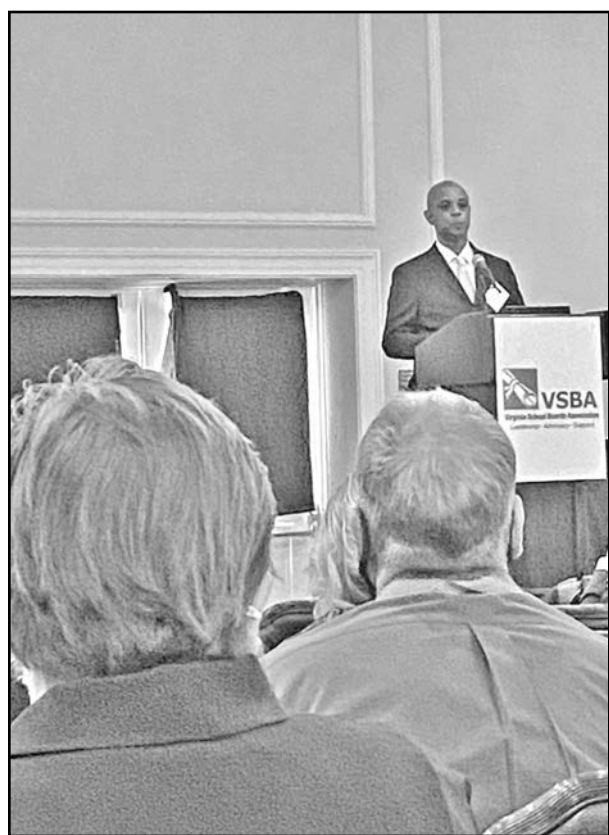
past president.

Martin appointed Cardell Patillo of Portsmouth City as chairman of the VSBA Finance/Audit Committee, and appointed Dr. James E. Coleman Jr. of Lynchburg City as chairman of the VSBA Legislative Positions/Federal Relations Committee.

The VSBA's 2021-2022 Regional Chairmen are Lurton B. Lyle of Dickenson County, Diana L. Williams of Waynesboro City, Mary M. Benjamin of Dinwiddie County, Gunin A. Kiran of Montgomery County, JoWanda Rollins-Fells of Caroline County, Sharon Felton of Virginia Beach City, Amy McClure of Lunenburg County, Jason Collier of Greene County and Karen Corbett Sanders of Fairfax County.



Teddy Martin II



## Talley opens VSBA conference



Martinsville City Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley gave opening remarks at the Virginia School Board Association's (VSBA's) annual conference.

## Shopping initiative set to kickoff next week

VisitMartinsville is launching its third annual holiday shopping initiative next week to highlight the opportunity to support local craftspeople and venues this holiday season.

Products made in Martinsville-Henry County

and local experiences that can be enjoyed with visiting family and friends this season will be highlighted.

"We want to increase the awareness of the unique products and experiences available here in Martinsville –

Henry County, VA," said Kelly Rowland, Tourism Marketing and Client Relations Manager for Martinsville – Henry County.

The holiday countdown will be launched on the VisitMartinsville Facebook

page on Monday, November 29. Each day, the VisitMartinsville team will reveal one local product or experience that could be given as a gift option this year. Throughout the 25 days, the agency also will offer giveaways of some of the prod-

ucts/experiences showcased. Winners may opt to keep the gift or give it as a gift this holiday season.

To learn more about local shopping opportunities, visit [www.visitmartinsville.com/where-to-shop](http://www.visitmartinsville.com/where-to-shop).



# Martinsville man charged with murder in alleged shooting incident

**Dewayne Euvonne Austin, Jr., was charged with first-degree murder and use of a firearm in commission of a felony in connection with the death of a Fieldale man.**

A Martinsville man wanted in connection with a November 20 shooting incident was charged with first-degree murder on Monday.

Dewayne Euvonne Austin, Jr., 20, turned himself in at the Henry County Magistrate's Office, around 11 p.m. on November 21, according to a report from the Henry County Sheriff's Office.

The Martinsville-Henry

County Emergency 911 Center received a call on November 20, 2021, at approximately 8:18 p.m., that an individual had been shot in the parking lot of 950 Blackberry Road, Bassett.

Deputies arriving on the scene at 8:23 p.m. found a man suffering from at least one gunshot wound to the torso lying on the ground.

Lewis Javon Rumley, 41, of Hardin Road, Fieldale, was

pronounced dead at the scene. His body was transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the Western District of Virginia for an autopsy.

Austin, of 177 Niblett Dr., Martinsville, also was charged with use of a firearm during the commission of first-degree murder in connection with the incident.

He is being held without bond in the Henry County

Jail.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to contact the Henry County Sheriff's Office at (276) 638-8751 or Crimestoppers at 63-CRIME (632-7463). The Crimestoppers Program offers rewards up to \$2,500 for information related to crime. The nature of the crime and the substance of the information determine the amount of reward paid.

# New physical therapy clinic opens in Martinsville

CORA Health Services, Inc., doing business as CORA Physical Therapy ("CORA"), a top-10 national operator of outpatient physical therapy services, opened its newest clinic in Martinsville.

The addition of Martinsville expands CORA's footprint in Virginia, making it the 14th location serving the region with increased access to quality healthcare.

Located at 2700 Greensboro Road in Southside Plaza by Planet Fitness, CORA Martinsville provides rapid

scheduling options for patients in as little as 24- to 48-hours — sometimes even the same day — for faster pain relief. The team of local, licensed physical therapists offer state-of-the-art treatment plans for general orthopedic and sports injuries, pre- and post-operative care, vertigo and balance disorders, chronic pain, and workplace injuries and workers' comp solutions. Post-COVID recovery programs to address pulmonary dysfunction and cardio impacts of illness or inactivity are also available.

"As a native of Martinsville,

I'm excited to care for this community and bring CORA to the residents of Henry County," said clinic manager Garrett Van Nutt, PT, DPT. "Martinsville is a special place, and I can't wait to help those suffering find solutions for faster pain relief."

CORA Physical Therapy accepts patients through direct access — no referral required — for people calling or walking into the clinic seeking physical therapy services, as well as through physician referrals. As an option for patients who cannot come into the clinic, CORA

also offers telehealth visits to ensure continuity of treatment with 4,000+ insurance plans accepted and payment options for patients without insurance.

Ron Greer, Regional Manager at CORA Physical Therapy, said, "we are really pleased to welcome the residents of Henry County to our new clinic and to ensure a safe and effective treatment environment for everyone. It is our pleasure to provide access to quality care for anyone in need of outpatient rehabilitation services."

The clinic reflects a new

prototype look for CORA, designed to create a warmer, more welcoming, and comfortable environment for patients. As with all CORA clinics, the Martinsville clinic is taking extra precautions to adhere to the health and safety of both patients and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, with scheduling and check-in protocols for all appointments. For more information, visit <https://www.coraphysicaltherapy.com/martinsville-virginia/> or call (276) 632-1884 for a free consultation.

# Martinsville Speedway to host annual Christmas Toy Drive

Martinsville Speedway will hold the 27th annual Christmas Toy Drive on Saturday, Dec. 4 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The annual event will welcome the greater Martinsville region to donate an unwrapped toy or \$25 for the opportunity to drive laps around the iconic track in their personal vehicles. The Christmas Toy Drive will benefit the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County.

"The 27th Annual Christmas Toy Drive will have a tremendous impact in the lives of families in our community," said

Clay Campbell, Martinsville Speedway President. "As we enter the holiday season, we will rally the community to support this great cause, so we can share the joy of Christmas with those in need. We are grateful for our valued partners and fans across the region for joining us in supporting this event to touch lives through the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County."

Over 27 years, the Christmas Toy Drive has impacted over 20,000 area children through nearly \$300,000 in dona-

tions and over 50,000 toys to unwrap on Christmas morning in Martinsville and Henry County. The Christmas Toy Drive is one of the most popular events in the region with residents from Henry County and the surrounding counties in Virginia and North Carolina coming to support the community and take laps on the same historic half-mile short track as NASCAR's biggest stars. Last year's Christmas Toy Drive raised over \$12,000 and provided toys to over 700 children.

On Saturday, Dec. 4,

Martinsville Speedway staff will welcome the community to the track and receive donations from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. For laps around the track, drivers must sign waivers and be 18 years of age or older with a valid state-issued driver's license. All participants must adhere to Virginia state laws regarding the usage of seat belts and child safety restraints.

The donated toys and monetary donations will be distributed to area children through the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County, which is a

faith-based, first-stop center for resources for families in crisis. The organization supports those in the community who need support to keep a roof over their heads, homes warm and lighted, and food on the table with short-term assistance and long-term solutions. To learn more about the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County, visit [gracenetWORKmhc.org](http://gracenetWORKmhc.org).

For more information on the 27th Annual Christmas Toy Drive, visit [www.martinsvillespeedway.com/events/toy-drive](http://www.martinsvillespeedway.com/events/toy-drive).

# Little Feat tops initial Rooster Walk 12 lineup



**Blues and rock musician Brandon "Taz" Niederauer will play two sets at Rooster Walk 12.**



**Legendary rock band Little Feat will perform its "Waiting for Columbus" album at the 12th annual Rooster Walk, scheduled for May 26-29, 2022.**

Legendary rock band Little Feat will perform the entirety of its 'Waiting for Columbus' album at the 12th annual Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival this year, set for May 26-29, 2022 at Pop's Farm in Martinsville, Va. Tab Benoit will sling a heaping helping of New Orleans blues, while Andy Frasco & The U.N., and Sammy Rae & The Friends, will bring the party.

In addition, music fans will be treated to

two sets from Brandon "Taz" Niederauer (blues/rock), Yarn (roots rock), Mike & The Moonpies (country), The Wooks (bluegrass), Sol Driven Train (rock), Crawford & Power (country) and Pirates of the Piedmont (pirate shenanigans). Meanwhile, Mountain Heart (bluegrass) will host the annual "The Jimmy Jam" collaborative jam set, and 1960s-era-throwback-rockers The Nude Party will make their RW debut!

Many, many more bands will be announced in the coming months.

"We're so excited to announce such a great group of artists to the Rooster Walk 12 lineup," said festival co-founder Johnny Buck. "Hosting an iconic act like Little Feat will make for an amazing night at Pop's Farm. And on a more basic level, we're also thrilled to simply be getting back to normal and hosting the full festival over Memorial Day week-

end once again."

The festival (Rooster Walk 11) last took place in May 2019. Rooster Walk 12 was scheduled and postponed in 2019 and 2020. Event organizers hosted a scaled-down version of the full fest, called Rooster Walk Reunion festival, in October 2021 at Pop's Farm.

Tickets for Rooster Walk 12 (RW12) went on sale Tuesday, November 23 at [www.roosterwalk.com](http://www.roosterwalk.com). Organizers first put tickets on sale for Rooster Walk 12 back in November 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. Many patrons who purchased tickets in 2019-20 never requested a

refund. Therefore, ticket prices will pick up where they left off in 2020, when RW12 was officially postponed, and ticket sales suspended.

Rooster Walk will take place Thursday-Sunday of Memorial Day weekend in the rolling countryside surrounding Martinsville, Va. Rooster Walk is a 4-day festival celebrating music, art, and the great outdoors at the idyllic Pop's Farm venue. With roughly 50 bands performing on 6 different stages, an eclectic roster of great music guides the Rooster Walk experience.

In addition to four days of amazing music, the family-friendly Rooster Walk will offer a wide variety of kids' activities, craft beer, great food, arts and numerous opportunities to enjoy Virginia's great outdoors with kayak tours, bike rides, yoga, a disc golf course and beautiful on-site camping.

Rooster Walk has been named one of the Top 5 festivals in the state by the Richmond-Times Dispatch. It also has been

voted the region's Most Creative Charitable Event by readers of Virginia Living Magazine. The festival was created in memory of late Martinsville natives Edwin "The Rooster" Penn and Walker Shank, who graduated from Martinsville High School in 2000 along with Buck and fellow festival co-founder William Baptist.

A portion of proceeds from the festival will be donated to local and regional charities, including Rooster Walk's own Penn-Shank Memorial Endowment Scholarship Fund for students at Martinsville High School, and the Rooster Walk Music Instrument Program for public band programs in the local city and county school systems.

The festival is produced by Rooster Walk Inc., a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to promoting music, arts and education in its home of Martinsville-Henry County. Since 2009, Rooster Walk Inc. has donated more than \$220,000 to local and regional charities.

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

# OBITUARIES

## Drewry Wayne Ingram

Drewry Wayne Ingram, 80, of Axton, VA passed away on Tuesday, November 16, 2021. He was born on October 5, 1941, to the late Noah Ingram and Myrtle Spencer Ingram. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Marie; his brother, James; and son-in-law, Mark Mason.



dren, Michael, Matthew, Autumn, and Jodie; and great-grandkids, Cooper, Keridee, Erica, Daylon, and Jayden.

A memorial service was held on November 19, 2021, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel with Dr. G.H. Vaughn officiating.

Memorial donations may be made to the SPCA of Martinsville-Henry County, 132 Joseph Martin Hwy. Martinsville, VA 24112.

Norris Funeral Services & Crematory in Martinsville, VA is serving the Ingram family. Online condolences can be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Deborah Martin Thompson

Deborah Martin Thompson, 64, of Collinsville, VA passed away on Saturday, November 20, 2021, at Sovah Health of Martinsville. She was born on September 19, 1957, in Martinsville, VA to the late Maynard Lee Martin and Mary Alice Turner Martin. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her husband, Troy McDaniel Thompson, Sr.



grandchildren, Marshall Thompson, Abigail and Jackson Thompson, Johnny Stoneman, and Katie and RJ Sink.

A funeral service will be held on Friday, November 26, 2021, at Norris Funeral Services at 1 p.m. with Pastor Janet McGhee officiating. Visitation will be prior to the service, from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, November 26, 2021, at Norris Funeral Services. Burial will be held at Henry Memorial Park.

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

## Elaine Gooding Visnic

Elaine Gooding Visnic, 82, of Ridgeway, Virginia passed away peacefully at Wake Forest Baptist Health on November 20, 2021, surrounded by her loving family and friends. Elaine was born on October 20, 1939, to Howard Gooding and Elna Thorne Gooding and was raised in Oakton, Virginia.



her college friends, listening to Polka music, and going to church. She was loved by all that met her and became an 'adopted grandma' to many.

Elaine was preceded in death by her parents, her brother Calvin Gooding, her husband Ted and is survived by her remaining brothers Joseph Gooding (Jean) and James Robert Gooding (Carol), step-son Larry Visnic (Jackie), step-daughter Lisa Visnic Sheehan, grandchildren Robby and Erin Sheehan, Vincent Sheehan, and great grandchildren Ezra and Micah Sheehan, many other nieces, nephews, grandchildren, and great grandchildren and her dear friends, Delores Thompson, Bobby Thompson, Ben (Hannah), Brooklyn (Jake), and Caitlyn (Sam).

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

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

## Hylton to play at University of Virginia



Jade Hylton, a senior at Bassett High School, has committed to play softball at The University of Virginia. Pictured seated (left to right), are Davy Hackett (travel coach); Jade Hylton; Gregory Hylton, father; Seth Bigham (travel coach). Standing (left to right) are BHS AD Jay Gilbert, Coach Taylor Prillaman, Head Coach Bill Parks, Coach Brandon Johnson, Principal Tiffany Gravely.

# CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad or for more information call (276) 694-3101.

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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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Located at 138 S. Main Street, Stuart, VA. Call (276)694-7158 or email [lclark@clarkbrotherscompany.com](mailto:lclark@clarkbrotherscompany.com).

#### P&HCC

Patrick & Henry Community College in Martinsville, VA has the following job openings: Career Services Coordinator, Educational Talent Search Advisor,

#### HELP WANTED

Law Enforcement Officer, Science Lab Assistant, MHC After 3 Program Leader, MHC After 3 After School Instructor, and Adjunct Faculty in English, Legal Assisting, NCCER Plumbing, Nursing, and Welding. For details and application information please visit <http://patrickhenry.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.

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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.

# Unemployment rate falls for 17 months

Virginia's unemployment rate dropped to 3.6 percent in October, which is 2.5 percentage points below the rate from one year ago, Gov. Ralph Northam said Friday. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate of 4.6 percent.

The Commonwealth's labor force participation rate rose to 63.0 percent. This rate is above the national rate of 61.6 percent.

"Virginia's economy is mak-

ing great strides, with the lowest unemployment rate since the COVID-19 pandemic began," said Northam. "The positive trend is the result of careful fiscal management and our extensive work to make Virginia a welcoming and open place. This approach has served Virginia well and continuing it will deliver further economic gains for the Commonwealth."

Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 19,400 jobs in October. The labor force increased by 5,918

to 4,256,634, as the number of unemployed residents decreased by 7,566 to 154,126. The number of employed residents rose by 13,484 to 4,102,508. In October 2021, Virginia saw over-the-year job gains of 2.0 percent.

"The declining unemployment rate and growth across many industries suggest that Virginia's economy is as dynamic as ever," said Secretary of Labor Megan Healy. "Employers and employees are working together on our eco-

nommic recovery, and we should all be proud of how far we have come."

"The Commonwealth's job market recovery maintained its momentum through October, another positive sign of what's to come for Virginia's post-pandemic economy," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball. "With nearly 20,000 jobs added and growth across ten of the eleven major industrial sectors since last year, Virginia's economy continues its favorable growth tra-

jectory."

Compared to a year ago, on a seasonally adjusted basis, ten of eleven major industry divisions experienced employment increases. The largest over-the-year job gain occurred in leisure and hospitality, up 25,200 jobs or 7.6 percent. The next largest over-the-year job gain occurred in professional and business services, up 24,500 jobs or 3.2 percent. Government experienced the third-largest over-the-year job gain of 9,700 jobs or 1.4 percent.

# Contrast-enhanced mammography offered at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist

The Comprehensive Cancer Center at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, N.C., is the first in the region to offer contrast-enhanced mammography (CEM), an imaging technique that uses iodinated IV contrast in combination with a standard digital mammogram and can help better detect breast cancer.

The technology provides mammography images with better precision – especially in dense breasts – compared to a standard mammogram and is performed at a lower cost to patients compared to an MRI, while still providing accurate results.

Women with dense breast tissue have a higher risk of breast cancer compared to women with less dense breast tissue, according to the American Cancer Society. Radiologists can also have more difficulty identifying cancer in dense breast tissue, since dense breast tissue and breast masses or tumors both look white, enabling tumors to hide in the breast tissue.

The positioning and compression of the breast during a CEM is the same as a standard digital mammogram. However, immediately before the CEM, an IV is inserted into an arm vein for an injection of a contrast agent. The contrast agent makes cancers more visible than on a regular mammogram.

"Contrast-enhanced mammograms are another pivotal and reliable tool we have in the detection and diagnosis of breast cancer and breast health," said Kelly Cronin, M.D., medical director of breast imaging and assistant professor of radiology at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist. "Both routine mammography and contrast-enhanced mammography are safe tests and are the best way to detect breast cancer early, which results in the best outcomes for patients."

CEM capabilities are not for every patient and are intended to detect breast cancers for women at an increased risk, evaluation of dense breast tissue, further screening of abnormalities seen on a traditional mammogram or to investigate breast

symptoms, such as a breast lump or breast pain. A radiologist will determine if a CEM is needed on an

individual basis.

Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist now offers online scheduling for reg-

ular screening mammograms: WakeHealth.edu/MammogramAppointment. Individuals

do not have to be a current Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist patient to schedule online.

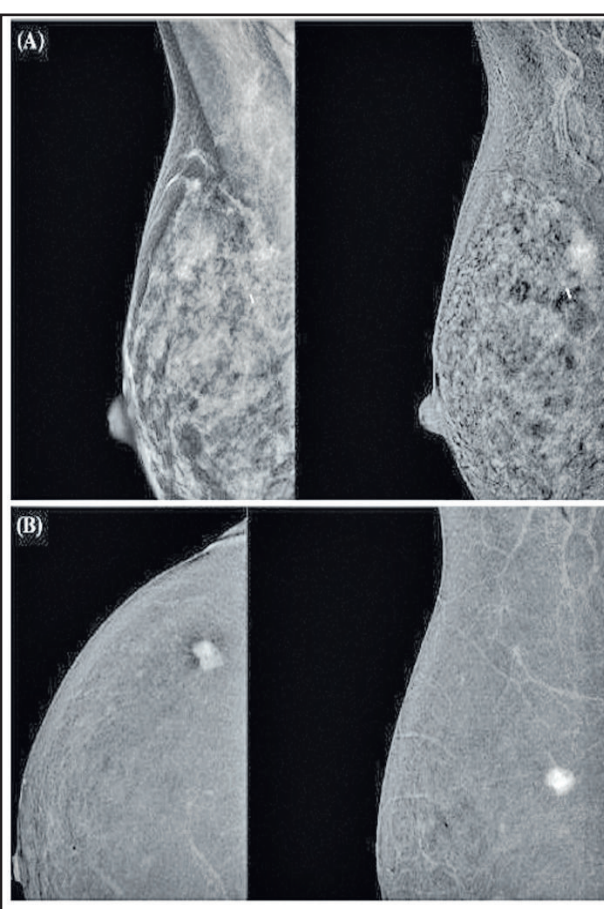


Figure A depicts standard imaging and figure B depicts contrast-enhanced imaging. Photo courtesy: Siemens



# Etheridge, King and Kiah added to FloydFest lineup

Following this month's initial artist announcement, theme-and-logo debut and ticket on-sale, Across-the-Way Productions releases its second round of artist additions today for FloydFest 22 Heartbeat, the latest annual offering of the Southeast's award-winning, premier summer outdoor music festival, taking place Wednesday to Sunday, July 27 to 31, 2022, at Milepost 170.5 on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Floyd.

The additions include one of rock music's greatest female icons and multiple-GRAMMY winner Melissa Etheridge, world-class guitar phenom and soul singer-songwriter Marcus King and GRAMMY-nominated, rising roots-music star Amythyst Kiah.

Today's artist announcements follow Across-the-Way Productions' initial artist announcement, which included the long-awaited return of the pop, rock, R&B and jazz quintet Lake Street Dive; Floyd, Virginia-raised singer-songwriter and now national touring artist Morgan Wade; synth-modern-soul suppliers Durand Jones & The Indications; the R&B, blues, gospel and good old-fashioned funk of Neal Francis; the spellbinding voice and time-bending sensibilities of Sierra Ferrell; the fearless falsetto and mid-60's soul of Aaron Frazer; and 2021 FloydFest On-the-Rise Competition winner, 49 Winchester, and runner-up, Sexbruse?. The next artist reveal is slated for Dec. 2, 2021, with more to follow over the next six-plus months.

Melissa Etheridge - Undoubtedly, Melissa Etheridge is one of rock music's great female icons. Her critically acclaimed eponymous debut album was certified double platinum, built around such memorable songs as "Bring Me Some Water," "No Souvenirs" and "Ain't It Heavy" for which she won her first GRAMMY for Best Female Rock Vocal. Etheridge hit her commercial and artistic stride with her fourth album, Yes I Am, featuring the massive hits "I'm the Only One" and "Come to My

Window," a searing song of longing that brought her a second GRAMMY. The six-times platinum album spent more than 2.5 years on the album chart. Etheridge is also an Oscar winner for Best Original Song in 2007, and received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Across-the-Way Productions welcomes her to our mountain for the first time for FloydFest 22 Heartbeat.

Marcus King - A half-decade ago, Across-the-Way Productions tapped this rising star to headline an exceptionally memorable Roanoke GO Fest, but, until now, Marcus King has never graced the stages of FloydFest. A 25-year-old guitar phenom and innovative songwriter, King can simultaneously switch from swaggering rock to supersonic soul, with his vocal powers taking center stage. Fresh off a Dan Auerbach-produced album and having played professionally since age 11, King is a genre-bending world-class talent, manifesting as one of the most soulful voices of his generation.

Amythyst Kiah - Recognized by Rolling Stone as "one of Americana's great up-and-coming secrets," GRAMMY-nominated Amythyst Kiah endlessly redefines the limits of roots music with inventive rhythms and textures, carrying an unforgettable voice that's both unfettered and exquisitely controlled. Kiah gracefully interlaces political commentary and personal revelation, ultimately offering a raw yet nuanced examination of grief, alienation and the hard-won triumph of total self-acceptance. Across-the-Way Productions welcomes her to our mountain for the first time for FloydFest 22 Heartbeat.

FloydFest also added brand-new designs for FloydFest 22's 'Heartbeat' theme to its online merchandise store.

FloydFest is located at Milepost 170.5 on the Blue Ridge Parkway in Floyd, Va. For more information, call (888) VA-FESTS or email info@floydfest.com.

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