

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, March 19, 2022

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IMAGE FROM GOFUNDME PAGE

Zachary Ty Porter, 20, was killed in a single-vehicle crash on Chatham Road Monday afternoon. Following his death, friends, family, and community members have rallied around the family, offering support on social media and donating to a GoFundMe, which quickly surpassed its \$10,000 goal.

Outpouring of support for family of 20-year-old crash victim

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

Community members are rallying in support of the family of a 20-year-old man, identified as Zachary Porter, who died in a crash on Chatham Road in Henry County Monday afternoon. In addition to numerous posts on social media remembering Porter and offering prayers, support, and condolences to his family, many of which included the hashtag #ZachAttack4ever, there are also several efforts to raise money to help the family with expenses. On Tuesday, a GoFundMe was organized by Molly Trexler to support Porter's family.

As of Wednesday morning, donations on the page from 194 people totaled \$13,835, surpassing the initial \$10,000 goal.

In a message, Trexler said that the situation has been "very devastating," but she was "blown away by the support of everyone in the county. Our family isn't at a place to discuss anything right now. Less attention is more as we navigate this loss."

On Wednesday, The Checkered Pig restaurant announced it was holding a fundraiser for Porter's family on Monday, March 21 from 5-8 p.m. at its 1014 Liberty Street location.

BTW21 reported that

See **Support**, page 8



Martinsville track coach Lynwood Dodson (left) detailed the academic and athletic accomplishments of Virginia state indoor track winner Rickyah Mitchell-Hairston.

Curriculum additions reflect growing diversity in city schools

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

A number of new courses will be available to Martinsville students next school year, reflecting the growing diversity of the city's student population and needs of the community.

Angilee Downing, assistant superintendent for instruction, along with other personnel, presented the division's new program of studies to the city's school board at its March 14 meeting.

Among the new offerings to students are additional language classes and credit options, courses focused on African and African American studies, and additional career and

technical education (CTE) courses to help students prepare to enter the workforce, Downing said.

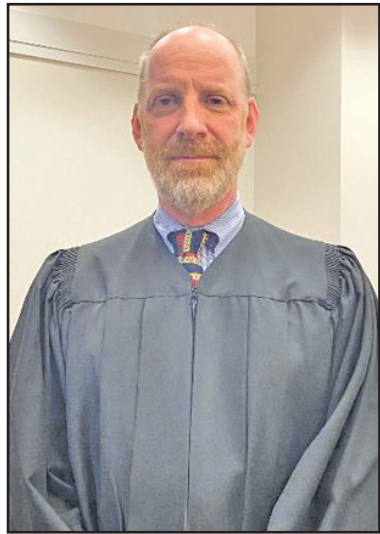
She explained that, as students began to return to full-time in-person learning, school administrators took time to "really look at our demographics, our schools, our populations and ask, what are the needs and are we meeting the needs" of students.

One result of those discussions was the creation of additional course offerings for students planning to enter the workforce after graduation.

Shauna Hines, coordinator of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math), CTE, and

See **Curriculum**, page 3

Henry County judge appointed to fill vacancy



Judge James McGarry

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

Henry County's General District Court Judge James McGarry was appointed by the Virginia General Assembly to serve in the Circuit Court.

He begins in the new capacity on May 1.

McGarry will fill the vacancy created when Judge David Williams retired in February.

Patrick County Commonwealth's Attorney Stephanie Vipperman was tapped to take McGarry's spot on the General District bench.

"I'm honored to be appointed to serve on the circuit court bench," McGarry said. "I look forward to the

challenges that will come with it."

Before he was appointed to the general district bench three years ago, McGarry said he practiced law for 26 years, attracted to the profession because he liked the idea of having a job that allowed him to help people while challenging him intellectually.

He said he appeared before Williams "many, many times" as a lawyer and knows he has "huge shoes to fill in stepping into his new role."

Williams "has been a great judge for 30 years or more," McGarry said. "His knowledge of the law, his knowledge of people, and his ability to run a courtroom are far beyond

See **Judge**, page 8

Rives finds new life 'on the road'

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

Rives on the Road is hosting its season kickoff party at New College Institute (NCI) on Saturday, March 19. The event marks the first time the Rives group has hosted an indoor concert since the onset of the pandemic.

"This is now the opening party for the 2022 Rives on the Road Season," Johnny Buck, executive director of Rooster Walk, Inc. (which absorbed the Rives organization), said.

The kickoff includes dinner, an open bar, and music from the Eric Gales Band with the TC Carter Band

opening. Buck said Gales, an internationally-touring blues guitarist, has never been booked at the Rives or Rooster Walk before, but has been on organizers' lists for several years.

The TC Carter Band is local to Martinsville and Henry County and, though the members are young, they are also making a name for themselves, particularly in the blues scene, Buck said, and recalled the first shows organized at the historic Rives Theatre, back when the theatre was being leased to the nonprofit MURA (Martinsville Uptown Revitalization Association).

Buck and his cohorts were allowed to put on a few shows in the venue,

using the small existing stage that was built for monthly bluegrass shows hosted by the Lions Club, and for the last decade of its life, that venue was home to between 10 and 30 live music shows each year, all organized by Friends of the Rives (now Arts at the Rives).

"We did surprisingly well financially," Buck recalled, and the family-owned company that owned the Rives was willing to let the group lease the space "at an extremely generous rate" beginning in 2009 to continue hosting concerts.

Soon after the Rives Theatre was

See **Rives**, page 4



Internationally-recognized blues guitarist Eric Gales will perform at the 2022 Rives on the Road season kickoff. The concert, held at New College Institute, marks the first time Rives organizers have hosted an indoor music event since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Yarn performed at the last indoor Rives on the Road event, held in January 2020. The show, dubbed "Yarn Morrison," was a Van Morrison tribute.

Tours of the new jail offered this weekend

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

The Henry County Sheriff's Office is offering the public a chance to walk the halls of its newly-constructed Adult Detention Center (ADC) this weekend. The 400-bed facility, located at 800 Dupont Road in Martinsville, will be open for guided group tours on Friday, March 18, from 1-9 p.m.

and Saturday, March 19 from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Sunday, March 20, will begin a lockdown period for final preparations to begin moving inmates into the facility.

Deputy County Administrator Dale Wagoner said officers will begin the process of moving inmates from the current jail to the new facility on March 25, in keeping with a tentative timeline

presented to the Henry County Board of Supervisors in January 2016.

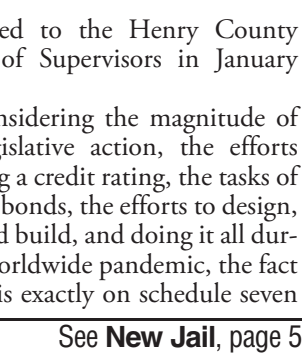
"Considering the magnitude of the legislative action, the efforts securing a credit rating, the tasks of issuing bonds, the efforts to design, bid, and build, and doing it all during a worldwide pandemic, the fact that it is exactly on schedule seven

See **New Jail**, page 5



Henry County Sheriff's Lt. Colonel Steve Eanes (right) leads a tour of the new Henry County Adult Detention Center in February. This weekend, the new jail will open its doors to the public for tours before the lockdown period that begins before inmates are moved into the new facility.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

(Event information/calendar items must be received by 5 p.m. on the Tuesday before the desired publication date. Email to newsreporter@theenterprise.net)

Saturday, March 19

The Spencer-Penn Centre 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.

A COVID-19 vaccine clinic will be held at Martinsville High School (351 Commonwealth Blvd E) from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. The vaccines will be administered free of charge for adults and children ages 5 and older.

Sunday, March 20

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society is hosting Founder's Day beginning at 3 p.m. at the Heritage Center and Museum, 1 East Church Street, Martinsville, with guest speaker Will Pannill. Former employees of the various textile companies, including Pannill, Sale, Tultex, Lacy, and Bassett-Walker, are especially invited to attend to be recognized. Attendees are also encouraged to wear or bring company products and other mementos.

Monday, March 21

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board Budget & Finance Committee and the Facilities Committee will meet jointly, at 11:30 a.m. in Room 124 in the Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the committees will not receive public comment.

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board will meet at 12:30 p.m. in the Hooker Exhibit Hall, Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the board will not receive public comment.

Tuesday, March 22

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

Martinsville City Council will hold its regular meeting in the Martinsville Municipal Building beginning at 7 p.m.

Piedmont Arts hosts Chix with Stix from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Knitters are invited to work together in the museum's classroom. Sessions are self-guided and provide a space to socialize while creating. Bring your own supplies. Free for members, \$5 for non-members (pay at the door.)

Piedmont Arts is holding a pollinator barn quilt class from 6-9 p.m. for ages 12 and up to celebrate Bee Month in April. Participants will create a 12x12

inch pollinator barn quilt which they will have the option of including in a display at Piedmont Arts during April. All supplies provided. BYOB and snacks. Tickets are \$35 for members and \$40 for non-members and can be purchased at piedmontarts.org.

Thursday, March 24-26

VMFA on the Road will be at Piedmont Arts 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 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 is hosting Painting with Genie beginning at 1 p.m. All supplies are provided. Pre-registration is required by calling (276) 957-5757. The cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members.

The Horsepasture Volunteer Fire Department (17815 A.L. Philpott Hwy) will host a country buffet breakfast from 6-10 a.m. The cost for adults is \$8 and children under 10 are \$4. All carry-outs are \$8.

Sunday, March 27

The Spencer-Penn Centre 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 (276) 957-5757.

Monday, March 28

A COVID-19 vaccine clinic will be held at the Martinsville branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library from 10:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. and at Albert Harris Elementary School from 4-6 p.m. The vaccines will be administered free of charge for adults and children ages 5 and older.

Tuesday, March 29

The Basset Historical Center 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.

A COVID-19 vaccine clinic will be held at the Bassett branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library from 10:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. and at Patrick Henry Elementary School from 4-6 p.m. The vaccines will be administered free of charge for adults and children ages 5 and older.

Friday, April 1 and Saturday, April 2

Fido's Finds is hosting a basement sale. Every sale benefits the Martinsville-Henry County SPCA. The sale will take place Friday from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Call (276) 656-1101 for more information.

Thursday, April 7

Piedmont Arts hosts the Earl White String Band, a mainstay of the old-time, folk, and dance community for more than 45 years and one of the few Black Americans preserving and playing Appalachian old-time string band music. General admission tickets are \$20 and are available at Piedmont Arts and online at piedmontarts.org.

A caregiver support group will meet from 11 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Spencer-Penn Centre. This free program facilitated by Good Samaritan allows those caring for a friend or loved one to share the rewards and challenges of caregiving while connecting with others who understand. Attendees will learn on managing stress.

Friday, April 8

It's Music Night at the Spencer-Penn Centre. Travis Frye & Blue Mountain will play in Alumni Hall. Gate opens at 5 p.m. and music begins at 6:20. Admission is a \$5 donation. Social distancing will be required and masks when that is not possible. Concessions will be sold.

Saturday, April 9

The Spencer-Penn Center is hosting a spring grapevine floriculture/decorating workshop from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. Participants will create their own decorative grapevine wreath. Don't have a wreath? No worries! One can be purchased for \$10. All other supplies included. The cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. For questions or to register, call (276) 957-5757.

Wednesday, April 13

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society is sponsoring its annual "Be a Part of History" blood drive in conjunction with the American Red Cross from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center and Museum. To schedule an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org or call/text John Phillips at (276) 806-5022.

Saturday, April 23

The Spencer-Penn Centre is hosting its 11th annual Pig Cookin' Competition from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. This free event includes a 'barnival,' vendors, cruise-in, silent auction, and more. BBQ will be available for purchase. Call the centre at (276) 957-5757 with any questions.

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. Call (276) 638-7297 to schedule your appointment. Beginning in April, the clinics will be held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, rather than weekly.

The Martinsville-Henry County SPCA is hosting an adoption special through April 16. Adoption fees for all dogs 40 pounds and over are \$50. Come by Tuesday through Friday from 12-6 p.m. and Saturdays from 2-4 p.m. to find your forever friend!

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.

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. Call the center at (276) 647-9585.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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60				61				62		63		
64				65						66		
67				68						69		

- CLUES ACROSS**
- 1. Type of footwear
 - 5. Studies a lot all at once
 - 10. Adventure story
 - 14. Hundred thousand
 - 15. Former U.S. Vice President
 - 16. Ruler
 - 17. Indian city
 - 18. Similar
 - 19. Ship as cargo
 - 20. Volcanic craters
 - 22. Boxing's "GOAT"
 - 23. Bullfighting maneuvers
 - 24. London soccer team
 - 27. Score perfectly
 - 30. No (Scottish)
 - 31. SoCal hoops team (abbr.)
 - 32. Woman (French)
 - 35. Unwanted attic "decor"
 - 37. Peter Griffin's daughter
 - 38. Broad, shallow crater
 - 39. Large instruments
 - 40. Low bank or reef
 - 41. _____ and Venzetti
 - 42. Oil group
 - 43. Father
 - 44. Aggressive men
 - 45. Pairs well with green
 - 46. Travelers need it
 - 47. Digital audiotape
 - 48. Midway between northeast and east
 - 49. Chemistry descriptor
 - 52. S. China seaport
 - 55. Sound unit
 - 56. Heavy cavalry sword
 - 60. Thick piece of something
 - 61. Spa town in Austria
 - 63. Boyfriend
 - 64. Norse personification of old age
 - 65. Type of box
 - 66. Tie together
 - 67. Fiber from the coconut
 - 68. Chicago mayor
 - 69. Old English letters
- CLUES DOWN**
- 1. Type of sauce
 - 2. Pattern of notes
 - 3. Plant with long seedpods
 - 4. Map out
 - 5. Numbers cruncher
 - 6. Make a mental connection
 - 7. Italian tenor
 - 8. N. America's highest mountain peak
 - 9. Witness
 - 10. Arabic given name
 - 11. Music awards
 - 12. "The Immoralist" author
 - 13. Area units
 - 21. Units of loudness
 - 23. Political action committee
 - 25. Bar bill
 - 26. Witch
 - 27. A theatrical performer
 - 28. 2-door car
 - 29. _____ and flowed
 - 32. Papier-____, art medium
 - 33. City in Georgia
 - 34. Irregular
 - 36. College sports conference
 - 37. Angry
 - 38. Partner to cheese
 - 40. S. American mammal
 - 41. Self-immolation by fire rituals
 - 43. Split pulses
 - 44. Disfigure
 - 46. Cow noise
 - 47. Erase
 - 49. Chadic language
 - 50. Reward for doing well
 - 51. Paid TV
 - 52. Millisecond
 - 53. Other
 - 54. Colombian city
 - 57. Necklace party
 - 58. Every one of two or more people
 - 59. Regrets
 - 61. They come after "A"
 - 62. Horse noise

Mills receives coveted award



Edd W. Mills was awarded the 2021 Tom Downing Award by the Fontaine Ruritan Club. The award is the highest honor a Ruritan can receive from their club. The Ruritan National website notes that only 4 percent of Ruritans are recognized with this award.

Tourism zone ordinance, public hearings top supervisor agenda

A series of public hearings top the Henry County Board of Supervisors' evening agenda on Tuesday.

The board's second March 22 meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Room, located in the Henry County Administration Building on Kings Mountain Road.

Supervisors will hold a public hearing on magisterial redistricting. Last month, the Redistricting Committee presented its recommendations for changes to the magisterial districts to meet the requirements of the Virginia Constitution that requires mag-

isterial districts be reapportioned every 10 years following the release of the decennial census. This process aims to balance the represented population of each district to within 5 percent of the median.

A hearing also will be held on the Fieldale Heritage Revitalization, as required by the grant process for an application to the Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development. The hearing provides residents with an opportunity to comment on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) proposal that will

be submitted for the project. This denotes the second public hearing required in the process.

The board also will consider, after the public hearing concludes, a rezoning application by Gregory L. and Anne M. Benton requesting to build additional accessory buildings on property located at 902 Eggleston Falls Road, in the Ridgeway District.

The board also will meet at 3 p.m. on March 22 to consider an ordinance to create a tourism zone, which would allow businesses to take advantage of state and local tax incentives not avail-

able to businesses elsewhere.

The goal of these incentives is to stimulate business attraction, growth, and increased employment opportunities within certain areas of a locality. This can include, but is not limited: hiring credits, sales & use tax incentives, expense and interest deductions, discount utilities hook-up and payment plans, sewer facility hookup payment plans and reduced parking requirements. Any city, county, or town may establish, by ordinance, one or more tourism zones. Each locality may grant tax incentives and pro-

vide certain regulatory flexibility in a tourism zone, according to board documents.

Also at the afternoon meeting, supervisors are scheduled to hear updates on delinquent tax collection efforts and from the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp., as well as financial and other matters.

The board will consider meeting in closed session to discuss appointees to Henry Martinsville Department of Social Services; pending legal matters; the acquisition/disposal of real estate and as-yet unannounced industries.

Positive pause as hospital restrictions eased, visiting hours expand

Callie Hietala
Staff writer

As community transmission of COVID-19 slows in the area, Sovah Health is easing pandemic era restrictions on hospital visitors. Officials announced last week that, effective Monday, March 14, the healthcare system is reopening visitation at its two hospitals to family, friends, and other guests as well as expanding visitation hours.

"For the better part of two years, we have restricted visitation significantly for the protection of the visitors, our staff, and our patients," said Alan Larson, Sovah Health's market president and CEO of Sovah Health-Danville. "We feel like we're in a spot now where we need to make the community aware that the hospital needs them to participate in the healing art of healthcare."

One of the most difficult things for a hospital patient

during the pandemic was not having the support and comfort of friends and family during their hospital stays, said Spencer Thomas, CEO of Sovah Health-Martinsville. Now, the hospital wants to allow as much opportunity as possible for those interactions to happen once again.

Patients in the qualifying units, including outpatient services and most inpatient units, may have two well visitors at a time, with the ability to interchange, during visitation hours.

For pediatric patients, the two visitors must be parents or guardians. Labor and delivery patients are allowed two well support visitors during labor and one well support person for their entire hospital stay after delivery, in addition to a second well visitor during visitation hours.

Patients in the emergency department will be allowed one well visitor after being placed in a room; patients who

are in isolation, immunocompromised, or are under observation or test positive for COVID-19 are now allowed one well visitor.

All visitors must be aged 12 or older. All will still be screened for symptoms of COVID-19 upon entry.

Visiting hours will be from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. seven days a week in most areas of the hospital. Visitation in the ICU will be at the discretion of ICU staff, as it was before the pandemic.

Thomas said visitors are still be expected to wear a mask while inside the hospital.

Dr. Sheranda Gunn-Nolan, market chief medical officer, said hospital staff will continue to wear masks and personal protective equipment (PPE) because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recent update to mask-wearing guidelines does not extend to healthcare professionals.

Thomas said the easing

of visitation restrictions comes after both sites of Sovah hospitals have seen a "steady decline" in the total number of COVID-19 patients. National trends indicate that decline is not isolated to the local community.

According to information from the health department, Thomas said both Martinsville and Danville are classified as areas of moderate COVID transmission. Just a few weeks ago, they were both classified as high transmission areas.

According to the CDC's online map reflecting community transmission levels by county, Henry County is categorized as low transmission. The map was last updated March 10.

As of March 10, there were fewer than 10 patients in both hospitals admitted for COVID-19, two-thirds of which were in Martinsville and one-third in Danville, according to Gunn-Nolan, who said the

statistic is one of the lowest she's been able to report in a long time.

Sovah Health does not disclose exact numbers of COVID-19 patients due to patient privacy concerns, Larson explained.

Gunn-Nolan said those who are not vaccinated remain 4.3 times more likely to contract the virus.

Officials called the change in visitation policy a "positive pause" in the pandemic-related restrictions that have been in place for more than two years. Gunn-Nolan said that last Thursday marked day 723 of talking about COVID.

"I think there's a palpable sense of gratitude that we've gotten through another surge," Larson said, but cautioned that "other variants are out there," and yet another surge could come.

"This virus by its nature will continue to mutate until we get to a sufficient herd immunity that will keep this at bay," he said.

However, Larson said that, over the past several years dealing with and learning about the virus, hospital staff is beginning to "gain confidence that we can manage what we're asked to take care of" should another outbreak occur.

Gunn-Nolan said what she described as one of the lowest numbers of people hospitalized with COVID-19 since the onset of the pandemic more than two years ago. She said fewer than 10 patients are currently hospitalized with COVID across Sovah's two campuses. The steady decline in COVID cases led the healthcare system to ease its pandemic-related restrictions on hospital visitation.

Larson said that while the easing of restrictions marks a "positive pause," another variant could cause another surge of the virus, which will continue to mutate until sufficient herd immunity is reached.

Curriculum from page 1

Fine Arts, said the division is building on its existing partnership with Patrick & Henry Community College to offer new options for students, including Certified Nurse Aid (CNA). When that course is successfully completed, students will take an assessment test and, if they pass, will become a licensed CNA able to immediately enter the workforce.

Hines said another course offering will be a criminal justice academy for those interested in joining law enforcement, public safety, or similar careers.

The division will offer precision machining, training students for skilled jobs like welding which are both high-paying and, she said, "very needed."

Downing noted that Martinsville "has quite the reputation for advanced manufacturing," and classes like precision machining came about from looking at the needs of the community, business partners, and students.

Hines said she is looking for additional classes to offer students through P&HCC.

African Studies and African American Studies are two of the new elective classes offered to high school students. Cary Wright, coordinator of humanities and advanced programs, said the elective, mandated by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) was ready last fall, but the school did not have instructional staff to implement it - an issue he hopes will be resolved over the summer, which would allow the course to be offered in the fall.

According to documents related to the new program of study on the VDOE website, in August 2019, then-Governor Ralph Northam issued an executive order creating the African American History Education Commission, which was charged with examining the teaching of African American history in Virginia's public schools. Northam also directed the department to work with partners that included public school educators, univer-

sity historians, and college professors, to develop a new African American history course for high school students.

"It's a fantastic program," Wright said, and added that school staff are excited to offer it to students.

To address an increasing population of non-native English speakers, Downing said the division will offer English as a Foreign Language I & II.

"We have students who, English is not their native language and they're new to the country," Downing said. "For them it is a world language," no different than the French, Spanish, or other languages that are a more familiar part of high school curricula.

According to the program of studies handbook, the class is only available to students whose native language is not English and have been in the country less than 12 months. Students need administrator approval in order to take the course.

Dr. Tamara Vaughn, coordinator of academic interventions, Title III, foreign language, and mentoring, discussed with the board the division's credits for demonstrated proficiency which, she said, enables students who have learned foreign languages outside of their regular studies or are bilingual, to earn language credits without taking a class. Those students may take a state-approved test and, depending on their score, earn school credit.

"We're seeing our demographics changing ... especially at the high school level," Vaughn said.

Data from the 2020 census indicates that Martinsville has seen an increase in the number of people who identify as Hispanic or Latino, nearly doubling over the last decade. The 2010 census found that 4 percent of the city's population identified as Hispanic or Latino, compared to 7.6 percent in 2020.

Additionally, 2020 data shows the majority of Martinsville's population, 45.2 percent, is Black,

while 43.9 percent is white. Another 5.7 percent of the city's census respondents identified as multiracial.

Downing said staff is looking forward to offering the slate of new programs to students. "We want all of them to have access and all of the skills they need to accomplish their dreams."

She said there also have been in discussions with New College Institute (NCI) "to see how can we expand opportunities for our students. How can we bring what the community has to offer to our students?"

Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley said, "I'm glad we're not gatekeeping, just forcing students to take certain things. They have options, they have choice, and they have variety."

"We do not gatekeep," Downing said. "We try to push our students to do more than they think they can do."

In other matters, the board:

*Heard from Michael Haley, owner of Uptown Pinball, about the history and growing popularity of his arcade. He estimated

more than 100,000 people have been to the arcade since it opened.

*Heard from English teacher Ryan Brent and Wright about freshman Vex Miller who recently won the Eastman Oratorical Contest.

*Heard from Bobby Martin, who was recently named WLSL Coach of the Year.

*Heard from Lynwood Dodson who presented state indoor track winner Rickyah Mitchell-Hairston.

*Recognized the division's teachers of the year: Ronnell Penn (Clearview Elementary), Jasmine Hairston (Albert Harris Elementary), Kristin Moorefield (Patrick Henry Elementary), Robin Fletcher (Martinsville Middle), and Kristen Scott (Martinsville High).

*Heard from the principals of Albert Harris Elementary and Patrick Henry Elementary about recent events and projects.

*Heard from Shauna Hines on the 2022 musical, "Aladdin Jr." which will be performed April 1 and 2 at 7 p.m., and April 3 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door and

are available online at www.mcpsfinearts.org.

*Approved the consent agenda.

*Unanimously approved a request from Dr. Paulette Simington, executive director of special education and student services, to apply for Title VI federal funds through the special education annual plan. Simington said the division is required to apply for the funds through the Virginia Department of Education. Simington said this year, the school was requesting \$592,247, up from last year's request of \$577,998. The funds include salaries, benefits, purchased services, travel, and professional development for 3 special education teachers and 13 special education paraprofessionals and materi-

als and supplies for special education.

*Unanimously approved the request from Simington to apply for \$7,234 early special childhood education funds to cover instructional materials and supplies for preschool aged students that qualify for speech services not currently enrolled in the early childhood program at Clearview.

*Heard the superintendent's report.

Important dates:

March 15: Piedmont

Governors School meeting

March 26: middle and high school regional band concert at Martinsville High School

April 4: next regular board meeting

April 11-18: spring break (schools closed)



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OPINION

The Joro spider and sensationalized media

I hope you're sitting down because I'm about to tell you something so surprising, so shocking, that it may shake you to your very foundation:

Some media sources are dishonest.

Feel free to take as long as you need to get your heart rate back down and clean up after your comical spit-take.

As evidence of my bold claim, I'd like to submit the Joro spider.

The Joro spider (*Trichonephila clavata*) is a large, colorful spider that can be found in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and parts of China. Back in 2013, it started popping up in Georgia — likely due to individuals that stowed away on shipping containers — and it's since spread from Georgia to parts of South Carolina. It's believed that eventually, this spider could spread across most of the Eastern seaboard given its tolerance for cold weather.

If you're an arachnophobe, that may seem pretty bad. But if you've read any of the insane, fear-mongering headlines about the Joro spider, it might seem like the end of civilization is at hand.

"Everything we know about the Joro - the giant flying spiders multiplying across the East Coast," reads a headline from *The Independent*. "Giant spiders expected to drop from sky across the East Coast this spring," crows *Axios*. And then there's my personal favorite, a *USA Today* column titled "Giant spiders are

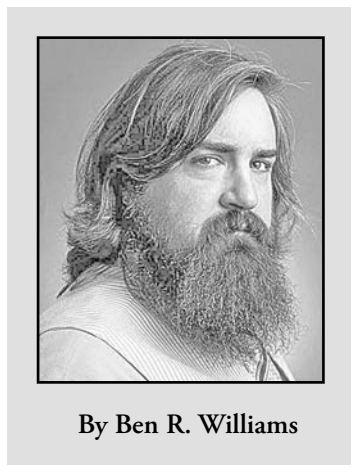
invading the East Coast! This is not a drill! Evacuate to Toledo! Now!" After reading this column, I felt much better about my own abilities as a columnist and much worse about the current state of *USA Today*. They're truly living up to their slogan, "USA Today: America's favorite newspaper that comes free when you get a room at the airport Holiday Inn."

Based on these headlines, it sounds like the Joro spider is incredibly dangerous, at least a foot long, and inexplicably capable of flight. If you see a headline suggesting that deadly five-pound spiders are about to start raining from the sky, you're probably going to click the link. It seems like important information.

I know a decent amount about spiders, so let me lay your fears to rest: the Joro spider is not a big deal. Number one, it's not aggressive, and even if you do somehow get bitten by one, it has fairly mild venom. Also, this isn't a spider you're likely to find in your house; it's an orb weaver, meaning all it wants to do is build a web outside, sit quietly in the middle of it, and wait for bugs to blunder past.

Two, it's kind of a big spider, but it's nothing we haven't seen before. Have you ever seen those big yellow garden spiders we have in Virginia? The Joro spider is about the same size as those guys and no more dangerous.

Third, it can't fly. Nearly every article mentioning Joro spiders



By Ben R. Williams

says that they engage in "ballooning," which means they produce little silk parachutes that catch the wind, allowing them to disperse. What these articles fail to mention is that they don't do this when they're full-sized; they do this when they're tiny baby spiders. You might remember Charlotte's babies doing the same thing at the end of "Charlotte's Web." Many species of spiders engage in ballooning; it's nothing new.

Fourth, we're not going to see these things any time soon. Based on an article I found from Penn State which includes stuff like "research" and "actual scientific information," these spiders are expanding their range in the U.S. by an average of 10 miles per year. We're not going to wake up one day this summer and see them blanketing Virginia like in the 1977 William Shatner eco-terror

classic "Kingdom of the Spiders."

So why all of these fear-mongering headlines about the giant flying death spiders?

Because these publications want you to click their links, and there's no better way to make someone click a link than by making them scared or angry. The only reason I'm even remotely worried about the Joro spider is that like many invasive species, it could have an impact on our native insects and spiders. But nobody's going to click on a headline that reads, "Ecological impact of invasive spider remains unclear."

And that's the problem with real news versus sensationalized news. I try to get my news from reliable sources like Reuters. Reuters is one of the gold-standards for unbiased reporting. And you know how you can tell they're reliable?

Because they're boring. Let's look at a few Reuters headlines I randomly selected on the day I'm writing this column:

"U.S. ready to take diplomatic steps Ukraine will find helpful, State Dept. says."

"D.C. Circuit orders FERC to revise assessment of pipeline upgrade."

"EXCLUSIVE: Chile tax reform to focus on individuals, natural resources, finance minister says."

You will notice that no one is "clapping back" at anyone. No one is getting "blasted" or

"destroyed" or "slammed." Reuters is not telling you that "you won't believe" the information contained in the story, nor are they offering "ten reasons why" you should do something.

This also extends to TV news. On election night, I generally tune into C-SPAN. C-SPAN features unbiased information presented as it's happening. When you watch C-SPAN, you will not see anyone screaming at anyone else, nor will anyone tell you reasons why you should be afraid of something or angry at someone. C-SPAN is fantastic.

It is also, and I say this with all due respect, so boring that it could serve as a prescription sleep aid.

But journalism isn't supposed to be entertainment. It's supposed to be unbiased, factual information, and it's up to the reader or viewer to think critically about that information and decide how they feel about it. If you're watching a news channel for entertainment, you're watching an entertainment channel.

The problem, of course, is that entertainment is a much easier sell than journalism. Brian Lamb, the founder of C-SPAN and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, has an estimated net worth of \$1.2 million. Meanwhile, Tucker Carlson, a man who screams made-up grievances into the void each night, has an estimated net worth of \$30 million.

It's enough to make a man wish the killer flying spiders really were on the way.

White House Misdirection on Energy

Morgan Griffith
9th District U.S. Rep.

Russia's unprovoked war of aggression in Ukraine calls for the United States to respond with the diplomatic and economic tools we have in our hands. One that the Biden Administration has been reluctant to use has been American energy.

As I noted in my last column, the United States imported 200,000 barrels of crude oil and 500,000 barrels of other petroleum products per day from Russia in 2021, purchases that funded Vladimir

Putin's regime. Our country's leadership in energy production, however, should allow us to stop importing Russian energy and export our energy to other countries.

Since I wrote that column, President Biden moved to ban Russian energy imports. It was a welcome step, but the hesitation in taking it and the subsequent efforts by the White House to stop stronger measures indicates that the Administration still does not grasp the power and potential of domestic energy production.

President Biden issued

the ban on March 8. He did so as negotiators on Capitol Hill worked on legislation not only to ban energy imports but also to suspend normal trade relations with Russia and its ally Belarus. The congressional action under discussion would have been stronger than the President's, so his Administration followed up its ban by pressuring Congress not to go any further.

The bill that came to the floor could have been much stronger. I voted for it only after Democrats blocked a better bill offered by Congressman Kevin Brady (R-TX) that would have further restricted Russian trade and opened up American energy production.

In a sign of the muddled direction of this Administration, just a few days after blocking a bill that would have stripped Russia of normal trade status, President Biden called for Congress to send him a bill that does so.

The White House has seized on the import ban as a convenient way to explain high gas prices

and push its underlying domestic agenda.

A reporter asked President Biden on March 8 about gas prices, "What can you do about it?" He responded, "Can't do much right now. Russia is responsible."

Anyone who has filled a gas tank since January 20, 2021, when the President was inaugurated, recognizes his statement as disingenuous.

According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the national retail gas price for the week of President Biden's inauguration was \$2.48 per gallon. Before Putin invaded Ukraine, it had soared to \$3.62 per gallon — an increase of more than a dollar.

Russia was not responsible for depressing American energy production. Vladimir Putin has committed many wrongs, but he did not cancel the Keystone XL pipeline or issue a moratorium on new oil and gas leases on federal lands. Those wounds were self-inflicted thanks to the Biden Administration.

The only other response the Administration has

besides deflecting blame is urging Americans to buy electric vehicles. Such a suggestion probably leaves a bitter taste in the mouths of Americans when they consider that the average transaction price for an electric vehicle is \$62,876, according to a *Wall Street Journal* article that cites recent Kelley Blue Book data.

If buying a used electric vehicle, a buyer has to look at how much the battery has diminished and whether it will need a new battery pack or modules, which can cost over \$10,000.

Price aside, plenty of other factors limit electric vehicles as a solution to the present energy crisis. I brought up one of them at a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing; following the White House's lead, House Democrats chose to discuss electric vehicles rather than urgent problems and realistic solutions.

The issue I raised at the hearing was the range of electric vehicles. During good weather, I could not drive an electric vehicle from one end of the Ninth

Congressional District to another without recharging. *Axios* reported that cold weather diminishes their range even more. In Norway, electric vehicles lose about 20% of their driving range and take longer to charge, and AAA found that the loss in range when the car's heater is on at full blast could be as high as 41%.

Taking these facts with others I have previously noted, such as cost, the insufficiency of current charging stations, and the inadequacy of today's electric grid to support new electric vehicle infrastructure, electric vehicles are clearly inadequate for addressing our near-term energy challenges.

The solution remains obvious to everyone but the White House and congressional Democrats: more domestic energy production.

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

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Rives

from page 1

destroyed, he said two or three pop up shows were organized that same winter and all were well received.

After the 2019 fire, 'Rives on the Road' became the group's solution to continue to offer indoor concerts in Martinsville and Henry County, Buck said of pop-up concerts that could be held in any venue with enough capacity for an audience of hundreds.

In January 2020, a Rives on the Road season opening party was held at Forest Park Country Club with the group Yarn.

But then COVID hit.

The 2020 show was the group's last indoor concert for more than a year. Saturday's event at NCI will be the next.

"We've been planning all along to get Rives on the Road going again for this year," Buck said. Three shows were hosted outside at Pop's Farm, the home of Rooster Walk, during the height of the pandemic to allow for social distancing. An indoor show was initially scheduled for January, but was cancelled due to the onset of the omicron variant.

Only one other show has been announced thus far—the Lonesome River Band, a bluegrass group which will perform at NCI on April 1.

Dates/announcements of future acts this season have not been set yet - partly because most haven't been booked yet,

though season passholders are guaranteed free admission to five other shows this calendar year in addition to Saturday's event.

Traditionally, going back to the early days of Rives shows, "a lot of what we've done intentionally over the years is wait to book bands once they have begun to put their tour together" to find groups that are already going to be nearby or passing through the area, allowing them to be booked at a more economical rate, Buck said.

As for the future of the Rives Theatre, Buck said his organization does not have the means to rebuild it, nor is he aware of any plans to do so.

Meanwhile, the administration at NCI agreed to partner with the group, Buck said. However, the group is open to exploring the idea of a permanent indoor home. It is not, he said, in a financial position to build or renovate a space itself. That, he said, likely would have to happen through a partnership with another business that sees value in hosting the group's concerts.

However, Buck said, hosting shows in uptown is important. In addition to the many businesses and residents who call uptown home, many of the Rives' most loyal supporters over the years live close to the area and have become accustomed for more than a decade to driving into uptown Martinsville for a

music experience.

"But one of the neat things about Rives on the Road is it gives us a chance to spread our wings a little bit" to showcase other facilities, he said, and added that organizers always want the venues to be in Martinsville and Henry County.

Regardless, Buck believes continuing the Rives' musical legacy—whether in one place or on the road—is important.

Not only are the shows a tourism driver—Buck said tickets to Rives shows have been bought by people living several hours away—but they add to the cultural fabric of the area.

"I think the arts in general and specifically live music is a really important part of the quality of life for folks living in and around Martinsville and Henry County," he said.

Tickets for the season kickoff at NCI are \$50.

Rives on the Road season passes, which include the kickoff and admission to five additional shows this year, are \$125. Tickets can be purchased online at Eventbrite. More information and links to ticket sales can be found on the Rives Theatre Facebook page.

Buck said tickets for the kickoff event can be purchased at the door, but dinner cannot be guaranteed since it is a catered event.

Congressional staff to visit Patrick, Henry counties

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith's staff will be available at the following locations on March 23.

In Henry County from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the Bassett Branch Library, 3969 Fairystone Park Highway, Bassett.

In Patrick County from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in the Patrick County Administration Building Conference Room, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart.

In the event of inclement weather (heavy snow, sleet, icy rain, etc.), traveling office hours may be rescheduled to avoid putting constituents at risk. If schools are closed, office hours will be closed as well. Call the Christiansburg Office at (540) 381-5671 or the Abingdon Office at (276) 525-1405 with any questions or to schedule an appointment time in the event of office hour closure.

VEC gets state aid to prosecute fraudulent unemployment claims

Attorney General Jason Miyares has signed an agreement with the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) to prosecute fraudulent claims for unemployment compensation.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Virginia has been inundated with fraudulent claims for unemployment compensation. These fraudulent claims are perpetrated through identity theft of innocent Virginians by organized criminal rings. Under Virginia law, the VEC can request and authorize the Attorney General to represent the VEC in the prosecution of criminal unemployment compensation fraud cases.

"When someone commits fraud against the state, they are stealing from all Virginians. When that fraud impacts our unemployment insurance program, it is especially hurting people in need. I am proud of Attorney General Miyares who will take on this important role of fighting fraud and abuse on behalf of all Virginians," said Gov. Glenn

Youngkin.

"The VEC has asked that I take on this responsibility, and I enthusiastically agreed to the VEC's request," said Miyares. "Protecting the Commonwealth from crime is one of my top priorities as Attorney General. Fraudulent claims must be prosecuted and fraud on the unemployment fund diverts resources from those who need them most."

"There is a tremendous amount of work to be done to refocus on our customers, the individuals and employers, and get them the resources they need," said Commissioner Carrie Roth. "Working with the Attorney General's office, we are increasing our efforts to go after those who are committing fraud and taking from Virginians the benefits they are entitled to receive. This fraudulent activity is frustrating to many Virginians who are already in tough situations, and we are bringing the additional support of the Attorney General's office to hold those committing this crime accountable."

P&HCC's class of 2022 to graduate in-person

Since 2019, the pandemic has caused Patrick & Henry Community College graduates to celebrate their graduations virtually. This year, the college has announced that the class of 2022 will be walking in person.

In a return to pre-pandemic traditions, the graduation ceremony will be in the Stone Hall gymnasium on the second Saturday in May. The college is planning a few small surprises for the graduates to make this in-person graduation extra special.

The college is also delighted to announce the 2022 graduation speaker will be Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner, the President and CEO of the International Honors Society for Community Colleges --Phi Theta Kappa.

As the head of Phi Theta Kappa, Dr. Tincher-Ladner oversees 1,300 society chapters in 11 nations and works to provide scholarship and leadership opportunities for approximately 250,000 students worldwide. She uses her international position to spearhead innovative research and advocate for community college students.

"As educators, graduation day is one of our favorite days of the year. It means so much to us to celebrate our students' success. So, it goes without saying, that we are beyond delighted to have the opportunity to celebrate our students in person together as a PFamily," said P&HCC's President Greg Hodges. "We are also thrilled that we will get to welcome Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner as our commencement speaker. The Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society is an incredible and international organization that has done so much good for so many community college students. Dr. Tincher-Ladner is an exemplary national leader of PTK who, herself, has been a champion of student success. The fact that she has deep roots in P&HCC's service region makes her visit with us even more exciting."

Also, during the ceremony, the college intends to reveal the Teaching Faculty Member

of the Year and the Distinguished Faculty of the Year Award Winners.

To participate, eligible students should submit both an application for graduation and an indication of their intent to participate in the commencement ceremony. The application for graduation is due by March 31. More information about these steps and all other graduation-related information will be sent directly to students' college email addresses.



PHOTO ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED ON PTK.ORG
Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner will be the speaker at P&HCC's in person graduation.

New Jail

from page 1



Deputy County Administrator Dale Wagoner said the county financed \$76 million for the construction of the new facility and will be reimbursed 25 percent of the cost, or \$18.75 million, from the state.

years later is very impressive," Wagoner wrote in an email.

The new jail will house both male and female inmates, and has areas ranging from minimum to maximum security.

According to a press release from the sheriff's office, Piedmont Community Services will have an office inside the facility with the ability to treat inmates in need of mental health services. Wellpath Medical Services will have staff and offices within the jail as will Good News Jail Ministry. Classrooms were constructed for approved volunteer groups to help inmates with educational needs, including earning a GED.

Construction Costs

A number of county residents have raised concerns about the cost of the new jail and rumors have circulated that the project is over budget.

Wagoner said that the county is still under budget for the total project.

He noted that a reference on the county website in 2017 estimated the jail construction cost at \$68 million, but he explained that number was a "rough estimate before the initial design work was completed."

The price of the jail has remained consistent since the initial design meeting Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC) requirements was completed.

In the spring of 2018, the Virginia General

Assembly approved a state budget that included \$18,759,878 for the 25 percent reimbursement to Henry County for the jail, he wrote.

In a letter dated July 11, 2018, VDOC notified Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry that the State Board of Corrections approved the county's submitted Community Based Corrections Plan and Planning Study.

"In approving the Planning Study," the letter stated, "the board approved eligible state reimbursement funding for construction in an amount up to \$18,759,878, or the 25 percent of the approved eligible cost of \$75,039,512."

Included with the letter was a copy of the Virginia Acts of Assembly approved in June of 2018 showing funding for 25 percent reimbursement was appropriated "in an amount not to exceed" the aforementioned \$18.75 million.

The minutes of the August 2019 Board of Supervisors meeting indicate the board unanimously approved awarding a \$49,074,062 contract to the Lynchburg-based English Construction Company, Inc. for the construction of the new jail.

The minutes state that two qualified vendors submitted bids for the project and staff negotiated with the low bidder "to further reduce the cost of the contract and to value-engineer certain aspects of the design." English's

bid, according to the minutes, was \$49,074,062 for construction, including \$750,000 for per unit fees related to foundation work.

"The county will be able to realize additional savings by purchasing many of the materials and supplies needed for construction directly from the vendor," the minutes stated. "Collectively, the total cost for constructing the facility and purchasing the materials and supplies is \$64,126,857. Contracts for furniture, fixtures, and kitchen equipment are not included in this proposal and will be presented to the Board for its consideration at a future date."

At its Sept. 2019 meeting, the board unanimously approved amending the award of contract to English Construction to the full amount of \$64,126,857, thereby allowing "better control of inventory of materials and supplies as they are needed on the job site." Further, the minutes state, the move would "place any burden of cost escalation on English Construction."

However, the county would still be able to make direct purchases of materials and supplies "to realize additional savings. When this occurs, English Construction will issue a deductive change order to reduce the total payment amount due to them," according to the minutes.

Wagoner said that the county purchased several materials directly from vendors "to take advantage

of government pricing and no sales tax." He estimated that the extra work on the part of county staff saved the county approximately \$4.2 million on the project.

A document provided by Wagoner on Feb. 22 shows the amount of purchase orders issued for the jail project totaling \$72,525,330. Wagoner said as of March 15, \$69,195,115 had been spent.

Part of that cost, he noted, was \$1,089,530 spent on improvements to Dupont Road which "serves a much greater good than just for the jail project."

The improvements mean the road can be accepted into the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT's) secondary road system, he said, adding that means VDOT will assume responsibility for road maintenance, including snow removal and any future repaving.

"It will also allow further sub-division of the entire DuPont property for other economic development projects and public safety operations," he noted. "Currently, the cost of maintaining the road is shared by all of the tenants at the site," he said of the county, DuPont, and Invista.

Funding the construction of the jail was a 3-phase process, Wagoner explained. Around 2016, the county took out a \$10 million loan to cover the initial startup costs of the project, including architectural design and purchasing the land. He noted that the county did

not use the entire amount.

Wagoner said at a supervisor meeting in September 2019, financial consultant David Rose, of Davenport & Company, "discussed the strategic financing plan for the jail at approximately \$76 million and assuming a reimbursement of \$18.75 million from the state."

The minutes from that meeting state that "In 2018, Davenport assisted the county with securing bonds on the open market to cover the majority of the cost of constructing the new facility."

The county, Wagoner said, "has followed this plan and has only financed \$76 million, with the state's 25 percent being reimbursed at the end of the project so the total debt can be paid down."

The initial 2018 bonds paid for 75 percent of the cost of the jail, and paid off the initial startup loan, Wagoner said. In 2019, the county issued another series of bonds to pay off the remaining balance.

"For each phase of the financing, there were several public hearings relating to the financing and much public discussion," he continued.

In 2018, the supervisors approved a tax increase on real estate and personal property, with the additional revenues going toward the debt service on the jail, Wagoner said, and noted that the increase was only intended to pay down the costs of construction and not to fund ongoing operational costs.

That funding issue was brought up by County Administrator Tim Hall at the supervisor's annual

planning session held in the new jail on Feb. 8.

There, Hall said that while the county anticipated saving roughly \$1 million annually by being able to house all inmates in the new facility (currently, some county inmates are outsourced to other locations at a cost to the county), the savings would not be enough to cover all ongoing operational costs.

He discussed the possibility of either tax hikes or funding cuts to help the county meet its budget deficit for the upcoming fiscal year, caused not only by the operational cost of the jail but a number of other factors, including unfunded mandates, school funding requests, and maintaining law enforcement salary increases.

Wagoner said the best he recalls, county tax increases have always been for specific projects like the new jail. He could not recall a time when county taxes were increased to cover inflation, pay increases, or other ongoing costs.

While no solution for the issue of covering operational costs for the new facility has been announced, the county is still undergoing its budgeting process for the upcoming fiscal year.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS												
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OBITUARIES

Irene Lawson Simpson

Irene Lawson Simpson, 94, passed away at King's Grant on Wednesday, March 9, 2022. She was born on May 14, 1927, in Meadows of Dan, VA to Turner Madison Lawson and Lucinda Agnes Shelor Lawson. Her family included 12 children. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Edwin Earl Simpson, and all of her siblings. Survivors are a daughter, Deborah Sue Simpson of Martinsville and a son, Danny Earl Simpson of White Hall, MD. Danny is married to Kathleen McKenzie, and they are the parents of Irene's only grandchild, Paul Madison Simpson of Albuquerque, NM. She has had numerous nieces and nephews, 18, all but 3 survive.

Irene graduated from Meadows of Dan High School and shortly after moved to Martinsville to study at Perry Business School. In Martinsville she met and married Earl in 1946. She was an active member of Chatham Heights Baptist Church into the 1960s before moving her membership to First Baptist. She worked in the area first at DuPont and later, after her children were established in school, at Lee Telephone. She remained with the telephone company past their acquisition into Centel until her retirement.

She was a dedicated helper, for members of her extended family, to being a regular blood donor, church worker, and volunteer at Martinsville Hospital. Even into her 90s, she could be found



ringing for the Salvation Army outside Kroger. She and Earl loved beach trips, dancing, and bowling. She competed in bowling leagues since her DuPont days. Her daffodils are on the verge of covering all of Druid Hills. She knew how to make a point, especially one that needed making. Last summer she didn't know Katie and I were in town. We were waiting for her in her room at King's Grant when Mom was wheeled in. Debby said, "Surprise! Look who's here? Don't they look good?" Mom said, "Katie looks good." Debby said, "What about Danny?" Mom said, "He might look good if he'd comb his hair." For her 94th birthday she was serenaded with an original composition, "The Ballad of Irene Lawson," which starts this way: IRENE...Irene Lawson. Born on May 14.

The funeral was held on March 14, 2022, at First Baptist Church of Martinsville, officiated by Revs. John Fulcher and Dennis Knight. Interment was at Roselawn Burial Park.

Memorial contributions may be made to the First Baptist Church of Martinsville, 23 Starling Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112; Grace Network, P.O. Box 3902, Martinsville, VA 24115; Mountain Valley Hospice, 730 East Church Street, Suite 13, Martinsville, VA 24112; or a charity of the donor's choice. Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA. To express condolences online, visit www.collinsmckee-stonemartinsville.com.

Hubert Lee Ramsey

Hubert Lee Ramsey, 92, of Ridgeway, VA passed away Thursday, March 10, 2022. He was born July 17, 1929, to the late Jesse Ramsey and Estelle Shellhorse Ramsey. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Bernice Ramsey; sister, Virginia R. Lankford; and brother, Eldridge Ramsey.

Mr. Ramsey served in the United States Army in the Korean Conflict and retired from DuPont.



He is survived by his nephew, Robert Lankford of Ridgeway, VA; half-brothers, Jerry Ramsey of Clarksville, VA and Jesse Ramsey of Greensboro, NC; and stepdaughter, Janice Searce.

A graveside service was held on March 16, 2022, at Roselawn Burial Park.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Ramsey family. Online

condolences may be made at norrissfuneral.com.

James E. Peverall, Sr.

James E. Peverall, Sr., 91, of Martinsville, VA passed away Friday, March 11, 2022. He was born on December 7, 1930, in Roanoke, VA to the late Cornwall Aspinwall Peverall and Kathleen Lydia Peverall. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of over 50 years, Juanita F. Peverall; his son, Garry D. Peverall; and his brother, Cornwall A. Peverall, Jr.

He is survived by his son, Jim Peverall, Jr. of Martinsville, VA; daughters, Kim Ford (John) of Martinsville, VA and Carol Ward (Joe) of Chesterfield, VA; five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Jim was a decorated Korean War Veteran, attended Roanoke College, was a Virginia State Trooper, and retired as a Special Agent with the U.S. Treasury



Department. He was a member of Rich Acres Christian Church, NHT Destroyer Charles R. Ware DD-865, American Legion, National Association of Federal Agents, Virginia State Police Alumni, and the Elks Lodge.

A funeral will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, March 18, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel, with Pastor Tim Hunt officiating. Burial will be at Roselawn Burial Park.

Memorial donations may be made to Rich Acres Christian Church, 422 Mountain View Road, Martinsville, VA 24112.

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

Georgia Hairston

Georgia Hairston, 76, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away Thursday, March 10, 2022. She was born September 3, 1945, in Henry County to the late James Dennis Wells and Mary Ann Preston Wells.

Georgia was of Apostolic faith and attended Fellowship Church of our Lord and Savior. She enjoyed cooking, spending time with family and friends, and was a member of the neighborhood watch.

She is survived by her husband, Rodgers Hairston; daughters, Benita (Timothy) Vernon, Tosha Hairston, Chicquita Hairston; sons, James Dennis



Hairston, Parish (Priscilla) Hairston, Kevin Hairston; sisters, Alice Wells Reynolds, Shirley Ann Wells Reynolds, Alberta Loretta Wells, and Bonnie (Bruce) Powell; brothers, Harry Lee (Nadine) Wells, Bobby (Juanita) Wells, James (Dorothy) Wells.

The funeral was on March 16, 2022, at Wright Funeral Service Chapel. Bishop Phillip Calloway officiated. Burial was at Carver Memorial Gardens.

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

Judy Joyce Draper

Judy Joyce Draper, 72, of Collinsville, VA, formerly of Mayodan, NC, passed away Thursday, March 10, 2022. She was born July 3, 1949, in Martinsville, VA to the late Raymond Joyce and Hester Keith Joyce. She also was preceded by her brothers, Wayne Joyce and Danny Joyce.

Mrs. Draper worked for Mehler Engineering.

She is survived by her husband of 27 years, Robert Lee "Bobby" Draper, Jr.; children, Lisa H. McHone (Herbert) and Roger "Dean" Hurd (Shannon); stepdaughter, Kelly Draper; and grandchild-



dren, Darren McHone (Jordan), Daniel McHone (Maggie), Tiffanie Hurd (Jon), and Christopher Hurd (Brianna). She is also survived and preceded in death by her half brothers and sisters.

A funeral was held March 17, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel. Pastor Jerry Tedder officiated. Burial was at Roselawn Burial Park.

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

Lucy Thelma Hairston Mattox

Lucy Thelma Hairston Mattox, 88, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away Sunday, March 13, 2022, at her home. She was born October 31, 1933, in Henry County, Virginia to the late General George Washington Hairston and Betty Ruth Stone Hairston. She was a member of High Ridge Missionary Baptist Church and enjoyed cooking, going to church, entertaining, and her family.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her sisters, Bertha Pearson, Mary Katherine Hairston,



Mildred France, Stella Craig, Ruby Spencer and Hassie Spencer, and brothers, George Hairston and Thomas Hairston. She is survived by a sister, Fannie Mae Muse.

The funeral will be Monday, March 21, 2022, at 1 p.m. at Carver Assembly Building, with Pastor Keishawn Niblett officiating. Visitation will be thirty minutes prior to

the service. Burial is at Carver Memorial Gardens. Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at www.wrightfuneralservices.net.

Michael Rayford Spraker

Michael Rayford Spraker, 66, of Axton, Virginia passed away Friday, March 11, 2022, at his residence. He was born August 22, 1955, in Martinsville, Virginia to the late Erron Rayford Spraker and Lucy Hodges Spraker. Michael proudly served in the United States Army during the Vietnam era. He enjoyed spending his time hunting and fishing. He was a member of Redemption Point Church. Mike loved the Lord as well as his family.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Sabrina Lovelace Spraker. He is survived by

his stepson, Greg Smith (Mallory); sisters, Sandra Spraker Sale, Wanda Viars, Patsy Frazier (Eddie); brother, Phillip Spraker (Doris); grandchildren, Austin Smith, Grayson Smith, and McKenzie Byrd (Graham); and several nieces and nephews.

A graveside Service was held March 15, 2022, at Horsepasture Christian Church Cemetery. Kenny Daniels and Bruce Hagy officiated. Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at www.wrightfuneralservices.net.

Katherine E. "Pet" Hairston

Katherine E. "Pet" Hairston, 77, of Bassett passed away peacefully at her home on March 7, 2022. She was born in Henry County on December 4, 1944, to the late Sam Lee and Savannah H. Easley. She was also preceded in death by her husband, George R. Hairston; brothers, Billy A., Samuel L., and MacArthur L. Easley; Baby Easley and sister, Barbara Lee Easley. Katherine was a member of the Star of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Bassett where she served as a Sunday School Teacher, the Usher Board Ministry, as a Trustee in Training, and sang in the Gospel Star Choir.

Katherine, more affectionately known as "Pet" to everyone, was also a consistent and present pillar of strength and support to other children who attended high school and college with her daughter, Maletia. There are many students at St. Paul's College who benefited from her words of wisdom



and her good cooking. A few of her specialties that she loved to cook in her spare time included her special dumplings, homemade bread, strawberry and peach cobbler, pinto beans, and her special fried chicken. Once everyone was served, she would sit back and drink a cold Pepsi or Coke.

In addition to her daughter, Maletia H. Manns, "Pet" is also survived by two grandchildren, Terrance J. Schoefield and Vintoria S. Manns; two sisters, Vera A. Thornton of Martinsville, VA and Mary J. Brown of Chesapeake, VA; a special niece, Alison S. Easley of Raleigh, NC and a special nephew Alonzo DaRon Easley of Madison, NC; and a host of nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held March 14, 2022, at Carver Memorial Gardens. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.bassettfuneralservice.com. Bassett Funeral Service is serving the Hairston family.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

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

SERVICES

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HELP WANTED

FERRUM COLLEGE

Groundskeeper
(Ongoing/recurring seasonal status)

Ferrum College currently has open positions for a Seasonal Groundskeeper. The individual will perform general grounds work, including mowing lawns with riding and push mowers, using trimmers, and cleaning walkways. This position is a non-benefits eligible position and is considered to be an ongoing/recurring seasonal status. The person filling this position will work approximately 30 to 40 hours per week. Occasional weekend work is required. Must be able

to lift and carry 50 pounds on a regular basis. Valid driver's license required. Submit application to and three references to: resumes@ferrum.edu or to Human Resources, P.O. Box 1000, Ferrum, VA 24088-9000. Background check required. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FERRUM COLLEGE

Head Cheerleading Coach (seasonal position)

Ferrum College, an NCAA Division III institution located in Ferrum, Virginia, is looking for a motivated, energetic and passionate individual to be our next Head Cheerleading Coach. This is a seasonal position and the review of applications will begin immediately.

PRIMARY PURPOSE: The Head Cheerleading Coach will evaluate, recruit, coach and mentor qualified student-athletes that will be a part of our cheerleading program. The successful candidate will oversee the organization of all team practices, events and budgets. This individual will put together a comprehensive recruitment plan for the program and will ensure a culture of compliance within all NCAA Division III and Ferrum College rules and regulations, and ensure all coaches and student-athletes comply with same.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Evaluate, recruit, coach and mentor qualified student-athletes.

- Oversee all aspects of the cheerleading program operations, including, but not limited to, the development and management of all team practices, recruitment, academic monitoring, budgets and the supervision of any volunteer and student assistant coaching staff.
- Develop and execute a comprehensive recruitment plan for the cheerleading program, ensuring a robust and competitive roster from the local, regional and national landscape.
- Ensure a culture of compliance around all NCAA Division III and Ferrum College rules and regulations and ensure all coaching staff members and student-athletes do the same.
- Travel locally and regionally for selected events and post-season football and/or basketball contests.
- Oversee student-athlete academic progress, be available for consultation/support for student-athletes and direct student-athletes to the appropriate academic professionals to ensure academic success.
- Select and purchase all equipment necessary to ensure a safe environment.
- Work closely with Sports Information Director to develop a media plan and be available for interviews and speaking engagements to internal and external constituents.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES: Oversight of any volunteer and/or student assistant coaches.

HELP WANTED

QUALIFICATION STANDARDS:

Education/Experiences:
A bachelor's degree and a minimum of two years coaching experience at the collegiate, club or high school level is required. A master's degree and collegiate participation and coaching experience is preferred.

Licenses:
Current and valid driver's license required.

Other Preferences:
The candidate must be able to work independently and have the ability to work occasionally on evenings and weekends throughout the year to accomplish the tasks necessary for success in this field. The successful candidate must be committed to working and teaching within an environment that embraces the development of students around their education, cultural diversity, mental health awareness and NCAA and ODAC compliance.

To apply for this position: Please submit a letter of interest, resume, and application to Ferrum College, Human Resources, P.O. Box 1000, Ferrum, VA 24088, or e-mail to resumes@ferrum.edu. The College will begin accepting applications for this position immediately, and look to fill the position as soon as possible. A background check will be required of the successful candidate.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Home Health Aide

Full-time Home Health Aide needed for a precious young lady with down syndrome. Duties include- diapering, bathing, tube feeding (will train), daily outings, and simple therapy work. Monday thru Friday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. \$11.81 per hour. On the job training provided. Call (276) 627-0042.

Fairy Stone State Park Now Hiring

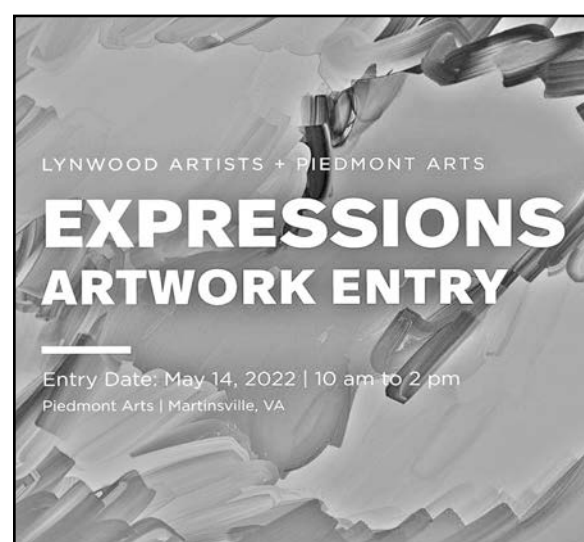
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Apply online or at the park office:

967 Fairystone Lake Drive
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Regional artists invited to enter annual exhibit at Piedmont Arts



The official entry rules for "Expressions 2022" are available now at Piedmont Arts and online at PiedmontArts.org. Artists from Southern Virginia and the surrounding regions are invited to enter this annual showcase, which will be on display May 28 – July 29, at Piedmont Arts in Martinsville, Virginia.

Artwork entry will take place on Saturday, May 14, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. Entry is open to all artists living within a 100-mile radius of Martinsville. Artwork submitted for entry must have been completed within the last three years. Work previously exhibited in "Expressions" is not eligible. Up to two pieces of art may be submitted per artist. Unlike a juried exhibition, "Expressions" is open-entry, and all submitted works in compliance with the entry rules are accepted.

Cash prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place in

seven categories, as well as purchase awards, the Lynwood Artists Award and Best In Show.

Before entering work, artists should read the complete entry rules and download an entry form at piedmontarts.org/info/expressions.cfm.

Piedmont Arts is a nonprofit art museum in Martinsville that inspires and engages the diverse Martinsville-Henry County community and surrounding areas through visual arts, performing arts and arts education. Piedmont Arts is a statewide partner of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, with programming that is partially supported by the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. Piedmont Arts is 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.

Axton man charged with first degree murder

On March 11, at approximately 12:23 p.m., the Martinsville-Henry County Emergency 911 Center received a call that an individual had been shot during an incident in the parking lot of Kuntry Boyz Tires located at 8985 A.L. Philpott Hwy., Martinsville.

Henry County Sheriff's deputies arriving at the scene at 12:28 p.m. found a man lying on the ground. The man, identified as Donny Shermaine Martin, 44, of Martinsville, had suffered multiple gunshot wounds to the

torso and was pronounced dead at the scene.

The body was transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the Western District of Virginia for an autopsy.

Investigators alleged that an argument ensued between the Martin and Stephen Darnell Holland, during which a firearm was produced, and Martin was shot multiple times.

Holland, 39, of Axton, was charged with first-degree murder and use of

a firearm during the commission of a felony. He is currently held in the Henry County Jail without bond.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call the Henry County Sheriff's Office at (276) 638-8751 or Crimestoppers at 63-CRIME (632-7463). The Crimestoppers Program offers rewards up to \$2500.00 for information related to crime. The nature of the crime and the substance of the information determine the amount of reward paid.



Stephen Darnell Holland

CITIZEN COMMENT ON USE OF ARPA FUNDS

TAKE NOTICE that the City Council of Martinsville, Virginia, at its regular session to be conducted on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be practicable, at the City Council Chambers, Martinsville Municipal Building (second floor), 55 West Church Street, Martinsville, Virginia, shall conduct a public information session concerning proposed uses of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds by the City of Martinsville. A brief presentation on uses of ARPA funds allowable by law will be given. Citizens are encouraged to attend and comment upon ANY proposed use of ARPA funds they deem desirable, including items not included on the current suggested list of uses.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS HENRY COUNTY, VIRGINIA

CCBC Lot 5
Bid # 22-04143-3091

Sealed Bids for the construction and development of CCBC Lot 5 will be received at the Henry County Administration Building, Purchasing Department, Room 210, PO Box 7, Collinsville, VA 24078 (Postal), 3300 Kings Mountain Road (UPS & FedEx), Martinsville, VA 24112, until 3:00 p.m. local prevailing time on April 14, 2022, at which time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read aloud in the 1st floor Summerlin Board Room. The Project consists of clearing, grubbing, excavating, ESC/SWM, and other construction activities associated with developing an approximate 6.7 acre pad at CCBC. Bids will be received for a single prime contract and shall be on a lump sum basis.

The contract documents may be examined at the following locations:
Henry County Engineering and Mapping, Room 208, or
Henry County Purchasing Department, Room 210
3300 Kings Mountain Road
Martinsville, Virginia 24112

Copies of the contract documents may be obtained at the Henry County Engineering and Mapping, Room 208 (Phone: 276-634-4776). Partial sets will not be issued.

The procedure for withdrawal of bids shall be according to provision B. 1 contained in Va. Code §2.2-4330, as amended. If a contract is for one hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000) or more, or if the total value of all construction, removal, repair, or improvements undertaken by the bidder within any twelve-month period is seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000) or more, the bidder is required under Title 54, Chapter 11, Code of Virginia (1950) as amended, to show evidence of being licensed as a "Class A Contractor." If a contract is ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or more, but less than one hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$120,000), the bidder is required to show evidence of being licensed as a "Class B Contractor." The bidder shall place on the outside of the envelope containing the bid and shall place in the bid over his signature whichever of the following notations is appropriate:

- “Licensed Class A Virginia Contractor No.”
- “Licensed Class B Virginia Contractor No.”

An optional Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled to be held at 10:00 a.m. local time on March 31, 2022 in the 1st Floor Summerlin Board Room of the Henry County Administration Building located at 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville, Virginia. Attendance is not mandatory, but all BIDDERS are encouraged to attend.

Owner: Henry County
By: Tim Hall
Title: County Administrator
Date: March 12, 2022

City schools lift mask restrictions

Martinsville City Schools has joined the slew of local entities easing mask requirements in the wake of new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

As of March 15, masks are become optional for all city school employees. Masks also are optional on any school-provided

transportation for staff and students.

Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley made the announcement on behalf of the school board at its regular board meeting on March 14.

The meeting marked the first time in recent memory that every school board member in attendance (Jay Dickens was

absent and Tony Jones attended via phone) did not wear a mask.

A March 15 letter outlined the changes in the wake of updated guidance by the CDC combined with low COVID-19 transmission rates in the area.

According to the letter, the division will “continue to contract trace per CDC

guidelines and after testing positive for COVID-19, faculty, staff, and students will be required to wear well-fitting masks to return to school on days 6-10’ after a positive test.

Henry County Schools announced earlier this month that masks were optional for staff, and no longer required on school buses.



The Martinsville City School Board on Monday met without masks, reflecting the easing of mask restrictions in the area. The CDC classified Martinsville and Henry County as an area of low COVID-19 community transmission, meaning most people may enter public buildings mask-free.

February revenue collections support total projections

Gov. Youngkin last week announced that February revenue collections support the revised general fund forecast issued last month. Total general fund revenues fell 1.2 percent in February compared to last year's unusually large number, as more refunds were issued this February due to last year's delayed opening to the refund-processing season. February is not considered a significant month for revenue collections. On a fiscal year-to-date basis, total revenue collections rose 13.6 percent, ahead of the annual forecast of 9.2 percent growth.

"This revenue report supports the mid-session forecast, and reinforces the need for us to cut costs on families and strengthen Virginia," said Youngkin. "We have strong revenue forecasts that can fund tax cuts. With the highest gas prices on record and the highest inflation rates in decades, we have to provide relief for Virginians, and we have the revenues to do it now."

"This month provided no surprises since we announced the mid-session forecast last month. The key to the general fund revenue forecast remains the 4th quarter when individual income tax final payments are due on May 1," said Secretary Cummings. "I am closely watching nonwithholding collections given its connection to a volatile stock market. However, I am confident that the

revised revenue estimate provides sufficient cushion to meet the forecast."

Collections of payroll withholding taxes decreased 1.3 percent in February. Collections of sales and use taxes, reflecting January sales, rose 7.9 percent in February. February receipts include January post-holiday sales and gift card purchases, completing the holiday shopping season, however the severe winter weather could have delayed some purchases. The main tax return filing season began in February; the Department of Taxation issued \$280.1 million in refunds compared with \$217.0 million in February of last year. Through February, 595,000 refunds were processed compared with 486,000 last year.

On a year-to-date basis, collections of payroll withholding taxes – 56 percent of General Fund revenues – increased 9.7 percent ahead of the annual forecast of 9.0 percent growth. Sales tax collections – 17 percent of General Fund revenues – increased 14.8 percent through February, ahead of the annual forecast calling for an 11.4 percent increase. Recordation taxes advanced 0.5 percent on a fiscal-year-basis, ahead of the 4.3 percent decline in the annual forecast. Total revenues rose 13.6 percent through February, ahead of the annual forecast of 9.2 percent growth.

Support

from page 1

emergency services were dispatched to the scene near the Ward Road intersection at 4:13 p.m.

According to that report, Virginia State Police Sergeant M.C. Davis told media at the scene that a 1996 Nissan Frontier was going westbound on Chatham Road when it ran off the right side of the road.

"It encounters a ditch that had been severely eroded from rain over the years," Davis told the news outlet. "Very rough ditch. And it tries to reaccelerate and steer out of the ditch, and when it gets back to the asphalt, that steering motion causes the tires to bite, and it starts to upset the vehicle. It (the vehicle) rolls, and when it rolled and it landed, it ejected the driver."

Paramedics performed CPR on Porter, but he succumbed to his injuries.

Davis told BTW21 that Porter was not wearing a seatbelt.

Patrick & Henry Community College released a statement on Facebook Tuesday which said Porter was a welding student at the college.

"We are shocked and heartbroken to

learn of Zachary's sudden passing," the post read. "He will be sorely missed by all who knew him. Our hearts go out to all his family, friends, and classmates."

The post included a link to the college's mental health resource webpage for Porter's classmates who may want to talk or need help processing the sudden loss.

Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry confirmed that Porter's father, Scott, is an investigator with the Sheriff's Office, which was supporting the family "in any way we can."

"Many of our officers have been to see Scott and his family," Perry said, "and we will continue to do so throughout this time and through the funeral. Scott is a well-loved and appreciated officer, and our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family through this."

Donations to the GoFundMe in support of Porter's family can be made at <https://gofund.me/f312e6fd> or by searching Zachary Ty Porter Memorial at GoFundMe.com.

Judge

from page 1

my experience level, that's for sure. He was very respected. All the lawyers hold him in high regard, so it's a big job for me to follow."

"He's the perfect judge to succeed Judge Williams, without a doubt," said Jim Haskins, of the firm Young, Haskins, Gregory, Mann & Wall. McGarry was a partner at the firm, arriving there after graduating law school at Washington and Lee University.

Haskins said McGarry "turned into an outstanding trial lawyer ... one of the best trial lawyers in this part of the state, without a doubt."

He also is an outstanding person, Haskins said.

"He's smart, he understands his clients," Haskins said. "He's unique. I've told him before, 'you were a great member of our firm, you were an outstanding trial lawyer, but in my opinion, you were born to be a judge.'"

It was at Young, Haskins, Gregory, Mann & Wall that Martinsville City Attorney Eric Monday first met McGarry. Monday said the two worked together for several years, and McGarry's wife was his son's preschool teacher.

McGarry was "definitely one of the best attorneys in our region when in private practice," Monday said. Once appointed to the General District bench, Monday said McGarry was "a patient and compassionate judge with a commitment to giving everyone a fair hearing and an honest outcome. There's no one better suited to be on our circuit bench," he

added.

Henry County Attorney George Lyle said he has known McGarry for more than 25 years as a lawyer, a judge, and as a regular attendee of Martinsville Mustangs baseball games (Lyle said McGarry and his wife regularly host players at their home for the summers.)

"Judge McGarry is a thoughtful, patient, and practical jurist," Lyle said. "I recently had a minor case before him involving a small claims court matter. Even though it was clear the government entity would prevail, and the citizen's case would be dismissed, he gave the citizen plaintiff ample time to speak their mind, and explained the Court's decision and reasoning in an understandable way, and offered common sense advice how to avoid similar future problems. In short, he gave the citizen their day in court, and even though they lost, they left feeling treated fairly. There is a lot to be said for that."

McGarry also has a good sense of humor, Lyle said. He said he was involved with some of the planning for McGarry's investiture (the ceremony in which the judge receives their robe, usually purchased and presented by the local bar association) when he was appointed to the General District Court. Lyle jokingly asked McGarry if he had a color preference for his robe. McGarry, who Lyle said is a big Louisiana State University fan, immediately replied, "purple and gold, of course," eliciting laughs throughout the room.

OBITUARIES

Henry William Vaughn

Henry William Vaughn, 87 of Bassett, Virginia transitioned on March 2, 2022, at his home. On this day GOD called our dear beloved home from labor to rest. He was born in Patrick County, Virginia on November 12, 1934, to the late John Henry Vaughn and the late Mary Alice Easley Vaughn. He attended Full Gospel United Holy Church. He worked at Bassett Furniture Industry for years until he became disabled.

During his time on Earth, he enjoyed spending time with his family, working on cars with his brother, gardening, playing spades, beating on junk and meeting his long-term family member the late Alfred Wimbush at Hardees for coffee every morning. He was also a well-known and loved person, known for his smile and politeness wherever and whomever he came in contact with. Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his four brothers, Amos Vaughn, Ellis Vaughn, Otis Lee Vaughn, John Percy Vaughn; his two sisters, Volia Via and Lucy Harper; one grandson, Shedrick Barner; great-granddaughter, Nevaeh A'Miracle Tarpley; great-



granddaughter, Sha'Meah Barner and a beloved son-in-law, Steven Wimbush.

He leaves to mourn and cherish his memories, his wife, Camellia Myra Vaughn of Bassett; three children, Annette Vaughn of Bassett, Karen Wimbush of Collinsville and William Vaughn of Bassett; one brother, Robert Vaughn of Patrick County; four grandchil-

dren; five great-grandchildren and a host of nieces and nephews. The funeral was held Friday in the Bassett Funeral Chapel. Burial was in Carver Memorial Gardens.

Each time we see the sun go down, It seems the end of day, And yet we know the sun is rising somewhere far away, And when we lose someone we love, We learn to trust somehow that a new life in a brighter place is just beginning now, A place of grace and peace and joy, Beyond all time and sorrow, Where loving hearts who part today, Will meet again tomorrow.

Online condolences may be made by visiting www.bassettfuneralservice.com. Bassett Funeral Service is serving the Vaughn family.

Erma Louise Williams Lawson

Erma Louise Williams Lawson, 89, of Martinsville passed away on Friday, March 11, 2022, at Stanleytown Senior Care, Bassett, Virginia surrounded by her daughters. Erma was a member of Clearview Wesleyan Church. She was a dedicated mother first and foremost. She treasured her children and embraced every moment



with them. She especially loved her role as nanny where she gave life advice and instilled family values. She also enjoyed assisting her late husband (and love of her life) James Early Lawson with his business, Lawson's Roofing, Heating, and Air Conditioning in Martinsville.

Erma was born in Martinsville on February 1, 1933, to the late Alva Lee Williams and Verdine Mae Crawford Williams. She is preceded in death by her husband, her mother, her father, two of her daughters Jo Ann Lawson Shelton and Barbara Sue Lawson, and her son in law Rev. Mike Shelton. She is survived by two daughters Brenda L. Souther of Ridgeway and Becky L. Patterson

and her husband Bryan of Martinsville; Also Surviving are three grandchildren: Jamie Shelton and wife Shannon, LeAnn West and husband Chris, and James "Jay" Souther and wife, Melinda, and four great-grandchildren, Ella and Miller West, and Cade and Maverick Souther.

A special thank you to Caregiver Jennifer Wade at Stanleytown Senior Care, as well as all of the caregivers over the last years for the kindness, loving care, and friendship given to our mother. Her family also extends gratitude beyond measure to Mountain Valley Hospice.

A private graveside service to celebrate her life was held on Wednesday, March 16, 2022, at RoseLawn Burial Park in Martinsville. Friends wishing to honor her are invited to make donations to Mountain Valley Hospice.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA. To express condolences online, please visit www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com.

Nancy Hollandsworth Spraker

Nancy Hollandsworth Spraker, 86, of Martinsville, went home to be with the Lord Thursday, March 10, 2022. She was born February 22, 1936, in Bassett to the late Albert Lee Hollandsworth and the late Annie Mae Mize Hollandsworth. Waiting to welcome her in heaven are granddaughter, Kimberly Spraker; great grandson, Noah; brother, Robert Hollandsworth; sisters, Evelyn Wilson and Mildred Branch. She was a member of Collinsville Church of The Brethren where she taught Sunday School. Nancy worked in the cafeteria at Martinsville Jr. High School for over 30 years. She is survived by her daughter, Judy Westmorland (Jim) of Collinsville; son, Ronnie Spraker (Dot) of Rome, NY; grandchildren, Monica Wilkins (Jerry), Jessie Foss (Anthony) and Daniel Haskell; great-



grandchildren, Cooper, Ayona, Riley, Amiya and Jonathan; sister, Carolyn Amos of Bassett; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

The funeral was on March 15, 2022, at the Collinsville Church of the Brethren. Pastor Roy McVey officiated. Burial was at Roselawn Burial Park in Martinsville. The family is requesting visitors use face coverings. Along with Nancy's service, there will be a celebration of life for her loving husband of 68 years, Roby Leon Spraker who went home to be with the Lord on December 2, 2020. The family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the Collinsville Church of the Brethren.

Online condolences may be made by visiting www.bassettfuneralservice.com. Bassett Funeral Service in Bassett is serving the Spraker family.

Dorothy Catron Dillon

Dorothy Catron Dillon, 82, of Bassett, died Wednesday, March 9, 2022 at the Chippenham Hospital in Richmond, Virginia. She was born in Smyth County on September 3, 1939, to the late Worley Armstrong and the late Nora Bentley Armstrong. She was also preceded in death by first husband, Joseph Catron, her second husband, George Dillon and eleven brothers and sisters.



She was a member of the Tabernacle Baptist Church.

She is survived by her children,

Della Belton, Mike Catron (Janice), Wanda Mize and David Catron (Sarah); six grandchildren; six great grandchildren; sister, Phyllis Couthard (Gerald); brother, James Armstrong and several nieces and nephews. A graveside service was held March 14, 2022, in Henry Memorial Park with Dr. Chris Atkinson

officiating. Online condolences may be made by visiting www.bassettfuneralservice.com. Bassett Funeral Service is serving the Dillon family.

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