

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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Martinsville Seven commemorated with exhibits



Faye Holland, director of the Martinsville 7 Initiative, stands next to part of the recently-opened exhibit on the Martinsville Seven currently on display at the Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI.) The exhibit is the first of seven meant to tell the broader story of the Seven.

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

More than 70 years after they were executed, the stories of the Martinsville Seven are finally being told by two institutions in the city the men called home.

In recent months, two displays have been installed commemorating the history of the Martinsville Seven—one at the Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI) on Fayette Street and another at the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center and Museum on East Main Street. Both are located in Uptown Martinsville.

The Martinsville Seven were Joe Henry Hampton, Frank Hairston Jr., Howard Lee Hairston, James Luther Hairston, John Clabon Taylor, Booker T. Millner, and Francis DeSales Grayson. The seven Black men were found guilty of the 1949 rape of Ruby Floyd by all-white, all-male juries in single-day trials. They were executed in the electric chair on February 2 and 5, 1951. To date, it marked the largest mass execution for a single-victim crime in Virginia's history.

On August 31, Gov. Ralph Northam granted each of the men posthumous pardons in an acknowledgement of the injustice of their sentences.

The exhibit at FAHI opened on Feb. 5. Faye Holland, director of the Martinsville 7 Initiative which spearheaded the creation of the exhibit, said the date was targeted because it was the anniversary of the day the last of the Seven were executed.

In addition to educating the public about this chapter in Martinsville's history, Holland said the display lays the groundwork for future topics that will be expanded upon in subsequent exhibits—seven in all—that will tell a more complete history of the Martinsville Seven. Future exhibits will focus on the crime, the arrests, the trials, executions, and the pardons.

See **Martinsville Seven**, page 9

School board allocates \$1 million for broadband, requests return of sales tax funds

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

The Henry County School Board voted last Thursday to allocate \$1 million from its CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act funds to the Henry County Board of Supervisors for its broadband expansion initiative and to formally request the return of \$2.6 million in sales tax revenue.

Henry County Public Schools Director of Communications Monica Hatchett said the contribution to the broadband initiative would help make internet access a reality for all students and staff members in the school system.

The vote came at the board's public hearing on its proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which was presented to the Henry County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

The motion was made by board member Francis Zehr, of the Ridgeway District. He told Superintendent Sandy Strayer, "it has come to my attention that the county administration has asked you if the board would contribute \$1 million to their broadband initiative."

Strayer confirmed that the request had been made. "They did talk about us contributing funds if they are able to secure funds, and they would also put in funds," she said.

Deputy County Administrator Dale Wagoner said in the county's broadband expansion initiative has been in the works since at least 2020, when a broadband

See **Broadband**, page 7

Council clashes over proposed ARPA spending



Council member Tammy Pearson (far left) questions City Manager Leon Towarnicki about whether more of the city's ARPA funding could be used to proactively address infrastructure issues, particularly water lines that have passed their life expectancy. Vice Mayor Jennifer Bowles (middle) and Mayor Kathy Lawson look on.

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

A discussion about the proposed uses of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding grew heated during Tuesday's regular meeting of the Martinsville City Council. A tense back-and-forth between several council members occurred when council member Tammy Pearson expressed reservations about the

method by which a list of possible projects to be funded through the pandemic relief money was compiled. Pearson called for a process with more public input and discussion.

Her comments came after a presentation by City Manager Leon Towarnicki discussed a proposed project list that was created by city staff, for the \$15.5 million in ARPA funding allocated to the city. He explained

that half the funds were received in June 2021 and noted that the remainder is expected in June of this year. The money, he said, must be committed by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026.

The project list, he said, included both previously discussed projects and others that the city would not normally have

See **Council**, page 10

Drugs, other items seized as investigation ends

A narcotics distribution investigation concluded on February 17, when Henry County Sheriff's investigators executed a search warrant at 121 Kimway Drive, Axton.

Approximately two pounds of suspected Fentanyl, 1½ pounds of methamphetamine, and ½ pound of cocaine were seized, according to a release. The approximate street value of the narcotics seized is in excess of \$100,000.

Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry said police developed

information and issued a search warrant relatively quickly whereas an undercover operation could last anywhere from 6 months to a year and result in the indictments of a number of individuals.

"Any of the opiates can be fatal," Perry said, but Fentanyl is particularly deadly. "Fentanyl is far stronger than any other opiate. It is a synthetic opiate and very small amounts, a few granules (the size of grains of sand) can be a fatal dose. It's very powerful."

Methamphetamine, on the other hand, is less



Items with a value estimated at more than \$160,000 were seized during a recent drug investigation, according to a release from the Henry County Sheriff's Office.

likely to put someone in a medical emergency but places them in an altered state of consciousness that presents hazards of its own, Perry said. "It carries dangers, but it carries a different type of danger." He said users sometimes experience hallucinations while carrying a weapon, or choose to operate a vehicle while in an altered state, both of which could lead to injury or fatality.

Both drugs can continue to affect the body for

See **Drugs Seized**, page 7

County hears presentation on redistricting

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

The Henry County Board of Supervisors heard two presentations on redistricting during its regular meeting on Tuesday.

General Registrar Dawn Stultz-Vaughn discussed the impact of statewide redistricting on the county's district assign-

ments, while Planning, Zoning, and Inspections Director Lee Clark discussed proposed changes to the county's own magisterial districts following the release of 2020 census data.

Vaughn said the required redistricting in Henry County only impacts state district assignments. "There will be no state boundary

shifts, but simply numerical changes to congressional districts, senatorial districts, and house districts," she said.

Previously, Henry County was split between the 5th and 9th congressional districts but, after redistricting, will lie wholly in the 9th district.

The senatorial district number for the entire county will change from

20 to 7, she said.

Henry County's house districts were previously listed as the 9th, 14th, and 16th. Now, Vaughn said the westernmost third of the county will be located in the 47th house district, while the remaining two-thirds of the county, including the City of Martinsville, will be part of the 48th district.

Vaughn said every voter in Henry County would receive a notice from her office explaining

See **Redistricting**, page 9



Supervisors Debra Buchanan (far left), Tommy Slaughter (second from left), and Garrett Dillard, (far right), present a resolution to the Hon. Judge David Williams (second from right), commending his service to the county. Williams, who is set to retire at the end of this month, has served the community for more than 42 years, including more than 30 years as the county's circuit court judge.

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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)

Thursday, March 3

The Henry County School Board will hold its regular meeting beginning at 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.)

P&HCC is offering a hyflex (in-person or virtual) professional development workshop, "Customer Service: Rev Up Your Engines" from 9-11 a.m. This workshop focuses on ensuring guests have the best possible experience at hotels or restaurants. Cost is \$49 (register by Feb. 17 for a \$10 discount.) To register, visit ph.augusoft.net or call (276) 656-0260.

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 an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Friday, March 4-6

P&HCC is offering a motorcycle basic rider course. This 3-day course is for those who want to learn to ride a motorcycle properly and safely. Motorcycles and helmets are provided for your use during the course. Sessions meet Friday from 6-9:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. The cost of the class is \$100. Pre-registration is required. Call (276) 656-5461 or visit ph.augusoft.net.

Saturday, March 5

Piedmont Arts presents its annual, fabulous fundraiser Dancing for the Arts beginning at 4 p.m. in the Martinsville High School Auditorium. The contest features 8 teams competing to win the most votes, the highest score from the judges, and a set of hand-crafted trophies. The cost is \$10 for general admission and \$25 for reserved seating. Purchase tickets at piedmontarts.org.

Monday, March 7

The Martinsville-Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Health is hosting a free vaccine clinic from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Henry County Food Pantry (3321 Fairystone Parkway, Bassett.) To register, call Karen Millner at (276) 759-3131.

Thursday, March 10

Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) is celebrating Art at

Happy Hour. Enjoy happy hour with complimentary drinks and light snacks provided by the Piedmont Arts Guild while you go on a casual, self-guided tour of current exhibits. RSVP by March 9 to (276) 632-3221 or online at piedmontarts.org

Friday, March 11

It's Music Night at the Spencer Penn Centre! Enjoy tunes from the Jus Cauz Bluegrass Band in the Centre's Alumni Hall (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer.) Gate opens at 5 p.m. and the band goes on at 6:15. Admission is a \$5 donation. Social distancing will be required, and masks when distancing is not possible. Concessions will be sold.

Saturday, March 12

The Martinsville-Henry County SPCA is hosting the WOOFSTOCK Fur Ball at Chatmoss Country Club (550 Mt. Olivet Road, Martinsville) beginning at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$95 per person and include food, live music by Seven Til Sunrise, and an open bar. The event also includes a live auction, silent auction, and raffle tickets. For more information or to purchase tickets visit spamhc.org or call (276) 252-9014.

Thursday, March 17

The Henry County School Board will hold a special meeting beginning at 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.)

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 an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Friday, March 18

The Spencer Penn Centre is hosting Bingo. Doors open at 5 p.m., games begin at 6 p.m. \$20/20 games. \$1 game for members only at intermission.

The American Red Cross is hosting a blood drive at Hillcrest Baptist Church (18075 AL Philpott Hwy, Ridgeway) from 1-6 p.m. To schedule an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Friday, March 18-20

P&HCC is offering a motorcycle basic rider course. This 3-day course is for those who want to learn to ride a motorcycle properly and safely. Motorcycles and helmets are provided for your use during the course. Sessions meet Friday from 6-9:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. The cost of the class is \$100. Call (276)

656-5461 or visit ph.augusoft.net.

Saturday, March 19

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) is hosting a grapevine wreath class from 1-3 p.m. The cost is \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members. Students should wear gloves and bring a flathead screwdriver to class. Pre-registration is required by calling (276) 957-5757. The cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members.

Thursday, March 24-26

VMFA on the Road will be at Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville.) The program is a traveling art museum from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond that brings art to remote corners of Virginia by way of the Museum's Statewide Partners program. Visitors will be able to tour "A View from Home: Landscapes of Virginia."

Friday, March 25

Join Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) for an opening reception in honor of the museum's newest exhibits beginning at 5:30 p.m. Complimentary wine and light refreshments will be served. The reception is free and open to the public.

Saturday, March 26

The Martinsville-Henry SPCA, the Martinsville City Police Department, and PetSense are partnering to host a microchip clinic from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. at PetSense (240 Commonwealth Blvd. W, Martinsville.) The cost of a microchip and registration is \$10. Dogs must be on leashes and cats must be in carriers for the safety of the animal.

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) is hosting Painting with Genie beginning at 1 p.m. All supplies are provided. Pre-registration is required and can be done by calling the Centre at (276) 957-5757. The cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members.

Sunday, March 27

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) will host a barn quilt class from 12-4 p.m. All supplies are provided and pricing is based on size, ranging from \$75 to \$85. The registration deadline is Friday, March 18. For more details or to register, call the Centre at (276) 957-5757.

Tuesday, March 29

The Bassett Historical Center (3964 Fairystone Park Highway, Bassett) will feature music from the local country and gospel group the Southern Gentlemen from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. The program is free and open to the public. Masks will be required.

ONGOING

The Louise R. Lester Spay/Neuter Clinic is hosting wellness clinics every Tuesday. Clinics are by appointment only—no walk-ins will be accepted. February's clinics will be dedicated to families with public assistance only, but will open to everyone beginning in March. Call (276) 638-7297 to schedule your appointment.

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 make a donation can find more information on Facebook or at www.foresthillspc.com/mhc-warming-shelter.html.

Patrick & Henry Community College is organizing a virtual Leadership Learning Community! If you have leadership questions, P&HCC can connect you with answers through this virtual community. Participants have the opportunity to collaborate and brainstorm current, real-time challenges and successes with fellow leaders while learning from each other or gaining insights from professionals skilled in areas of concern. Sessions will be held from 4-5 p.m. every other Wednesday, through June 22. Prices range from \$225 for 12 sessions all the way to \$25 for individual sessions. For more information or to register, visit ph.augusoft.net or call (276) 656-0260.

Piedmont Arts hosts three exhibits: "Our Living Past: Platinum Portraits of Southern Music Makers," "Dear B.J.: Postcards from the Pandemic," and "Tara Compton." All exhibits run through March 12. Museum admission is free.

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.

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 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 at (276) 647-9585.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
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49				50	51				52	53	54
	56					57		58			59
				60							
										63	

- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Constrictors
 - 5. Abounding in rocks
 - 11. Speed
 - 14. German city
 - 15. Lacking sympathy
 - 18. Visionaries
 - 19. Wastes away
 - 21. One precursor to the EU
 - 23. Nursemaid
 - 24. Unconsciousnesses
 - 28. Baby's word for father
 - 29. Equal to 64 US pints (abbr.)
 - 30. Senses of self-importance
 - 32. Midway between south and southwest
 - 33. When you hope to get there
 - 35. Electronic data
 - 36. Passports and drivers' licences are two
 - 39. Fishes
 - 41. Air Force
 - 42. Personal computers
 - 44. Ecological community
 - 46. Wings
 - 47. Halfway
 - 49. Cool, calm and collected
 - 52. Jewelled headdress
 - 56. Musical composition
 - 58. ___ Falls
 - 60. Repeating remarks
 - 62. Periods in one's life
 - 63. Hyphen
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. ___ Humbug!
 - 2. Devices that alert pilots (abbr.)
 - 3. Grocer
 - 4. One point east of southeast
 - 5. Subjects to hostility
 - 6. Work unit
 - 7. Atomic #56
 - 8. British thermal unit
 - 9. "Elusive Butterfly" singer
 - 10. Fastened over animal's neck
 - 12. Device
 - 13. Rechargeable power source
 - 16. Ancient sage
 - 17. Consist of two elements
 - 20. "Pygmalion" writer
 - 22. "The Centennial State" (abbr.)
 - 25. Of I
 - 26. Get older
 - 27. Brotherhoods
 - 29. Buzzing insect
 - 31. Sunscreen rating
 - 34. Brew
 - 36. Leader
 - 37. Indigo bush
 - 38. Burn with a hot liquid
 - 40. Junior's dad
 - 43. Horse mackerels genus
 - 45. Morning
 - 48. Unit of linear measurement (abbr.)
 - 50. Double curve
 - 51. Small, twisted bunch
 - 53. Developed
 - 54. Mars crater
 - 55. Humanistic discipline
 - 57. Word element meaning ear
 - 58. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
 - 59. Wood residue
 - 61. It cools your home

Bassett residents earn award from WGU

Two Bassett residents earned an Award of Excellence at Western Governors University. The award is given to students who perform at a superior level in their coursework. * Phyllis Dalton, of Bassett, has earned an Award of Excellence at Western Governors University College of Health Professions. * Shannon Whitlow, of Bassett, has earned an Award of Excellence

at Western Governors University College of Business. Established in 1997 by 19 U.S. governors with a mission to expand access to high-quality, affordable higher education, online, non-profit WGU now serves more than 131,000 students nationwide and has more than 257,000 graduates in all 50 states. Learn more at www.wgu.edu.

City reverses stance on student mask requirement



Martinsville City Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley at Tuesday's meeting of the city school board, where the updated mask policy was announced. (Contributed photo.)

Martinsville City Public Schools will allow students to opt out of wearing a mask while in school beginning March 1. The school system announced the change in a letter signed by Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley that went out to parents on Wednesday. School board chairman Donna Dillard previously announced that, despite Gov. Glenn Youngkin's executive order lifting the statewide mask requirement for public school students, the division would continue to require

its students to mask. The change in position comes after Youngkin signed Senate Bill 739 into law on Feb. 16, allowing parents to opt out of school mask mandates for their children. "To opt out, you must notify your child's principal in writing," the letter stated. "If you do not notify the school of the opt out, your student must continue to follow our mask requirement." "As a division, we will continue to strongly encourage mask wearing as a key strategy in our efforts

to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our schools and community. We will focus on maintaining a positive and welcoming learning environment in which students feel comfortable wearing a mask," the letter stated. "It is important to note that, per federal regulations, students will need to continue wearing masks on school buses. All staff members will also be required to wear masks in our buildings, per Virginia Department of Labor and Industry guidelines," it added.

Blue Ridge Fire & EMS Academy graduates first class



The first class of the Blue Ridge Fire & EMS Academy (above) graduated last week in a ceremony held in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building. Class 001 graduated 9 students, pictured here with their instructors and staff members from both the Henry County and Franklin County departments of public safety.

Two of the graduates (pictured left), Kevin Perkins (left) and Ashton McCloy (right), will join the staff of the Henry County Department of Public Safety under the management of director Matt Tatum (center.)

Each graduate was presented with a wooden axe (right) emblazoned with their name and "Class 001."



Middle school students celebrate Black History Month with research project

Walking into the doors at Martinsville Middle School, visitors are surrounded by college clouds and banners. Not just those of colleges and universities, but of those of student created universities using some of our amazing first African Americans. Maya Angelou said it best, "The more you know of your history, the more liberated you are." Rosa Parks, Ruby Bridges, Harriett Tubman, along with many more, instantly come to mind when you think of Black History Month. But what about those who were the first in our everyday careers, trades, life, entertainment, and other fields? That is where Morgan Belton's classes comes to play. Belton, AVID Coordinator at Martinsville Middle School, wanted to provide her students with the opportunity to see that there are more heroes out there, not

just those who are celebrated and taught in school. Each student in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade in her AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) classes had to research the first African American either in their career, trade choice, hobby, or area of interest, and it could not be someone that students already knew or had heard about. Once research was complete, students then created a college/university banner based upon their legacy. "Seeing the students become engaged, curious, and proud while diving into their research and physically creating something made it exciting for me to see especially in a time where everything is being done digitally," Belton said. "My goal was for the students to see that there are more remarkable people who has accomplished countless of things, especially in the careers, trades, interests, and hobbies of their liking."

Ms. Buchanan, a 7th grade Math teacher, said, "It brought so much joy to my heart to see students creating artifacts of their learning with their hands. Having so many digital assignments over the last few years has removed an essential element of learning which encourages students to express themselves through authentically creative experiences. Seeing the finished products hanging on the walls of the school has given them a sense of pride in their learning. They were excited to do the research, to discuss ideas with their peers, and to create their pennants in celebration of Black History Month. Students were truly invested in their learning." "I am very proud of the work of our teachers and students," said Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley. "Creativity is a very important part of academic instruction."



Kirra Shelton, Layla Garrett, Aliyah James with banners created for Black History Month.



Back row: Amyah Richardson, Sherman Dillard, Angeliah Eccles; middle row: Alyana Hairston, Briana Reid, front: Jazmin Moto Ocampo.



Black History Month banners created by middle school students in Martinsville.

Localities may compete for federal funding on new resource page

With billions of dollars in infrastructure funding up for grabs, U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner, D-Alexandria, is working to give a leg up to Virginia's counties, cities, towns, tribes, and stakeholders. On Tuesday, Warner unveiled a new resource webpage that will make these dollars as accessible as possible for Virginia localities as they prepare to compete for the funding, which was authorized by the bipartisan infrastructure law negotiated by Warner and signed by President Joe Biden. "I'm excited to launch this page to help Virginia localities access the funding I was proud to negotiate and secure through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Virginia stands to gain a historic amount of competitive funding, but only if we apply and compete for it. This site will help connect Virginians to key resources and help them stay on top of grant and funding opportunities," said Warner. Among other things, the site:

• Visualizes application due dates with an interactive calendar, allowing users to better track deadlines.

- Filters grants by federal agency, allowing users to better locate grants that fit their needs.
- Enables users to easily request a letter from the Senator in support of a grant application.
- Provides a snapshot look at the funding that is already making its way to Virginia, and allows users to view in detail how that funding will be distributed and utilized throughout the Commonwealth.

This competitive funding comes in addition to billions of dollars in formula funding, also authorized by the bipartisan infrastructure law. Formula funding is non-competitive and determined by pre-existing formulas, which are based on statistical criteria. In general, states, localities, and other entities that normally receive infrastructure funding from Congress can expect to receive a boost of additional federal dollars, distributed through traditional programs. The webpage may be accessed at <https://www.warner.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/infrastructure-lawresourcesforvirginia>.



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OPINION

Tournament night

As regular readers of this space know, I have an obsession with pinball that some would argue borders on psychosis. Lately I've begun attending some pinball tournaments.

I don't attend these tournaments hoping to win. While I'd love to win, I'm a realist and I know my limits. I know that ten percent of the time, I'm an unstoppable player, a force of nature that cannot be reckoned with. Unfortunately, 20 percent of the time, I'm the worst player that ever lived. The remaining 70 percent of the time is pretty much all over the map between those two points. Since tournaments don't consist of you just playing the same game over and over again for a couple of hours until you actually play a good game, I realize my chances of winning a tournament are slim to none.

Instead, I attend tournaments with two goals. The first goal is to have fun. I enjoy meeting like-minded weirdos such as myself. I enjoy being able to turn to a person and say, "Man, I just can't get dialed in on that upper rollover to light the pop bumpers on Spanish Eyes," and have them know exactly what I'm talking about.

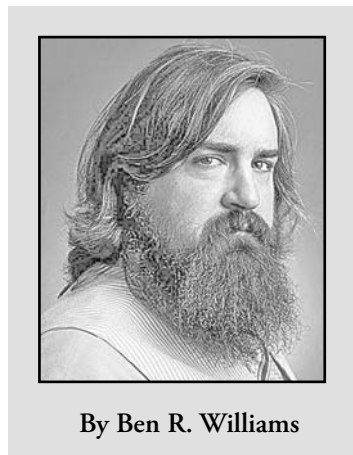
My second goal is to not embarrass myself. This goal is harder to attain, but I'm proud to say that I have yet to come in dead last in a tournament.

In fact, I've had a few pretty good moments.

The best moment I've ever had at a tournament came just a few months ago. The tournament rules were that groups of four players would be randomly assigned to different machines; you'd play eight different machines over the course of the night against three other randomly selected players.

One of the machines I was assigned to was PinBot, one of my all-time favorite machines. Dating from 1986, PinBot is considered one of the most iconic machines ever made. The theme of the machine is that you're playing against some sort of giant pinball-themed robot in outer space. At the top of the playfield is PinBot's robotic facial visor, and when you hit enough targets, the visor opens, allowing you to shoot two pinballs into his eye sockets. Once you've done that, PinBot speaks to you, kicks out both balls, and you get to play two-ball multiball and your scores are doubled as long as you keep both balls in play.

When I'm in a tournament, I always like to introduce myself to the other players, and I'm always sure to congratulate them on a good game even if they just metaphorically kicked my teeth in. If I'm getting beaten really badly and my turn comes up, I also like to say stuff like, "Well folks, I reckon it's time I show ya'll how this game is played." People enjoy that; it shows them that I don't take myself too seriously and also that I'm aware of



By Ben R. Williams

how badly I'm sucking.

I had three opponents on PinBot that fateful evening. My first opponent, whom we'll call Bertha, was a brassy older lady who, like me, was just there to have fun (although I later found out she was a solid player, and she smoked me on a couple of games).

The next player we'll call The Master. I knew the moment I saw him that he was a serious contender. He was a small fellow wearing Bermuda shorts and a 25-year-old South Park T-shirt; I recognized that shirt because I'd bought that same one at Spencer Gifts in 1997. He was a really friendly guy, and he had the air of a man who doesn't take the tournament too seriously because he knows he has nothing to prove. His first place showing later that evening was proof that he was the real deal.

The third player was a young lady in a leather biker jacket, punked out with piercings and tattoos and whatnot.

"Hi," I said, sticking out my

hand to her. "I'm Ben."

"Hi," she said with a smile. "I'm Pinky, and I'm looking forward to destroying you tonight."

I don't begrudge anyone a little trash talk, and I certainly wasn't offended by Pinky's confident remark. However, I'm a big fan of the concept of "underpromise and overdeliver," and I resolved then and there that I was going to do my level best to utterly obliterate Pinky at pinball as quietly and humbly as possible. I already knew I couldn't beat The Master, but I figured a strong second place showing would be good enough.

Modern pinball machines are set to three-ball play, which means you get three balls to set your high score with the score on each ball being cumulative. Some people insist on setting their machines to five-ball play, but these are disturbed individuals that I try not to associate with. On a multiplayer game, each player alternates between balls; this means that the game isn't over until the last ball is played, and the very last player can sometimes pull off an amazing upset.

We set to playing PinBot, and as I had expected, The Master quickly established a formidable lead. Bertha, meanwhile, was playing a solid game, but Pinky and I were struggling. PinBot can be a cruel and unforgiving game, and while pinball is a game of skill and not chance, one bad bounce can quickly bury you, and PinBot has a lot of opportunities for bad bounces.

By the time my turn came up on ball three, Bertha and

The Master's games had ended. Bertha had about 300,000 points, while The Master had a little over 600,000 points. I had about 200,000, and Pinky had about 100,000. I was leading her, but not by enough; it was still anyone's game.

I launched my ball and nailed both of the skill shots, which are timed shots that happen at the very beginning of the game. The second skill shot caused PinBot's visor to open, revealing his robot eye sockets.

I fired one ball into a socket, then a second one into the other socket.

In his robotic voice, the height of 1986 technology, PinBot said the words that sealed Pinky's fate:

"NOW. I. SEE. YOU."

The two balls kicked out and I played a long multiball, my scores doubled. Suddenly, I noticed someone was excitedly cheering me on; it was The Master himself, congratulating me even as I demolished his own score!

I ended up winning the entire game with a score of 755,580 points; Pinky, meanwhile, wrapped things up with 132,030 points. The Master congratulated me again, and then I shook Pinky's hand.

"Good game," I said.

"Eh, I'm too drunk to play anyway," she said. But she didn't seem drunk at all to me.

Like I said, The Master ended up winning the whole tournament, and he certainly deserved to. But during that one game of PinBot, I got to briefly wear his crown.

Weekly Update

Del. Les R. Adams
16th House District

This week in Richmond, lawmakers in the Virginia General Assembly are again engaged in committee work to consider bills passed by the opposite chamber. Many of these initial bills under consideration in first days following "crossover" are those with a Senate companion, or similar legislation on the same topic, that have already passed that body. Of those that I introduced, a few have recently been reported to the Senate floor for final passage.

One of my bills that does not fit into that category is House Bill 753, respecting the liberty

of religious organizations to promote and remain consistent with their own beliefs under what appears in the Virginia Code as the euphemistically named "Human Rights Act." This Act of Assembly, previously passed by the Democrat controlled legislature last term, incorporated what was then referred to as the so-called "Virginia Values Act" that, contrary to the values held by Virginians all across the state, may now be used to deny implementation of non-progressive viewpoints regarding social issues.

As such, Christians and other faith based religious organizations find themselves in a particularly perilous situation under

laws that, as signed by former governor Ralph Northam, conveyed broad new authority for the state to prohibit and redress newly identified bases of discrimination, including marital status. Of course, issues relative to the nature of marriage and gender are those that often intersect with religious belief and practice. Therefore, churches, Christian schools, and other similarly oriented groups seek amendment to the existing law for protection against state interference.

My bill, as it passed the House of Delegates, is a very modest proposal that would provide religious liberty protections in three limited respects. First, as to the section exempting religious groups from certain employment rules, the bill specifies that consistent with our American heritage of freedom,

the term "religion" includes "all aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief."

Second, also under the employment section, preschools are added to the list of other religiously affiliated schools that propagate religious faith and thereby warrant defense from lawsuits and other actions by the Attorney General. That is, early learning centers would join certain elementary, secondary, and higher educational institutions in the protections currently afforded.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the section governing how the "Human Rights Act" is to be construed altogether, would be amended to include the following language that unfortunately is currently missing. "Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit a religious corporation, association,

or society, or any nonprofit institution or organization operated, supervised, or controlled by or in conjunction with a religious organization, association or society, from taking any action as is calculated by it to promote the religious principles for which it is established or maintained."

Two Democrats joined all Republicans in voting for this bill on the floor of the House of Delegates. If at least one does so in Senate committee, and thereafter on the Senate floor with expected Republican support, I have no doubt it will be signed by Governor Youngkin. We will soon learn whether he will have that opportunity.

Contact me at P.O. Box K, Chatham, Virginia, 24531; or (434) 432-1600 in Chatham and (804) 698-1016 in Richmond.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

What's a R.I.N.O

A rhino is a horned mammal you see in the zoo; a R.I.N.O. is a "Republican in name only." Some of them might belong behind bars too. Republican voters are furious as four senate "R.I.N.O.s," Romney, Inhofe, Graham, and Burr, did not even show up to vote on an amendment that would have defunded President Biden's vaccine mandates.

I'm not loyal to either party. In the 60s I would've voted for JFK, for sure RFK. In the 90s I would have voted for Ross Perot (even if my Mom did not like him). I'm not a fan of the Bush family. Ted Cruz is just embarrassing. I didn't vote at all in 2012; if I knew then what I know now, I would've voted for Ron Paul.

While many are unhappy with the Republican party the Democratic party is not doing any better. The headline in February 17th's Virginian-Pilot article read, "The brand is so toxic: Inside the Democratic Party's struggle in rural America." The article quotes former Sen. Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota as saying, "the brand is so toxic that people who are

Democrats, the ones left, aren't fighting for the party."

Two parties and nobody's happy. People are double vaxxed and double masked. Millennials are upset with the housing market; everyone's upset with inflation. According to the media it appears that the students who are not walking out over mask mandates receive an education solely on racism and LGBT propaganda. What can save us?

This is where a reader says, "Please don't say religion." Well, American sectarianism is not going to save us.

The Charismatic-Holiness sect, known historically for its Oral Roberts "faith healing campaigns," has not only not healed anyone from Covid-19, but has had pastors die with Covid-19. In August 2020 the Martinsville Bulletin reported that Mark Price had "apparently" died from Covid-19. He was only 62.

The United Methodist sect has been delaying a split since 2019 caused by disagreements on the LGBT issue. They let women preach when the Bible said not to (1Tim. 2:11-12), so why not just ignore the Bible's ruling

on homosexuality.

While the Southern Baptist Convention has been following the New Testament's teaching against homosexuality, they've had a mess on their hands with sex scandals surfacing over the past two years. This past October ABC ran this headline: "Southern Baptist leader resigns amid rifts over sex abuse."

I believe that the New Testament church can rescue America. Religion in the first century looked nothing like today's sectarianism. Jews had the temple; Christians met in their homes (Romans 16:5). There were no trustee boards, but each autonomous congregation had elders (Acts 14:23).

I think if the community consisted of small groups of five to ten Christians studying their New Testament in someone's home, then we would see a new attitude forming. Neighborhoods make the town, towns make the state, and the states make the nation. It's worth a try. Could we possibly do any worse than the current clergy?

Caleb Robertson,
Martinsville

Letters to the Editor Guidelines

Henry County Enterprise welcomes letters to the editor and/or reader viewpoints of 500 words or less. Submissions may be edited for clarity, length, legal ramifications or general taste at the editor's discretion. We reserve the right to refuse to publish submitted letters for the same reasons. All letters must be signed by an individual and include community. Letters that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered for publication. Viewpoints and opinions expressed in letters selected for publication are the opinions of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Henry County Enterprise.

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Give us your view:
The Henry County Enterprise encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publication. The Henry County Enterprise reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

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

Fans can drive personal vehicles around Martinsville Speedway to benefit local agencies

As part of its 75th anniversary season, Martinsville Speedway will host Track Laps for Charity during the spring's three-race night race week and fall's penultimate NASCAR Playoffs race week. Track Laps for Charity offers fans the opportunity to drive their personal vehicles around Martinsville's historic half-mile for a donation of \$25. All proceeds will support the beneficiary charity.

"For our 75th anniversary season, Martinsville Speedway will host Track Laps for Charity as part of our NASCAR race weeks to offer fans the opportunity to drive their family and friends around the historic half-mile," said Clay Campbell, Martinsville Speedway President. "We look forward to welcoming the community to the track for a ride before NASCAR's best take to the track."

This year's Track Laps for Charity events at Martinsville Speedway will continue to support organizations making a difference in our community. Martinsville Speedway will host Track Laps for Charity events to benefit Vet Tix on Wednesday, April 6 and Grace Network on Wednesday, Oct. 26. The events will be held under the lights from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

"Martinsville Speedway's Track Laps for Charity is such a fun experience for families to enjoy the excitement and thrill of riding on a NASCAR track," said Navy veteran, Michael A. Focareto III, Founder & CEO, Vet Tix. "Vet Tix is honored to partner with Martinsville Speedway as they continue to support our military/veteran community through this special opportunity to make lasting memories."

Vet Tix is a national 501(c)(3) non-profit that provides event tickets to their 1.6 million verified veterans, currently serving military members and first responder members. To date, Vet Tix has distributed over 9.7 million tickets. Vet Tix has built a well-respected brand over the years with hundreds of thousands of testimonials from their members (VetTixers) sharing how these experiences the organization provided them has contributed to incredible lifelong memories, opportunities for veterans, service members, and their families to reintegrate into society and American life all while strengthening their family bonds and sharing event experiences. To learn more about Vet Tix, visit www.vettix.org.

"We are so grateful to partner with Martinsville Speedway each year as we

prepare to serve the children right here in our community," said Tracy Hinchcliff, executive director, Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County. "We have many families that walk the line of poverty each day and to help their children celebrate with toys at Christmas or food assistance during the year, Martinsville Speedway has been an amazing partner. Giving back to the community we love is essential for all of us and to know that your purchases and donations are changing lives every day! Grace Network has been a beacon of hope for over 15 years in Martinsville and Henry County and what better partner to help those in need, than to have The Martinsville Speedway walk along side of us to make a difference."

The Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County 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.

To participate in Track Laps for Charity, fans must abide by the following rules to provide all participants with a safe experience:

All drivers must be 18 years of age or older with a valid state-issued driver's license.

Driver and passengers must sign Track Laps for Charity waivers.

All participants must adhere to Virginia state laws regarding the use of seat belts and child safety restraints.

Passenger vehicles only; motorcycles are not permitted.

Maximum speed is 55 miles per hour and regulated by Martinsville Speedway personnel in the Official Chevrolet Camaro Pace Car.

Drivers must stay up to speed and refrain from lagging behind in order to speed up.

Track Laps for Charity may be postponed or canceled due to inclement weather or safety conditions. If a cancellation is necessary, Martinsville Speedway will make its best effort to contact guests in advance of their visit.

For more information, visit www.martinsvillespeedway.com/events/tracklaps-forcharity.

Axton man held with no bond in shooting incident

A shooting incident that occurred on February 18 remains under investigation, according to a release from the Henry County Sheriff's Office.

At approximately 1:05 a.m. that day, the Martinsville-Henry County Emergency 911 Center received a call that a person at 964 Southland Drive, Martinsville, was shot in the abdomen.

Henry County Sheriff's deputies responded to the scene and made contact with Ray E. Durlinger, Jr., 42, of 964 Southland Drive, who had suffered a gunshot wound to his abdomen. He was transported to SOVAH Health Martinsville and subsequently air-lifted to a North Carolina hospital for treatment of life-threatening injuries.

Investigators determined that a man was at Durlinger's residence, where an argument ensued outside near the road. During the argument, a firearm was produced and Durlinger suffered a single gunshot wound. The alleged shooter fled the scene, according to the release.

Jake Raleigh Robertson, 23, of Axton, was later taken into custody



during a traffic stop. He is currently held in the Henry County Jail with no bond on charges that include aggravated malicious wounding and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

The investigation is ongoing. 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). Crimestoppers 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.

Payment plans and audits available after impact of January weather on utility bills

As the City of Martinsville experienced extremely low temperatures during the month of January, some customers may have received higher utility bills than expected due to higher kilowatt consumption.

The speculation and rumors circulating on social media stating that rates have been increased are not true. The City of Martinsville has not increased utility rates since July 2020.

Payment plans are available for customers who need assistance with paying their utility bill. Contact the Utility Billing Department at (276) 403-5146 during business hours for more information.

For customers who would like to request an energy audit, call (276) 403-5183 during business hours.

Free event in the galleries set for March 10

Enjoy a casual tour of the museum's current exhibits and a Zoom talk with Our Living Past photographer Timothy Duffy during Art at Happy Hour on Thursday, March 10, from 5 - 7 p.m. at Piedmont Arts.

For over 35 years, Duffy has forged a unique vision immortalizing Southern musical heroes and the world in which they live. The founder of Music Maker Foundation — a non-profit that preserves the musical traditions of the South by directly supporting the musicians who make it — Duffy traveled the South to capture the compelling collection of 25 wet-plate collodion photographs featured in Our Living Past: Platinum Portraits of Southern Music Makers. The exhibit includes portraits ranging from guitar virtuoso and Allman Brothers Band member Derek Trucks and legendary bluesman Taj Mahal to lesser-known blues and soul artists, as well as images of instruments, like former Carolina Chocolate Drops member Dom Flemons' circa 1920 banjo, "Big Head Joe."

Dear B.J.: Postcards from the Pandemic is a creative non-fiction interpretation of life in Appalachia during the COVID-19 pandemic, as imagined by artist L.S. King through intimate postcard-sized images and written correspondence. Each card features a black-and-white photograph with a backside written to a mysterious B.J. and signed by "ME." Through these vagaries, King invites the viewer into a shared world. Perhaps you wonder who B.J. is, or maybe you know. Perhaps you relate to the "ME" who signed the cards. And as you think about it all, perhaps you overlay King's visual narrative over your own.

Tara Compton's eponymous exhibit features work by the local abstract painter, sculptor and jewelry designer.

Art at Happy Hour is free and open to the public with complimentary sips and snacks. RSVP attendance by March 9 to (276) 632-3221 or online at PiedmontArts.org.

Exhibits on display through Saturday, March 12. Exhibit admission is always free. Our Living Past: Platinum Portraits of Southern Music Makers on display at Piedmont Arts through March 12.



Preschool in the Galleries returns to Piedmont Arts

Local preschools were able to attend Piedmont Arts' Preschool in the Galleries for the first time in two years on February 16. Carlisle School's Zip Zap Zop theatre troupe, under the direction of Susan Aaron, entertained the preschoolers with songs about loving our unique selves; shapes and colors; and acted out a silly story that had the children in fits of giggles.

Have a preschooler? Piedmont Arts' free Discovery Room for creative play is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to

5 p.m., and be sure to visit PiedmontArts.org for information on upcoming Wee Create! classes for toddlers and their trusted adults. The next Wee Create! is Thursday, April 14 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Piedmont Arts.

Piedmont Arts is a nonprofit art museum, located at 215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville. Museum hours are Tuesday - Saturday from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free. Learn more at www.PiedmontArts.org.



Preschoolers from First Baptist Church Early Learning Center and Happy Feet Early Learning and Child Center take part in Preschool in the Galleries at Piedmont Arts on February 16.

City authorities seek information about robbery

Martinsville Police officers responded to a report of a robbery at Sparky's Food Store, 604 Starling Avenue, around 9:30 p.m. on February 20.

According to the store owner, a black male, dressed in a black hooded sweatshirt and wearing a red bandana over his face, entered the store, produced a handgun and demanded money.

After a brief struggle with the owner, the man allegedly grabbed the cash register and fled from the store. The man left in a dark colored vehicle.

No one was hurt during the incident.

Investigators and officers processed the scene for evidence, and also are asking anyone with any information related to the incident to please contact Lt. Sandy Hines at (276) 403-5328, the Martinsville Police Department at (276) 403-5300, or Crime Stoppers at 276-63-CRIME (276-632-7463). Crime Stoppers is an anonymous tip line. Callers with information leading to an arrest and conviction could be eligible for up to a \$2,500 reward.



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OBITUARIES

Wanda Diane Sink Arrington

Wanda Diane Sink Arrington, 74, of Martinsville, VA passed away Thursday, February 17, 2022, at Viviant Healthcare of Bristol, TN. She was born September 29, 1947, in Rocky Mount, VA to the late Peter Oscar Sink and Winfred Lucy Martin Sink. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Danny Herman Arrington; sister, Eleanor Sink Washburn (Bobby); special niece, Cathy Hickson; and twin nephews, Michael Gene Washburn and Robert Dean Washburn.

She is survived by her son, Michael Dean Arrington and wife, Jane of Piney Flats, TN; half-sister, Sharon



Pagans of Rocky Mount, VA; half-brother, P.O. Sink of Rocky Mount, VA; grandchildren, Taylor Biggs-Arrington and Mason Arrington. Also surviving are many special nieces and nephews.

The funeral was held on February 20, 2022, at Snow Creek Christian Church, with Reverend Scott Oliver officiating.

Donations may be made to the Snow Creek Christian Church Backpack Program; 4970 Snow Creek Road, Martinsville, VA 24112.

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

David Garland "Sonny" Draper

David Garland "Sonny" Draper, 85, of Martinsville, VA passed away Saturday, February 19, 2022, at Woltz Hospice Home. He was born March 27, 1936, to the late Frank Lester Draper and Gladys Parcell Draper. He was also preceded in death by his sister, Shirley Draper Agee and brother, Randall Leslie Draper.

Sonny was a member of Granberry United Methodist Church and was manager/part owner of D & A Cafe. After retiring from D & A, he became an avid bird watcher and professional grocery shopper.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy Lawrence Draper of the home; daughter, Kimberly Draper Woolf (Bill) of



Richmond, VA; grandson, Benjamin David Woolf; brother, Frank L. Draper, Jr. (Jeannie) of Ridgeway, VA; sister, Lemma Sue Draper Cobbler (George); numerous nieces and nephews; and special caregiver, Janeise Collins.

A graveside service was held February 24, 2022, at Roselawn Burial Park, with Lay Preacher, Tom Blair officiating.

Memorial donations may be made to Granberry United Methodist Church, St. Jude Children's Hospital, or a charity of your choice.

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

Billy Green Joyce

Billy Green Joyce, 88, of Bassett, VA passed away Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at the Landmark Center in Stuart, VA. He was born November 22, 1933, in Spencer, VA to the late Thomas Green Joyce and Ida Terry Joyce. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sisters, Louise Joyce Helms and Mary Joyce Johnson; and brothers, George and Harold Joyce.

Mr. Joyce was payroll manager at Stanley Furniture where he worked for 38 years. He was a very active church member, serving in many roles as Deacon, Treasurer, and Sunday School Teacher. He was a member of First Baptist Church of Collinsville and served in the U.S. Army from 1955-1957.

He is survived by his loving wife of 66



years, Bobbie Koger Joyce of Bassett, VA; daughter, Taujina Martin (Dickie) of Collinsville, VA; son, Barry Joyce (Deborah) of Salem, VA; grandchildren, Brandon Martin (Ashley), Adam and Halle Joyce; and great-grandchildren, Jacob and Eli Martin.

The funeral was held on February 20, 2022, at First Baptist Church of Collinsville with Rev., Dr. Larry Cheek officiating. Burial will be held Friday, February 25, 2022, at 1 p.m. at Henry Memorial Park.

Memorial donations may be made to First Baptist Church of Collinsville, 3339 Virginia Ave., Collinsville, VA 24078.

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

James Wiley "J.W." Meeks

James Wiley "J.W." Meeks, 63, of Fieldale, Virginia passed away on Saturday, February 19, 2022, at SOVAH Health of Martinsville. He was born January 9, 1959, in Franklin County, Virginia to the late James Troy Meeks and Allie Maye Ferguson Meeks.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sisters, Carlene Wright, Darlene Bowers, Brenda Richards, and Linda Richards.

James enjoyed being outdoors and



loved spending time with family and friends.

James is survived by his nieces, Sheila Martin (Lonnie), Samantha Bowers, Tammy Stoneaman (H.B.), Rebecca Richards, Jennifer Martin; and nephews, Tommy Lee Bowers, Jr., and J.D Hutchens; and several great nieces and nephews.

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

Kathy Preston

Kathy Preston, 63, of Collinsville, Virginia passed away Friday, February 18, 2022, at Kindred Hospital. She was born May 8, 1958, in Franklin County, Virginia to the late Sidney Simmons and Mary Ferguson Hale.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her stepfather, David Hale; and brother, Terry Wayne Simmons.

Kathy enjoyed spending time at the beach. She was employed by Radial for more than 10 years.

Kathy is survived by her daughters, Addie Renee Johnson and Tabetha



Cline; sons, Eric Law (Abdel) Saleh, and Bradley Shively (Angela); sister, Joyce Goodwin; grandchildren, Traketa Cline, Taylor Cline, Tyheim Cline, Brooke Shively, Dylan Shively, Nova Shively, Alivia Law, Austin Law, Ja'Naya Ross, Madison Ross, Zaiden Johnson, Laila Johnson; seven great grandchildren and one special great

grandchild, Skyonna Cline.

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

Barbara Sue Brummett

Barbara Sue Brummett, 62, of Henry, VA passed away Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at Sovah Health Martinsville. She was born May 19, 1959, to the late George Brummett and Ethel Allen Brummett. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her sister, Janice Brummett, and nephew, Dusty Howell.

She is survived by her nephew, Alan Brummett (Brandi) of the home; sisters, Erma Turrubiarte and Deborah Mays, both of Bassett, VA; niece, Kayla Brummett; nephews, Austin Mason and Jason Howell (Beth); special great-niece and nephew, Ryleigh and Brantley Brummett, many other great-nephews; and MawMaw, Sharon Hackney.

Barbara was loved by everyone. She will be missed greatly. She never met a stranger. She loved everyone unconditionally. She loved playing with her



baby dolls and Brantley and Ryleigh. She loved going to the beach and our random road adventures. She loved doing anything with all of us kids. She loved her mountain dew and nutty bars. She loved giving hugs and kisses. We would all love to get a kiss and a hug from Barbara Sue. She is now at peace with our loved ones that have

passed before. Giving her mom (granny) the best birthday gift, her first baby back.

"Sometimes the things we can't change end up changing us instead."

A funeral was held February 21, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel. Burial was at Henry Memorial Park.

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

Sheldon Drew Capps

Sheldon Drew Capps, 29, of Bassett, VA passed away on Tuesday, February 22, 2022. He was born on February 3, 1993, to Andrew Warren Capps and Shelby Plaster Roop.

Mr. Capps graduated from Patrick County High School in 2011 and worked as a welder. He loved his family and friends, hunting and fishing, and he was a dedicated father. Mr. Capps was a member of Mountain View Baptist Church in Patrick Springs, VA.

He is survived by his mother, Shelby Plaster Roop and step-father, Cliff Roop of Patrick Springs, VA; his father, Andrew Warren Capps and step-mother, Denise Capps of Collinsville, VA; daughter, Avery Capps of the residence; fiancée,



Chelsie Dalton of the residence; brother, Brandon Capps of Patrick Springs, VA; and maternal grandmother, Velma Plaster of Stuart, VA.

A funeral will be held at 2 p.m. on Monday, February 28, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel with Dr. Michael Hatfield officiating. Visitation will be held from 12 to 2 p.m.

before the service at the funeral home, and other times at the residences of Shelby and Cliff Roop, and Andrew and Denise Capps. Burial will be at Roselawn Burial Park.

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

Samantha Rankin

Samantha Rankin was born on April 4, 1979, in Danville Virginia to James and Susan Glasgow and was the oldest of two children. She graduated from Danville Community College from the nursing program and later obtained her paramedic license from Patrick and Henry Community College. She worked at Kings Grant and enjoyed spending time with her patients.

She was passionate about her love of chickens, flowers and enjoyed rescuing kittens. She also loved spending time at the beach. She was a beloved mother, devoted wife, loving daughter, sister and aunt to her niece and was a wonderful friend and a blessing



to all who came in contact with her.

In April of 2020, she was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. She fought for her life and lived it to the fullest every day, and did so with a smile on her face. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

"She fought the good fight and kept the faith, her legacy will be carried on through the lives of her children."

A private ceremony will be held for the family.

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

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

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

OBITUARIES

Annie Lee Ridinger Martin

Annie Lee Ridinger Martin, 85, of Martinsville, VA died Tuesday, February 22, 2022, at her home surrounded by many family members. She was born on April 6, 1936, to the late Otto K. and Ida Alma Hylton Ridinger. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her sisters, Lucille Moore, Betty Spencer Willard, Linnie Oliver and Doty Griffith, brothers Otto, Jr., Joe, Everette and Lilburn Ridinger and one grandson, Joseph Turner.



She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Horace Martin of the home, two daughters, Pam Brinegar (Steve), Jan Turner (Tony), and three sons Willie Martin (Mitzi), Tommy Martin (Paulette) and Eric Martin (Wendy). In addition, she is survived by 11 grandchildren, Brian Brinegar, Stephanie Viperman, Susanne Washburn, Tyler, Trevor and Madison Martin, Carrie and Lance Martin, Mitchell Turner and Brey and Seth Martin, and 16 great-grandchildren, Bristol Brinegar, Zariah Scales, Kipton and Kendra Viperman, Bryant and Brinden Washburn, Camden Martin, Max and Emerson Lucas, Chris, Emma and Cole Kaltwang, Thomas and Tobias Martin, and Will and Cooper Turner.

swap of the Martinsville Bulletin. She believed in the value of education as this was the key to success in life. She attended Bridgewater College and was a graduate of Patrick Henry Community College and Averett University, with a Bachelors' Degree in Sociology/Social Work. Annie was devoted to any effort that helped mankind, and made sure that each of her family members did something to help anyone in need. She aided the Brethren Volunteer Services in the ghettos of Baltimore, MD while a student at Bridgewater College.

The funeral will be on Friday, February 25, 2022, at 2 p.m. at McKee Funeral Home, led by Dr. Mike Hatfield and Pastor Curt Ashley, with Eulogist Willie Martin. Pallbearers will be grandsons. Honorary pallbearers will be great-grandchildren. Memorial donations may be made to Dyers Store Volunteer Fire Department, Mountain Valley Hospice or any charity of choice.

The family wishes to express appreciation to the caregivers, to Mountain Valley Hospice, and to family and friends who shared their love, food, cards and concerns for Annie.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home. Online condolences may be made to the family at www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com.

Chatham Heights Baptist Church. She worked at Lee Telephone Company, at Martinsville Memorial Hospital and at Citizens Against Family Violence. She enjoyed gardening, crafts (particularly knitting and sewing), and spending time with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, especially at their athletic, school and extracurricular events. She was a friend to many. She was a devoted foster mom, having kept 60 foster children in her home. She was a PALS volunteer for Henry County schools, donated countless handmade gifts to scores of preschool children throughout Henry County Schools, where she also read to hundreds of elementary school children. She attended Knitwits at Chatham Heights Baptist Church, and was a frequent visitor to the seed

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Obie Upsie Turner

Obie Upsie Turner, 85, of Rocky Mount, Virginia, passed away Friday, February 18, 2022, at his residence. He was born March 3, 1936, to the late Roy Edward and Halsie Elizabeth Mason Turner. He was the Owner/Operator of Turner Auto Sales for over 50 years.

Obie is survived by his nephew, Carl

Brown, and his friend, Mabel Mae Draper.

In addition to his parents, Obie was preceded in death by his sister, Clydie Elizabeth Turner Brown, and nephew, Keith Brown.

All services will be private at a later date.

Drugs Seized

from page 1

a long period of time, Perry said, while the effects of cocaine typically dwindle more quickly, and users typically are not as violent while under the influence as users of other drugs. Instead, "people commit crimes to get the money for cocaine," he said, noting that it was the most expensive of the drugs seized. "It probably costs two or three times the price to do cocaine than heroine, Fentanyl, or meth," he said.

In addition, three vehicles, four firearms, two sets of body armor, and \$67,486 in U.S. currency also was seized during the investigation.

Tynahry Tremaine Watkins, 31, of 121 Kimway Drive, is currently held in the Henry County Jail without bond on several charges:

- Possessing a firearm while in possession of a schedule I/II controlled substance.
- Possessing a firearm after being convicted of a felony.
- Possess with the intent to distribute more than 100 grams of Methamphetamine.
- Possess with the intent to distribute a Schedule I/II controlled substance.

Melinda Lynn Craft, 46, of 80 Boulder Road, Axton, has been charged with the following and

- Possessing a firearm while in possession of a Schedule I/II controlled substance.
- Possess with the intent to distribute more than 100 grams of Methamphetamine.
- Possess with the intent to



Tynahry Tremaine Watkins



Melinda Lynn Craft

distribute a Schedule I/II controlled substance.

Craft also was held in the Henry County Jail without bond.

This matter remains under investigation, according to Perry, who added that larger drug operations are currently underway. Additional charges are anticipated as the investigation continues.

Broadband

from page 1



School board member Francis Zehr, of the Ridgeway District, made a motion to give the Henry County Board of Supervisors \$1 million for a broadband initiative, contingent upon the supervisors returning \$2.6 million in revenue generated from a recent sales tax increase. Zehr ultimately separated the proposal into two motions, both of which passed unanimously.

planning team was formed. In July 2021, the county joined with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission, Franklin County, and Patrick County to apply for a Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) grant to fund broadband.

Wagoner said \$33,571,073 was received from the VATI grant, and an additional \$61,794,113 was leveraged from Appalachian Power and RiverStreet Networks. The grant, he said, requires a local match of \$3,621,000.

The funding will provide fiber to homes and businesses in approximately 3,600 locations in Henry County that do not currently have broadband access.

Ultimately, Wagoner said, the goal "will be to have as many partners on board as possible to expand the breadth and the depth of the broadband project."

With proper funding in place, Wagoner said the initiative can expand further, including bringing fiber to areas that have access to the internet, but not good-quality internet. "Other components will likely include efforts to narrow the digital divide, promote job training in the field of fiber optics and networking, and address affordability."

Strayer explained that funding the request would mean amending the school division's current CARES funding, which would likely mean cutting into the division's capital project fund.

Hatchett later said that, though the contribution to the broadband initiative will likely "dictate the need to reprioritize capital projects for the school division," the "capital projects list that we maintain is a broad list that has fluid timelines based on funding" which has been reprioritized at various points in the past. So, while high need projects will likely still move forward, "a medium priority project may wait another year to ensure that we can do our part in making internet access for our families a reality."

Zehr's initial motion, seconded by Elizabeth Durden, of the Collinsville District, was to amend the division's CARES funding to give the county the requested amount, on the condition that a third entity also contribute its share of funds toward the initiative and "contingent upon them returning the \$2.6 million dollars in sales tax revenue."

Last April, in a measure approved by voters, the county levied an additional 1 percent sales tax to help fund school construction and improvement projects.

Though the section of the Code of Virginia allowing for the tax increase specified that "revenues from this tax shall be used solely for capital projects for new construction or major renovation of schools," the county and its board of supervisors chose to allocate some of the funds to pay down debt from previous school construction and improvement projects.

In December, then-Attorney General Mark Herring issued an opinion stating that the revenues from the additional tax are to be used to fund capital projects for new construction or major renovation of schools and not for debt mitigation.

Vice chairman Teddy Martin said he was concerned about combining the two issues into one motion.

"The \$2.6 million shouldn't have anything to do with the \$1 million request. They should do that because it's the right thing to do," he said. "I don't like the idea of, 'you do this for me, I do that for you.' I don't have an objection to helping them with the broadband initiative, but I have a concern with the impression that these items are linked."

Board member Benjamin Gravely, of the Iriswood District, agreed with Martin.

"It's almost like we're bargaining. That money from the tax, in my opinion, that money belongs to us." He pointed out that most of the board members campaigned for the tax increase. "That money is owed. They should give us our money. I don't have a problem supporting the board on broadband, but to use that as a bargaining chip, I don't think it's right."

"All I'm trying to do is cooperate with the governing body," said Zehr. "I served on the governing body for 16 years, so I know a little bit about it. They've got a tough situation. It's nothing to do with bargaining as far as I'm concerned."

Ultimately, Zehr separated his motions, one to give the supervisors the requested funding for broadband contingent upon the board receiving additional funding for the project, and another to send a letter to the county requesting the return of the \$2.6 million in sales tax revenue.

Both motions were unanimously approved.

"My only hope is that ... they (the supervisors) will be more cooperative than they have been," Martin said. Board of Supervisors chairman Jim Adams did not respond to a request for comment on whether or not the supervisors would consider returning the sales tax money to the school board.

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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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Preferred qualifications include a master's degree or prior graduate and/or professional student affairs experience (2-3 years). Qualified candidates should possess, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree, previous student affairs experience, and a desire to work with college students. Compensation includes a competitive salary plus benefits, an on-campus one-bedroom furnished apartment, and a meal plan.

Visit www.ferrum.edu for more information about Ferrum College.

HELP WANTED

Coordinator of Residence Life & Educational- Ferrum College - Ferrum College has an opening for the Coordinator of Residence Life & Educational Programming position. The Coordinator is a live-in professional staff member who is responsible for a residential area that houses approximately 300-400 students. This Coordinator will be responsible for the coordination of campus-wide educational initiatives for the Office of Student Life & Engagement, including planning and executing educational and prevention programs on campus. The Coordinator will supervise around 10-15 undergraduate student staff members. Applicants should be mature, outgoing, enthusiastic,

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HELP WANTED

For consideration:
Please submit your resume, cover letter, and contact information for three (3) references to Human Resources, Ferrum College, P.O. Box 1000, Ferrum, VA 24088 or email to resumes@ferrum.edu. Review of applicants will begin immediately. The search will continue until the position is filled. Background check required.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

TEN OAKS, a hardwood flooring Manufacturer in Stuart, VA is growing and now accepting applications or resumes for Industrial Electrician, Automation Technician/Engineer, Maintenance, 1st & 2nd shift Production. Top Pay, 2nd Shift Premium, Insurance, Benefits, Paid Vacations & holidays, 401k. Call, (276)694-3208 or pick up applications at 209 Progress Dr., M-F 7-5 or email resume to: human.resources@tenoaksflooring.com.

Required qualifications:
Bachelor's degree in student development, higher education or a related field

Three years of experience in residence life and housing.

Preferred qualifications:
Master's degree

Seven or more years of experience in student affairs.

A letter of application, resume, copies of transcripts, and three letters of recommendation should be emailed to resumes@ferrum.edu or mailed to Human Resources, Ferrum College, P.O. Box 1000, Ferrum, VA 24088. Background check required.

HELP WANTED

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Patrick & Henry Community College in Martinsville, VA has the following job openings: Vice President of Academic & Student Success Services, Educational Talent Search Advisor, Law Enforcement Office Science Lab Assistant, MHC After 3 Program Leader, MHC After 3 After School Instructor, and Adjunct Faculty in English, Mechatronics, 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.

Axton Solar, LLC will host a community meeting on Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 6 p.m. at the Galilean House of Worship, located at 5078 A.L. Philpott Highway, Martinsville, Virginia 24112. Representatives of Axton Solar, LLC will be present to discuss its proposed solar energy generation facility to be located in the vicinity of Axton, Virginia, and to answer questions from the public. Interested members of the public are invited to attend in person. If you would prefer to participate by telephone or by computer you may find additional information and instructions here: <https://axtonsolarproject.info/>

COUNTY OF HENRY REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing is now scheduled for **March 9, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following this public hearing, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the application to the Board of Supervisors.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the following application on **March 22, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia.

The purpose of this public hearing is to receive input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearing.

Case R-22-04 Gregory L. and Anne M. Benton

The property is located at 902 Eggleston Falls Rd, in the Ridgeway District. The Tax Map numbers are 62.3/84F, 84J, 84K, 84L. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 3.4-acre from Suburban Residential District S-R to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant wishes to build additional accessory buildings on the property. The applications for this request may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

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is a public accounting firm in Stuart, VA. We are looking for an experienced, self-motivated bookkeeper to grow with our firm. This position will perform typical bookkeeping tasks, as well as a wide range of special accounting projects. The ability to learn new tasks and to work independently is a must. The bookkeeper reports to the Senior Manager. Interested applicants should email their resume to susanheath@qcarllc.com.

Requirements include a Bachelor/Associates degree with major in Accounting, five years bookkeeping/accounting experience, and Quickbooks experience.

Responsibilities will include recording financial transactions, compiling financial reports, verifying accounting data, notifying senior staff of any accounting errors, and special projects, as deemed necessary.

Ferrum College is hiring a Director of Housing and Residence Life. The Director of Housing and Residence Life provides oversight to all functions of residence life and ac-

WHEREAS, the reversion of Martinsville from an independent city to a town pursuant to the terms of the Agreement would have established a traditional town-county relationship between Martinsville and Henry County, with the same rights, powers, and responsibilities as other towns and counties, except as provided by special law or modified in the Agreement;

WHEREAS, the City and the County concluded that the City's reversion to a town located within and constituting part of Henry County in accordance with the terms of the Agreement meets the requirements of Virginia Code § 15.2-4106;

WHEREAS, on August 24, 2021, the respective governing bodies of the City and the County approved the Agreement by resolution, directing that the Agreement be referred for review by the Commission and stating their intention, after the Commission's review, to adopt the Agreement and thereafter to petition the appropriate Circuit Court to affirm and validate the Agreement and give it full force and effect;

WHEREAS, on August 25, 2021, the City and the County, by counsel, filed a joint notice with the Commission, requesting that the Commission review the Agreement, find that the City's reversion to town status pursuant to the Agreement is in the best interests of the Commonwealth, and recommend that the Agreement be affirmed and given full force and effect by a special, three-judge court;

WHEREAS, the Commission heard evidence and argument presented by the City and the County and conducted a hearing in September 2021 as required by law and issued its findings and recommendations in a report dated October 2021 (the "Report"), and this Report is incorporated herein by reference;

WHEREAS, the Commission's Report dated October 2021 found the City's reversion to town status to be in the best interests of the City, the County, and the Commonwealth and recommended approval by a three-judge, special court;

WHEREAS, on November 9, 2021, the City Council passed an ordinance approving and adopting the Agreement by recorded affirmative vote of a majority of its members, after having advertised its intention to approve the Agreement at least once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper having a general circulation in its jurisdiction, containing a descriptive summary of the Agreement, and holding a public hearing on the Agreement prior to the adoption of the ordinance;

WHEREAS, on December 14, 2021, despite its many prior representations and commitments, the Henry County Board of Supervisors voted against an ordinance approving and adopting the Agreement by recorded vote of a majority of its members, for reasons other than the best interests of the City, the County, and the Commonwealth;

WHEREAS, Chapter 41 of Title 15.2 of the Virginia Code (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.) requires the City, subsequent to the Commission's review, to pass an ordinance by a recorded majority vote of all the members of the City Council, to petition the Circuit Court for the City of Martinsville, alleging that the City meets the criteria set out in Virginia Code § 15.2-4106 for an order granting town status to the City;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-4107, the three-judge, special court may, in its discretion, direct any appropriate state agency, in addition to the Commission, to gather and present evidence, including statistical data and exhibits, for the court, to be subject to the usual rules of evidence;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-4106, the three-judge, special court shall enter an order granting town status if, after hearing the evidence, the court finds that criteria set out therein are met;

WHEREAS, based on the latest United States decennial census, the City has a current population of less than 50,000 people;

WHEREAS, Henry County is the adjoining county and will be made a party defendant to the proceedings;

WHEREAS, the proposed change from city to town status will not substantially impair the ability of the County to meet the service needs of its population;

WHEREAS, the proposed change from city to town status will not result in a substantially inequitable sharing of the resources and liabilities of the Town of Martinsville and the County;

WHEREAS, the proposed change from city to town status is, in the balance of equities, in the best interests of the City, the County, the Commonwealth, and the people of the City and the County;

WHEREAS, the proposed change from city to town status is in the best interests of the Commonwealth in promoting strong and viable units of government; and

WHEREAS, the change from city to town status should be under terms and conditions that ensure an orderly transition from city to town status; adjust financial inequities; balance the equities between the parties; and ensure protection of the best interests of the City, the County, the Commonwealth, and the people of the City and the County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia,

- The City Council, by this Ordinance, hereby declares that the City desires to revert to the status of a town within and constituting part of Henry County, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 41 of Title 15.2 of the Virginia Code (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.).
- The City Council, by this Ordinance, hereby declares that the City desires the change from city to town status to be under terms and conditions appropriate to ensure an orderly transition from city to town status; adjust financial inequities; balance the equities between the parties; and ensure protection of the best interests of the City, the County, the Commonwealth, and the people of the City and the County.
- The City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager and the City's legal counsel to petition the Circuit Court for the City of Martinsville for an order, pursuant to Chapter 41 of Title 15.2 of the Virginia Code (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.), establishing Martinsville as a town within and constituting part of Henry County, and Henry County shall be made a party defendant to the proceeding.
- The City Manager and the City's legal counsel are hereby authorized to take all other actions, and to employ such special consultants as may be needed, to accomplish the objectives set forth in this Ordinance.
- This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect on the date of its adoption.

Adopted this 27th day of January, 2022.

Attest:
/s/ Karen Roberts
Karen Roberts, Clerk of Council

VIRGINIA:
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE
CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA)
Plaintiff,)
v.)
COUNTY OF HENRY, VIRGINIA)
Defendant.)
SERVE: George A.H. Lyle, Esq.)
Henry County Attorney)
County Administrative Building)
3300 Kings Mountain Road)
Martinsville, Virginia 24112)
SERVE: Jimmie L. Adams)
Chairman, Board of Supervisors)
County Administrative Building)
3300 Kings Mountain Road)
Martinsville, Virginia 24112)

NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, pursuant to § 15.2-4101(B) of the Virginia Code, that, on February 7, 2022, or as soon thereafter as may be feasible, the City of Martinsville will file a petition in the Circuit Court for the City of Martinsville for an order granting it town status within the County of Henry. Attached to this notice and incorporated herein by reference is a certified copy of the ordinance of the Martinsville City Council, passed by a recorded majority vote of all the members, and authorizing the filing of the above-referenced petition.

Dated: February 4, 2022

Respectfully submitted,
CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA
By: */s/ Stephen C. Peipgrass*
John S. West (VSB No. 34771)
Robert S. Claiborne, Jr. (VSB No. 86332)
Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP
1001 Haxall Point, Suite 1500
Richmond, Virginia 23219
Telephone: 804.697.1200
Facsimile: 804.697.1339
john.west@troutman.com
stephen.peipgrass@troutman.com
robert.claiborne@troutman.com
Counsel for the City of Martinsville

CERTIFICATION

I, Karen Roberts, Clerk of the City Council of the City of Martinsville, do certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an Ordinance passed by a recorded majority vote of all members of the City Council at a meeting convened on the 27th day of February, 2022. The membership of the City Council at that time consisted of five members, including the Mayor, and the Ordinance was passed by the City Council by a recorded vote of four ayes and one nay.

This, the 4th day of February, 2022.

/s/ Karen Roberts
Karen Roberts, Clerk of the City Council

CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA ORDINANCE No. 2022-U-1 AN ORDINANCE TO PETITION THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE FOR AN ORDER GRANTING TOWN STATUS

WHEREAS, on December 10, 2019, the City Council voted in favor of the City of Martinsville's (the "City" or "Martinsville") reversion from an independent city to a town located within and constituting part of the County of Henry (the "County" or "Henry County"), following discussion and study regarding the feasibility of the same;

WHEREAS, on September 18, 2020, the City, by counsel and pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-2907(A), filed with the Commission on Local Government (the "Commission") a notice of its intent to petition for an order granting it town status, seeking to establish a traditional town-county relationship with Henry County, including the same rights, powers, and responsibilities as are granted to existing towns consistent with Virginia law, and this notice is incorporated herein by reference;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-2908, the city-to-town reversion proceeding was deemed to have been instituted upon City's filing of the notice with the Commission;

WHEREAS, the City notified all local governments located within or contiguous to, or sharing functions, revenue, or tax sources with, the City of its intent to petition for an order granting it town status, seeking to establish a traditional town-county relationship with Henry County, including the same rights, powers, and responsibilities as are granted to existing towns consistent with Virginia law;

WHEREAS, on November 30, 2020, Henry County, by counsel, filed its response to Martinsville's notice of intent to petition for an order granting it town status;

WHEREAS, the City and the County entered into negotiations to seek a voluntary settlement of the city-to-town reversion proceeding;

WHEREAS, the City and the County entered into a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 29, 2021, in contemplation of a comprehensive settlement agreement providing for the City's reversion to town status and addressing the allocation of governmental services following that change in governmental structure, the transfer of certain properties, the sharing of certain revenues, a temporary moratorium of annexation rights, and other matters;

WHEREAS, on May 26, 2021, at a joint public meeting, the respective governing bodies of the City and the County approved the Memorandum of Understanding;

WHEREAS, the City and the County reached a Voluntary Settlement Agreement (the "Agreement"), pursuant to Title 15.2, Chapter 34 (§ 15.2-3400, et seq.) and Chapter 41 (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.) of the Virginia Code and consistent with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding;

Redistricting from page 1

the changes. She anticipates voters would only see numerical changes in their district, not a change in the actual voting precinct. “We’re trying to make it as simple as we can,” she said.

According to state statute, all magisterial districts must be drawn to ensure that each fall within 5 percent of the median population, County Administrator Tim Hall said.

Since the 2010 census, Henry County experienced a population decline of 3,203, lowering the median population of magisterial districts from 9,025 to 8,491 residents, and necessitating some small changes to most districts.

The minor changes came at the recommendation of a committee made up of Clark, Hall, Vaughn, County Attorney George Lyle, Public Information Officer Brandon Martin, and GIS Manager Jason Gardner.

Clark explained that only two districts—the Blackberry and Collinsville Districts—actually fell outside of the 5 percent threshold but, because the two districts did not touch, other districts had to be adjusted to compensate. Only the Iriswood District remained unchanged at the end of the process, Clark said.

He added that the committee was cognizant of drawing new lines that would not change any polling locations. Ultimately, Clark said, 69 people were moved from the Reed Creek to the Blackberry District, 230 from the Horsepasture to Blackberry, and 87 moved from the Ridgeway to the Horsepasture District. In the Collinsville District, 45 people were moved to Horsepasture, and 348 went to the Reed Creek District.

The board scheduled a public hearing on the proposed changes for March 22, at 6 p.m. The board may adopt an ordinance making the changes official following the hearing.

The presentation, including a map showing the proposed district changes, may be viewed at http://www.henrycountyva.gov/content/uploads/planning/redistricting_presentation.pdf.

In other matters, the board:

*Conducted a joint budget meeting with the Henry County School Board to discuss preparation of the FY22-23 school budget and total county budget.

*Approved the minutes from its Jan. 19, Jan. 25, and Feb. 8 meetings.

*Heard from Doug Stegall, of Collinsville, about reversion and insurance for part-time school bus drivers.

*Heard a report on delinquent tax collection efforts from County Treasurer Scott Grindstaff. As of Jan. 31, Grindstaff’s office had collected 89.71 percent of real estate taxes. Due to the delayed due date, there was no collection report on personal property tax collections.

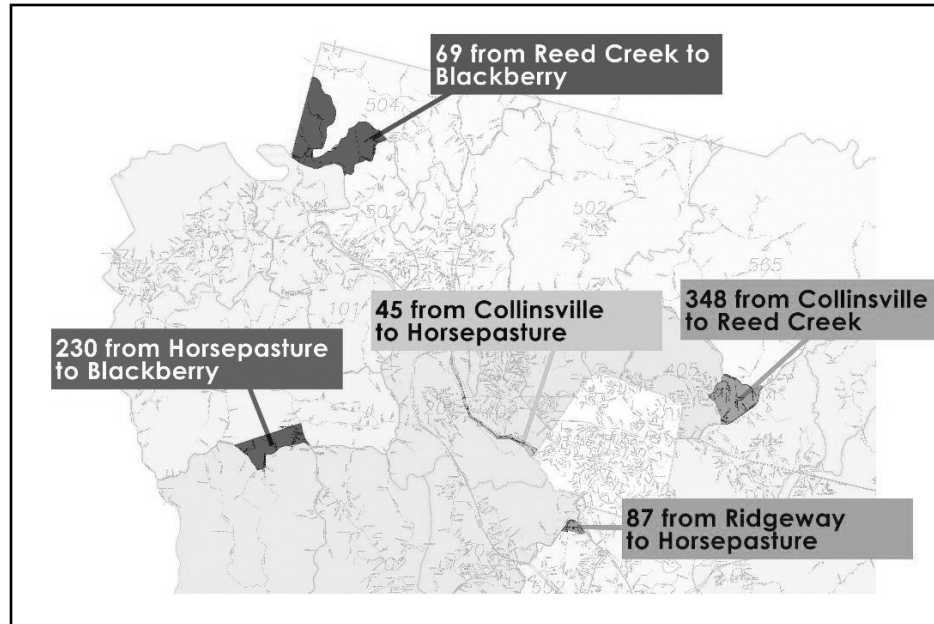
*Heard and update from Sarah Hodges, director of tourism and talent development for the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Association. Hodges shared a video that is being used by German company SCHOCK to attract new employees to its Henry County location.

*Approved an additional appropriation of \$10,500 from asset forfeiture funds for investigative software that will assist investigators in solving various incidents.

*At the request of Public Safety Director Matt Tatum, awarded a sole-source contract for an ambulance re-chassis in the amount of \$154,295 to Vest Sales and Service, Inc.

*Approved resolutions for bridge memorials to honor fallen police officers. The resolutions will be forwarded to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for further review and approval, as required by state law. The designated bridges are U.S. 220 at the Smith River as the George Melvin Brown Memorial Bridge; Virginia 1228 at the Smith River as the George S. Frame Memorial Bridge; Virginia 701 at the Smith River as the John J. Johnston Fieldale Bridge; U.S. 220 at William F. Stone Highway as Paul Edward Grubb Memorial Bridge; U.S. 220 at Virginia 57 as the Sgt. J. Michael Phillippi Memorial Bridge, and Virginia 220B at Reed Creek as the Willis Herman Ferguson Memorial Bridge.

*At Vaughn’s request, approved a split precinct waiver for voting precinct #603 Ridgeway #1 and the Town of Ridgeway. Hall said the General Assembly requires each voting precinct to be wholly contained within a single congressional district, Senate district, House of Delegates district, and local districts. However, a locality can



A map (above) presented by Planning, Zoning, and Inspections Director Lee Clark on behalf of the county’s redistricting committee shows changes to the county’s magisterial districts necessitated by the most recent census data. The board will hold a public hearing on the proposed changes at its March 22 meeting. General Registrar Dawn Stultz-Vaughn (left) told the Board of Supervisors her office would be sending notices to every voter in Henry County explaining redistricting changes. She said she anticipated voters would only see a change in their numerical district, not a change in voting precinct, on a state level.

request a waiver in specific circumstances. In this case, the precinct in question contains the Town of Ridgeway, constituting a split precinct because some voters live within the town limits and others do not.

*Approved the appropriation of fiscal year (FY) 2021 carryover funds of \$50,000 to the FY21 school budget for school-related capital projects.

*Reappointed Rodney Thacker and Wesley Caviness to the Industrial Development Authority for 4-year terms, ending March 31, 2026.

*Reappointed J.R. Powell to the Dan River Alcohol Safety Action Program Board for a 3-year term, ending March 31, 2025.

*Approved a resolution commending the Hon. Judge David Williams on his retirement. Williams will retire at the end of February after serving the community for over 42 years, with more than 30 years as the county’s circuit court judge.

*Heard from a representative from the Virginia Department of Transportation, who said the department would like to hold the public hearing on the 6-year plan for Henry County at the board’s April meeting.

*Approved rezoning request for Wayne A. Willard/Twin Oak Properties, LLC. The applicant requested the rezoning of approximately 1.05 acres in front of 51 Sandy River Road in the Iriswood District from suburban residential to commercial for the development of commercial self-storage units.

Martinsville Seven from page 1

Another, Holland said, will delve deeper into the personal lives of the executed men.

Holland said she hopes the exhibits will give visitors greater insight into the lives of the Seven, most of whom were teenagers or in their 20s when they were arrested.

For instance, Holland said, at least two of the men—Taylor and Grayson—had children, and all left families behind who were affected by the loss of their loved one who, in some cases, also was a provider for the family.

The stories of the families and how they were affected often go overlooked, she said. “You’ve got to look at what the living (relatives) now face and how it still affects them.”

At 37, Grayson was the oldest of the group. Holland said he had four children, one of whom was just 4-years-old when his father was executed. He watched his father get arrested, Holland said. After that, the young boy and his family were socially ostracized, she said, and were left in financial difficulty in a time when services for those in need are not nearly as available as they are today.

“They had nothing,” she said. “Their dad was gone.”

While not all the surviving descendants of the men have been able to travel to Martinsville to see the exhibit yet, the reactions for those who have were overwhelmingly positive, Holland said. They see the exhibit, she said, as not necessarily a validation, but rather a recognition of their long-held feelings. “They’re all really, really glad that there is some light shed on it (the story) and there is some understanding of kinship,” she said.

One relative, she recalled, expressed a feeling of relief that “even though the situation was so horrific, now there’s recognition. There are people that take a deep breath with him because (these men) are not just ghosts, left out and forgotten forever.”

Taylor’s great grandson, Camry Harris, who still lives in the area, expressed his appreciation for the effort that went into the exhibit.

“It has been a very heavy burden that I feel may never be lifted no matter what’s done, but I am very thankful to Faye Holland and her team of researchers for the years of work they put in to present the story of my great grandfather in this exhibit,” he said. “In my heart, I pray for peace for all the families affected, including my own.”

In addition to the exhibition effort mounted by the Initiative, Holland said she hopes to one day have a dedicated museum and social justice center in Martinsville.

Just a few miles away from the FAHI exhibit, the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society also has joined the effort to commemorate the Martinsville Seven. Visitors to the Heritage Center and Museum, located in the former Henry County courthouse, will notice a new text panel hanging just outside the courtroom where initial hearings were held for the seven men.

The panel, which divides the story into seven sections similar to those in the FAHI exhibit, includes images of some of the protests that took place ahead of the executions (the case drew both national and international attention) as well as an image of Hampton’s death certificate.

Historical Society board member Jarred Marlowe researched and wrote the panel while his friend David Scurry, a student at Yale, used his graphic design skills to put the panel together.

Marlowe said the story of the Martinsville Seven is “one of those stories I just can’t shake.”

“It’s hard to fathom the injustices that took place in the local, state, and national justice system during that time, and even though they had repeated legal appeals and the legal system had many chances to examine the cases and trial, nothing was ever corrected,” he said.

Marlowe is a regular volunteer at the museum, an experience that, he said, makes the story of the men hit home even more.



The courtroom in the former Henry County Courthouse, now the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center and Museum, is where initial trials for the Martinsville Seven were held. An exhibit on the history of the seven men was recently installed just outside the doors of the courtroom.

“At least once a week, I walk into the courtroom where seven young black men ultimately had their lives ended by a prejudiced and unfair system. While working on the display, it was hard not to be haunted by their faces and stories. It just motivated me to want to do more.

“I wish more people knew or would want to learn more about them, to not only show how much things have changed since then, but as a lesson that we can never go back to a point like that again,” Marlowe said. “The Martinsville Seven, to me, serve as a stark reminder that racism and prejudice was not some far off problem that others deal with, and we only hear about. It happened here, in our city, with our neighbors. And we’re still reeling from it in this day and time.”

“It was my honor and privilege to help make that board and I want to do more for them in the future,” he said.

Board president John Phillips said the group “took our time on the Martinsville Seven project to ensure that we respected the sensitivity and accuracy of the subject.”

“Though long overdue, the permanent exhibit is quite timely as I question whether our entire community could have embraced it earlier. I’ve lived here my entire life and never heard of the Martinsville Seven until several years ago,” he said. “As a historical society and museum, we are responsible for nearly 250 years as an organized people and many more years as a culture. We cannot be proud of what happened but are honored to finally and publicly acknowledge the Martinsville Seven as part of our overall history. As American author Robert Heinlein stated, ‘A generation which ignores history has no past and no future.’”

A third commemoration of the Seven is planned later in the year. City Attorney and Assistant City Manager Eric Monday sponsored a state historic marker, which will be placed outside of the former courthouse that is now home to the Heritage Center and Museum. Monday said a dedication ceremony is set for August 27 of this year, just a few days before the one-year anniversary of the pardons.

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Council from page 1

been able to fund in its normal budgeting process.

Proposed projects include \$1,850,000 for improvements and renovations to bathrooms, seating, and concessions at Hooker Field; \$804,070 for the Summit View Water Line Project; \$200,00 for the establishment of city-wide historic districts; another \$200,000 for various stormwater repairs; and \$500,000 each for blighted property demolition, upgrades to the city's municipal building, citywide park upgrades, and affordable housing.

Towarnicki said \$1,918,073 was put toward projects that are already completed or committed.

The list also included a proposed \$50,000 for Piedmont Arts' capital campaign, and \$4.5 million for uptown revitalization, which was the largest expense presented.

After a number of conversations with Uptown Partnership Director Kathy Deacon, Towarnicki said city staff decided to put a great deal of emphasis into the revitalization effort. He suggested that some of the funds could even be used to acquire and rehabilitate some of the uptown's long-vacant buildings to help them find new life.

In addition to the projects identified by staff, Towarnicki said up to \$10 million can be used in the budget to make up for lost revenue. "I'm certainly not advocating that we do that," he said, clarifying that he was merely pointing out the possibility. The list presented to the board proposed that \$4 million be directed toward lost revenue.

All told, Towarnicki said the list compiled by staff exceeded the amount of ARPA funding the city expects to receive by nearly \$500,000. However, he told council that several of the projects, when put out to bid, could cost less than initially estimated, thus bringing the actual expenses closer to the amount of funding allocated.

As council began discussion of the proposed projects, Pearson asked why more funding was not being directed toward city infrastructure, because it was her understanding that many of the city's pipes, most of which Towarnicki said were put in in the 50s and 60s—are far past their expected lifespan.

"I think this could be an opportunity to be proactive instead of reactive," she said.

"I just know with the reversion discussions, we've continuously said that our infrastructure is crumbling," Pearson continued, "we said if we were to revert, we'd have more money to focus on that crumbling infrastructure. Why wouldn't we use this opportunity to use some of the money to address that?"

Towarnicki responded that, while such a project was possible, a detailed and extensive study would be needed to accomplish it and, to his knowledge, a "fair amount" of the more problematic pipelines had been replaced. He said he was unaware of current areas where significant breaks indicated a line could be failing.

A water line, "if it's taken care of and maintained and the pressure's not excessive, it can just last and last," he said.

City Attorney and Assistant City Manager Eric Monday said the city was more likely to find other funding sources for infrastructure than the projects included on the ARPA funding list. "One of the reasons the staff came up with this list is that a lot of the items on here don't get advantageous financing, they're not good grant applicants, so that's why we've put them off for so long."

Vice Mayor Jennifer Bowles asked Pearson what she would remove from the list and how much she would allocate to infrastructure instead.

"I'm glad you asked," Pearson said, adding that while she did not yet have enough expertise to directly address Bowles' question, she researched processes used by officials in other cities and towns, particularly those comparable to Martinsville, in determining how to allocate their ARPA funding.

The localities she examined engaged with residents via surveys and meetings to gauge the needs and desires of the community before generating a list of proposed projects. Pearson said she would like to see a similar process take place in Martinsville.

Additionally, she would like to solicit feedback from various subject matter experts, including department heads in the city, before considering overall funding options.

Bowles said Martinsville residents recently had the opportunity to participate in a survey about the city's Uptown, which was similar to what Pearson was describing.

Additionally, Bowles said, "I'm sure Leon and Eric already consulted with the department heads about what they feel should be the priorities. But like



City Manager Leon Towarnicki told city council that Martinsville had already received half of its allocated \$15.5 million in ARPA funds in 2021 and expected to receive the remaining half later this year. He presented a list of projects identified by staff that the funding could be spent on.

you said, if you, who are on council, don't have a handle on the subject matter, do you feel like our citizens would have a handle on priorities?"

"They are our constituents, so I definitely want their feedback and input," Pearson replied, and added that there are "many, many who are subject matter experts in our community on these various ideas."

She said that she also would like to see more drawn out plans for items on the list, as well as a return on investment (ROI) for several proposed projects, particularly the investment in uptown revitalization.

Bowles said that Deacon was expected to attend council's next regular meeting.

"Well, they're doing it, but we haven't even given them the money yet, so I think that might need to be done with more of a project plan versus," Pearson said, but was interrupted by Mayor Kathy Lawson.

"I don't think we plan on giving them any money until we have done our due diligence in seeing what they have projected and seeing all the data that goes along with that and seeing how it's going to affect our citizens and our uptown," said Lawson. "This (revitalization funding) is just a broad category."

"It is a broad category, but there's a lot in here that I do think is missing," Pearson countered, saying the money could be used to provide business incentives and to address issues such as suicide prevention, mental and behavioral health (which she said many localities were directing funding toward,) improved outcomes in the juvenile justice system, substance abuse, and increasing the funding for affordable housing.

Bowles asked Pearson if the cities and towns she researched received more funding than Martinsville.

"No, a lot of them actually got less," Pearson said. Though she could not name specific localities when asked by Bowles, Pearson said she would be happy to send her more specific information.

"I think what I would like, if you would be so kind to share what you found out with all of the members of council and the city manager and the city attorney," said Lawson, "and then we also can go to those communities to see what their process was. I think that would be a great learning experience moving forward."

"I would love to do that," Pearson replied, reiterating that she would like to slow down the process to hear more community input.

Elsewhere during council's discussion of the projects, council member Danny Turner returned to the subject of funds allocated to uptown projects. He expressed concern about favoring Uptown Partnership over the city's other uptown economic driver, the Chamber of Commerce and its Partnership for Economic Growth (C-PEG.)

"I think that our partnership with C-PEG and the Chamber of Commerce has worked very well," he said. "I don't know why we would throw them to the curb so quickly. I'd like to see them included in any (funding.)"

Towarnicki said conversations were happening between the two organizations to coordinate efforts.

"They're working together," added Lawson.

"That's not the report that I got," Turner said. "I want C-PEG included in anything here," he said of the list.

Turner went on to inquire about pandemic-related funding received by the city's school system, which, he said is "our number one expense." He said the division was receiving millions of dollars in COVID relief funding—over \$8 million, according to Towarnicki—and asked if there would be some effort to save taxpayers some expense due to that influx of money.

"We want them to use their money to the benefit of the schools plus the taxpayers," Turner said.

"I agree," Towarnicki said.

Monday said it was his understanding that the school funding could be used for "standard of quality (SOQ)-related positions, which is certainly very heavy on the instructional end, so that may be a conversation you want have with the school system as part of your budget process."

"Usually, the school budget that comes before council is expenditures, and they look to you for the revenue," Monday continued. "It is an important thing to keep in mind that they have this \$8 million pot that has been given to them by the feds."

"They are certainly able to fill significant payroll-related expenditures. As long as they're SOQ-linked and that's a significant part of their budget," Monday said, responding to a question from Turner about how the schools could spend their money. "Payroll is the biggest part of their expenditures and certainly almost all of the instructional payroll is SOQ-related."

In other matters, the council:

*Approved the minutes from its Jan. 25 meeting and Jan. 27 special session.

*Read a proclamation acknowledging March 2022 as Women's History Month.

*Adopted on first reading an ordinance repealing the city disguise and mask restrictions.

*Adopted on first reading an ordinance amending the allowable height of uncut grass from 18 to 10 inches.

*Set the dates of its budget work sessions for Wed. April 27, Tuesday, May 3, and Wed., May 4. The meetings will likely be held from 6-8 p.m.

*Council member Chad Martin read a letter sent to him by a constituent which stated that Smith Lake Road is "in serious need of being repaved." He presented a list of, he estimated, 50 or 60 signatures gathered by the author of the letter in support of the road improvement.

*Discussed the need to update the city's strategic plan which, according to Towarnicki, was last updated in 2017.

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