

Special election scheduled for school board, interim member to be appointed for now

Circuit Court Judge approved a Writ of Election on Friday, August 5th to hold a special election will be held to fill the Ridgeway District vacancy created on the Henry County School Board with the recent death of Francis Zehr, who served on the board for 11 years.

The special election will be added to the November 8 ballot. Registered voters living in

the Ridgeway district who are interested in running for this position are encouraged to contact Henry County Registrar Dawn Stultz-Vaughn at (276) 634-4698 or her office, located at 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Collinsville.

Candidates must be registered voters in the Ridgeway district and receive the required amount of support signatures from voters in the district.

However, serving as a school board representative is about more than just fitting the legal requirements of the role. Board members are responsible for encouraging staff, students, and families. The board also makes decisions about curriculum, facilities, finances, and safety.

Henry County Public Schools Director of Communications Monica

Hatchett said, "It is our hope that the person who assumes the Ridgeway district Board member role will be passionate about doing what is best for all students."

Until the election can be held, an interim member will be appointed to serve from September 1 to November 30.

Interested candidates, may submit a letter of interest by Monday, August 15, to

Hatchett at monica.hatchett@henry.k12.va.us or P.O. Box 8958, Collinsville, VA 24078.

Candidates for the interim position will be interviewed by the school board. A public hearing will be held on Monday, August 15, at 6 p.m. Candidates must have their name read at this meeting and must be a registered voter in the Ridgeway District to be considered for the position.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Martinsville's Lou Whitaker was honored Aug. 6 for his career with the Detroit Tigers.

Baseball great honored for storied career

Pat Delaney
Contributing writer

It has been quite a week for Martinsville's Lou Whitaker.

The Detroit Tigers honored Whitaker by retiring his Number 1 in honor of his accomplishments during his 19 years with the team.

In a video tribute kicking off the ceremony, narrator J.K. Simmons said of Whitaker, "this kid from humble beginnings is one of the greatest second basemen to ever play the game."

Originally scheduled for 2020, and postponed by COVID, the day arrived on Saturday, August 6 at Comerica

Park in Detroit. Whitaker's number 1 was officially retired. His name and number were added to the outfield wall alongside other Tiger legends in particular, his longtime teammate Alan Trammell's Number 3.

During the pregame ceremony, Trammell said, "today Lou Whitaker gets his due and I couldn't be prouder to have number-one next to number-three, linked together forever. You know what's next? The Hall of Fame."

Whitaker and Trammell made up the longest running double play combination in baseball history, and what many believe to be the best. Among the Tiger's

See **Baseball Great Honored**, page 3

New business venture offers non-traditional health options

By Staff Reports

Yet another new business has opened its doors in Uptown Martinsville, improving health and wellness with non-traditional medicine. The Wellness Bar Uptown, located in a former bank building at 20 East Main Street in Martinsville, is owned by the husband-and-wife team Mandi and Travis Hundley. It is the area's first IV hydration and vitamin bar.

The business is the brainchild of Mandi, a transplant to the city, with support from Travis, a Martinsville native who returned to the area several years ago.

Travis graduated from Martinsville High School in 1999 and joined the Air Force, serving for just over 5 years. After leaving the service, he moved to the Charlotte, NC area then to Greensboro to be closer to his mother when she became ill. He finally returned to Martinsville as her health continued to decline, and currently works in planning and logistics for Howmet Aerospace.



Mandi Hundley (right) and her husband Travis Hundley (left) have recently opened the Wellness Bar Uptown in the former People's Bank building in Uptown Martinsville. The IV lounge offers drips and shots as well as a salt cave and soon, an oxygen bar to help alleviate a variety of complaints from brain fog, fatigue, and even hangovers.

Mandi moved to the area in 2013 to work as a hospitalist, sent by a company that contracted with SOVAH for such services.

"It was supposed to be a 3-year assignment," she said. "But I loved the hospital, I loved the community, I loved my patients. After the

three years were up, I was given the opportunity to transition into the cancer center. Cancer (work) is my background and my passion, so I decided to stay." She is now the nurse practitioner in SOVAH's

See **New Venture**, page 3

Company official discusses project during community meeting



Trey Lopez, Senior Development Manager of Axton Solar, addressed residents attending the community meeting.

Sharon West-Duel
Contributing writer

Trey Lopez, Senior Development Manager of the Axton Solar project, presented information at a communi-

ty meeting in the TAD Space ballroom on Church Street in Martinsville on Thursday.

Owned by Vesper Energy, this project involves 1,237 privately owned acres in Henry County and 1,423 acres in western

Pittsylvania County. It will be a 200-megawatt facility with an expected 35-year lifespan, afterwards the land can be returned to agricultural use.

See **Axton Solar**, page 5

Final Short memorial ride slated to be held Saturday

By Staff Reports

After 20 years of organizing the annual Jennifer Short Memorial Scholarship Ride, Ray Reynolds is stepping down due to health concerns.

The ride gets underway on Saturday, August 13, at CrossPoint Church, located at 3951 Greensboro Road, Ridgeway.

Registration is \$10 per person and begins at the church at 11 a.m. A meal will be held at noon, sponsored by Bojangles and the church, fol-

lowed by guest speakers that include Henry County Schools Superintendent Sandy Strayer, Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry, Martinsville Sheriff Steve Draper and Rockingham County, N.C. Sheriff Sam Page.

Donations are also accepted. All proceeds benefit the Jennifer Short Memorial Scholarship.

The ride is open to motorcycles and vehicles of all types. "We welcome everybody. It's open to everybody. We encourage everybody to be a part of

it," Reynolds said.

Participants are scheduled to leave the church at 1 p.m., and proceed to the Jennifer Renee Short Memorial Bridge in Rockingham County, N.C., Reynolds said.

The ride will follow the typical 35-mile route, with participants leaving from the church and heading down U.S. 220 South to Virginia/North Carolina state line. After taking Exit 135, the entourage will turn right at the light, left at Dan Valley Road, left on River Road, and finally

left on Grogan Road to reach the bridge for prayer, Reynolds said.

Michael and Mary Short were found dead in their Henry County home on August 15, 2002. They each died from a single gunshot wound. Their daughter, Jennifer Renee Short, 9, was missing from the home, and presumed abducted by her parents' killer or killers.

A massive search effort began, spanning several localities. Her remains were recovered 6-weeks later in

See **Short Memorial**, page 5

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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)

Friday, August 12

Join Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) for an opening reception in honor of the museum's new exhibits, "Private Domain," "Continuity: Color + Texture," "Seasons," and "Colors of the Appalachian Trail and Works by Pat Coleman." This event is free and open to the public. Complimentary wine and light refreshments will be served.

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

Saturday, August 13

The Dan River Basin Association will host its annual Smith River Clean Up. For more information, visit www.danriver.org or follow Dan River Basin Association on Facebook.

Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) hosts a Purrfect Art Family day from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. in the Gravelly-Lester Art Garden. Have a bark-tastic time with Piedmont Arts and the SPCA of Martinsville and Henry County enjoying critter-themed storytelling with Gael Buck, face painting, bubble art, crafts, Zumbini music and movement workshop, and a performance by Pirates of the Piedmont. Support our furry friends by bringing a donation for the SPCA to this free family event.

Tuesday, August 16

The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive at The Community Fellowship (2674 Virginia Avenue, Collinsville) from 12:30-5:30 p.m. To schedule your donation appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Thursday, August 18

Uptown Partnership presents Third Thursdays in Uptown in collaboration

with the Virginia Museum of Natural History. The events will be held in the Franklin Street/Depot Street parking lot in Martinsville. Food trucks will be on-site with entertainment from DJ What and beer sales from Mountain Valley Brewing from 5-9 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

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

Friday, August 19

Henry County Parks and recreation hosts Movies in the Park at Jack Dalton Park (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Collinsville). Friday night's movie is Boss Baby: Family Business. Music and games begin at 7:30 p.m. and the movie begins at 8:55. Drinks, candy, and snacks are available for purchase!

Don't miss the 2022 TGIF Concert Series in Uptown Martinsville! Located in the Bridge Street parking lot at 65 West Main Street, the Rotary Clubs of Martinsville and Henry County present an evening of music with The Pizzaz Band. The show begins at 7 p.m.

Sunday, August 21

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) will host a Sock Hop from 2-5 p.m. with the ever-popular DJ What! spinning all genres of music. Admission is \$5.

Tuesday, August 23

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive at the Virginia Museum of Natural History (21 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) from 1-6 p.m. To schedule your donation appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Wednesday, August 24

The American Red Cross will host a blood drive at New College Institute (191 Fayette Street, Martinsville) from 1-6 p.m. To schedule your donation appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Sunday, August 27

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) will host a basic canning class from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. Pre-registration is required. To register, call (276) 957-5757.

Friday, September 9

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) will host its popular music night with band Gap Civil. Doors open at 5 p.m. and music begins at 6:15. Admission is a \$5 donation. Concessions will be sold.

Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) hosts Savory September: The Art of Tailgating. Bring your crew and all your wacky tailgating traditions for a night of friendly rivalries, great food, and ice-cold refreshments. Food and custom cocktails by local chefs. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased at PiedmontArts.org.

Saturday, September 10

The Southside Survivor Response Center will celebrate its second annual Community Without Limits at Jack Dalton Park in Collinsville from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Attendees at this free event will enjoy free lunch, giveaways, a DJ, games, face painting, a dance contest, and more! For more information, call (276) 734-0040.

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) will host an advanced canning class, Soups and Such, from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. Pre-registration is required. To register, call (276) 957-5757.

ONGOING

The Martinsville Farmers' Market is open every Saturday from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. through November 20 and Wednesdays from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. through September 29. Shop with SNAP/EBT and receive up to \$20 in free fruits and vegetables each week. To shop market vendors online, visit martinsvilleuptown.com.

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.

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 their headquarters (1903 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville.) Doors open at 5:30 and games begin at 7. Money from Bingo supports community service awards, scholarships, and other community efforts.

MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness offers no contact Medicaid application assistance for eligible Virginia residents from birth to 64 years of age. No sign-up fees, no premiums, no deductibles. Including Children's Medicaid/FAMIS, Pregnancy Medicaid and Adult Health Care -19 to 64 years old. Questions can be answered, and applications completed by phone. In-person application assistance is available from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursdays at The Community Storehouse. Call or text Ann Walker 276 732-0509 to see if you qualify.

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

Submit your community news and photos to newsreporter@theenterprise.net

Application Period Underway for Cooling Assistance

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) will provide cooling assistance to qualifying households this year through the Virginia Energy Assistance Program (EAP). Applications are currently being accepted and can be submitted until Monday, August 15.

To qualify, a household must have a child less than six years of age, an adult 60 years or older, or an individual with a disability living in the home. Individuals and families in need of Cooling Assistance are encouraged to apply even if they are unsure of their eligibility status.

- Assistance is available for:
- Payment of electric bills to operate cooling equipment
 - Payment of security deposits for electricity to operate cooling equipment
 - Repair of a central air conditioning system or heat pump
 - Purchase of a whole-house fan, including ceiling or attic fans
 - Purchase and installation of a win-

dow unit air conditioner

Households that previously received approval for Cooling Assistance in 2022 for a one-time benefit of \$600 for the payment of an electric bill do not need to submit additional applications for this type of assistance during the current application period.

Applications (available in English and Spanish) can be submitted to a local department of social services, online via CommonHelp, or by calling 1-855-635-4370. Eligibility is determined by the local department of social services. All applications must be submitted by August 15.

The Energy Assistance Program is funded by the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program block grant. Last year, VDSS served over 69,000 households with Cooling Assistance through the EAP. To learn more about Cooling Assistance and other assistance programs available, visit the VDSS Energy Assistance webpage.

HENRY COUNTY

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Horsepasture District
3-year terms
- Blue Ridge Regional Library Board**
Horsepasture District
Ridgeway District
4-year terms

Apply: www.henrycountyva.gov/boards

SANDY MCGUIRES

OCTOBER 30 10:30AM

21 BTW
Your Neighborhood Network

Therapeutic horse academy gets funding boost



The Kiwanis Club of Bassett recently donated \$500 to Tackfully Teamed to help with the general expenses of the therapeutic horse academy. Pictured are Club president Tim Stone (L) presenting the check to Susan Warren (R) of Tackfully Teamed.

Baseball Great Honored from page 1

leaders in many stats, Whitaker tallied 244 home runs, 2,369 hits and a career batting average of .276. He also was named rookie of the year in 1978, was a five-time all-star, and a World Series champion in 1984.

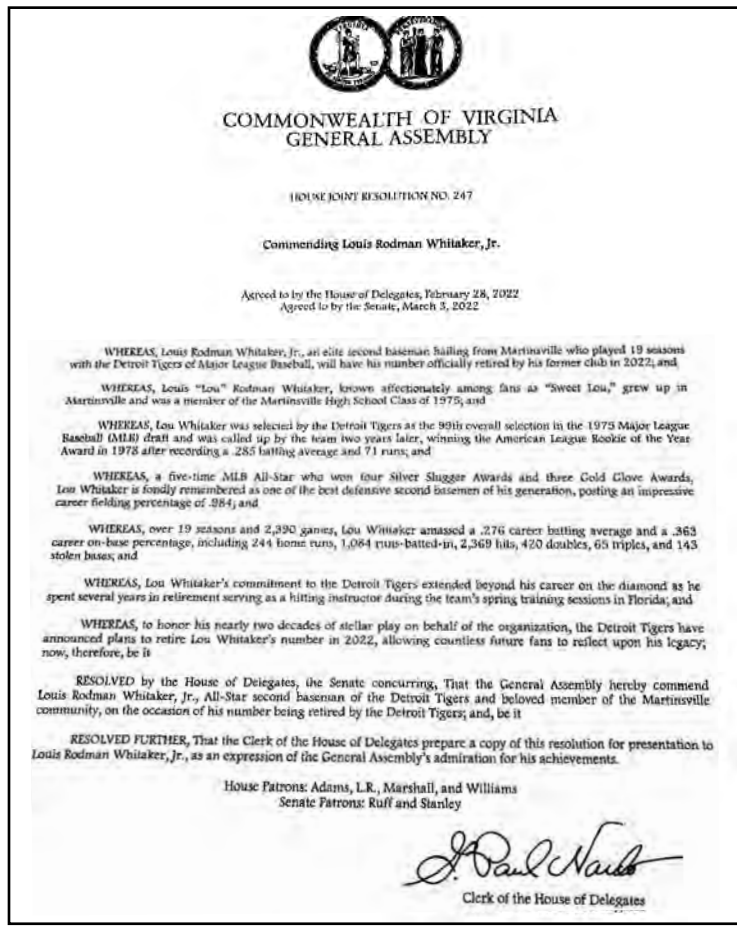
“This will be one of the greatest moments in my life, just knowing my number will be retired and I’ll get a chance to see my number on the wall with some legends from Tiger history,” Whitaker told those fortunate enough to be in the sold-out Comerica Park. “What an honor.”

During his speech, Whitaker gave a shout out to Martinsville and Henry County, where he said he “played ball all day and all night.” He thanked his family and friends. “They’re the reason I’m here today.”

In Martinsville, Whitaker received another honor, this time from this home state. The General Assembly, in House Joint Resolution 247, commended him for his career in baseball, his number being retired, and “as an expression of the General Assembly’s admiration for his achievements.” He was presented with the honor by Danny Turner, a member of Martinsville City Council, Monday night at Hooker Field.



Danny Turner (left), a member of Martinsville City Council, presented Lou Whitaker (center), of Martinsville, a resolution from the Virginia General Assembly, commending Whitaker for his achievements.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
The Virginia General Assembly commended Lou Whitaker for his career in baseball and “as an expression of the General Assembly’s admiration for his achievements.”

New Venture from page 1

oncology clinic.

The pair met when Travis’ mother was Mandi’s patient in the cancer center and married less than a year ago. Together, the two have found a way to combine their strengths (hers in medicine and his in business) to open the new space which, though it was a new concept in an untested market, already has been a hit with the community.

The business is focused on health through non-traditional means, Mandi said. Currently, they offer IV drips, shots, and have installed a salt cave on the upper floor.

“It’s all about alleviating chronic symptoms or complaints,” said Mandi, who said she personally holds a consultation with each new client (who wants an IV drip) to learn their health history, discover what issues they want to address with their drip, and find out if there are any pre-existing health conditions (such as congestive heart failure, uncontrolled high blood pressure, and kidney or liver disease) that might preclude them from getting a drip.

The drips, she said, also address the issue of dehydration, a common problem in the United States. “Eighty to ninety percent of the (U.S.) population is chronically dehydrated and does not know it,” she said. “Dehydration is horrible, and a lot of Americans are vitamin deficient because we don’t absorb a lot through our diet, so dehydration and vitamin deficiency lead to so many chronic complaints and chronic health conditions. People let it go for years and then they end up in a doctor’s office or hospital,” often leaving with multiple medications to manage their conditions.

“We want to catch it on the front end and make people healthier and try to maximize their wellness as much as we can without them having to be chronically ill,” Mandi said.

There is a menu of pre-set cocktails to address issues like brain fog, energy, weight loss, migraines, stress, and even hangovers. Pre-set options from the shot bar (a one-time injection for those who do not have the time for an IV drip) include B12, vitamin D, and others.

All of the drips, Mandi said, are mixed by hand.

“I mix every bag myself,” she said. During one-on-one consultations with new clients, “we sit down and talk about what is bothering them physically or what their specific goals are, and we can mix individual cocktails specific to them. I’ve probably made more individual cocktails than I’ve sold off our standard menu. We make it as individualized as we can.”

The salt cave (a room filled with Himalayan salt) has benefits of its own, and not just for those who prefer an experience that doesn’t involve needles.

“It helps with respiratory conditions,” Mandi said. “The salt’s diffused into the air, so you’re actually breathing it in. It helps with anything from allergies, sinus congestion, asthma, cystic fibrosis, skin conditions. It’s good for mental health—stress, anxiety, depression.”

Travis added that the pair will soon begin partnering with local masseuses to offer massages in the salt cave.

The business also plans to add an oxygen bar upstairs, which will be up and running as soon as supplies arrive. The space will use medical-grade oxygen with a machine that blends it with essential oils to address various complaints, Mandi explained.

For those who do not have the time or willingness to travel to the Uptown location, the pair say they are planning to offer a mobile shot bar “so if a business wants to have one of our nurses come in, for example, on their lunch break” to give shots to employees who want them, they will be available that way, Mandi said.

They are also planning to begin hosting cocktail parties, offering drips at bachelorette parties, sporting events, or for other groups who may want the service.

Mandi said she has long dreamed of opening her own business.

“I didn’t know what I wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to do something that was in non-traditional medicine, focusing on wellness and preventative health.” In the course of her research into nurse practitioner-led businesses, she took a course specifically on IV vitamin replacement. “I thought it was so interesting, and this is so popular in other places with so many good results and great feedback, I saw an opportunity in Martinsville to do something that is new and different but, I think, very needed.”

Travis admitted that, as excited as his wife was, he was initially skeptical of the concept, as even the idea of an IV drip bar was totally foreign to him.

That all changed earlier this year when, in April, the pair travelled to Florida to attend a wedding. The reception featured an open bar. Mandi had a plan and encouraged him to indulge. The next morning, “I felt horrible,” Travis laughed.

“I told him I made us appointments for hangover drips” prior to their flight home, Mandi said. “We went to an IV lounge. Travis hates needles, but he felt so bad he was willing to try.”

After receiving his drip, “it was like he woke up from the dead,” Mandi said, laughing. “We’re on the plane home and he says, ‘alright, I’m in.’”

“That was the first weekend in April,” Travis recalled. The next month, they conducted a trial run of the concept, setting up as a vendor at Rooster Walk.

“The first two days, I had my doubts,” Travis admitted, “but Saturday and Sunday, it was nonstop.”

The Wellness Bar celebrated its grand opening on June 18, less than a month later.

“We moved so fast,” Mandi said. The pair brought skillsets from their very different professional backgrounds to the venture.

“Travis knows nothing about medicine,” said Mandi.

“And Mandi knows nothing about business,” Travis replied.

“I was telling him the idea and he said, ‘it sounds great, but who’s going to do the bookkeeping and the supply management and the inventory control?’” Mandi recalled. “I was dumbfounded, because I hadn’t thought of any of that.”

Together, with Travis’ 15-years in business and Mandi’s medical background (in addition to working her full-time job and managing a new business, she is also pursuing her doctorate in nursing) the two have found a formula for success.

Mandi said that, since opening, the community response has been “overwhelming. We’re open six days a week and every day that we’ve been open, we’ve had people scheduled for drips and every day we’ve had twice as many just walking in without an appointment and probably ten times as many shots. The salt room is booked. We’ve been so busy. Sometimes it’s standing room only.”

The crowds are handled by a team of four rotating registered nurses who administer the drips and shots.

“People have been incredibly supportive, and its people I’ve never met. It’s not our friends supporting us, its people supporting the business,” said Mandi.

“We get a lot of feedback that people are glad that something like this came to Martinsville,” Travis said. “We’re the only place (like this) around within an hour and a half or a two-hour radius.”

The business receives support from the local medical community as well, said Mandi.

“We’ve had physicians come in, we’ve



Heated massage chairs populate the area of the building for those receiving IV drips. Clients can choose from a preset menu of cocktails or create one tailored to their needs in consultation with Mandi Hundley, a nurse practitioner currently pursuing her doctorate in nursing.

had pharmacists come in, we’ve had nurse practitioners, we’ve had physicians sending their patients here,” she said. “To me, that shows that it’s something that, even though it’s a foreign concept for the area, it’s still something that’s respected within the medical community.”

Despite Martinsville being an untested market, the two said they never considered opening their new business anywhere else. For them, it was always going to be in Martinsville.

“It’s home,” Mandi said simply. “That’s it,” Travis agreed. “What better place to start and grow something than in your backyard?”

“You want to invest in your own community, invest in your own people,” Mandi added.

For more information about The Wellness Bar Uptown, visit the business’s Facebook page.



The salt cave, filled with Himalayan salt, helps ease respiratory issues and combat stress and anxiety. The couple plan to offer salt cave massages in the near future.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Breezed through
5. Time units (abbr.)
8. Pigeon’s murmur
11. Moves aside in fright
13. Partner to “ahh”
14. Taxis
15. Monetary units of Turkey
16. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
17. Prolific Italian opera composer
18. Restaurants
20. One’s grandmother
21. Ancient Greek City
22. Italian mountain ranges
25. Data
30. Acted in an obedient way
31. Autonomic nervous system
32. Not on the up-and-up
33. Mock lightly
38. Mimic
41. Built

43. A neighborhood
45. Inflammation of the kidneys
48. Semitic fertility god
49. Temporary name of Seaborgium
50. Wise people
55. Tear down
56. ___-fi (slang)
57. Diamond weight
59. Frosted
60. Predecessor to EU
61. Makes changes to
62. Some are secret
63. Tooth caregiver
64. Old English poet

5. Large stinging paper wasp
6. Bucharest is its capital
7. River in Ireland
8. Type of TV
9. Double-reed instruments
10. Spanish motorcycle manufacturer
12. Midway between south and southeast
14. French commune
19. Alike
23. A bachelor’s apartment
24. Foot part between the ball and ankle
25. Belonging to a thing
26. Japanese classical theater
27. Supervises flying
28. Not even
29. Capital of Saudi Arabia
34. Electronic counter-

- measure
35. Consumed
36. American politician (abbr.)
37. Sun up in New York
39. Casually looked through
40. Revealed the presence of
41. Peyton’s little brother
42. Diana __, singer
44. Study of moral values and rules
45. Civil Rights group
46. Makes less severe
47. Made an emotional appeal
48. Vivacity of style
51. One who is highly skilled
52. Gets around in pursuit of pleasure
53. Famed guitarist Clapton
54. Most common Japanese surname
58. Recipe abbreviation

CLUES DOWN

1. Sign language
2. In style
3. Norwegian river
4. People with impaired hearing

OPINION

Regarding equality

I'm going to be intentionally vague in this opening story because I don't want to call out my loved ones, for reasons that will soon become obvious.

Some years ago, I found myself in a small caravan of vehicles driving from east Texas back to Martinsville, Virginia. My dad and I were in a truck at the rear of the caravan, beholden to the choices of the truck we were following.

Right around lunchtime on the first day of the trip, we happened to be passing through Louisiana.

Louisiana is a state famous for many things, but as lunchtime approached, I was mainly thinking about their famous piles of seafood slathered in hot sauce. We drove past plenty of wonderful-looking restaurants, humble, weathered buildings with names like "FAT MAMA'S CRAWFISH SHACK." I had no doubt that any one of them would offer one of the finest meals I'd ever had in my life. But which one would the occupants of the truck in front of us pick?

Suddenly, their right turn signal flashed to life. I saw an exit up ahead. Looming above the highway, a towering sign advertised my impending disappointment:

CRACKER BARREL
"There ain't no way they're pulling into the @!*&\$^#

Cracker Barrel," I said.

We pulled into the Cracker Barrel. I ate some salty ham or something, thinking all the while about Fat Mama, her crawfish, and the difficulty of leading a life completely devoid of regret.

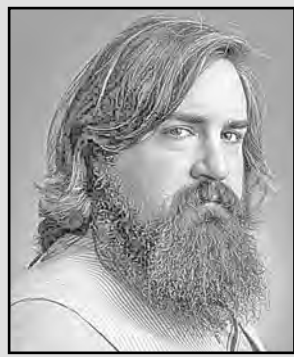
I tell you this story to establish the following: I do not like Cracker Barrel. I would rather eat anywhere than Cracker Barrel. I don't care for the food, but my biggest issue is the artificial forced folksiness, the rocking chairs connected to the porch with bike chains, the random stuff tacked up on the walls, the desperate attempt to evoke in the diner's mind a simpler time that never truly existed.

Yet despite all that, this column is about to become a defense of Cracker Barrel.

I'm just as surprised as you are.

Earlier this month, Cracker Barrel announced on social media that they were introducing Impossible sausage, sausage made from the plant-based meat alternative produced by Impossible Foods. This was to be a new menu item, not a replacement. Rest assured, water is still wet and you can still get meat-based sausage at Cracker Barrel.

Nonetheless, Cracker Barrel fans online lost their ever-loving minds.



By Ben R. Williams

To be fair, there were many who applauded Cracker Barrel for offering a vegetarian alternative to their usual menu. However, there were many, many Cracker Barrel fanatics who viewed this new menu item as a savage blow, the ultimate example of wokeness and political correctness run amok.

"You used to serve REAL things," wrote one fellow. "Real butter. Real meat. Real smiles. Real good food. Now you want to add in FAKE sausage. Bye bye, old friend." (On a side note, having worked in the restaurant industry, I guarantee most of those smiles were not actually real.)

"Read the room and understand your base," wrote another actual human with a job and responsibilities. "It's not that there are options, it's that yet another woke company will bite the dust with this one."

"The last time I got sausage it tasted terrible, they must

have gave me the plant based," wrote another real man who is likely a registered voter. "Also they did away with the sampler breakfast which I ordered every time I ate there because they would give me double hashbrowns if I didn't want the apples. Well needless to say that my favorite restaurant is no longer. Tere menu change was a big mistake. Bye Bye Crackerbarrel."

This is only the tiniest sampling of the outraged comments on Facebook. This story was reported on by multiple major news outlets. It's probably some of the best free advertising Cracker Barrel could have hoped for.

My initial thought upon reading these comments was that if you have a meltdown because your favorite restaurant adds an item to the menu, you forfeit your right to ever again call anyone a "snowflake."

My second thought was that this situation is, on a very small and hilarious scale, the perfect illustration of one of the most serious problems we face in this country.

The people who are upset over Cracker Barrel's new menu are not upset because they have been inconvenienced. They have not been. The only people in this situation who have been inconvenienced are the poor Cracker Barrel employees who are going to have to listen to customers ranting about wokeness for the next few months

until a new outrage catches their attention.

No, these customers are upset because other people have been offered a convenience. They're upset because people who either cannot eat meat or choose not to now have an alternative. They're upset because Cracker Barrel has taken a step towards offering equal options to vegetarians.

"Equality" is one of those things that many people profess to support in theory but become outraged by in practice. Take gay marriage; in this country, for now at least, a same-sex couple can get married and have all the same rights as a heterosexual couple. That's equality, and you don't need me to tell you that some folks can barely sleep at night because of it.

How about religious freedom? The First Amendment states that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The freedom to follow whatever religion you choose without discrimination is a perfect example of equality, and I'm hard-pressed to think of a more controversial topic.

Cracker Barrel, having dipped a toe into providing equal options for vegetarians, has stoked the ire of their most loyal customers. As the saying goes, when you're accustomed to privilege, equality feels a lot like oppression.

County seeks input on broadband survey

Henry County has launched a new two-question survey that will be used to expand internet options for residents. The survey is intended for people who want to upgrade from internet connections such as digital subscriber line (DSL) or satellite but have limited alternatives for available providers.

To help pinpoint which Henry County residents are affected, the two questions cross-reference internet connection types with specific addresses. No other data points are collected in the survey and it can be completed in less than five minutes.

This survey is the first step of Phase 2 of the county's effort to expand broadband. Phase 1 of the project is underway following the Board of Supervisors' decision in June to award a contract to RiverStreet Networks to construct a fiber-to-the-home network for residents without any access to internet service. The second phase tackles another component of the digital divide by ensuring everyone has equitable access to fast, reliable internet coverage.

Residents may access the survey by visiting www.co.henry.va.us/phase2.

Hietala tapped as city school's new Communications and Community Outreach

Martinsville City Public Schools (MCPS) selected Callie Hietala to serve as its new Communications and Community Outreach Coordinator.

Before joining the staff at MCPS, Hietala worked as a reporter for The Enterprise, writing primarily for The Henry County Enterprise. During that time, both the Martinsville School Board and the Henry County School Board placed her on the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Media Honor Roll in recognition of her coverage of the school divisions.

A native of Southwest Virginia, Hietala previously worked at the William King Museum of Art in Abingdon, VA, where she held a number of titles over the years, including outreach instructor, curator, interim director of education, and community

programs manager and digital marketing coordinator.

"I am honored and excited to join the team here at Martinsville City Public Schools," Hietala said. "I have always believed that access to high-quality education is the backbone of any community. MCPS staff and teachers are passionate about their work, and I look forward to helping share the stories of our staff, student, and school successes with our community."

"We are excited about Mrs. Hietala joining the Martinsville City Public Schools family," said Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley. "Callie will bring a journalistic background to our communications arena. She will make a great impact on our division."



Callie Hietala

Emergency Allotments to continue for SNAP households in August

Virginia's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has received federal approval to release emergency benefits to eligible households in August. These enhanced benefits will be automatically loaded to recipients' Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards on Tuesday, August 16.

The emergency allotments temporarily raise existing SNAP households' monthly benefit amount to the maximum allowable based on household size as follows:

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TEMPORARY MAXIMUM

MONTHLY ALLOTMENTS OCTOBER 1, 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

Maximum Monthly SNAP Allotments for 48 States and D.C.

The enhanced SNAP benefit is made available through a public health emergency declaration that requires government agencies to request an extension of emergency allotment issuances on a month-to-month basis. Future benefit allotments are dependent upon this monthly approval process and are subject to change.

SNAP participants can contact their local department of social services or visit CommonHelp for questions or account information.

Household Size	Maximum Allotment
1	\$250
2	\$459
3	\$658
4	\$835
5	\$992
6	\$1,190
7	\$1,316
8	\$1,504
Each additional person	\$188

Additional information about SNAP and other assistance programs can be found at dss.virginia.gov/benefit/.

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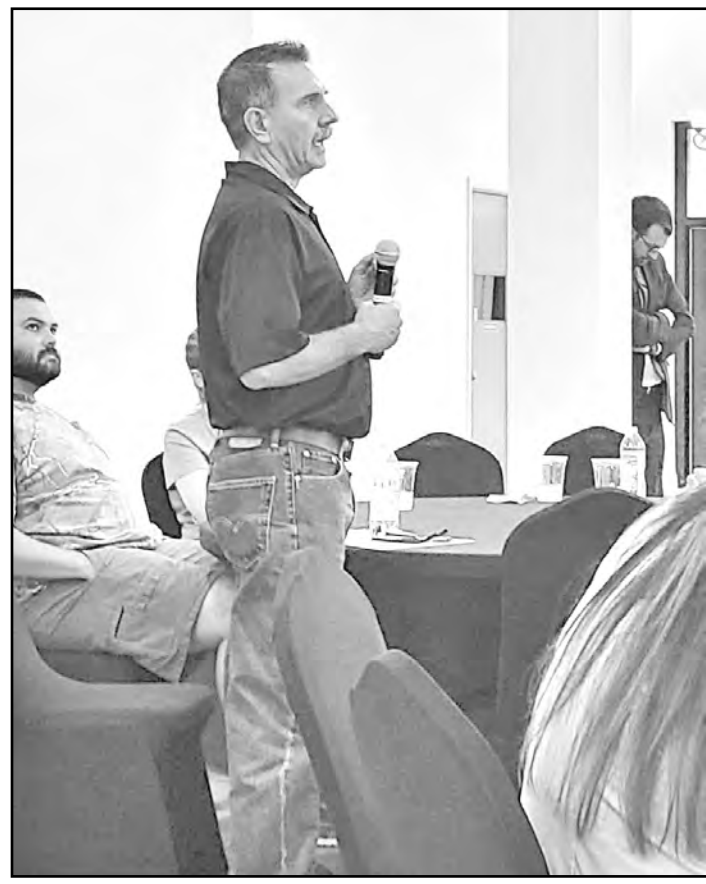
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Axton Solar from page 1



Tim Wilson, of Axton, requested free water sample evaluations for residents.

Lopez said the purpose of the meeting was to provide an update, answer questions and hear concerns from residents.

“You guys have to live here among the project, we understand there are other projects in the area that do set a precedence. It’s up to us to convey and communicate with each and every one of you the transparency of the project and how this project will be different from the other ones,” he said.

One of the slides shown in Lopez’s presentation gave details about how property taxes will be allocated from the Henry County General Budget, along with the revenue. A total of \$666,025 was given for Year 1 of the project share of the budget allocation.

Also in his progress update, Lopez noted that several steps had been completed, with work on others ongoing. The list included:

- Cultural Resources Study (complete)
- Wetland Delineation (complete)
- Typology & Hydrology Study (complete)
- Biological Assessment (complete)
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (complete)
- Geotechnical Study (complete)
- Pittsylvania County Special Use Permit (complete)
- Henry County Special Use Permit (partially complete)
- ALTA (American Land Title Association) Surveys (partially complete)

Lopez addressed concerns that a lot of timber will potentially be impacted by the project by explaining the steps currently in place to minimize the impact. He added that a minimum 20 feet of vegetation would be required.

“We already have a substantial buffer. Where there is no current vegetation, we will have to plant it,” he said, adding that with help from the chamber of commerce, bids will be solicited for landscape architects and fencing companies.

After his presentation, many in the audience voiced their concerns and/or wanted additional information about the project. Several residents asked Lopez the name of the entity who would be buying energy from Axton.

“I can’t answer that yet, we’re still in the process of negotiating the PPA (Power Purchase Agreement),” Lopez said.

Tim Wilson, of Axton, expressed concerns about setbacks from the roadway, and noted that he believed Pittsylvania County did a good job modifying their permits in this regard.

“Right now, the current ordinance is the setbacks for any public roadway is 150-feet from any residential property and will require a 100 ft. foliage around these project areas,” he said.

Wilson added that groundwater pollution is a concern for residents because most use well water. He requested that residents receive free water sample evaluations.

Other issues raised by residents ranged from voltage, project life and property values.

Dispensers keep school milk cold, cut back on carton waste

Cartons aren’t the only way to deliver nutritious milk to growing students. Milk dispensers—like soda machines but for milk—have the potential to decrease school milk waste.

Milk cartons make up about 50% of school trash volume, and students waste 30% of all milk in cartons, according to milk dispenser supplier Hubert. Schools that use a milk dispenser and washable cups can decrease packaging waste associated with school milk.

But that’s not the only benefit to milk dispensers. “Replacing cartons with milk dispensers helps students drink more milk, filling critical nutrition gaps while also putting the school on a more environmentally sustainable path,” said Roseann Liberatore, registered dietitian and manager of youth wellness in Virginia for The Dairy Alliance. “Students expect choices and products that taste great. Milk dispensers allow students to serve themselves and keep the milk colder than cartons, improving milk’s taste.”

In Virginia, The Dairy Alliance and the Virginia State Dairywomen’s Association have supported the use of milk dispensers in schools through grant programs that help cover the cost of equipment.

“The milk dispenser grant program is a great opportunity to promote increased

milk consumption and reduce food and packaging waste at the same time,” noted Tony Banks, senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. “Dairy farmers are eager for schools to consistently serve milk at its proper temperature, as it’s been shown to improve consumption.”

After Bluestone Elementary School in Harrisonburg introduced milk dispensers, it experienced a 91% reduction in packaging waste and a 52% increase in milk consumption, according to an internal study conducted at the school. It also eliminated the 39,000 milk cartons it had been providing students yearly.

Before schools had to shut down during the pandemic, Liberatore said Prince Edward County schools, an elementary school in Harrisonburg and four elementary schools in Lynchburg were using the milk dispensers. Prince Edward has since started using its milk dispensers again, and the schools in Harrisonburg and Lynchburg are hoping to restart in the new school year.

King George and Louisa County high schools are slated to have milk dispensers in use this school year, and Northumberland County has them installed in its high school, with plans to expand to middle school this year.

According to Liberatore, milk is the leading source of calcium, potassium and vitamin D that children ages 2-18 are often lacking.

Short Memorial from page 1

Presents 20th Annual Jennifer Short Memorial Scholarship Bike/Car Ride

Saturday August 13th (Rain Date August 20th) contact Ray Reynolds (276-340-2000)

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Ray Reynolds Construction	West Window Corp.	Debbies Flooring
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Henry County Sheriff’s Office	Bassett Kiwanis	Stone Dynamics
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Martinsville City Sheriffs Office	Sarver Cleaning Services	Victory Baptist Church
Martinsville City Police	Community Fellowship Church	
Buford Boitnotte	Los Nortenos	
Fieldale Cafe	Blue Ridge Mustang & Ford Club	
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Rockingham County, N.C., near the bridge now named in her honor. The murders are still unsolved, though the case was reopened in 2021. Like many in the community, Reynolds has not given up hope that justice will be served. He said events like the ride help to bring attention to the tragedy. Reynolds, a neighbor of the Short family, has organized the ride for two-decades. This year, however, is the final year that his health will allow him to do so. “If anyone else wants to take it over, I’ll do anything I can to help them,” Reynolds said of the ride that

has raised more than \$40,000 in scholarships since it began as a way to honor Jennifer Short and her parents, and raise funds to provide scholarships in Jennifer Short’s memory to Bassett High School students. Although he organizes the event, Reynolds attributes its success to the support he receives each year from individuals and businesses in the community. This year, that list includes the Bassett Kiwanis Club, Bojangles, Cool Knobs and Pulls, State Farm, Bryant Radio, Rayzor’s Edge Photography, Queen’s Landing, CrossPoint Church and others. In the event of rain, the ride will be held on Saturday, August 20.

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OBITUARIES

Trevis Edwards Lusk

Trevis Edwards Lusk, 80, of Martinsville, VA passed away Monday, August 8, 2022. She was born February 12, 1942 to the late Thelma E. Edwards and Thelma Daniel Edwards. She was also preceded in death by her brothers, Rev. F. Gary Edwards and David J. Edwards; and brother-in-law, Mich Massey.



She is survived by her husband of 62 years, James T. Lusk, Jr. "Jim"; her son, J.T. Lusk, III; four sisters, Linda E. Ratliff (Joe), Naomi E. Massey, Fern E. Joyce, and Faye E. Luther (Dennis). She is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews, whom she dearly loved.

She is survived by her husband of 62 years, James T. Lusk, Jr. "Jim"; her son, J.T. Lusk, III; four sisters, Linda E. Ratliff (Joe), Naomi E. Massey, Fern E. Joyce, and Faye E. Luther (Dennis). She is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews, whom she dearly loved.

Trevis graduated from John D. Bassett High School and received an associate degree in Business Administration from PHCC. She worked 22 years at First National Bank, which is Sun Trust. She was head teller at the Druid Hills branch until ill health forced

early retirement. With her lupus in remission, she worked 5 years in the Order and Invoice department at Hooker Furniture, a job she really enjoyed. She spent her last active working years as Bookkeeper/Secretary Treasurer at her son's construction business, retiring in 1998. She and Jim traveled extensively until her health intervened.

Visitation for Trevis will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. on Thursday, August 11, 2022 at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel. The funeral will follow at 11 a.m. with Pastor Eric Winn officiating. Burial will be held at Roselawn Burial Park.

Memorial donations may be made to the Parkinson's Foundation, 200 SE 1st Street, Suite 800, Miami, FL 3313.

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

Clara Prillaman Davis

Clara Prillaman Davis, 95, of Martinsville, died Sunday, August 7, 2022, while sleeping peacefully at her home in Rich Acres. A native of Henry County, she was born in the Barrows Mill community on January 19, 1927, the daughter of the late Lafe Pence Prillaman and Fannie Pearl Gauldin Prillaman. She was also preceded in death by her husband of almost 25 years, Francis Buford "Snookie" Davis, her sisters, Norris P. Miller (Raymond P. Miller) and Zada P. Oakes (Calvin A. Oakes), and brothers, A. Otis Prillaman (Barbara D. Prillaman), James A. Prillaman, Kenneth G. Prillaman, and L. Berkley Prillaman.



Survivors include her children, Larry F. Davis, Deborah D. Aaron (Michael K. Aaron), and Barbara A. Davis all of Henry County, VA; her brother, A. Norman Prillaman of Martinsville, VA; her sisters-in-law, Eloise M. Prillaman of Forest, VA and Frances J. Davis of Martinsville, VA; her grandchildren, Erin L. Muck (Aaron J. Muck) of Cincinnati, OH, Jessica K. Oates (Paul D. Oates) of Martinsville, VA, Matthew C. Aaron (Michelle N. Hutzler) of Roanoke, VA, and Emily A. Aaron (Yasiah R. Brandon) of Greensboro, NC; and great-grandchildren, Caleb E. Muck, Nathan J. Muck, Adah R. Muck, Judah B. Muck, Jaxon A. Brandon, and Mila E. Aaron.

Clara attended the Barrows Mill one-room school, South Martinsville Elementary School, was a 1944 graduate of Martinsville High School and a 1945 graduate of the National Business College in Roanoke, VA. She worked for

E. I. DuPont for five years following graduation. Later, as a fulltime mother of three, she assisted her husband as his bookkeeper in the family's construction business. She, then, worked briefly for Cahill Insurance before spending her last 25 years in the workforce as executive secretary at the United Way. Clara and her husband were two of the ten charter members of Rich Acres Christian Church. They also, along with other family members, were the original owners and operators of the Martinsville Drive-In Theatre.

A servant of God and a living example of His word, Clara touched and blessed many people. At the heart of it all, she knew that performing small graces daily makes a difference in the lives of others. So, thank you, Clara, for making this world a better place by being a shining example of God's love. We love you a bushel and a peck and a hug around the neck.

The family will receive friends at Rich Acres Christian Church on Thursday, August 11, 2022, from 1:00 to 3:00pm. Funeral services will immediately follow at 3:00pm with Tim Hunt officiating and then proceed to Horsepasture Christian Church cemetery for the burial.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Rich Acres Christian Church, 422 Mountain View Rd, Martinsville, VA 24112.

Norris Funeral Services, Inc. and Crematory is handling arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.norrisfuneral.com.

Timothy Alfred Gauldin

Timothy Alfred Gauldin, 56, of Portsmouth, VA passed away on Saturday, August 6, 2022. He was born on November 23, 1965, to Alfred and the late Bernice Gauldin.

He is survived by partner, David Morgan; parents, Alfred and Nancy Gauldin of Martinsville, VA; sister, Pam Shoemaker (Mike Keaton) of Martinsville, VA; niece, Carrie Stone (Tyler) of Martinsville, VA.

A memorial service will be held at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, August 12, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services with Pastor

Leonard Hall. Visitation will be held prior to the service, from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

A service will be held in Portsmouth/Virginia Beach, VA at a later date.

The family request in lieu of flowers, memorial donations be made to SPCA of Martinsville - Henry County, 132 Joseph Martin Hwy, Martinsville, VA 24112 (276)638-7297.

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

Buddy Rogers Arrington

Buddy Rogers Arrington, 84, of Martinsville, VA passed away on Tuesday, August 2, 2022, at Sovah Health of Martinsville. He was born on July 26, 1938, in Franklin County, VA to the late Love Glenwood Arrington and Louise Walker Arrington.



He is survived by his wife, Patsy Ann Chitwood Arrington of the home; son, Joey Rogers Arrington of Bassett, VA; stepson, Todd Arrington of Martinsville, VA; brother, Jimmy Arrington (Marie) of Figsboro, VA; nephew, Ronnie Arrington of Myrtle Beach, SC; niece, Angela Arrington of Atlanta, GA; step-grandson, Danny Goad of Charlotte; step-granddaughter, Amber Arrington of Florida.

Visitation was held on Thursday,

August 4, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services. Funeral service was held Friday, August 5, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services with Rev. Randall W. Lenderman, Chaplain and former Pastor of Druid Hills Baptist Church officiating. Burial will follow the service at Arrington Family Cemetery in Franklin County, VA.

The family would like to thank everyone for their love and kindness.

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

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

Wilbur S. "Smitty" Doyle, Jr.

Wilbur S. "Smitty" Doyle, Jr., 72, of Martinsville, Va. passed away on Friday, August 5, 2022. He was born March 29, 1950 to Wilbur S. Doyle, Sr. and Lillie Frances Turner Doyle.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Mary Elizabeth Doyle.

He is survived by his sisters, Gail Doyle Smith (Wright) of Wilmington, NC, and Sarah Doyle Krebs (Bill) of Greensboro, NC; brother, David Reid Doyle (Meg), of Wilmington, NC; nieces and nephews John Gregory, IV (Leslie); Elizabeth Morgan; Army Lt. Colonel William Krebs, Jr. (Krista); Turner Krebs (Agustina); Kathryn McCarthy (Tony); Heather Lowder; Laura Doyle; Reid Doyle; Alex Rollmann (James); and 14 great nieces and nephews; and his beloved Labrador retriever Libby.

Smitty was a 1968 graduate of Drewry Mason High School and also attended Wake Forest University. Following college, he enlisted and



proudly served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He was a member of the First Baptist Church of Martinsville and taught Computer-Aided Design (CAD) at PHCC.

A graveside service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 9, 2022 at Roselawn Burial Park and will be officiated by Rev. Dr. Libby Grammer. A visitation will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 8, 2022 at McKee-Stone Funeral Home Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial donations be made to Labs of Lancelot, 816 Lancelot Drive, Pleasant Garden, N.C. 27313. Labs of Lancelot breeds, trains and provides Labrador retrievers for military veterans. Those who wish may also donate to a charity of your choice.

McKee-Stone Funeral Home, Martinsville, VA is serving the family.

To express condolences online, please visit www.collinsmckeeestonemartinsville.com.

Charles Cleveland Tunnell

Charles Cleveland Tunnell, 87, of Bassett, VA went to be with the Lord Friday, August 5, 2022 at his home. He was born September 18, 1934 in Glen Cove, NY to the late Dorothy Tunnell and Charles Tunnell. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his first wife, Ellen Tunnell, wife, Jean Hankins Tunnell; and great-granddaughter, Emberly Reffett.

He is survived by his sons, Chuck Tunnell (Janet), Danny Hodges (Barbara), and Chris Tunnell (Jean); ten grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Mr. Tunnell was a member of Victory Baptist Church and ran the Victory International Food Bank. He was a truck driver for over 35 years and served in the



U.S. Army.

A funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. on Monday, August 8, 2022 at Victory Baptist Church with Pastor Dan Schelling and Pastor David Naff officiating. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service from 1 to 2 p.m. Burial will follow at Mount Vernon Baptist Church Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Victory International Food Bank, 1300 Dillons Fork Rd., Collinsville, VA 24078 or the SPCA of Martinsville-Henry County, 132 Joseph Martin Hwy., Martinsville, VA 24112.

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

Cathy Lewis Wallace

Cathy Lewis Wallace, 63, of Fieldale, VA passed away on Saturday, August 6, 2022, at Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital. She was born on March 21, 1959, in Martinsville, VA to the late Elmer Lewis and Estelle Coe Lewis. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her beloved dog, Daisy.



She is survived by her children, Houston Wallace, and Haley Wallace; father of her children, Conny Wallace; siblings, Shirley Johnston (Wayne), Wayne Lewis (Margie) and Jackie Davis (Gratton); her cat, Lilly and granddog, Maggie.

Visitation will be held from 5:00 p.m.

to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services. Funeral service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 10, 2022, at Norris Funeral Service with Pastor Michael Harrison and Pastor David Hagee officiating. Burial will follow the service at County Line Christian Church Cemetery.

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

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

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OBITUARIES

Brad Steven Hensley

Brad Steven Hensley, 42, of Bassett, passed away on Saturday, August 6, 2022. He was born November 12, 1979 in Winston Salem, North Carolina to Robert Steven "Bobby" Hensley and Robin Gilley Hensley. Brad has been an automobile mechanic his entire life, following in the steps of his father and grandfather.



Brad was preceded in death by a daughter, Bria Shan Hensley; his paternal grandparents, Henry and Shirley Hensley and his maternal grandparents, Curtis and Jean Gilley. In addition to his parents, Brad is survived by his sister, Jill Leann Hensley, two aunts Cheryl Hensley Gammons (Jeff), Mary Ann Hall, an uncle, William Michael Gilley (Nancy) numerous cousins, great-aunts, great-uncles and a multitude of friends.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, August 11, 2022, at Wright Funeral Service from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. A private graveside service will take place at the family cemetery in Bassett.

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

Carolyn Williams Lawson

Carolyn Williams Lawson, 77, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at SOVAH Health of Martinsville. She was born March 1, 1945, in Franklin County, Virginia, to Robert I. Williams and Nell McCrickard Williams.



In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband Ervin Lawson; son, Michael Ervin Lawson; brothers, Robert "Bobby" Williams and Henry Lee "H. L." Williams; sister, Tammy Hope Williams.

She is survived by her son, Darrel Lawson; sister, Florence L. Hall; grandchildren, Jatha, Vickey, Hayes and Britney; and five great-grandchildren.

A graveside service will be held Friday, August 12, 2022, at 11:00 A. M. Roselawn Burial Park with Dr. J. D. Harmon officiating. Visitation will be thirty minutes prior to the service.

The family would like to say a special thank you to Roselawn Funeral Home and Manager Kelly Ratcliff.

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

Larson to retire from Sovah Health, search for successor currently underway

Sovah Health system announced today that chief executive officer (CEO) and Market President R. Alan Larson will retire from the top leadership role at the hospital at the end of the year. Larson will continue serving in his position while a qualified successor is recruited to fulfill this important role. The search for a new leader is currently underway.

"Alan has provided exemplary leadership to Sovah Health and demonstrated a strong commitment to serving the healthcare needs of the Danville and Martinsville communities since becoming CEO and Market President," said Cherie Sibley, president of LifePoint Health's Central Division of hospitals, of which Sovah Health is a part. "He has helped enhance the level of quality and patient safety and worked hard to ensure that the hospital is well-positioned to continue serving the community long into the future. We appreciate Alan's willingness to help ensure a smooth transition as we begin the search for the right

person to lead Sovah going forward."

Since stepping into the Market President and CEO role in 2015, Larson has encouraged the Sovah teams to connect to and live out their mission of Making Communities Healthier. In 2017, he led the merging of the two hospitals to form what is now Sovah Health. His leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic established vaccine clinics and education tools for staff and patients alike and inspired tireless and compassionate care from local caregivers. His tenure at Sovah also resulted in ACGME accreditation for the Sovah Health – Danville residency program, recruitment of some of the best and brightest providers to Southern Virginia, the initiation and groundbreaking of the Emergency Department renovation in Danville, and numerous other facility and equipment upgrades.

"Alan is a compassionate, service-minded leader who has instilled in all of us an unwavering com-

mitment to making our community healthier," said Julie Brown, PhD, chair of Sovah's governing board. "Sovah Health has been fortunate to have him at the helm, and we are grateful for his efforts and accomplishments on behalf of our patients, employees, physicians and volunteers. We wish him all the best in his retirement."

Larson and his wife, Kami, look forward to spending more time with their family in his retirement.

"It has been a true honor and privilege to have served alongside an incredible group of employees, physicians, board members and volunteers to improve the health of our southern Virginia communities," Larson shared. "I'm so proud of our team's accomplishments and consider myself fortunate to have been part of this outstanding organization. I know Sovah Health has an incredibly bright future ahead."

For more information about Sovah Health, visit SovahHealth.com.

Blue Ridge Fire & EMS Academy recognized by VACo

The Blue Ridge Fire & EMS Academy (BRFEA) was selected as one of 29 local government programs in Virginia to receive a 2022 Achievement Award from the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo).

VACo received 100 submissions from across the state and winning entries focused on addressing issues of the pandemic, connecting citizens, and other challenges faced by counties.

The BRFEA was formed in 2021 through a partnership between the Henry County Department of Public Safety and the Franklin County Department of Public Safety. It was created to address the dwindling number of trained emergency response personnel in each locality.

"It is an honor to have been selected by VACo for this outstanding achievement in regional cooperation," said Matt Tatum, director of Henry County Public Safety. "While the academy may have begun out of the necessity to fill critical positions, it has quickly developed into a model for multijurisdictional collaboration to produce quality training for first responders in rural localities."

The partnership calls for each agency to cover any specific cost related to their recruits and the instruction staffing is shared proportionately between the jurisdic-

tions participating. The model also allows partner jurisdictions to join in the future to fill personnel shortages. Patrick County chose to participate in the second academy which began May 2.

"The fact that the program is growing in its second year is a testament to the dedicated leadership of each of the participating departments and it really speaks to the benefits of strong partnerships," said Henry County Deputy County Administrator J.R. Powell. "Undoubtedly, the first academy class had its hurdles to overcome by coordinating in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, but that adversity made the academy staff and recruits resilient as a team and benefited the communities at large."

One benefit of the program is the division of instructional responsibilities amongst departments with existing robust training regiments. During the first academy, Franklin County took the lead on firefighter training while Henry County was in charge of the emergency medical services training portion.

The VACo Achievement Awards is a competitive program open to local government members of the association. For a complete list of the winners, visit: www.vaco.org/county-profiles/achievementawards/2022-achievement-awards-entries/.

Applications to be accepted for internet expansions

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development will begin accepting applications on September 6 for funding to expand access to high-speed internet for millions of people in rural America nationwide, part of the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to investing in rural infrastructure and affordable high-speed internet for all. USDA is making the funding available under the ReConnect Program, which received new funding from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

"High-speed internet connects people and businesses to new markets and helps people in rural America build brighter futures," said Under Secretary Xochitl Torres Small. "For too long, too many rural communities have been left out of the digital economy. This funding will help everyone in America – regardless of where they live – because rural people provide the everyday essentials our country depends on. Investments like the ones we are making through President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will help close the digital divide across rural America."

The USDA is making additional funding available for high-speed internet in Round 4 of the ReConnect Program. The department will begin accepting applica-

tions on September 6 for up to \$150 million in loans, up to \$300 million in loan/grant combinations, and up to \$700 million in grants. The Department will use funds appropriated under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a historic \$65 billion investment to expand affordable, high-speed internet to all communities across the U.S.

The application deadline is November 2.

The USDA has made several improvements to the ReConnect Program for Round 4. Collectively, they increase the availability of funding in rural areas where residents and businesses lack access to affordable, high-speed internet. These include:

*Allowing applicants to serve areas where at least 50% of households lack sufficient access to high-speed internet.

*Adding a funding category for projects where 90% of households lack sufficient access to high-speed internet. For applications submitted under this category, no matching funds will be required.

*Waiving the matching funds requirement for: (a) Alaska Native Corporations, (b) Tribal Governments, (c) projects proposing to provide service in colonias,

(d) projects proposing to serve persistent poverty counties and (e) projects proposing to provide service in socially vulnerable communities.

Additionally, to ensure that rural households that need internet service can afford it, all awardees under this funding round will be required to apply to participate in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The ACP offers a discount of up to \$30 per month towards internet service to qualifying low-income households and up to \$75 per month for households on qualifying Tribal Lands. The USDA's actions to expand high-speed internet access in rural areas are key components of the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to help America build back better in its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

To be eligible for ReConnect Program funding, an applicant must serve an area where high-speed internet service is not available at speeds of 100 megabits per second (Mbps) (download) and 20 Mbps (upload). The applicant must also commit to building facilities capable of providing high-speed internet service at speeds of 100 Mbps (download and upload) to every location in its proposed service area.

Lawmakers mull drug-pricing reforms as costs become top issue for voters

Democrats say they have reached an agreement on the Inflation Reduction Act, which includes measures aimed at lowering prescription-drug prices.

Senate lawmakers could begin considering its passage this week.

Donna Christensen, board member of Consumers for Quality Care and former Congressional Representative from the US Virgin Islands, said if passed into law, the changes would primarily affect Americans relying on Medicare.

"Medicare Part D, there'll be a cap on out-of-pocket costs to the beneficiaries," Christensen explained. "I think that's a very good thing. We wish that it would be extended to the privately insured as well, though, because they are facing increasing out-of-pocket costs."

Major drug companies and other opponents argued the legislation will stifle innovation and reduce the number of new medications available to consumers.

A recent survey from Consumers for Quality Care found 80% of voters feel their health care costs, including deductibles, out-of-pocket expenses and unpaid medical

bills continue to increase each year.

Christensen pointed out research has shown Affordable Care Act caps on out-of-pocket costs -- which can stretch into the thousands of dollars depending on the medication -- have proved too high for most individuals to utilize.

"It's causing people to delay or skip health care because of it," Christensen observed. "Because they're afraid of incurring medical debt."

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation poll released earlier this year, 6 in 10 working-age adults with health-insurance coverage have gone into debt getting medical care in the past five years.

Advocates are calling on lawmakers to set affordable out-of-pocket caps and \$35-a-month copay caps on insulin for those covered by Medicare and private insurers.

Nadia Ramlagan
Virginia News Connection

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Duffy hired as Assistant Athletic Director of Operations



Ruthanne Duffy was named the new Assistant Athletic Director of Operations and Senior Women's Administrator at P&HCC.

Patrick & Henry Community College selected Ruthanne Duffy as the Assistant Athletic Director of Operations and Senior Women's Administrator.

"We are pleased that Ruthanne has accepted our offer to join our PHfamily," said Brian Henderson, Athletic Director and Assistant Vice-President for Student Engagement and Inclusion. "As we strive to give the best student-athlete experience, her role will be one of the most important in our department. Ruthanne is committed to continuing the development of our athletic program, is a great representation of leadership for our female student-athletes, and will help us stay forward thinking during this season within the NJCAA."

Duffy has led the Ferrum College Volleyball (NCAA DIII) program as the head volleyball coach since 2015 and was the assistant coach from 2012-2015. While at Ferrum, Duffy served as an advisor to the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, served on numerous hiring committees, and was a game day administrator when not performing her primary coaching duties. As a coach, Duffy was responsible for planning, administering, and evaluating the overall operations of the volleyball program. She also oversaw recruitment and evaluated the academic achievement of student-athletes.

"I am thrilled to be joining this incredible PHfamily and to have the chance to serve the ever-growing number of student-athletes at Patrick & Henry Community College. I'm excited to assist the P&HCC student-athletes prepare, compete, succeed and achieve their athletic and academic goals. Thank you to Dr. Greg Hodges and Brian Henderson for giving me this opportunity."

In addition to coaching at Ferrum College, Duffy also managed and operated a local collegiate wooden bat baseball team, the Martinsville Mustangs, a

member of the Coastal Plain League. Duffy was named the assistant general manager in 2018 before being promoted to general manager of the Mustangs for the 2019 and 2020 seasons. With the Mustangs, Duffy was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the team including corporate and sponsorship sales, ticket sales, hiring and management of staff, overseeing player recruitment, contracts, and roster maintenance, securing host families for athletes, as well as organizational relations and promoting a positive image in the community.

A graduate of the University of Virginia's College at Wise, Duffy played volleyball and received a degree in physical education with a concentration in sports management in 2010. During her time as a student-athlete at UVA-Wise, the volleyball program won the Region XII championship and competed in the NAIA National Tournament in 2007. In the fall of 2021, she completed her M.S. in Sport Administration from Arkansas State University.

Duffy, and her husband Matt, live in the Martinsville area with their two children.

Uninsured rates drop among low-income adults in Virginia, other states with expanded Medicaid program

The uninsured rates among low-income adults declined in all five states that expanded Medicaid in 2019 and 2020, including Virginia, according to a new report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Virginia's uninsured rate has gone down 7.2 percentage points since the state expanded Medicaid in 2019.

The national uninsured rate reached an all-time low of 8 percent in early 2022, with 5.2 million people having gained coverage since 2020, coinciding with the beginning of the Biden-Harris Administration in January 2021.

The report, which analyzes data from the National Health Interview Survey and American Community Survey, shows the dramatic impact of Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to increase health care access and lower costs for America's families through the American Rescue Plan's enhanced Marketplace subsidies, the continuous enrollment provision in Medicaid, several recent state Medicaid expansions, and substantial enrollment outreach by the Administration in 2021 and 2022.

"We know that access to quality, affordable health care is key to healthier lives, economic security, and peace of mind," said HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra. "That's why the Biden-Harris Administration has worked tirelessly to expand access to health insurance and lower costs for America's families through the American Rescue Plan and other actions. Our new report shows that the uninsured rate in the country reached an all-time low this year – welcome news and proof that our efforts to protect and expand on the Affordable Care Act are paying off. As we move forward, the Department of Health and Human Services will continue to do everything we can to protect, expand, and strengthen the programs that provide the quality, affordable health care Americans rely on and deserve. And I'm hopeful that with Congressional action we can continue the work to lower costs for more Americans by both extending the enhanced Affordable Care Act tax credits that have helped drive the uninsured rate to an all-time low and increasing the affordability of prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries -- reducing their cost sharing and allowing Medicare to negotiate a better deal on prescription drug prices."

In a related report titled 'Effects of Medicaid expansion on insurance coverage and health services use among adults with disabilities newly eligible for Medicaid,' that was published by HHS researchers this month, Medicaid expansion was shown to have improved preventive care and financial security for adults with disabilities, further evidence of how coverage expansion can improve health equity.

Key findings from today's report, published by HHS's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), include the following:

* The nation's uninsured rate declined significantly in 2021 and early 2022, reaching an all-time low of 8.0 percent for U.S. residents of all ages in the first quarter (January-March) of 2022, based on new data from the National Health Interview Survey, compared to the prior low of 9.0 percent in 2016.

* Approximately 5.2 million people – including 4.1 million adults ages 18-64 and 1 million children ages 0-17 – have gained health coverage since 2020. These gains in health insurance coverage are concurrent with the implementation of the American Rescue Plan's enhanced Marketplace subsidies, the continuous enrollment provision in Medicaid, several recent state Medicaid expansions, and substantial enrollment outreach by the Biden-Harris Administration in 2021-2022.

* Uninsured rates among adults ages 18-64 declined from 14.5 percent in late 2020 to 11.8 percent in early 2022. The uninsured rate among children ages 0-17, which had increased during 2019 and 2020, fell from 6.4 percent in late 2020 to 3.7 percent in early 2022.

* Approximately 5.4 percent of adults 18-64 reported having Marketplace coverage in early 2022 compared to 4.4 percent in 2020, reflecting approximately 2 million additional adult Marketplace enrollees – roughly half of the 4 million adults who gained health coverage over this period.

* Changes in uninsured rates from 2020 to 2022 were largest among individuals with incomes below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and incomes between 200% and 400% FPL.

State-specific analyses using the American Community Survey show that the largest changes in the uninsured rate for low-income adults between 2018-2020 generally occurred in states that recently expanded Medicaid. More recent state estimates beyond 2020 are not yet available.

Overall, these results highlight the significant gains in health insurance coverage that occurred in 2021 and early 2022 associated with the Biden-Harris Administration's policies to support health insurance expansion. These gains build on the large reductions in the uninsured rate that occurred after the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2014, which research demonstrates produced improved health outcomes, better access to care, and improved financial security for families.

Landowner Legacy Planning Workshops set

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOP) and the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) encourage landowners to make plans – now – for passing on their land to the next generation. The Generation NEXT program, a collaboration between VDOP and VCE, helps Virginia landowners make plans to keep forests intact, in forest, and in family.

To help landowners get started and clarify misconceptions about the legacy planning process, the Generation NEXT Program is hosting in-person and virtual workshops this summer and fall. The workshops, which will take place in South Boston, Galax and New Kent, serve as opportunities for family members to ask difficult questions, receive useful information, and get on the same page about their plans for the future.

Typically, these sessions are only in-person, but a virtual workshop has been added so dispersed families can also take advantage of these helpful resources and tools that make the planning process more accessible and manageable.

Workshop Information

Families pay a single fee to participate. Registration opens up six weeks prior to each workshop. Visit the VCE website for more information.

In-person:

South Boston – August 26-27

Galax – October 27

New Kent County – November 2

Virtual:

(All virtual workshops take place from 3 to 5 p.m.)

September 7

September 8

September 14

September 15

"Many landowners are overwhelmed by the legacy planning process and assume that it primarily involves complicated estate planning with attorneys and accountants," said VDOP Forestland Conservation Program Manager Karl Didier. "The Generation NEXT program helps to ease estate planning and demonstrates how it's just one part of the ongoing legacy planning process. Much like a forest changes over time, your plans will evolve. As priorities change or family dynamics shift, so should plans for your land."

"One of the most important steps in legacy planning includes conversations between the landowner and the people who will steward their land after they're gone," said Generation NEXT Program Coordinator Karen Snape. "When unforeseen events occur before clearly established plans for your estate and land can be put in place, things can quickly become complicated for surviving family members. Having these conversations now is critical."

A companion to the workshop series, the award-winning Legacy Planning: A Guide for Virginia Landowners publication, provides an overview of the nine major steps involved in developing a robust land legacy plan. It includes case studies from landowners throughout Virginia and guides landowners to tools and resources. The free publication is available on the Virginia Tech website or in print by request.

Husband and wife real estate team sentenced for wire fraud

A husband and wife realtor team from Wise were sentenced recently on federal wire fraud charges related to their scheme to create fake residential sales contracts to obtain advance sales commissions to which they were not entitled.

Jessee Allen DeLoach, 40, pled guilty in February 2022 to one count of wire fraud. He was sentenced last week to 15 months in federal prison. Natasha Ashley Miller DeLoach, 38, also pled guilty to wire fraud in February 2022 and was sentenced to 15 months in federal prison. In addition to their prison time, the DeLoaches agreed to pay \$146,273 in restitution.

According to court documents, the DeLoaches owned a real estate agency called Koltown Properties, Inc., which operated in Southwest Virginia. Between March 2016 and November 2019, the defendants created at least 19 phony residential sales contracts and submitted them to multiple advance commission companies throughout the country to fraudulently obtain money.

Advance commission companies provide a financial service to real estate agents by assisting them with cash flow. Specifically, real estate agents may sell portions of their pending commissions on legitimate residential sales contracts in exchange for access to cash before the closing date.

As part of the scheme, the DeLoaches created entirely false sales contracts for properties they knew were not under contract or they listed buyers and sellers who did not exist. Additionally, the DeLoaches altered valid residential sales contracts to reflect that no other real estate agent was involved in order to double their claimed sales commissions. To further their schemes, the DeLoaches created fake title companies, including one named Excel Title Company, to validate the fraudulent contracts to the advance commission companies so they would in turn authorize commission payments to the DeLoaches. The two obtained more than \$300,000 in advance sales commissions over the life of their schemes.

United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh and Special Agent in Charge Stanley M. Meador of the FBI made the announcement.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Virginia State Police investigated the case, with assistance from the Wise County Commonwealth Attorney's Office.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Lena L. Busscher is prosecuting the case.

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If you've read this far, you can see how effective a classified ad in the Henry County Enterprise can be.

Call 276-694-3101 or email submissions@theenterprise.net to place your ad.

HELP WANTED

Fayette Area Historical Initiative

Position Title: Executive Director

Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI), 211 Fayette Street Martinsville, VA 24112

Closes: August 29, 2022, 5:00 P.M.

Salary Hiring Range: \$40,000- \$50,000 annually, depending on qualifications and experience

Job Type: Full-Time, 40 hours per week with some evenings and weekends required for special events or other duties to meet the Museum's mission

The Organization: Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI), a 501(c)(3) orga-

HELP WANTED

nization, was established in 2004 and has served the community for 18 years. Located at 211 Fayette Street, Martinsville, VA 24112, its mission is historical preservation of the Fayette Street neighborhood and the African-American community. Although its mission is to collect and preserve African-American heritage and culture, FAHI invites visitors from diverse populations to understand the African-American experience; all ethnicities, genders, socioeconomic classes, and professions are invited.

Essential Job Functions:

- serve as a spokesperson and liaison between the Board of Directors and the community

- oversee Museum's daily operations, staff and volunteers, education and public programming, and external communications

- lead board development, recruitment, and training
- manage assets and optimize financial operations

- lead the development and execution of the strategic plan

- oversee the development, management, and preservation of museum collections

- oversee and participate in fundraising efforts, includ-

HELP WANTED

ing grant writing, special events, requests to local, state, and national foundations, and community partnerships/collaborations

Key Qualifications:

- Excellent communication skills (verbal and written), effective listening, and positive interpersonal skills
- Highly organized, detail-oriented
- Demonstrated use of current technology and social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram

- Experience with museum collections, successful grant writing

Preferred Professional Characteristics:

- Bachelor's degree in history, education, or a related field of study- preferably with an African-American emphasis
- Experience at a museum or similar combination of education and experience

How and when to apply- Interested candidates should submit a cover letter, résumé, and three references no later than August 29 to the following email address: fahichair@gmail.com or mail to: Attn: Joyce Staples, Fayette Area Historical Initiative, 211 Fayette Street, Martinsville, VA 24112. This position will close on August 29 at 5:00 P.M. Applications

HELP WANTED

will not be accepted after the closing date listed above. Fayette Area Historical Initiative is an equal opportunity employer.

Help Wanted?

Let our readers know you're hiring with a classified ad in The Enterprise for as little as \$8 a week.

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COUNTY OF HENRY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **August 24, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of Special Use Permits for the following cases.

Case S-22-11 Fredrick Wooden / Larry Jones

A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-902 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a recreational hookah bar in an existing restaurant building. The property is located at 2089 Virginia Ave in the Collinsville District and is zoned Commercial District B-1, as shown on Tax Map 29.7(70)/55-58.

Case S-22-12 Michael Crowley, PE; Crowley Professional Engineers Firebird and Thunderbird Solar

A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-1801 through 21-1808; and 21-302 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of 2-Large Scale Solar Energy Facilities. The properties are generally bounded by Ebony Dr and Aladdin Dr, in the Ridgeway District, and zoned as Agricultural District A-1. The project consists of 2 tracts, one of approximately 40.96-acres, and the second approximately 33.38-acres. The Tax Map number is 51.9/147. The proposal is to develop a 5 MW and 3 MW facility.

The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

State superintendent announces final round of grants to child care centers

Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow announced the fourth and final round of direct cash assistance for child care centers and family child care sites through Virginia's Child Care Stabilization Grant Program. Approximately \$50 million in final payments will go out to more than 3,200 sites across the state this month.

The Virginia Department of Education launched its federally funded Child Care Stabilization Grant Program in November 2021, using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act. The VDOE has since approved nearly 5,000 applications for funding and issued more than \$382 million to eligible child care programs. These resources have helped child care to stabilize operations during the pandemic, retain staff, purchase equipment, and make improvements to their facilities.

"Families depend on quality child care so they can work and fully participate in our economy," Balow said. "Virginia has led the way in getting federal relief funds directly in the hands of the child care providers. Moreover, these funds help ensure that more young learners have access to early childhood experiences

where they can develop key school-readiness skills. It's a win-win for families and kids."

For the final round, all programs that received a third-quarter grant and have an active license, registration, or approval will receive a final payment equivalent to approximately half of the third-quarter grant amount. Programs do not need to apply for the final awards. Rather, VDOE will notify sites of their final awards through the Child Care Stabilization Grant portal.

"The child care stabilization grants were a lifesaver. Even with thirty years of experience as a child care business owner and director, I was only able to focus on day-to-day survival to keep my doors open and my classrooms staffed during the pandemic," said Amy Bowie, the owner of Miss Amy's Child Care Center in Abingdon. "The resources and supports that came with the funding helped me strengthen my business and problem-solve challenges like staff recruitment and retention. I am grateful that this temporary funding allowed me to continue to serve the children and families in my community."

Since 2020, Virginia has provided more than \$660

million in direct cash assistance to more than 4,800 child care and family child sites. Including this most recent round, there have been eight rounds of funding. This flexible funding, which came from the CARES Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act and American Rescue Plan Act, has helped Virginia child care programs weather the pandemic. Nearly all child care programs have reopened and Virginia is now funding more children than ever before through vouchers issued under the commonwealth's Child Care Subsidy Program, with 32,000 children served last month.

VDOE will continue to work with partners such as the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation to issue any needed corrections to payments and offer technical assistance to recipients to help them maximize the use of funds and ensure compliance with grant requirements. Providers are encouraged to explore resources provided by VECF that include guidance documents, coaching and technology supports.

Providers with questions may contact VDOE's Division of Early Childhood Care and Education by email at childcaregrants@doe.virginia.gov.

New budget gives Virginia's farmers record funding for soil and water conservation

Never-before-seen levels of conservation funding for Virginia's farmers are included in the new state budget. Producers throughout the commonwealth will benefit from expanded cost-share and tax credit opportunities.

Changes to the application for much of this support will also streamline the process for many farmers.

"We are very excited about the historic level of cost-share funding for farmers in the new budget, and grateful to the General Assembly for providing it. The governor has prioritized meeting Virginia's Bay water quality goals, and with this money comes the responsibility to provide meaningful results," said Matt Wells, director of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

"We also know that we cannot meet our goals without true partnerships with our Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the agricultural community. This includes engagement, open lines of communication and mutual trust. We look forward to working with all of our partners to support agricultural best management practices across the commonwealth."

Increased cost-share and tax credits

The Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program, or VACCS, is funded at a record high for the 2022-2023 program year with \$123 million.

VACCS is the state program that helps

farms implement a range of conservation practices that protect water quality. By improving animal and soil health and reducing nutrient waste, these practices also help increase farm profitability — a key issue for producers as inflation rises.

DCR administers the state cost-share program in partnership with Virginia's 47 soil and water conservation districts.

"Virginia's soil and water conservation districts are the one-stop shops for state cost-share signup and practice implementation," said Dr. Kendall Tyree, executive director of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. "We applaud the governor and the General Assembly for this record show of support for voluntary conservation efforts and look forward to serving Virginia's agricultural community in our district offices."

Farmers may receive up to \$300,000 in state cost-share reimbursement for more than 70 best management practices including:

- Cover crops
- Nutrient management plans
- Forested or herbaceous buffers
- Animal waste systems
- Livestock stream-exclusion systems

Many of these practices can often be funded through a combination of state and federal funds, reducing the farmer's expense to less than 25% of the total cost.

Also available to Virginia's farmers this year are:



PHOTO COURTESY OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

A farmer plants crops using a no-till drill. No-till farming is one of many practices for which producers can receive cost-share funding.

Up to \$25,000 in state tax credits for fully implemented agricultural best management practices.

Up to \$50,000 in tax credits for best management practices on lands with an approved resource management plan.

To apply for funding or tax credits, farmers should contact their local soil and water conservation districts.

Streamlined paperwork for many producers

Farmers in many localities will now find it simpler to apply for funding to support multiple nutrient management and/or cover crop best practices.

Under what is sometimes called a "whole farm approach," a producer only has to submit one cost-share application to cover all of the nutrient management practices, or all the cover crop practices, established on as much acreage as desired.

Previously, this program was only available to farmers in Essex, King and Queen and King William counties, and in the Chesapeake Bay watershed of the Eastern Shore.

This year, however, farmers in Carroll, Gloucester, Grayson, Halifax, Mathews, Middlesex, Page, Rockingham, Washington counties — and all of the Eastern Shore — may also participate.

More information on Virginia's soil and water conservation programs can be found at <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil-and-water/>.

The program year ends June 30, 2023.



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www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Rockin' River, other fests set for next weekend

Three popular events are on tap next weekend for Martinsville and Henry County – TGIF, the Smith River Fest and the 2nd annual Uptown Music Fest.

TGIF, featuring The Kings, will kick off the weekend when it gets underway on Friday, Aug. 19 from 7 to 10:30 p.m. in the Bridge Street Parking Lot in Martinsville. Tickets are \$7 and proceeds help benefit youth scholarships in the area. Hosted by the Rotary Club of Martinsville-Henry County, TGIF is a staple of local summers. The event provides music and dance, serves as a gathering spot for friends, with vendors set up to provide food and drink. Bring your favorite people, a lawn chair and enjoy a night out.

The Smith River Fest returns on Saturday, August 20, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., at the Smith River Sports Complex, located at 1000 Irisburg Road in Axton. It offers a variety of fun outdoor activities, including the Hellgrammite Hustle Mud Run, river races, tubing, and bounce castles. Admission and parking are free, as are many of the events hosted.

The fest culminates with the 8th annual Blue Ridge Duck Race, sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club of the Blue Ridge. As one of the club's biggest fundraisers, the Duck Race offers a fun way for people to give back to their community. The Boys and Girls Club is a little more than halfway to its overall goal of 15,000 ducks. Ducks can be adopted for \$5 for one, \$25 for six, or \$100 for 25 ducks. The sponsors of the top three ducks will receive a cash prize.

The Uptown Music Fest, now in its second year, returns from 7 to 11 p.m. Saturday to 21 Starling Ave, Martinsville for another night of music, food, and fun.

Hosted by the Matthew Wayne Wade Foundation, a nonprofit that donates proceeds to a charity each year, the fest is sponsored by The Lester Group, Southern Virginia Properties, Sabin Law Office, PC., New South Metals, Chip Wyatt-State Farm Agent, BTW 21, Hugo's Restaurant & Sports Bar, Sounddawgs Production, LLC., Uptown Martinsville Farmers' Market and the Virginia Museum of Natural History. Musical guests include George Hodges, Matt Crowder, Martin and Kelly, and The Magnificent's Band. Tickets are \$7 if purchased in advance, and \$10 at the gate. Outside alcohol is not allowed. Tickets can be purchased at <http://www.winebyriver.com/uptown>

Admission for each event can be purchased separately, but a Rockin' River Fest Weekend event package includes admission to each event, a free pour at all three, a silipint, and a Rockin' River Fest T-shirt, for only \$30.



The Executives Band gets the crowd dancing at the 2021 Uptown Music Fest.



A crowd gathers for last year's Uptown Music Fest.



AXTON SOLAR COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

Our community grant program seeks to provide community groups and organizations with funds to further their mission and hands-on work in Henry & Pittsylvania counties. Any local entity that meets the following criteria may apply for a grant.



Fall Deadline:
September 15th, 2022

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