

County Administrator Tim Hall said the decision to use \$2.6 million from the county's 1 percent sales tax increase to pay down school debt was necessitated by a budget shortfall. The decision was made in consultation with County Attorney George Lyle.

Possible budget shortfall to be discussed at upcoming meeting

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

An advisory opinion issued Dec. 21 by Attorney General Mark Herring could affect Henry County's current budget allocation to pay down school debt.

In his opinion, Herring wrote that sales tax revenues for Gloucester County "are to be used to fund capital projects for 'new construction or major renovation' of Gloucester's public schools and not for debt mitigation."

According to Herring's website, the opinions issued by his office "are not legally binding" but "are frequent-

ly relied on by courts and members of the General Assembly, in addition to the officials to whom they are addressed."

The opinion was issued at the request of Del. Keith Hodges, R-Urbanna, who took issue with Gloucester County's use of tax revenues generated by an increase in sales tax to fund new construction and major improvement projects for the county's school system. Gloucester officials chose to use some of the revenue to pay down debt incurred by previous school construction

See Budget, page 6

Public Safety program encourages residents to prepare for emergencies

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

If disaster strikes, are you ready? The Henry County Department of Public Safety's Get Through 72 program reminds residents of a good rule of thumb during a power outage, winter storm, flood, or other emergency—have enough supplies on hand to get through at least 72 hours, or 3 days, of isolation.

"There's a mindset that we've seen that people assume there's enough help to come help them if there's a disaster," said Henry County Department of Public Safety Deputy Director and Training Division Chief Suzie Helbert.

That is not always the case, particularly now when "we're already short-handed," she said. Additionally, if roads are damaged, flooded, or otherwise impassable, it may be impossible for even a fully staffed emergency crew to reach some homes immediately.

The department encourages households to stock at least a 3-day supply of certain items. Some items, such as water, non-perishable food, and prescription medications, may seem obvious but others, such as emergency

cash to cover expenses such as fuel, lodging, and meals for their families (credit and debit cards may not work at locations like grocery stores or gas stations in the event of a power or internet outage); copies of prescriptions; and pet supplies, may be things people do not immediately consider having on hand in the event of an emergency.

An extra store of oxygen in the home for those who are reliant on it is essential, Helbert said, and something that EMS cannot supply. "EMS doesn't have excess oxygen," she said, adding that emergency crews often get calls from residents requesting oxygen when their supply is running low. "They need to get those (tanks) from their supplier."

Other items people should consider stocking are a flashlight, a multipurpose tool, batteries, warm clothing and sturdy shoes, blankets and/or sleeping bags, a first aid kit, paper towels, toilet paper, toothpaste, and infant formula and diapers (if needed).

In the event of an evacuation, residents should be prepared to bring critical documents (including those of any pets they may have) with them. These include a driver's license

See Prepare, page 8

Group seeks funds to reopen Bassett Community Center

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

A group of local volunteers hope to write a new chapter in the storied life of the Bassett Community Center, located at 119 Blackberry Road in Bassett.

Linda Crabtree, president of the Bassett Community Center board of trustees, and Michael Jarrett are members of the Save the Bassett Community Center group, which hopes to reopen the community center's pool by summer of 2022 and have the indoor facilities available by 2023.

The pool is an Olympic 25-meter pool, Crabtree said, 11-feet at its deepest end and 3-feet at the shallow end, with a separate wading pool for youngsters.

Funding will come from grants, individual donations, and - the group hopes - corporate sponsorships, Crabtree said, adding that the group does not yet know how much money it will need to get the space up and running by summer. "We're waiting on National Pools to come" inspect the site to learn exactly what needs to be done and at what cost, Crabtree said.

The pool is the group's focus because it believes the pool will be easier to repair and reopen quickly, Crabtree said. It also has the potential to attract potential members. Plus, the group hopes that profits from concessions will generate revenue that can then be put toward additional repairs.

Both Crabtree and Jarrett fondly remember the earliest days of the community center, which opened with great fanfare in June 1960.

"I was one of the very first people to shoot a basketball in the



The Bassett Community Center closed in 2019. A group of volunteers is raising funds to repair and reopen the center, beginning with the pool. The Olympic-size 25-meter pool once featured a 3-meter diving board. Save the Bassett Community Center hopes to have both the large pool and the wading pool for small children ready to reopen to the public by summer 2022.

gym," Jarrett said.

Because he lived just across the river as a boy, Jarrett said he was at the center "most every day," spending most of his summer hours at the pool. His father, Jarrett recalled, was an excellent bowler and enjoyed spending time at the bowling alley on the ground floor.

Crabtree said that her father could not afford to join the center when it initially opened because it was too expensive with six children in the family. However, by 1961, the family were members.

Crabtree went to work for the center as a lifeguard at the pool at the age of 15, walking an hour to work each morning from Bassett Heights. She fondly remembered arriving at work in the summer and going to open the gate by the pool—the first gate opened each day at 8 a.m.

"There would be 7 or 8, 10 kids out there every summer morn-

ing" waiting at the gate, she said, all having been dropped off by parents on their way to work. The children would sit around, waiting for the gate to open, "and they would stay here all day and their parents knew they didn't have to worry about them, that we would see to it they were taken care of."

Crabtree said the center cost \$360,000 to build.

"Even though I worked here for seven years, I always thought Bassett owned this," she said. "They were a huge benefactor."

She later learned that Bassett Furniture Industries contributed \$126,000, while the rest of the funding came from individuals and small businesses.

According to an article in the "Henry County Journal," about 4,000 people were expected to attend the grand opening on June

See Funds, page 2

Martinsville native bears witness to tornado's devastation

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

Phyllis Bowling Youngblood has lived in Mayfield, Kentucky since 1974.

"It's become my hometown," she said.

Her first hometown, though, was Martinsville. She was born here in 1947 and graduated from Drewry Mason School in 1966. She met her husband, Wayne, while attending college and followed him to Mayfield, where he grew up.

In mid-December, the Youngblood's hometown was devastated by what Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear called "the most devastating tornado event in our state's history." Multiple tornadoes touched down in the state. Mayfield was among the hardest hit communities.

After the storm, the National Weather Service categorized the tornado that ripped through the small town as an E4, its second most destructive rating, classified by winds of at least 190 miles per hour.

Youngblood recalled watching the local weather channel on Dec.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A mural in the town of Mayfield, KY survived the destruction of the EF4 tornado that ripped through the town in mid-December.

10 around 9:30 p.m. The anchor was tracking the path of the tornado that was about to wreak havoc upon the small town.

"They were calling this a monster," she said.

When the town's warning sirens began to blare, the couple went to the window "and we saw three

skunks that were real close to the ground, running around crazy like we never saw before," she said.

The two retreated to a bathroom to take shelter and waited as the power went off (though their generators kicked on). They

See Devastation, page 4

Supervisors to elect officers Monday

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will hold its reorganizational meeting on January 3, at 5 p.m.

In the Summerlin Boardroom of the Henry County Administration building. Attendees are strongly encouraged to wear facemasks and practice social distancing.

The board is sched-

uled to election a chairman and vice chairman, set meeting dates for the coming year, adopt the bylaws, consider a proposed budget calendar and a date for its annual planning session.

The board also may meet in closed session to discuss pending legal matters and special awards.

During a Dec. 14

ceremony held for incoming board members, newly and reelected members of the both the supervisors and the Henry County School Board were sworn into office by Henry County Circuit Court Clerk Jennifer Ashworth. The terms begin January 1 and end December 31, 2025.

See Officers, page 7

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UPDATES



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, Jan. 1

The Henry County Bike Club will host its annual New Year's Day event, Get Outside and Ride, Run, or Walk! Start your new year off right by getting healthier while exploring the Martinsville-Henry County community. Anyone interested in participating should meet at Chain of Fools Bicycle Shop (28 Fayette Street, Martinsville) at 10 a.m. for some New Year's Day exercise. Participants can meet at Hugo's for lunch after the event. The club requests participants bring a donation of canned or perishable food for Grace Network. For more information call (276) 336-8529.

Monday, Jan. 3

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will hold its 2022 organizational meeting beginning at 5 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.) At the meeting, the board will elect a chairman and vice-chairman for 2022 and set regular meeting dates for 2022, among other items. Attendees are strongly encouraged to wear masks.

Tuesday, Jan. 4

Martinsville City Council will hold a community conversation about reversion. The topic of this week's meeting is town/city changes. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in city council chambers. It is limited to 12 participants per session and anyone who wishes to participate must pre-register by emailing their 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. Citizens must register by noon the day before each session. Spots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis and priority will be given to city residents. The meetings will also be televised on MGTV-21 and linked on the city's website and social media.

Thursday, Jan. 6

The Henry County School board will

hold its regular monthly meeting at 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville. The meeting will also be livestreamed on Henry County Public Schools' Facebook page.

The American Red Cross is hosting a blood drive at the Martinsville Elks Lodge (300 Fairy Street Ext., Martinsville) from 12-6 p.m. To schedule a donation appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Join Piedmont Arts for Art at Happy Hour from 5-7 p.m. This event offers a final chance to view the exhibits "Print/Imprint: Asheville Printmakers," "Carl Chiarenza" on loan from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, and "Tools of Happiness" before they close. The event is free and open to the public. Complimentary refreshments are provided by the Piedmont Arts Guild. RSVP by Jan. 5 to (276) 632-3221 or online at PiedmontArts.org.

Friday, Jan. 7

The American Red Cross is hosting a blood drive at Blackberry Baptist Church (3241 Stones Dairy Road, Bassett) from 1-6 p.m. To schedule a donation appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Wednesday, Jan. 12

The Virginia Museum of Natural History (21 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) is offering its monthly Doodle Bugs! program, an opportunity for children ages 3-5 to experience science first-hand. The theme for January's Doodle Bugs! is winter wildlife. The hour-long workshop includes imaginative stories, fun activities, and games and crafts that spark creativity and curiosity. This is the perfect opportunity for parents and grandparents to learn and have fun with their children. Pre-registration is required one week before the program and the cost is \$7 per child. Masks are required for all indoor activities. For more information or to register, contact VMNH at discover.vmnh.virginia.gov or call (276) 634-4187. You can also register online at www.vmnh.net.

Friday, Jan. 14

Come join in the fun for Music Night at the Spencer-Penn Centre. Music begins at 6:15 in the Alumni Hall and concessions will be available.

The American Red Cross is hosting a blood drive at Stone Memorial

Christian Church (3030 Virginia Avenue, Collinsville) from 12-5 p.m. To schedule a donation appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Friday, Jan. 21

Join Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) in celebrating the opening of its first new exhibits for the new year! From 5:30-7:30 p.m., guests can enjoy music by Lauren Luther as well as complimentary wine and refreshments as they get their first look at three new exhibits: "Our Living Past: Platinum Portraits of Southern Music Makers," "Dear B.J.: Postcards from the Pandemic," and works by Tara Compton. All three of these exhibits are open through March 12. The opening reception is free and open to the public. RSVP to bjohnson@piedmontarts.org by January 18. For more information, visit piedmontarts.org.

Saturday, Jan. 22

Soar on over to the Virginia Museum of Natural History (21 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) for the grand unveiling of its newest special exhibit, "The Science of Flight!" This day of flight-focused fun includes live birds of prey, balloon animals, food trucks, flight-themed activities and crafts, and more! The first 500 children in attendance will receive a free giveaway. For more information and pricing visit www.vmnh.net.

TheatreWorks will present another fantastic "Piano Bar" at the Black Box Theatre (44 Franklin Street) in Uptown Martinsville. Tickets are \$10. Get yours at www.twcp.net.

ONGOING

The Warming Center of Martinsville and Henry County, located at Forest Hills Presbyterian Church (725 Beechnut Lane), is open to provide a warm place to sleep, a warm meal, and personal supplies at no cost to those in need. Anyone who needs transportation to the center can be picked up at 6:45 p.m. at the Martinsville library and 6:25 p.m. at the Collinsville library. Weekly schedules are posted at the Martinsville library, YMCA, and on the MHC Warming Center Facebook page every Saturday. For more information, call (276) 207-9660. Anyone who wishes to volunteer at the Warming Center or to donate can find more information on Facebook or at www.foresthillspc.com/mhc-warming-shelter.html.

Henry County Parks & Recreation invites you out for a trek along the trail. Meet as a group and walk along a different trail each week. Explore the trails of Martinsville-Henry County, make new friends, and get some fresh air and exercise. Call the HCPR Senior Services office at (276) 634-4644 to find out where the week's trek is happening! Trail Trekkers meet Thursday of each week (weather permitting) at 1 p.m. in the fall and winter and 9:15 a.m. in spring and summer.

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 its 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 at (276) 647-9585.

Funds

from page 1

11, 1960, to enjoy free soda, ice cream, cookies, and tours of the new building. Swimming cost 10-cents, and 25-cents was charged for bowling. Even before it opened its doors, about 800 family memberships had been sold, according to the article.

The new center was a hub of social activity in a community that had little to offer its residents at the time.

"It was a great place, and it was the only place we had to go do anything in Bassett," Crabtree said. "It was a godsend to us."

She recalled that 300 to 400 youngsters would come to the center for summer camp programs each year, while Jarrett said that, once built, the gym was the site of Bassett High School's basketball games.

When the North American Free Trade

Agreement (NAFTA) took effect, Crabtree said much of the center's funding dwindled, and eventually dried up entirely. Many of the companies that had once provided jobs for a bustling community and served as corporate sponsors withdrew funding, and the employees who bought memberships for their families moved away in search of new work. Keeping the facility open became a

struggle, Crabtree said.

For a time, the space was managed by Stanleytown Baptist Church. When that organization moved out, Bassett approached Henry County about taking over operations, but the county declined. The Bassett Community Center closed its doors in 2019.

Crabtree, Jarrett, and others hope the center can once again welcome the community, but there is a lot of work to do.

The facility has suffered a series of setbacks including a leaking ceiling (Basset Industries paid \$60,000 for a new one), flooding, asbestos, and several break-ins during which items were stolen and the property was damaged. The building never had centralized air conditioning, and the boiler that once provided heat is long gone.

Handicapped access to the pool and building must be improved, Jarrett said, and the restrooms need to be renovated.

The group already has secured donations from Bassett Industries and the Lester Group. It is working with Bassett, to hopefully find an engineer who can walk through the building and determine what needs to be done to reopen the facility. And, most importantly, the group is spreading the word. Jarrett said the group also has received inquiries about using the center's outdoor fields for games. Community members have brought in donations of supplies including paper towels. The energy around the revitalization is beginning to grow.

Crabtree said that she and others are working on an improved revitalization

plan that focuses on sustainability.

"When we get it open, we've got to keep it open," Jarrett said, adding the group hopes to rely on membership and community support.

Crabtree said she, Jarrett and others in the community "have a deep love for this place. We want to see it revived; we want to see something good happen."

The going may be slow, but "we're getting there," she added.

Donations to the center's revitalization effort can be made online at <https://gofund.me/59f456eb> or by searching for Save the BCC Pool on GoFundMe.com. Donations may be mailed to Bassett Community Center, c/o Bassett Furniture Industries, P.O. Box 626, Bassett, VA 24055.

Kiwanis club gives school funding boost



The Kiwanis Club of Bassett recently donated \$1,000 to Sanville Elementary School to help with expenses of an upcoming fifth grade class trip to Monticello in May. Tim Stone (left), President of the Kiwanis Club, is shown presenting the check to Sanville School Principal Joshua Eanes (right).

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Loud cheer

5. Defensive nuclear weapon (abbr.)

8. Type of cell

11. Oblong pulpits

13. Pitching statistic

14. Uncommon

15. Liabilities

16. Thin, straight bar

17. Oh goodness!

18. Competitions

20. ___ Jima, WW II battlefield

21. Professional assn. (abbr.)

22. Italian mountain range

25. Taking possession of

30. Used in cooking and medicine

31. Water (French)

32. Parent a child

33. Sun-dried brick

38. One point south of due east

41. Female fashion accessory

43. A way of making a copy of

45. A way to debilitate

47. Wings

49. Social insect

50. Dull brown fabrics

55. Indian musical pattern

56. N. England university

57. Portable stands for coffins

59. Iranian district

60. Envision

61. Passerine bird genus

62. Container

63. Falter

64. Tunisian city

CLUES DOWN

1. Cool!

2. Passover offering

3. Swedish rock group

4. Collegiate military organization

5. Large nests

6. Beloved baked good

7. 1980s pop legend

8. Finger millet

9. Hillside

10. Surrender

12. Midway between south and southeast

14. Long, narrow strap

19. Discount

23. A type of cast

24. Large, tropical lizard

25. Half of "Milli Vanilli"

26. Single

27. Big truck

28. Midway between east and southeast

29. Et ___ indicates further

34. Insecticide

35. Luke Skywalker's mentor ___-Wan

36. Cast out

37. Breakfast food

39. By reason of

40. One who makes thread

41. Baseball stat

42. Breezed through

44. Frothy mass of bubbles

45. Tony-winning actress Daisy

46. Made of fermented honey and water

47. Member of a Semitic people

48. Monetary unit of the Maldives

51. Run batted in

52. Makes publicly known

53. Disagreement

54. Soluble ribonucleic acid

58. Single-reed instrument

Ridgeway to hold public hearing on town election dates

The Town of Ridgeway is seeking public input on a proposed ordinance to move the dates of town elections from May to November.

Input will be accepted during a public hearing set for 6:15 p.m. on January 4 in the council chambers of the Ridgeway Mayor's office, located at 806 Main Street.

The proposed ordinance is in response to recent amendments to the Code of Virginia moving all town elections to coincide with November general election dates beginning January 1, 2022.

Ridgeway Mayor Craig O'Der was unsure why the legislation was passed. He said, as far as he knows, the town has held its elections in May since it was chartered in 1890.

The new legislation requiring the change to the town's electoral calendar is "unfortunate, but we have to comply with the Code of Virginia," he said.

According to O'Der, residents of Ridgeway take pride in upholding the tradition of spring elections. "Ridgeway is a traditional place," O'Der said, "People have a lot of pride in our community. It's a really traditional kind of government and town with small-town values.

"The founders of this town said there would be a May election and we trust those people that founded the town," he said.

He expressed concern that moving elections may create confusion among voters, as well as more work for election officials when town, county, state, and federal elections all happen at the same time.

He said the town participated in a conference call with the Virginia Municipal League (VML) and several small towns were "absolutely adamantly opposed" to the change, felt that it was not warranted, "and were talking about trying to fight" the legislation.

Ridgeway, however, will not join those localities, even though it also believes the change is not warranted.

"I think, let towns and cities decide when to have their elections," O'Der said. "We don't need somebody in Richmond to tell us how to live here in southwest Virginia."

City to receive grant funds for Uptown market

The City of Martinsville will receive \$4,088 through the inaugural round of the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industry Development (AFID) Fund Infrastructure Grant Program.

This project will help the city improve the Uptown Martinsville Farmers' Market, with funds tapped to buy shades to protect produce and vendors from the sun, new commercial grade scales to speed transactions, and a storage shed. In addition to securing valuable items when the market is closed, it will serve as an office for the market manager and provide an easily identifiable location for customers to go to take advantage of SNAP benefits.

Along with Martinsville, Gov. Ralph Northam announced seven additional projects that will receive nearly \$160,000 in funding to support local food systems and include new and existing meat processors, goat dairies, farmers' markets, and community canneries.

"With agriculture as our largest industry and often the biggest driver of our rural economies, making targeted investments that our farmers and food producers rely on is vitally important," said Northam. "These grants will help to diversify Virginia's agriculture across every corner of the Commonwealth. I congratulate the communities on putting forward such compelling projects and thank them for their partnership."

The AFID Infrastructure Program funds a wide variety of projects that will have a direct impact both on producers through infrastructure improvements, and on consumers by expanding access to fresh, local products. In addition, over half of the project are in economically distressed communities, with several focusing on expanding fresh food access to underserved communities using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and Virginia Fresh Match.

"Virginia agriculture is in many ways sustained by the community of small farmers and food producers making high-quality products for their local communities," said Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring. "By partnering with these communities to make small, but meaningful investments in these local food systems, we are helping to unlock the potential of these farmers and food producers to do even more. I am pleased with the quality and variety of projects that this new program from the AFID Fund is able to support and look forward to many more shared successes supporting sustainable agriculture in the Commonwealth."

In 2021, Northam signed House Bill 2068, creating the AFID Infrastructure Program. The new program competitively awards matching grants of up to \$25,000 in partnership with local governments to develop community infrastructure development supporting local food production and sustainable agriculture. Targeted projects include food hubs, farmers markets, commercial kitchens and other value-added facilities such as those for the processing and packaging of meats, dairy products, produce, or other Virginia-grown products. The AFID Infrastructure Program provides reduced match requirements for economically distressed and underserved localities and promotes projects that serve multiple producers.

Insurance coverage requirements for vehicles change January 1

Beginning January 1, the minimum insurance coverage required for vehicles in Virginia will increase. Senate Bill 1182 raises the minimum insurance coverage requirements over the next three years to the following:

| Liability Insurance Coverage Requirements | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Injury or death of one person | Injury or death of two or more people | Property damage |
| Current requirements | \$25,000 | \$50,000 | \$20,000 |
| Policies effective Jan. 1, 2022 through Dec. 31, 2024 | \$30,000 | \$60,000 | \$20,000 |
| Policies effective on or after Jan. 1, 2025 | \$50,000 | \$100,000 | \$25,000 |

This bill applies to vehicle insurance policies issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2022.

To purchase license plates and title and register a vehicle in Virginia, a customer must certify the vehicle is covered by the minimum insurance requirements or pay the Uninsured Motor Vehicle Fee.

Vehicle owners caught driving without insurance or who have not paid the Uninsured Motor Vehicle Fee will have their driving and vehicle registration privileges suspended (Code of Virginia § 46.2-707). To have those privileges reinstated, they must pay a \$600 noncompliance fee, file a Financial Responsibility Insurance Certificate (SR-22) with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for three years, and pay a reinstatement fee.

Virginia drivers are encouraged to contact their vehicle insurance provider to ensure they have the minimum insurance coverage on their vehicles.

Free clinics report increased demand, decreased staffing capacities

While organizations and communities work to increase access to healthcare for vulnerable populations nationwide, new survey data from the Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics (VAFCC) reveals that their 60 member organizations are navigating staffing challenges with patient demand increasing across the state.

The survey, which included responses from 50 member clinics in November, revealed 76% of clinics are seeing an uptick in patient demand compared to the previous year. Clinics reported rising needs in all services lines including dental, medical, behavioral health and pharmaceutical. COVID-19 related testing and vaccinations are becoming the most requested services.

While patient demand is on the rise, many clinics are experiencing workforce challenges that are impacting operational capacity. Forty percent of clinics report paid staffing shortages and lack of volunteers are limiting capacity.

The findings come as COVID-19 cases in Virginia have risen almost 80 percent, the highest figure since mid-October.

"During these challenging times when the need for accessible healthcare has never been more apparent, free and charitable clinics are caring for vulnerable Virginians," said Rufus Phillips, VAFCC CEO. "Clinics have never slowed down since the start of the pandemic and they remain committed to providing quality and innovative care, regardless of a person's ability to pay. We expect the demand for care at clinics to only increase in the coming months. The additional burdens are straining the limited resources of clinics."

Clinics need a mix of volunteer provider positions including nurse practitioners, physicians, nurses, dentists and dental hygienists. The VAFCC encourages interested providers to visit its Volunteer Opportunity Board & Directory to connect quickly and efficiently to current volunteer needs.

"With just a couple clicks, providers across the state can review current needs or add their name to a directory of interested volunteers for free clinics to contact for future opportunities," said Rebecca Butler, VAFCC Vice President for Marketing, Communications & Development. "If you're a medical professional and would like to volunteer your time, we urge you to connect with a local clinic."

Free and charitable clinics provided safe and accessible health services to more than 74,000 vulnerable Virginians in 2020. VAFCC manages freeclinicscare.org to connect patients with a range of healthcare services at nearby clinics.



LIVESTOCK AUCTIONS

EVERY SATURDAY AT 1 P.M.

- We sell cattle, goats, sheep & pigs.
- State Graded Feeder Sale every Saturday

For directions to our facility, weekly updates of upcoming events and current sale prices, please visit our website:
www.springlakeauctions.com.

Please feel free to call us at
(540) 297-1707.

We appreciate your business!

1069 SICKLE COURT, MONETA, VA 24121



PHOTO BY MARTHA DOMINGUEZ DE GOUVEIA

OPINION

The kids today are too soft

I tell ya, these kids today are just too soft.

Just the other day, I saw this kid riding his bicycle down the road. He was wearing a helmet, elbow pads, and knee pads! Why not just wrap your kid in bubble wrap at that point?

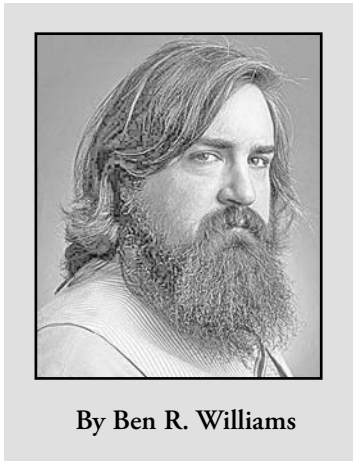
Back in my day, we didn't need any sissy pads or helmets. I'd ride my bike to the grocery store all the time. I had to ride the I-20 for five miles, cars and big rigs blazing past me, and by the time I got to the Piggly-Wiggly I was covered in dust and exhaust soot.

I guess my generation was just tougher.

Of course, I didn't always ride my bike. You remember those three-wheeler ATVs that Honda used to make until the nanny state government made them stop back in '88? Yeah, I had one of those. I used to ride it all over the woods and jump it off ramps. Sure, it rolled over on me every so often, but shattering your pelvis is like getting chicken pox; it's better if it happens when you're still a kid. I bet you'd never see a millennial on one of THOSE bad boys!

Of course, these kids today won't even ride in a CAR without a bunch of safety precautions! You have to put a baby in a car seat, you have to make little kids ride in the back seat, you have to wear a seat belt, you can't drink and drive, blah blah blah. It never ends with these people!

Back when I was a little kid, my folks plopped me right in the passenger seat without a seat-belt, and I was fine. Sometimes



By Ben R. Williams

I would hold a big box of loose knives while I was riding, just for the thrill of it. Back when kids were tough, we didn't need to have a bunch of seat belts and airbags cushioning us if we got into an accident. You'd just

pop through the windshield of your old man's '71 Buick Estate Wagon like a champagne cork and try to aim for a soft bush. Happened all the time, we were fine with it.

And don't even get me started on trucks! These millennials get upset if you even put a DOG in the back of a truck, much less a kid! You'll get the cops called on you for something like that. But in my day, all the neighborhood kids would ride around in the back of Mr. Adler's old Ford Bonus-Built pickup. We didn't even know who Mr. Adler was, he was just some guy who showed up to our neighborhood and liked driving kids around. Can't get away with that now, of course. You show up in a suburb dressed like Santa Claus in the middle of July and ask a bunch of kids to ride around in the back of your truck, you'll get labeled a "creep" or a "weirdo."

But Mr. Adler was just a nice old fellow, and he even joined the search party when my best friend went missing.

And the toys these kids have today! All the video games and computers and stuff. We didn't have any of that. When I was a boy, you had one toy: a .22 rifle. You'd go outside (a place these kids today have never even seen!) and you'd shoot at stuff, like bottles or cats or your friends. They don't make kids like they used to, I'll tell you that.

People always ask me why I get so upset about these soft kids today. The fact is, they're cutting into my profits. If something doesn't change soon, I'm going to have to close down the business that's been in my family for nearly 80 years.

I tell you, it's a hard dollar selling child coffins in this day and age.

A New Year, A New Beginning

Bryan Golden
Contributing writer

The New Year is a time of resolutions. It's a time when people commit to making a change in their life. Losing weight, changing jobs, saving money, making money, a new relationship, getting in shape, going back to school, or giving up smoking, are just some of the goals people set for themselves on January 1st.

Although it's possible for anyone to make a change or a new start, it takes determination, commitment, and persis-

tence. A new goal must be your own. You have to really want it. Without a burning desire, your motivation will fade quickly. It's virtually impossible to make a change due to external pressure.

You may agree to what someone else wants you to do, but it's very difficult to succeed without an internal drive. So, in order to successfully make a change or reach a goal, you have to make sure it's what you really want.

Don't start off on the wrong foot by making excuses as to why you will

probably fail. If you don't truly believe you can do it, you won't. People who do this will say something like, "I'll try to do it, but ..." Or you may hear, "I tried before and it didn't work but I'll give it another go." Before you begin, make sure the only things you are telling yourself are, "I can," "I will," and "I will do whatever it takes."

A new beginning is a three-step process. You have to first know what you want, formulate a plan to achieve it, and then take the necessary action to get it. Setting a specific goal is essen-

tial. The more detailed the better. If you want to lose weight, how much and by when? If you want a new job, what will it be and how much will it pay? If you want to save money, how much and how often?

Next, you need a plan. Just like your goal, your plan must be as detailed as possible. If you are going to lose weight, what will be your menu each week? Are you going to go on a specific diet, cut out certain foods, or just eat less? For finding a new job, what will be your strategy? Do you need a new resume? Will you

look on line, in the classifieds, use an employment agency, network, cold call, or all of these? If you want to save more money, in what areas will you cut back? Do you know where your money is going? Have you created a budget?

You want your plan to be doable. The smaller the steps are, the more likely you will be to succeed. Any time you feel a step is too big, break it down further. It doesn't matter how small each step is so long as you keep going and never give up.

Losing 20 pounds may feel overwhelming, but dropping two pounds a month doesn't seem too bad. If you keep at it for 10 months, you will

reach your goal. Saving \$3000 might appear beyond reach, but cutting back \$9 a day on family spending is manageable.

Finally, you must take action. The best goals and greatest plans will go nowhere without action. The reason you divided your plan into small sections is so it would be easy to take action, one day at a time. All you have to do is keep going, until you achieve your goal.

(Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com Copyright 2021 Bryan Golden)

Devastation

from page 1

lost cable, service to their house phone, and internet. However, they still had use of a cell phone and friends in nearby Metropolis, IL, kept them informed on news about the storm.

Eventually, her husband turned on his police scanner where, Youngblood said, they heard "horrible things" including reports of severed arms and a nurs-

ing home being hit.

"We could tell it was catastrophic," she said.

She, her husband, and their home were all spared from the tornado's fury. However, many other homes and buildings were destroyed, including the first home the couple shared after moving to Mayfield.

"First we were in a daze,

disbelief," Youngblood said. "I guess we were in shock. Then, we started feeling horrible depression and grief, then guilt" because they and their home survived when many others did not.

Since that terrible night, the Youngbloods have seen the destruction left in the tornado's wake—new and historic buildings, including the town's courthouse built in 1889 "just crumbled into a pile of bricks," she said.

They have heard stories of both the survivors and the dead—a woman whose back was broken in several places as her mobile home was tossed around by the tornado; a cat found alive beneath a debris pile eight days after the storm, and they have seen first-hand the outpouring of generosity and kindness that has flooded Mayfield since the devastation.

"We have really been overwhelmed with support from all over the nation," Youngblood said. She added that she had relatives who wanted to volunteer their time with the clean-up effort. They went to the designated online volunteer registry only to find that all the slots were taken—the town had all the help it needed at the time.

Youngblood said the town has received aid from national and international brands, including Papa John's, Jimmy Dean, and even the restaurant chain Denny's, all of which helped feed residents.

"You name it, it was here," she said, all with tents, propane cookers, and grills. "They were cooking night and day."

Kentucky bourbon distillers hosted a bourbon auction that raised more than \$3 million in relief funds and included 14 bottles found unopened and intact in the rubble of a local steakhouse.

Because the town had no running water, Tide rolled into town with a clothes washing and folding service, while another setup provided opportuni-

ties to shower.

And people have been sending in supplies. Too many supplies. The abundance of donated items is more than the small Kentucky town can handle on its own, Youngblood said.

Even the church the Youngbloods attend (churches left standing became distribution centers) had to put up a sign refusing physical donations and encouraging financial donations to the disaster relief fund instead.

"We don't even have pews open. There's stuff everywhere," she said.

To help manage the overabundance of donated items, Youngblood said a vacant warehouse in nearby Paducah, KY, was used.

There, Wayne Youngblood said, "all the charitable organizations are supposed to bring their surplus. It's going to be catalogued and distributed back to any individual charities that need it and can distribute it."

"The problem with so much stuff is so many people lost houses," Phyllis Youngblood said. "They have no place to take the stuff."

The Youngbloods had several relatives whose homes were destroyed, including Brad Youngblood who, Phyllis Youngblood said, not only had his home and lake house reduced to rubble by the storm, but also discovered his truck was "thrown into the lake" by the powerful tornado.

Youngblood said Gov. Beshear has "just been remarkable" in terms of helping those displaced by the storm find temporary housing. Entire hotels have been rented and some are staying in lodges in parks and campgrounds. About 1,800 of those who still have homes that survived the storm are without electricity, though utility crews are working around the clock.

Also hard at work are volunteers, both locally and from outside the area. Mostly, Phyllis Youngblood

said, they are working on clearing the crumbled brick and concrete, broken lumber, and twisted metal that used to be homes, businesses, churches, and historic buildings.

Youngblood said these volunteers, including high school football players and other athletic teams, are sorting the debris into piles—wood, metal, electronics, hazardous materials, brick—so that it can be picked up by large trucks dedicated to the task.

Cleanup efforts, she said, will continue for a long while. Just removing the rubble, fallen branches, and other signs of destruction is expected to take anywhere from six-months to a year, "and then the construction (to rebuild) is probably going to be slow."

Phyllis Youngblood said she and others worry that the number of volunteers will decline once Mayfield is no longer in the national spotlight.

"People are saying, 'we're getting all this help now, but where will they be in 6 months?' We'll still be in a lot of trouble in 6 months," she said.

Despite the influx of supplies and volunteers, there is still a long way to go and, as Phyllis Youngblood noted, even after rebuilding, Mayfield will never be the same as it

was before the "evil monster" ripped through the small Kentucky town.

Wayne Youngblood said he and his wife drove to a high spot on the outskirts of town. "You can see all of Mayfield," he said.

"It looks like a war-zone," Phyllis Youngblood said, "it looks like bombs have been dropped."

For Wayne Youngblood, who grew up in Mayfield and has lived most of his life there, looking out on the ruins of the town is difficult.

"It makes your heart hurt," he said. "But I know that we were the lucky ones."

To donate to those impacted by the Kentucky tornados, Gov. Beshear has established the Team Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund. Donations may be made online at kentucky.gov, or make checks payable to Kentucky State Treasurer and write "Team Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund" in the memo line. Mail checks to Public Protection Cabinet, 500 Mero Street, 218 NC, Frankfort, KY 40601. Donations to the fund are tax-deductible.

Information on volunteering and donating goods or resources can be found at kentuckystatepolice.org/westernky-relief/.



The former home of Wayne Youngblood's parents. It was owned and remodeled by relative Brad Youngblood, who put it up for sale just before the storm. A piece of carpet dangles in a corner, marking where the second floor once stood.

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Michael Showell, *Publisher*

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

Callie Hietala, *Reporter*
newsreporter@theenterprise.net

Randy Thompson, *Advertising Manager*
advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com
(540) 230-1129

Liz Moonbury, *Advertising Specialist*
advertising@theenterprise.net
(276) 694-3101

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

Patrick, Henry among localities to receive Opportunity Virginia grants

Henry and Patrick counties, as well as the City of Martinsville and others, will benefit from a \$77,053 Strategy and Roadmap for Growing the Controlled Environmental Agriculture (CEA) Sector grant.

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR), in partnership with the Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement, will develop a strategy and roadmap for supporting industry growth and workforce development for Controlled Environmental Agriculture (CEA) in Region 3. The strategy and roadmap will include an analysis of this emerging and dynamic agribusiness sector, including its industry and economic

growth potential while identifying and validating needed facilities and infrastructure, workforce development issues, opportunities and applied research assets.

Other localities in the region include Amelia, Buckingham, Brunswick, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward counties, and the City of Danville.

Gov. Ralph Northam announced the more than \$3.6 million in Growth and Opportunity for Virginia (GO Virginia) grants last week.

Grant proceeds are to support thirteen projects focused on expanding workforce

development and talent pipelines in key industries, fostering business, and improving infrastructure.

“GO Virginia allows us to address the unique needs of localities across the Commonwealth,” said Northam. “This targeted support is critical, both for local projects and for encouraging long-term regional collaboration. These thirteen projects will foster innovation, support entrepreneurs, and drive economic growth across the Commonwealth.”

This round of grants include 12 regional projects and one project through GO Virginia’s Economic Resilience and Recovery Program. The awarded projects will receive an addition-

al \$4.9 million in local and non-state resources.

“Virginia boasts a diverse economy, and each geographic region has distinct economic characteristics,” said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball. “GO Virginia has been effective in responding to those differences, as its regional approach fosters innovative ideas, programs, and strategies throughout the Commonwealth as demonstrated by these awarded projects.”

“Congratulations to today’s awardees and to their respective regional councils,” said GO Virginia Board Chairman Nancy Howell Agee. “GO Virginia has created a foundation over the past four years that is giving regions

the tools to develop high-impact solutions that have helped us tackle the economic setbacks of the COVID-19 pandemic while also focusing on longer term economic development strategies and objectives. These projects are a testament to how thinking creatively and collaborating deeply with localities, private industry, and other stakeholders has proven to be successful, making a difference in the lives of all Virginians.”

Since the program’s inception in 2017, GO Virginia has funded 208 projects and awarded approximately \$78 million to support regional economic development efforts. To learn more about the GO Virginia program, visit dhcd.virginia.gov/gova.

Agency seeks to fill newly created post

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) is searching for a president, a new position created by the board of trustees.

To aid in the transition process, Dr. Betty Jo Foster will serve as Interim President for the newly formed role. Current Executive Director Mark Gignac will continue with certain administrative and operational responsibilities under the new structure.

The expansion of executive leadership is a result of extensive growth in the level of activity of IALR, as well as strategic succession planning.

“The Institute for Advanced Learning and

Research has served as a regional catalyst for economic growth and transformation of Southern Virginia since 2002, and we are committed to ensuring this legacy continues for many more decades to come,” said Roy Ford Jr., D.Min., chair of the IALR board of trustees. “While the board recognizes and appreciates the accomplishments of IALR under the leadership of Mark Gignac, our recent completion of a seven-month strategic planning process uncovered the need for expanded top management resources to provide increased strategic leadership. The addition of a President will help better balance and focus

responsibilities while fulfilling our strategy of intentional, well-executed succession planning.”

IALR has formed a seven-member search committee to identify, interview and recommend candidates for the position. It has also chosen Korn Ferry in Washington, D.C., to conduct a national search. The firm will work with community stakeholders to gather input regarding the preferred attributes and qualifications for the new President. The President will provide high-level, strategic leadership, and the goal is to fill the position in 2022.

Foster will serve as Interim President, effec-

tive Jan. 5, bringing significant leadership experience to the role which includes time as former Chair of the IALR board of trustees. She also has served as Interim President for both Danville Community College and Central Virginia Community College. In addition, she was the Interim President and CEO for the Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce.

“We are delighted to welcome Dr. Betty Jo Foster as Interim President and look forward to the keen insight and strategic oversight she will provide,” said Ford. “Her valuable experience and deep knowledge of our area’s

challenges and opportunities will aid our efforts to establish an expanded leadership structure and continue driving successful economic transformation throughout Southern Virginia.”

IALR recently completed a seven-month strategic planning process. The work involved input from various internal and external stakeholders, including the entire board and all employees as well as many others, and resulted in the following strategic themes, all requiring significant strategic oversight: Virginia’s go-to partner for business and economic growth, center of excellence for education and workforce develop-

ment, globally competitive business ecosystem, collaborative team success, excellence in board leadership and decision making, strategic expansion of applied research, and culture of learning.

The institute serves Virginia as a regional catalyst for economic transformation with applied research, advanced learning, economic development, advanced manufacturing and conference services. IALR’s major footprint focuses within Southern Virginia, including the counties of Patrick, Henry, Franklin, Pittsylvania, Halifax and Mecklenburg along with the cities of Martinsville and Danville. For more information, visit www.ialr.org.

Warner sees “urgent need” to protect voting rights

U.S. Senator Mark Warner, D – Alexandria, believes there is an “absolute urgent need for Congress to step up and put in place basic federal protections” for America’s voting process.

During a remote interview, Warner said the nation has seen “state after state start to roll back access to the ballot box” and shorten voting times. Certain states, like Georgia, are giving the responsibility of overseeing and certifying vote counts to partisan entities rather than non- or bi-partisan bodies.

Should such practices be allowed to spread, “that would be a recipe for disaster,” and would mean the very structure of democracy “could be up for grabs,” he said.

“That is not good for America,” Warner cautioned. “I still remember when expanding voting rights was a bipartisan issue. That is not the case in today’s United States Senate.”

Virginia saw a 25 percent increase in voter participation in 2021 over 2017’s election, which “actually helped elect a Republican, governor-elect Glenn Youngkin,” Warner said. Increased voter participation is good, not for a particular political party, but for democracy as a whole.

Another challenge to the nation’s democracy stems from former President Donald Trump’s claims about voter fraud in the last presidential election.

“Too many of our fellow Americans have endorsed the Trump big lie about voting fraud,” Warner said. “Too many people still believe that lie,” which ultimately led to the Jan. 6 riot at the Capitol.

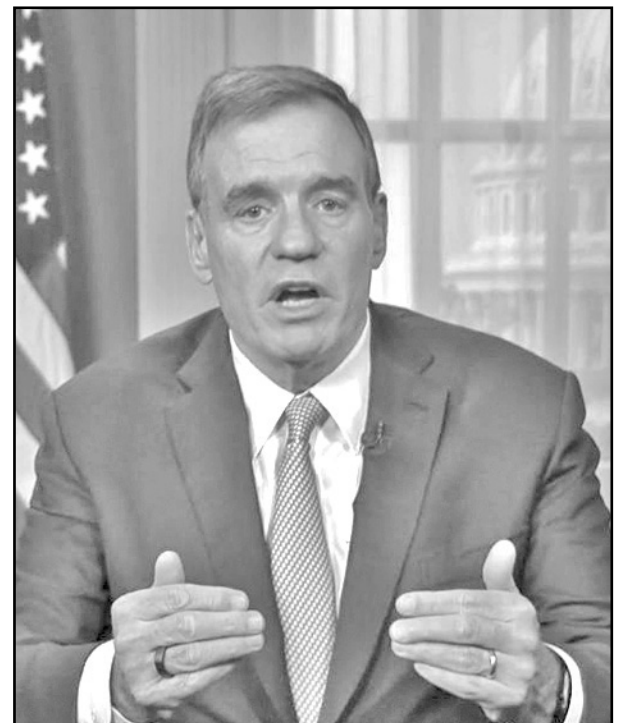
Warner, who is the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, said investigations into the events of Jan. 6 are ongoing but, “I do think we’ve made progress.”

“I think there’s still a lot of

questions about, particularly, House members, about how they were involved in the insurrection,” Warner said, including the targeting of the office of the parliamentarian’s office, where the ballots were kept.

“I still find it chilling that the parliamentarian’s office ... was totally trashed in a way that no other office was trashed in the Capitol and there was clearly some evidence that people were being shown the parliamentarian’s office by so-called ‘tour groups’ in the days leading up to January 6,” he said, an commented that office’s staff for protecting the electoral votes that day.

Since the riot, Warner said, “we’ve made record investments in additional training and additional hiring of the Capitol Police,” and enabled the police force to call in the National Guard “if they need additional help.”



U.S. Senator Mark Warner, D – Alexandria, said Congress must act to protect America’s voting process.

Take a New Year’s Day hike in a Virginia State Park

Enjoy the great outdoors on New Year’s Day with a first day hike at any of the 41 Virginia State Parks.

All state parks offer free parking on Jan. 1, and visitors to each park will receive a commemorative water bottle sticker (while supplies last).

For a list of scheduled hikes and programs, www.virginiastateparks.gov/firstdayhikes

Virginia State Parks has many hikes and opportunities to choose from or visit a park and create your own special First Day Hike. Here are a few ideas:

Sky Meadows State Park will open at 5:30 a.m. on New Year’s Day to support the sunrise celebration of various cultures. At 10 a.m., join a ranger at the Backcountry Trailhead for a guided hike.

Pocahontas State Park in Chesterfield offers a special New Year’s Eve night hike to celebrate the countdown. The park also offers a variety

of special hikes for different ages and capabilities throughout New Year’s Day.

Guided hikes are available every hour from 9 a.m. – noon at Natural Bridge State Park. The approximately 45-minute hike will lead you to great views of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Join a ranger at Smith Mountain Lake State Park on a mile hike that is rated as easy. The hike includes a scavenger hunt to discover winter’s hidden secrets in nature.

At Clinch River State Park, a ranger will lead you on a 4-mile hike along the Clinch and to ruins of a failed French settlement.

The 41 award-winning Virginia State Parks are managed by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. For more information, or to buy an annual pass or gift certificate, visit www.virginiastateparks.gov.



First Day Hike at First Landing State Park

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OBITUARIES

Joseph Edward “J.E.” Pigg, Sr.

Joseph Edward “J.E.” Pigg, Sr. 86, passed away Monday, December 27, 2021. He was born in Lawsonville, N.C. on August 16, 1935, to Millard G. Pigg and Ethel P. “Parlier” Pigg.

He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Kathleen Pigg; daughter Charlotte Anne; sons Joey Pigg (Dean), Page Pigg (Cindy); grandchildren, Alicia Pigg (Jonathan Fulcher), Tres Pigg (Barbara), and Spencer Pigg (Carson); brother, Philip Pigg (Cecilia); sister, Martha Martin (Francis); multiple beloved nieces and nephews, and by his childhood buddy and friend Lewis Morris.

J.E. was a long-time owner and operator of Millard’s Machinery Inc. which was started by his father and was family owned for 65 years. At the time Millard’s Machinery was sold, JE was the last single store owner, and his John Deere dealership was the third oldest in the world.

He was a Charter member of Hillcrest Baptist Church, where he was Deacon Emeritus. He was also a founding member of the Spencer Penn Center.



He served on the inaugural board of directors for Henry County Parks and Recreation and Carter Bank and Trust. He was also a 70-year member of the Spencer Ruritan Club. J.E. loved his family and church. He also loved gospel singing, traveling and watching ACC basketball, especially Wake Forest.

The funeral was held on Thursday, December 30, 2021, at Hillcrest Baptist Church. officiated by pastors Doug Ramsey, Randy Aldridge, and Dave Cuthbertson. Interment was at Mayo Baptist Church Cemetery, officiated by Pastors Curt Ashley and Andrew Adams.

Memorials may be made to the Hillcrest Baptist Church, 18075 A.L. Philpott Highway, Ridgeway, VA 24148; Mayo Baptist Church, 85 Penn Store Road, Spencer, VA 24165 or the MARC Workshop, P.O. Box 3749, Martinsville, VA 24112.

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

To express condolences online, visit www.collinsmckee-stonemartinsville.com.

Stanley Madison Burnette

Stanley (Stan) Madison Burnette, of Spencer, VA passed away late on December 24th, 2021.

Stan was born in Martinsville, VA on October 15th, 1956. He was preceded in death by his parents, Arlie E. Burnette and Helen S. Burnette. He is survived by his loving wife of 42 years, Dale T. Burnette of Spencer, VA, and three children, Lauren Burnette of the home, Thomas Burnette (Danni) of Chester, VA, and Danielle Morgan (Richard) of Ashland, VA, his three grandchildren, Rylan Burnette, Parker Burnette, and Avery Burnette, all of Chester, VA. He is additionally survived by two sisters, Joyce B. Webb of Ridgeway, and Linda B. Fain (Gene) of Martinsville, and three nieces, Heather Webb, Valarie Rich (Phillip), and Natalie McKenzie; and a nephew, Landon Webb.

He graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1979 with a Bachelor of Science in Animal Science. He started working at Commodity Specialists Company in 1979 the Monday following his Saturday graduation and was employed there for over 39 years upon retirement. He had many career accomplishments throughout his tenure. He was also an entrepreneur in the dairy as well as the beef



industry.

His whole life he was an avid sportsman, fisherman, and hunter. He took yearly trips for over 25 years to Wisconsin to grouse hunt with many of his fellow friends. He enjoyed outdoor sports such as baseball and softball, hunting, and fishing for most of his life.

He was a member of Pleasant Grove Christian Church for over 50 years. He loved his church family and was dedicated to serving the church in a variety of capacities. He was a strong believer in community service and was a long-time member of the Spencer Ruritan Club.

He loved mountain-living and spending time at his family farm at Meadows of Dan. His was a masterful storyteller, captivating the attention of anyone who would listen. He had an exceptional memory, intelligence, and leadership skills.

The Rev. Jim Pence officiated the funeral on December 28 at Pleasant Grove Christian Church.

Memorial donations may be made to Pleasant Grove Christian Church, 5232 Preston Road, Martinsville, VA 24112.

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

Nancy Miles Flanagan

Nancy Miles Flanagan, 90, of Martinsville, Va. passed away on Monday, December 27, 2021. She was born March 22, 1931, in Martinsville, VA. She was pre-deceased by her husband of 70-years, James B Flanagan Jr.

She is survived by her daughter, Beth Flanagan and Beth’s life mate Michael Battiste, and sister-in-law Virginia Wallace.

Nancy was a loving wife, devoted mother, cherished sister, caring daughter, generous friend and role model for strong women everywhere. Her passion in life was taking care of other



people from her family to a stranger she had just met. She was truly interested in listening to other people’s stories

A graveside service was held on December 30, 2021, at Lawson Cemetery in Eden, North Carolina.

Memorials may be made to Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, 824 Starling

Avenue, Martinsville, Va. 24112.

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

To express condolences online, please visit www.collinsmckee-stonemartinsville.com.

Lisa Marie Bennett

Lisa Marie Bennett, RPH, 54 of Ridgeway, VA passed away on Wednesday, December 22, 2021, at Joan and Howard Woltz Hospice Home. She was born on March 11, 1967, in West Chester, PA to Barbara Jean Coe and the late Coy Mack Coe.

Lisa is survived by her husband, Ronald E. Bennett of Ridgeway, VA; daughter, Marena Bennett of Ridgway, VA; siblings, Linda South of Tennessee, David Coe (Tammy), and Lorie Rispoli (Shawn) of Martinsville, VA.

The funeral service was held on



Tuesday, December 28, at Norris Funeral Services. Minister Bryan Chilton officiated. Burial was in Roselawn Burial Park.

Memorials may be made to the SPCA of Martinsville-Henry County, 132 Joseph Martin Hwy, Martinsville, VA 24112 or to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 4110 Glenn Alen, VA 23058.

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

Albert Lee Baliles

Albert Lee Baliles, 77, of Ridgeway, VA passed away on Thursday, December 23, 2021. He was born on December 20, 1944, to the late Posey Lester Baliles and Era Hatcher Baliles.

Mr. Baliles worked at United Elastic for 38 years.

He is survived by his wife, Frances Lee McGrady Baliles; daughter, Stephanie Baliles Haas (Steven) of Ridgeway, VA; sons, D. Blake Baliles (Tammy) of Stuart, VA and Tracy Baliles (Kelly) of Stuart, VA; sister, Mary Ellen Hill of Lawsonville, NC; brother, Posey Baliles, Jr. of Buffalo Ridge, VA; grandchildren, Matthew Baliles, Julian Baliles, Casey Vipperman, Katina



Coleman, Gracen Baliles, Bryce Handy, and Alan Haas; and seven great-grandchildren.

A funeral service was held on Sunday, December 26, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel. Pastor Mark Wright officiated. Burial was private.

Memorial donations may be made to Mountain Valley Hospice, 730 E Church St, St #13, Martinsville, VA 24112 or to New Beginnings Baptist Church, 142 First Southern Drive, Patrick Springs, VA 24133.

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

Budget

from page 1

and renovation projects.

Though Herring referred specifically to that county, his advisory opinion could impact Henry County, which directed the tax revenues in much the same way after voters approved the measure to levy an additional 1 percent sales tax to help with new school construction and improvement projects.

“We had a pretty significant budget hole” during last year’s budgeting process, said County Administrator Tim Hall. “We decided we

would take to the Board of Supervisors a plan to use some of that money toward the budget deficit, and the board considered and approved it.”

Hall said the proposed use of tax funds was brought to County Attorney George Lyle for his legal opinion.

“The language was not specific as to whether it was new debt or whether it was to pay off current school debt. So, based on his looking at it, we went ahead,” Hall said.

The section of the Code of Virginia allowing for the tax increase specifies that “revenues from this tax shall be used solely for capital projects for new construction or major renovation of schools.”

School board chairman Thomas Auker said the decision to direct the funding toward previous school debt was made without consulting with the school board.

“We found out about it

after the decision had been made,” he said. “We would have liked to have had some input to it, because they just simply took that money and were using it for other things.”

Auker said the school board reacted with disbelief and dismay.

“I think we were shocked because Mr. Hall had told us at a meeting that that would not necessarily happen, and it did. When the people voted to do that 1 percent tax, I feel the people have spoken and the board of supervisors didn’t have the right to take it away,” he said.

Henry County School Board member Teddy Martin, of the Reed Creek District, said local school officials also sought Herring’s opinion after the Henry County Board of Supervisors chose to allocate some of the tax revenues to pay down debt from previous school construction and improvement projects.

“We said our facts are very similar— (the county) is trying to use the funds for Meadow View (Elementary) debt that occurred before the passage of” the new legislation, said Martin, who was among the school board members and candidates, including Ray Reynolds, who helped bring the issue to the forefront.

Martin, who also is president of the Virginia School Board Association, said vice-chairman Francis Zehr of the Ridgeway District, and the school board unanimously approved an addition to its legislative agenda, asking the General Assembly to clarify whether the county’s use of the tax revenues fell within the accepted guidelines.

“I think it’s great the attorney general ruled in our favor, because the county took \$2.6 million away from us and we have projects that we need to do in order to get the schools in great shape,” including completing the bus garage and needed repairs to improve the aging buildings, Auker said.

“We’re just going to have to wait and see what the supervisors do,” Auker said. “It’s in their hands now, so they need to deal with it.”

A narrative in the county’s budget indicated that several factors contributed to the budget shortfall, including the staffing and startup costs of the new jail, “unfunded mandates from the Commonwealth regarding salary increases for Compensation Board employees, skyrocketing costs for the Children’s

Services Act; and the increased thresholds for minimum wage pay for our part-time employees.”

Darrell Jones, the county’s finance director, said the current debt for the school system is \$21,325,000, most of which (about \$14,600,000) is related to the construction of Meadow View Elementary.

Jones said the estimated debt service payments for the county’s school system for fiscal year 2022 were \$2.6 million. In its budget process, supervisors “approved taking the first \$2.6 million of the sales tax money” to pay the debt service “on the school construction projects from prior years, the most recent being Meadow View (Elementary).”

Hall said the county was aware that Gloucester had taken a similar action, and that an opinion was being sought on “whether that was the appropriate action. We told the board about that” before the vote was approved.

Hall said he anticipates the board will revisit the issue and decide how to proceed.

He also noted that Herring’s ruling “is an advisory opinion, it is not a law or mandate.” However, should the supervisors follow it, “then we need to show them what that might look like.”

County staff will need time to determine the impact of losing those funds, Hall said, adding the potential loss “leaves us with a huge budget hole, and that will be an ongoing concern.”

County officials also must decide how to manage the debt service payments moving forward which “is going to be a difficult process to work through,” Hall said, adding that he believes this year’s costs can be mitigated with the county’s reserve fund.

“I think, based upon the information we now have in hand, the board obviously will consider where we stand and we certainly will comply with any regulations handed down,” said Jim Adams, supervisor chairman and of the Blackberry District.

He said he anticipates the board likely will discuss the issue at its January meeting.

Lyle could not be reached for comment.



School board member Teddy Martin said the school board joined Gloucester County in its request for an opinion from Attorney General Mark Herring on the legality of using the tax revenue to pay down school debt rather than fund new construction and improvements.

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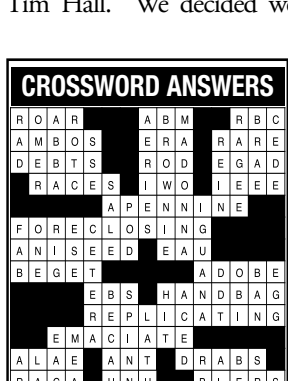
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Officers

from page 1



Jim Adams will represent the Blackberry District on the Henry County Board of Supervisors.



Garrett Dillard will represent the Iriswood District on the Henry County Board of Supervisors.



Joe Bryant will represent the Collinsville District on the Henry County Board of Supervisors.



Elizabeth Durden will represent the Collinsville District on the Henry County School Board.



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Diane Bernard
Virginia News Connection

Getting a flu shot is beneficial during the COVID crisis, but many people do not know flu shots also have

"If you've had heart disease or have had a stroke or had bypass surgery or a heart attack, getting that flu shot is not only protecting you from getting the flu, it's poten-

Kulkarni pointed out many

"The simple things you can do is know your numbers and pay attention to your symptoms," Kulkarni advised. "If you know your

Many doctors now offer Telehealth visits if you're still concerned about seeing someone in person. For more information on flu vaccines and going back to the doctor, visit the American Heart Association website.

"A unique course of criminality culminated in today's guilty plea, which ensures that the defendant will be sentenced for the entire range of his misconduct," said Sandra J. Hairston, United States Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina. "Credit for putting an end to the spree goes to officers

"This defendant used his position of trust within the credit union to gain access to large sums of money only to abuse that trust in the name of greed," United States Attorney Chris Kavanaugh of the Western District of Virginia said today. "Fortunately, the men and women of the Danville Police Department acted swiftly and were able to keep all of the counterfeit bills in this case from

Navarro remained a fugitive until March 2021, when the Durham Police Department in North Carolina responded to a report of shots fired and found

At sentencing, he faces a minimum of ten years in prison and a maximum penalty of life. A federal district

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Eric L. Iverson for the Middle District of North Carolina and Rachel Barish Swartz for the Western District of Virginia.

situation. "It's a great service to your pet to crate train them when they're little," Helbert said, adding that the training isn't difficult and can benefit both the pet and pet-owner. If your household has to go to a shelter or if your pet has to go to a separate shelter, "you don't want them to freak out in a crate." That could create a stressful situation both for the

*Henry County Sheriff's

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 5300
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 Department: (276) 403-
 5183
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 Authority (PSA): (276)
 634-2500
 *SPCA: (276) 638-
 7297

"The more each individual and family can prepare themselves to 'Get

She said that “another way community members can help is to consider volunteering with their local rescue squad or fire depart-

For a useful emergency preparedness checklist, visit www.vaemergency.gov/attachments/emergency-kit/. Helbert said another useful resource for preparing to protect yourself during an emergency is www.ready.gov.



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EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

It can take several days or weeks for government services and assistance to reach you and your family depending on the severity of the disaster and your geographic location. An emergency kit is vital to sustaining your family after a disaster.

Use this checklist to build your emergency supply kit over time by adding a few items each week or month. **Many emergency preparedness products are eligible for Virginia's tax-free weekend held annually in August. The 3-day sales tax holiday starts the first Friday in August at 12:01 a.m. and ends the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m.** Regularly replace items that go bad such as water, food, medication and batteries, and remember to keep in mind your family's unique needs as you build your kit.

FOOD + SUPPLIES

- ☐ At least a 3-day supply of water and non-perishable food
- ☐ Infant formula and diapers
- ☐ Pet food and supplies (see reverse)

MEDICAL NEEDS

- ☐ Medications for at least one week and copies of prescriptions
- ☐ Medical equipment, assistive technology and backup batteries
- ☐ First aid kit and antibiotic ointment
- ☐ Sunblock

TOOLS + SAFETY ITEMS

- ☐ Flashlight and batteries
- ☐ Multipurpose tool

PROTECTIVE GEAR + CLOTHING

- ☐ Extra warm clothing
- ☐ Sturdy shoes
- ☐ Blankets or sleeping bags

EMERGENCY FUNDS

- ☐ Emergency cash funds should be able to sustain your family for several days at a minimum. Government assistance and resources take time.
- ☐ Plan for funds to cover fuel, lodging and meals as well as pet boarding costs if you're asked to evacuate.
- ☐ Do not rely on credit cards or debit cards as critical networks such as internet or electrical infrastructure may be damaged. Be sure to withdraw plenty of cash before the storm.

HYGIENE + SANITATION

Maintaining good hygiene can stop the spread of bacteria and infectious disease.

- ☐ Antibacterial soap and disinfectant
- ☐ Paper towels, toilet paper and towelettes
- ☐ Bleach and rubbing alcohol
- ☐ Toothbrush and toothpaste

CRITICAL PAPERWORK

Prior to a storm or evacuation, collect and store your critical paperwork in a waterproof storage bag or container. Storing a password-protected backup of your records on a virtual cloud service is also recommended.

- ☐ Driver's license and passports
- ☐ Vehicle registration and proof of insurance
- ☐ Medical and vaccination records
- ☐ Prescription medicine labels
- ☐ Birth certificates and social security cards
- ☐ Marriage certificates
- ☐ Proof of residence (deed or lease)
- ☐ Business and personal tax records
- ☐ Wills
- ☐ Household inventory (photo or video)

COMFORT + PRICELESS ITEMS

You may be away from your home for an extended period and your property may be damaged. Grab any items that are irreplaceable or may provide comfort to your family, especially children.

- ☐ Books, puzzles and favorite stuffed toys
- ☐ Photo albums
- ☐ Valuables and jewelry