

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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County to consider draft legislative agenda at Tuesday meeting

Debbie Hall
Editor

Reversion tops the proposed list of Henry County's 2023 Legislative Agenda for the Virginia General Assembly. The Henry County Board of Supervisors will consider the proposal at its 3 p.m. meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 22.

Identified as the most pressing item on the list, the county would solicit input on "how to deal with the effects of the City of Martinsville's reversion to a town. This action by the city will have severe and long lasting impacts" on the county's fiscal condition, the proposal states.

In it, the county "strongly encourages" Virginia to "extend the temporary restriction on annexation following a city's reversion to a town" to 12 years, up from the current 24-months, the draft agenda states.

Further, the county requests budget and statutory changes so that capital costs of reversion are equally shared. The proposal requests an amendment to the Code of Virginia and the budget to "allow for and fund at least a 25 percent match for costs associated with constitutional offices, jails and courthouse subject to construction" due to a reversion.

Also requested is that the state fully funds "hold harmless provisions" for

Constitutional officers and schools so state subsidies remain funded at current levels or more for 15 to 20 years after the effective date of a reversion, and the lower Local Composite Index of Martinsville and Henry County would be used to calculate state education funding to county schools for 15 years, the draft states.

In economic development, the county encourages Virginia to develop new incentives that allow the state and localities to be more competitive with neighboring states, as well as additional funding "to enhance the high-tiered industrial sites in economically distressed communities."

The proposal also requests increased support for public education, including added support to provide and maintain competitive teacher salaries, the continued support of the New College Institute (NCI) and Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC).

"We also support NCI's ultimate conversion into a stand-alone four-year university or a branch campus of an existing four-year university," the proposal states.

With respect to transportation and providing the draft list is approved, the county would ask for funds from

See **Draft Legislative Agenda**, page 2



Martinsville Middle School Principal Ama Waller presents the school's improvement plan at a Nov. 14 meeting.

Martinsville school officials outline goals, discuss ways to improve

Maddy Oliver
Staff writer

School principals presented school improvement plans for Martinsville Middle School and Patrick Henry Elementary School to the Martinsville City Council at a Nov. 14 meeting.

Despite all schools being fully accredited as of the last Virginia Department of Education

(VDOE) evaluation, Martinsville schools are still looking for ways to improve. Some schools had achievement gap ratings that were at a Level Two and the schools are working to bring these ratings up.

Martinsville Middle School principal Ama Waller discussed goals set by the school. All are SMART goals, meaning they are specific, measur-

See **School Officials Outline Goals**, page 4

Brothers helping brothers: Big Bird Toy Run raises thousands for Christmas Cheer



Bikers lined up to participate in the ride started by Richard "Big Bird" Holcomb and continued by Chad Hall. Proceeds from the Nov. 12 event benefit area youngsters enrolled in Christmas Cheer of Martinsville and Henry County.

Maddy Oliver
Staff writer

The Big Bird Toy Run raised nearly \$10,000 for Christmas Cheer of Martinsville and Henry County. The ride, started by Richard "Big Bird" Holcomb and continued by Chad Hall two years after Holcomb's death, brings bikers together for a day of fun and charity.

Nearly 170 bikes participated in the ride, along with 300 to 350 people in attending the event. The ride went through Martinsville, Collinsville, and Bassett before ending at Sportlanes in Collinsville for food, music, giveaways, door prizes, auctions, and

See **Big Bird Toy Run**, page 6

Stone and Fowlkes honored



Russell Stone (center with plaque) is flanked by (left to right) Martinsville Mayor Kathy Lawson, Debra Buchanan and Tommy Slaughter, both members of the Henry County Board of Supervisors. Stone was named Outstanding Military Veteran for 2022.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Maddy Oliver
Staff writer

Russell Stone was selected to receive the Outstanding Military Veteran Award and W.C. Fowlkes was named Martinsville-Henry County's Veteran of the Year during a Veterans Day service at the HJDB Event Center.

"It is truly an honor to present to W.C. Fowlkes this year's Veteran of the Year award for 2022," said Walter Sheppard who presented the award to Fowlkes.

Fowlkes said he didn't know what to say other than thank you.

"I guess if you really enjoy what you're doing, if you feel like you're accomplishing something, most often for those who have a need, you really don't think about it. It's

just what you should be doing," he said.

Fowlkes grew up in Henry County and graduated from Drewry Mason High School. He then entered the Air Force and served for four and a half years as a medic. He graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) with a degree in real estate and urban planning, and went on to spend more than 35 years in mortgage, investment, and commercial banking.

Fowlkes was an early chairman of the Martinsville Uptown Revitalization Association, and serves on the Habitat for Humanity Board, Martinsville-Henry County Crimestoppers Board, and is involved with many other local organizations.

Noting that he was humbled by the award and his accomplishments that led to it, Fowlkes credited those who worked with him and helped him along the way.

"I never looked for anything in return, other than the thanks from those that I was able to help and assist at different times. It wasn't me, ever. I was always with a group. Always with a group of veterans trying to do what we could do for others. Whether it was here, whether it was in Iraq. It was just the thing to do. That's about the only way I know how to say it," he said.

"I just really do appreciate it and I'm very proud of this, I really am. And thank you all so much."

See **Veterans Honored**, page 6



The Martinsville-Henry County SPCA is experiencing overpopulation issues, just as many other shelters across the nation.

Local animal shelters at capacity

Maddy Oliver
Staff writer

Shelters all over the nation are at full capacity as pets keep coming in at a rate faster than they are being adopted. Local shelters are also feeling the effects of this overpopulation.

Catherine Gupton, executive director of the Martinsville-Henry County SPCA, theorizes that the overpopulation of shelters is due in part to people surrendering animals they got during COVID.

"During the COVID shutdown, a lot of people adopted animals because they were lonely. Now that everybody's returning back to the workforce,

they're finding they're not able to care for those animals the same way and they're returning them to shelters," Gupton said.

She added that spay and neuter surgeries drastically slowed during the COVID shutdowns, causing a boom in dog and cat populations.

Jayne Clark, shelter manager of the Martinsville Animal Shelter, agreed.

"Their jobs have picked back up. They're spending more time at work, they're spending less time at home. We're beginning to see a lot more surrenders of people bringing in dogs and saying, 'Hey, I just can't care for it anymore,'" Clark said.

See **Animal Shelters**, page 7

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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 dhall@theenterprise.net or newsreporter@theenterprise.net)

Saturday, November 19

The Martinsville-Henry County Christmas Parade will begin at 5 p.m. It will go through Uptown Martinsville. This year's theme is "Christmas in Motion."

Wild Ponies will perform at Theatreworks. Doors open at 7 p.m. and show starts at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15.

The Center for Community Learning will hold "Pictures with Santa Paws." Bring your dogs out for pictures with Santa at the Career Academy, 340 Ridgedale Drive, Martinsville. All dogs must be leashed. Bring a donation for the SPCA and receive \$5 off.

Sunday, November 20

The Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center and Museum will hold its monthly lecture at 3 p.m. This month's lecture is April 1865: Danville, Martinsville, and the End of the Civil War and highlights the role of the area in the last few weeks of the Civil War.

Monday, November 21

The P&HCC local board will hold their monthly meeting at 12:30 p.m. at the MET, located at 65 Motorsports Drive, Martinsville.

Wednesday, November 23

The W. Dan Prince III Thanksgiving Eve Dinner will take place on Nov. 23, 2022, from 1-4 p.m. at Martinsville High School, located at 351 E. Commonwealth Blvd, Martinsville, Va. FREE Thanksgiving meals will be available for dine-in, carryout, or delivery. For delivery, calls must be placed by Sunday, Nov. 20, 2022. Call (276) 730-9017 to order meals for delivery. The menu includes turkey, green beans, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, bread, and a cookie for dessert. Families with children under 12 will receive a free book this year. To find out more or to volunteer, visit www.theharvestfoundation.org/thanksgiving-eve-dinner.

Thursday, November 24

Reach Out Apostolic Church will be giving away Thanksgiving meals at the Sportsman's Club, 47 East Fayette Street, Martinsville from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call Anthea Barbour at (276) 806-0932

Thursday, December 1

Henry County School Board will hold its regular monthly meeting at 6 p.m., 1st Floor, Summerlin Room County Administration Building, Collinsville.

Piedmont Arts' annual Christmas Tree Lighting will be held in the Gravelly Lester Art Garden, 207 Starling Avenue, Martinsville, at 4 p.m., with hot chocolate, candy canes, music from the Martinsville High School Jazz Band, and a visit from Santa.

Piedmont Arts will hold a Bob Ross Painting Class at 9:30 a.m. Participants should bring a roll of paper towels, all other supplies are provided. Advanced registration is required. The cost is \$75 for members and \$85 for non-members.

Friday, December 2

Henry County School Board will hold its regular monthly meeting at 6 p.m., 1st Floor, Summerlin Room County Administration Building, Collinsville.

Saturday, December 3

The City of Martinsville's "Fall into Winterfest" will be held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., featuring craft vendors, food trucks, kids' activities, a beer garden, entertainment, and more. Admission is free.

Uptown Martinsville's tree lighting will take place at 5 p.m. at 55 West Church Street.

The Ridgeway Christmas Parade and tree lighting ceremony begins at 5:30 p.m. starting on Main Street and ending at the Blue Ridge Regional Library. Santa Claus will be on hand for family pictures. Enjoy coffee, hot chocolate, cookies, roasted chestnuts, and sounds of the season.

The Bassett Volunteer Fire Department will hold an all you can eat Breakfast with Santa from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Admission is \$8.

The Charity League of Martinsville and Henry County will host their Winter Gala fundraiser from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the HJBD Event Center. The dress is cocktail attire. Tickets are \$45 each or \$400 for a table of 10 and can be purchased at tinyurl.com/CLwinterGala.

Fido's Finds' "Fall into Winter" Basement Sale, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. All sales benefit the Martinsville-Henry County SPCA.

Santa will be at Studio 107 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for pictures. A 5x7 picture can be purchased for \$15.

Music Night at the Spencer Penn Centre with The Country Boys. Gate opens at 5 p.m. and the band starts at 6:15 p.m. Admission is a \$5 cash donation. Concessions will be sold.

Sunday, December 4

The Roanoke Symphony Holiday Pops Spectacular will take place in the Martinsville High School auditorium at 3 p.m. Altrusa will collect non-perishable food items for Grace Network in the lobby during the symphony's performance.

Santa will be at The Ground Floor from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Photos are \$10 per family.

Saturday, December 10

Piedmont Arts will host "Yoga in the Gallery" at 10:30 a.m. Bring your own mat, block, water bottle, and other supplies. The class is free to members and \$10 for non-members.

The SPCA's annual Pet Pictures with Santa will take place from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. Families, children, and pets are all welcome. The cost is \$10 per pose.

ONGOING

The Coats for Kids Coat Drive is donations at Hollywood Cinema and One Hour Martinizing on Rives Road through Nov. 30. For more information, call Debra Buchanan at (276)358-1463.

The Martinsville Farmers' Market is open every Saturday from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. through November 20 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 second and fourth Tuesday. Clinics are by appointment only—no walk-ins will be accepted. Call (276) 638-7297 to schedule your appointment.

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 (MHCCHW) continues to offer "no-touch" Medicaid/FAMIS application assistance for Virginia residents from birth to 64 years of age. No sign-up fees, no premiums, no deductibles. Call or text Ann Walker today at (276)732-0509 to see if you may qualify and get help applying.

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

The Blue Ridge Regional Library hosts its new book club, "Books and Brews," on the first Thursday of each month at 5 p.m. at Mountain Valley Brewing, 4220 Mountain Valley Road, Axton. The book for November is Walking Across Egypt by Clyde Edgerton.

Draft Legislative Agenda

from page 1

the Commonwealth Transportation Board and the General Assembly for the Martinsville Southern Connector project, creating a direct route from the North Carolina line and the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre to the U.S. 58/220 bypass and support for the construction of I-73 (with construction to start in the county).

The draft includes sections on law enforcement/public safety, Constitutional officers and other areas of concerns, the latter of which asks

the state to develop a master plan and build the Mayo River State Park, additional funding for the Children's Services Act, changes to the Virginia Retirement System to help cover critical labor shortages, funds to help cover voting procedures that "have brought increased demands on localities," and "maintaining and expanding funding and appropriate incentives to foster housing development, including workforce housing."

Also, at its 3 p.m. meeting in the

Summerlin Room of the Henry County Administration Building, the board also will consider:

*A resolution Honoring Terri Cook – Commissioner of Revenue.

*Awarding a contract for a Communications Microwave System.

*An Additional Appropriation of American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Funds for Employee Bonus Payment for the school division.

*Approval of the purchase of a fire truck for the Ridgeway Volunteer Fire Department.

*Award of a contract for Electrical Consulting Services.

*A request for Carryover of FY'22 County Funds.

Supervisors are scheduled to hear:

*A monthly report on efforts to collect delinquent taxes.

*An update from the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp.

The board may meet in closed session to discuss appointees to the Anchor Commission and Public Service Authority; pending legal matters; the acquisition/disposal of real estate and for discussion of as-yet unannounced industries.

Supervisors will meet again at 6 p.m. to hear a report on General Highway Matters, presented by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), a presentation from the Parks and Recreation Office and matters by the public.

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Three Martinsville teams advance to state championship in LEGO Robotics

Teams of elementary and middle school students came together at Martinsville Middle School on Saturday, Nov. 5, to compete in the regional qualifier tournament for the FIRST LEGO League (FLL) LEGO Robotics Challenge.

After a high-energy day full of overcoming challenges, celebrating successes, programming robots presenting projects, and one epic dance party, three Martinsville City Schools teams—the Rainbow Riveters, the Micro Microwaves, and Absolute Zero—advanced to the state robotics competition, which will be held at James Madison University December 10 and 11.

This year's challenge, called Superpowered, focuses on energy and encourages teams to "reimagine the future of sustainable energy," according to FLL's website. "To empower young people to be leaders and innovators, this year's energy theme addresses global challenges related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #7—focused on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable energy for all."

To prepare for the competition, teams had to design, build, and program a robot to perform various missions within a set time period. They were also tasked with identifying a real-world problem related to the year's theme, conducting research, and creating an innovative solution to that problem. For example, one team designed a solar-powered electric blanket to help the homeless keep

warm during the winter while another created a machine to clean dirt and grime from solar panels.

"We are so proud of all of our city's LEGO Robotics teams and what they were able to accomplish this year," said tournament director and the school division's coordinator of STEM, Math, and Science Jill Collins. "The LEGO program encompasses all of the Five C's (critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, and citizenship) as well as math, computer programming, engineering, problem solving, and teambuilding. It is so much more than just programming a robot to accomplish missions, and we are delighted that so many of our students participated in this year's program."

Twelve city school teams competed in the regional qualifying tournament, translating to more than 100 elementary and middle school students participating in the program.

The full list of award winners from the Martinsville regional qualifying tournament are:

Champion's Award: Absolute Zero Robot
 Performance Award: Power to the Tigers Robot
 Design Award: ACNF (All Creativity No Failure) Innovation Project Award: Rainbow Riveters Core Values Award: The Magical Unicodes Breakthrough Award: Wild Kidz Rising All-Star Award: Team 6/7
 Motivate Award: SOS Save Our Sphere
 Volunteer Award: Callie Hietala.



The Rainbow Riveters, from Patrick Henry Elementary, will compete in the state LEGO Robotics competition in December. Front row (from left): Katie Wall, Emery Taylor. Second row (from left): Meagan Price, Kyra Penn, Mykalah Saunders, Hailey Coleman. Back row (from left): Zariyah Bouldin, Nina Giles, Kyla Stewart, Tadley Tadborne.



The Micro Microwaves, from Patrick Henry Elementary, is one of three Martinsville teams advancing to the state LEGO Robotics competition at James Madison University in December. Front row (from left): Emersyn Crockett, Janae Eggleston, Ariyah Webster, Mason Wright, Remington Crockett. Back row (from left): coach Erica Crockett, James Hall, Jewell Martin, Maya Williams, coach Ashley Taylor, Jairo Mata.



Martinsville Middle School team Absolute Zero is advancing to the state LEGO Robotics competition. Front row (from left): Hudson Grant, Noah Wright, Bridgette Brent, coach Emily Harrell. Back row (from left): Veronica Smith, Samson Ray, coach Liz Lynch, Erzart Shahini, coach Lizzy Fulcher.

Agnew to retire at the end of school year



Gracie Agnew, Head of School at Carlisle School, will retire at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. Agnew has had a long, distinguished career in education culminating in the last five years at Carlisle School where she served as the 10th Head of School.

She recently shared with parents and faculty that her time at Carlisle School has been "exciting, enriching and fulfilling for me as an educator. I thank the outstanding faculty, wonderful students, and supportive parents." She added, "I have been in an ideal environment where there is a true passion for teaching, learning, and a zeal for achievement. I count it a privilege to be a part of the Carlisle family."

During her tenure at Carlisle, Agnew

was responsible for the addition of the STEAM lab, outdoor learning spaces, improvements in technology and learning resources, advances in curriculum and academic rigor, as well as enhancements to security measures and response plans. She oversaw upgrades to athletic facilities including the baseball field and the basketball gym. She successfully led the school through its continuing accreditation. During the pandemic, she ensured the progress of Carlisle students through a commitment to in-person learning.

"A contagious passion for truly educating students is the first and most lasting impression you have of Gracie Agnew," said Carlisle Board President, Jennifer Thomas. "Carlisle has been the

beneficiary of all the positive impact of that passion. Our students have thrived even during the most recent challenging years due, in great part, to Gracie and her talented team. I am confident that Mrs. Agnew's leadership will continue to resonate for years to come at Carlisle School."

The Carlisle Board of Trustees has formed a search committee that is working diligently to find the next leader to carry the torch of academic excellence and positive character development for our students. Agnew is actively involved in the selection of and transition planning.

The committee is now accepting applicant submissions at hssearchcommittee@carliseschool.org.

RU students named NCR Scholastic All-Americans

Two Radford University students were recognized as 2021-22 Scholastic All-Americans in August by National Collegiate Rugby:

Caleb Belcher of Collinsville, and Jaxon Turner of Martinsville.

This annual program recognizes high performing student athletes across college rugby.

Men's rugby and women's rugby were founding members of Radford's Sports Club Council (SCC). Since its inception, the SCC has helped develop 22 sport clubs with more than 450 participants. These clubs participate in collegiate leagues similar to those of varsity teams.

National Collegiate Rugby (NCR) is focused solely on the growth and development of collegiate rugby teams, student-athletes, and coaches.

NCR evolved from the National Small College

Rugby Organization (NSCRO), founded in 2007. Initially created to support the growth and development of small college rugby, the organization now serves men's and women's college rugby programs of all sizes.



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- CLUES ACROSS**
- Clip a small piece
 - Enter forcibly
 - Southwestern Native American tribe
 - Helps you smell better
 - Sun or solar disk
 - Low frequency
 - Former Houston football player
 - Federal crime
 - Home to Boston (abbr.)
 - Approval
 - Those who fight an establishment (abbr.)
 - ___ student, learns healing
 - Indian groomer of horses
 - Line where two pieces meet
 - One might be brief
 - Type of sword
 - Knife for fruits or vegetables
 - Stinkhorns
 - Stroke
 - Industrial process for producing ammonia
 - Sir ___ Newton
 - Wild goat
 - Muslim ruler
 - Scottish ancestor
 - Hat
 - Horse mackerel
 - Large wading bird
 - Alcoholic accompaniment
 - Tech department
 - Manifesting approval
 - Upper bract of grass
 - Of 1
 59. Large wading bird
 - Military prisons
 - Famed American cartoonist
 - Rise
 - Greek God of war and courage
 - The finger farthest from the thumb
 - Not moving
 - Sports official
 - Water purification process (abbr.)
 - University of Dayton
 - Indo-Malaysian evergreens
 - High schoolers' math course
 - Yankovic is a weird one
 - Adversaries
 - Merchandisers
 - Radioactive metal (abbr.)
 - Atomic #52
 - The back
 - One-time computer giant
 - Female of a horse
 - Football's big game (abbr.)
 - Vehicle
 - Single Lens Reflex
 - It's becoming more prevalent
 - Political action committee
 - Makes lightbulbs
 - Natural home of an animal
 - In bed
 - Superman villain
 - The Golden State
 - One who leads prayers in a mosque
 - They accompany a leader
 - Atomic #18
 - Electronic countermeasures
 - The appearance of something
 - Connecting line on a map
 - Deep red color
 - Secret affairs
 - Drenches
 - Contains music
 - Expression of surprise
 - Electronic pouches
 - Where birds are born
 - ___ and behold
 - Cools your home
 - The First State
- CLUES DOWN**
- Sewing needles
 - Functionary
 - Induces vomiting

OPINION

Elon Musk is an idiot

Elon Musk is an idiot. I'm far from the first person to point out that Elon Musk's \$44 billion purchase of Twitter last month may have been ill-conceived. There have been plenty of articles about how poorly the process has gone, about how there were really no upshots to the leveraged buyout of the social media site and endless potential downsides, many of which he is currently experiencing. There have been articles about how it was probably a bad idea to fire a bunch of coders before fully understanding what they did and then attempt to hire them back the very next day. There have been articles about how attempting to monetize Twitter's blue check mark verification system would result in chaos, which it did. There have been articles predicting that Musk's purchase of Twitter would be his personal and professional Waterloo, which increasingly appears to be accurate. However, I don't think all that stuff makes Elon Musk

an idiot. A terrible businessman perhaps, but not an idiot.

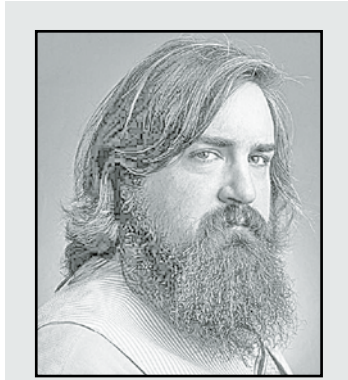
No, the reason Elon Musk is an idiot is something very different, and it's something that I haven't seen get the attention it deserves. For me, it all comes down to the following question:

Why is he doing this?

Elon Musk is worth about \$200 billion, making him the richest man on Earth. I'm worth substantially less than that, but I have a feeling I enjoy life a whole lot more than Musk does.

If I had Elon Musk's money, I wouldn't buy Twitter, especially not for the sole purpose of "owning the libs," and I certainly wouldn't micromanage it to death.

No, if I had Elon Musk's money, I'd start by getting some stuff done. Kids in this country going to bed hungry? Nah, not anymore! Homelessness? Not on my watch! It's been estimated that \$6 billion per year could solve world hunger, so let's kick some money toward that and see what happens. At this



By Ben R. Williams

point, I'm maybe down \$50 billion, probably less than that. Who cares? I still have \$150 billion!

Next, let's put \$100 billion toward hospitals, schools, scholarships, grant programs, and medical and scientific research. You know who's going to run all that stuff? Not me! Why would I want to? Let someone else do it. All I care about is that people get helped, and also that my name is celebrated for hundreds if not thousands of years as the single greatest

benefactor in mankind's history. I don't need to busy myself with the day-to-day, I just want to be responsible for ushering in America's next golden age.

At this point, I've still got \$50 billion, which is more money than any one human being should possess. Why not have some fun with it?

Now, your average boring billionaire would use their endless wealth to buy something like a Bugatti La Voiture Noire, the most expensive car in the world at \$18 million. Not me. You'll see me driving around in the original moon buggy, or maybe the Ecto-1 from Ghostbusters if it's raining.

I'm not going to be hanging out with politicians, tech billionaires, or Ghislaine Maxwell. You'll find me down at the bar hanging out with my new best friends Elvira, Mistress of the Dark and Carl Winslow from the sitcom "Family Matters" (you'll note that I didn't say actor Reginald VelJohnson who played Carl Winslow; I will be paying Mr. VelJohnson to remain in character as Carl at all times).

Hey, who's the newest

member of Blue Oyster Cult? That's right: me! Sure, I don't have any musical talent, but I do have billions of dollars, and if any audience members don't like my vocals on "Veteran of the Psychic Wars," I'll just pay them to clap.

Did you hear they're making a shot-for-shot remake of "The Blues Brothers" where I'm playing the role of every single person who died in the intervening 42 years, Aretha Franklin included? It's going to suck, but who cares? I'm a billionaire!

And at the end of the day, I'll STILL probably have \$49 billion, give or take.

See, THAT'S how you have fun as a billionaire. Not by putting yourself in a situation where you're stuck on Twitter all day arguing with Stephen King and Garfield that they should pay you eight bucks a month for a little blue check mark.

I swear, wealth is wasted on the wealthy. Then again, I don't have a roaring black hole in the center of my psyche that craves constant attention and approval, so I guess I'm coming at this from a slightly different perspective than Mr. Musk.

School Officials Outline Goals from page 1

able, achievable, relevant, and time bound. The goals primarily focus on a duo of Level Two indicators, English for students with disabilities and science overall.

"We reviewed documents and things that we already had in place to just overall see what we need to improve to get those indicators to Level One, or from yellow to green," Waller said, adding the school's first goal involves the test scores.

"Martinsville Middle School will increase the number of students passing state assessments to improve the school quality indicators from Level Two to Level One in science academic achievement, and English achievement gap by June," she said.

The school is already implementing tactics to achieve this goal.

"Some things we are already doing and some things from the academic review process that we need to tweak. School wide, we have been hitting vocabulary instruction. Again, cross curricular, everyone has word walls physically or digitally, students have interactive notebooks," Waller said.

The school has always prided itself on being "student led" through collaborative study groups and letting students monitor their own progress, she said. It also is trying to encourage cohesion and collaboration between the general education and special education programs.

"We've been really stressing the importance of collaborative planning between the gen ed and the special education teachers who have the specialty training to

know how to handle the students and teach them," Waller said.

The second goal involves parent and community communication.

"Martinsville Middle School will increase parental involvement by having at least 90 percent of families indicate that they agree or strongly agree that Martinsville Middle School communicates and involves them regularly in their child's education," Waller said.

The important thing is to make sure that there is a sufficient amount of positive communication between parents and teachers, so that when teachers need to have less positive communication, a relationship has already been established.

"We want to increase positive communication. Sometimes we're communicating, but we wanted to have more positive communication," Waller said. The school is utilizing monthly newsletters, quarterly conference forms, and more to that end.

"We also want to give parents a voice. One thing that stood out in our administration training this summer was building with, not building for, parents and students, but building with them," Waller said, emphasizing the importance of putting parents on various teams.

The third goal encompasses behavior and safety.

"Martinsville Middle School will decrease the number of out of school suspensions by 10 percent from the previous academic year by the end of May," Waller said.

She said the school has already implemented policies such as assigning mentors to students, making sure the expectations are reinforced daily, and offering "Reflective Fridays," as well as alternative behavioral correction methods.

"Implementing just other alternatives to correct or reteach undesired student behavior, whether that's restorative justice. We do a lot of conferences, talking, apologize, write a letter; team conferences where they bring our teams together and talk to the parents," Waller said.

"We're going to soon start implementing some after school community service projects for things you really don't want to expel for. You were skipping class, we don't want to pull you out of class, but you're going to stay after school and work on something. Oh, you vandalized the bathroom. You're going to stay after school and help the custodian clean the bathroom," she said.

Cameron Cooper, principal of Patrick Henry Elementary School, noted her school fared similarly, with science overall at a Level Two as well as math for students with disabilities.

The first goal involves SOL scores and improving those level indicators.

"(Our goal is to) increase our performance in English from 80 to 90 percent, math from 83 from 90 percent, and also increase our performance on the science SOL test by 15 percent as measured by the spring

SOL test," Cooper said.

A new curriculum has already been implemented to help increase science scores.

"We have started with a new curriculum this year for science. It's called STEM Scopes. It gives students a lot of opportunities to engage with their texts. So, they read about it, they engage with whatever the assignment is," Cooper said.

However, the school also wants to ensure it pays attention to students who are not yet SOL testing.

"We want to make sure that the PALS identified students, (and identified means you're falling behind a certain benchmark) and we want to reduce the amount of students who are PALS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) identified, which means they are performing at the level that they need to," she said.

Goals also are broken down for individual subgroups.

"Our goals are to, in the Black subgroup for English, to increase that by 10 percentage points as well, and also the students with disabilities subgroup, (we) want to increase that by 10 percentage points as well. In math, again looking at the Black subgroup, and increase that by 10 percentage points, as well as the students with disabilities subgroup. Last thing, with our science, making sure that we are increasing the pass rate with that," Cooper said.

Plans are being put in place to meet these goals.

In "English and math, just a few things that we make sure we're utilizing effective practices in the class and to make sure that's happening we have a specified time every week for every grade level to get together for English and math collaborative planning. During that time, we're looking at the framework, making sure we know what the framework says, how are students going to be assessed, and then making sure that we're clear about how the delivery is going to happen," Cooper said.

Cooper wants all students to come to school love and enjoy what they're doing by nurturing the whole child.

"We are a big believer at Patrick Henry of the whole child. Beyond just instructional pieces, we want students to love school. We spend a lot of time ensuring that there are clubs that meet their needs that they want to be interested in and constantly listening to them to build those clubs, so they strive and want to come to school," Cooper said.

In other matters, the board:

*Heard an update on the Lego Robotics teams and their competitions.

*Was presented information on all the offerings of the Apptegy Technology System.

*Heard from Ama Waller on her VDOE presentation on chronic absenteeism.

*Heard about the HBCU College Fair being held on November 29 at Martinsville High School.

*Approved the financial report.

*Approved the consent agenda.

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HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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

EARLY DEADLINE SET FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

The Henry County Enterprise will be published early due to the Thanksgiving holiday. As a result, obituaries and other submissions including event information and/or calendar items, must be received by noon on Monday, Nov. 21. Email obituary information to submissions@theenterprise.net. All other submissions may be sent to dhall@theenterprise.net, newsreporter@theenterprise.net, or call (276) 694-3101.

Axton Solar granted state permit

Axton Solar moves one step closer to providing Henry and Pittsylvania County residents with a new, long-term source of tax revenue after receiving its Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (“CPCN”) from the State Corporation Commission and the Department of Environmental Quality. The review process includes a public comment period and proceeded smoothly without delays. As with all installations of this scale, Axton Solar is taking all the legal and safety precautions required to design and build a facility that is both environmentally safe and a long-term benefit to the community. This CPCN signals that after state regulators and authorities performed a thorough review of the project, they do not anticipate any negative impacts and acknowledge the benefit to the public.

In the documentation sent to the regulators, Axton Solar asserts, and the Commonwealth agrees, that “there will be minimal environmental impacts associated with the Project. It will comply with all necessary conditions imposed by the regulatory agencies with regulatory responsibilities for all environmental aspects of the Project to ensure protection of public health and the environment.”

Company officials said they are excited to receive this permit.

“Developing a solar project takes time, a lot of care, and a focus on doing the right thing. This permit demonstrates our commitment to the people of Henry and Pittsylvania counties and our diligence when it comes to respecting the long-term environmental stewardship goals of the Commonwealth,” said Trey Lopez, Senior Development Manager with Vesper Energy.

The next steps for Axton Solar include meetings with the Henry County Board of Zoning and Appeals and the Henry County Board of Supervisors. If all local approvals are granted, construction will begin in 2023.

County school to receive Ag Grant

Bassett High School was among the 71 to receive a grant from the Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom for the 2022-23 school year. The grants, awarded to schools in 44 Virginia localities, will provide 25,000 youth in urban and rural areas with agricultural experiences related to gardening, animal agriculture, nutrition, STEM and leadership development. These grants and the projects they support also help youth gain a better understanding of food production and career opportunities in the agriculture field.

“Urban gardens, hydroponics and embryology are the most popular project topics as schools and communities seek in-person learning activities,” said Tammy Maxey, Virginia AITC executive director. “Youth from preschool through high school in public and private educational settings will have an opportunity to learn about a variety of agricultural concepts. Congratulations to the schools, centers and 4-H chapters across Virginia that have been selected.”

Agriculture in the Classroom is a national program that promotes greater understanding of agriculture through education. The Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom is a nonprofit organization that receives financial and administrative support from Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. For more information visit AgInTheClass.org.

Coalition awarded more than \$1.3 million grant

Mental health services expand in Martinsville, Henry County

A new model for behavioral and mental health services provides patients of Bassett Family Practice and Ridgeway Family Health with much-needed access, even though the providers are not physically in the room.

Telepsychiatry comes to Martinsville-Henry County as the need for access to psychiatric care has dramatically increased, largely due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Martinsville-Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness received a two-year investment of \$685,993 from The Harvest Foundation to grow its telepsychiatry program.

Sheryl Agee, senior operating officer at The Harvest Foundation, said the coalition is an organization focused on putting the patient first in everything they do to ensure the services they provide meet their needs.

“This expansion of telehealth services results in strong, trusted systems that everyone can access for healthcare services, regardless of their financial situation or other barriers they may have,” she said. “It also further increases the network of high-quality professionals available to our community. It’s especially important as we, unfortunately, live in a culture where often a negative stigma is attached to mental health symptoms and services, which hinder people from seeking the care they need. By integrating behavioral health services into a system that already provides a variety of healthcare services, patients can feel more at ease when accessing any care they may need.”

Landon Morrison, a nurse practitioner specializing in mental health and psychiatry, provides telehealth services at Bassett Family Practice, located at 324 T B Stanley Highway in Bassett, Va., and Ridgeway Family Health, located at 4944 Greensboro Rd. in Ridgeway, Va. After working as a registered nurse in a hospital for five years,

he said he realized through all his patient encounters that mental health was as important as physical health for the good of people’s lives.

“I realized that physical health is tied to mental health — patients got well more often and quicker if they were in a better mental health space to do so,” Morrison said. “That’s what led me to psychiatry in general, and especially following the COVID-19 pandemic. That took a large toll on a lot of people’s mental health.”

Morrison said it can often be intimidating for people to visit someone like him, but it can also be very helpful to talk about their feelings. Every treatment is tailored to his patients, but Morrison said he’s able to teach coping skills, whether that’s exercise techniques, breathing techniques, or different ways of thinking about things. He’s also able to prescribe medications if needed for certain conditions.

“Many times people feel like they can’t talk to their own family members or friends because of judgment, history, or whatever it might be,” he said. “I would encourage anyone out there who is on the fence about getting help to talk to someone. It can’t hurt and there aren’t any serious side effects. Just give it a try.”

The use of telehealth has increased substantially in recent years and accelerated rapidly with the COVID-19 pandemic, said Marcus Stone, executive director of the MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness.

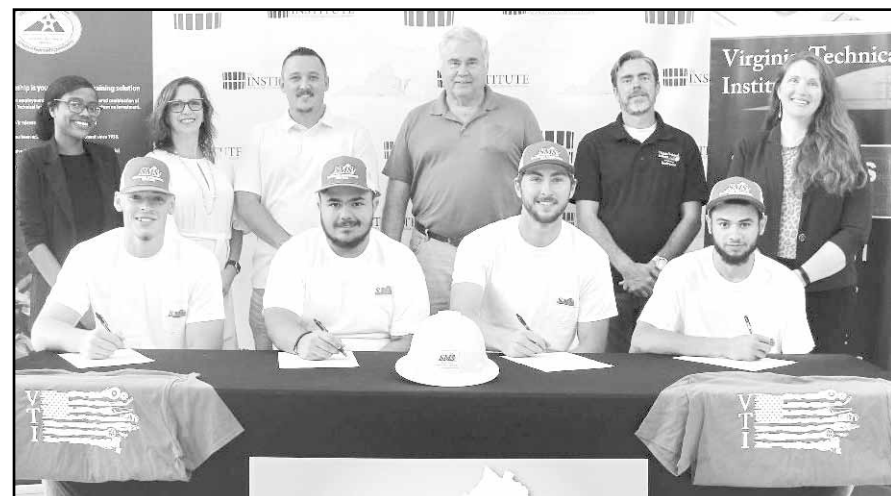
“In rural communities like ours, where there are fewer behavioral health providers, telehealth can connect patients with providers in other locations,” Stone said. “This not only increases access to behavioral healthcare services, but it can also increase their privacy and protect their anonymity. Telehealth has already been implemented in our modes of delivering standard primary care services to our patients, and as we continue

IALR awarded grant for its ExTRA program

The Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (TRRC) has awarded the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) a \$497,890 grant for its ExTRA (Expanding Talent through Registered Apprenticeships) program to grow state registered apprenticeships within the 15 Southern Virginia localities throughout GO Virginia Region 3. IALR will create a regional apprenticeship consortium to recruit apprentices and employers, as well as serve as the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry’s (DOLI) intermediary sponsor to help employers lacking capacity to fulfill the role as primary sponsor. Please see the attached news release for further details.



(Left to right) Front: John Daniel of Daniel Builders, LLC, Ulises Jimenez, David Sage (Virginia Technical Institute); back: Natori Neal (IALR), Kara Joyce (Virginia Department of Labor and Industry), and Dr. Julie Brown (IALR) participate in an apprenticeship signing ceremony.



(Left to right) Front: Plumber apprentices Corey Woods, James Hess, Caleb Shelton and Anthony Worsham Jr.; back: Natori Neal, IALR; Kara Joyce, Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI); Justin Hylton, Vice President, Southside Mechanical Services (SMS); George Hylton, Owner/ President, SMS; David Sage, Executive Director, Virginia Technical Institute (VTI); and Jessie Vernon, IALR. IALR worked with DOLI and VTI to help SMS achieve registration as a state apprenticeship sponsor.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has awarded a grant of \$1,310,312 to the Martinsville Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness.

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, said, “HHS’ award of more than \$1.3 million to the Martinsville Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness will enhance access to health care for the people of the city and county.”



Nurse Practitioner Landon Morrison (shown on screen) conducts a simulated behavioral health patient visit with Latala Hodges, communications director at The Harvest Foundation.

to build a stronger healthcare system, this grant will allow us to offer improved access to care by connecting patients and our mental health services in a way that is more convenient for them.”

This investment supports the foundation’s strategic plan priority of developing a vibrant community by building a strong healthcare safety net system and expanding behavioral health services for Martinsville-Henry County residents.

To find out more about telepsychiatry at the MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness, visit healthycommunitymhc.org or call (276) 629-1076 (Bassett Family Practice); (276) 956-2233 (Ridgeway Family Health) or email info@healthycommunitymhc.org.

New SVP of Credit Administration announced

ValleyStar Credit Union announces Misty Reed as its senior vice president of credit administration. Her role will focus on process automation, building relationships with external parties and communicating insights critical to ValleyStar Credit Union’s evolution.

Reed is a career credit professional with more than 20 years of financial services experience including commercial lending, underwriting and credit administration. Her previous roles include chief commercial credit officer and commercial underwriting manager.

“Misty’s impressive career as a credit professional brings us great confidence in her abilities to lead the credit union,” said Mike Warrell, CEO of ValleyStar Credit

Union. “Her expertise will help improve our processes and reduce risks, allowing us to better serve our members and fulfill our vision of being the best in service and convenience.”

In 2017, Reed received the Lending Officer of the Year award from Credit Union Times. She has also facilitated several financial analysis courses in conjunction with the Risk Management Association.

Reed holds an MBA from King University and bachelor’s in English from Lenoir Rhyne University. She also serves as Chair of the Blue Ridge Council of Make-A-Wish Greater Virginia and has served as the Audit Chair of the Girl Scouts of the Virginia Skyline Council.

OBITUARY

Charles Bunyan Agee



Charles Bunyan Agee, 92, of Houston, TX, passed away on August 13, 2022. He was born on October 15, 1929, in Patrick County, VA to the late Sarah Edna Spencer Agee and Ross Lee Agee. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his first wife, Sue Gaston Agee who passed away in 1973; son, Dale Lynch; sister, Mildred Crews; brother, Lee Agee; grandson, Daniel Agee; great-granddaughter, Lena Marie Spitzer.

and football, and he loved to watch western movies.

He is survived by his second wife, Peggy Crowe Agee; children, Anne Stevens, Jane Wade, Susan Norman, Kathy Earles, David Agee, Nancy Wilson, Mary Fatuch, Scott Agee, Brenda Coward, Pam Nicholson, and Sue Smith; forty grandchildren, sixty-seven great-grandchildren, and six great-great grandchildren.

A memorial service was held on Wednesday, November 16, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services with Pastor David Deisher officiating. The family received friends after the service.

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

Big Bird Toy Run from page 1

more. "It was a safe ride, everybody was good, no accidents, thank God for that," Hall said. "We had a great turnout at Sportlanes. Madhouse played for about 30 to 40 minutes, just rocked the place out, then we did about two and a half hours of giveaways, door prizes, auctions, all that cool stuff."

Although the number of bikers was off compared to last year, the event raised more funds. "I don't think we had as many motorcycles this year as we did last year. I think we had probably 175 to 200 last year, but as far as what we raised, (it) was actually up a couple thousand bucks. I think we raised \$7,500 last year, so we raised a little more money this year," Hall said.

According to Hall, the energy surrounding this year's run was different than in recent years. This year, participants enjoyed being with each other and the festivities.

"It felt like a new vibe this year. Just a new energy this year because we had a beautiful day. It was warm, everybody was just glad to be out," Hall said. "Most people probably got back home before the rain came. It was a really good energy, really good vibe, everybody just having a good time. It looked like just one big family. Brothers helping brothers, hanging out, and that's kind of the thing for bikers."

Hall is already looking at ways to make next year's run even better. "We're definitely going to make some changes year to year, because I've got a lot of different ideas," he said.

One of the changes Hall wants to make is promoting the event earlier to increase participation.

"Next year, I want to do like a 60-day campaign, and really try to up our game in marketing," he said.

Hall also is considering additional activities such as a burnout pit. Bikers would pay to enter the pit and do a burnout, which could spark competitions. "We're looking at putting in a burnout pit at Sportlanes. That'll be an addition, maybe next year. It will be a burnout pit for bikers to raise money. You can pull in, do a burnout, and all that. Money will be raised. There can be competitions and everything else when you get into a burnout pit," Hall said.

He is also looking towards options for more extravagant food options, including a cookout or barbecue, though those details are not set in stone.

"We've also even discussed having a whole shindig outside. Doing some barbecue, donating everything. Might could just be a plate lunch, or we could try to raise a few more dollars like that," Hall said.

Another big change, if the run continues to grow, will be the venue. As participation increases, Sportlanes' ability to accommodate participants declines, Hall said, adding that he is interested in an outdoor venue, but that may involve moving the run to a warmer date in the future.

"Honestly if it keeps going, we're going to have to find an outdoor venue, which is why we're even looking at moving it up a little warmer, so we can all be outside. All of us can't get in Sportlanes."

However, no matter the changes, Hall wants to make sure "to do what the bikers want, keep them riding."

"I look forward to doing it next year. Again, our goal is to continue this ride. This is my fourth year doing it, this is the second year we've done it without Big Bird. Big shout out to Lisa Holcomb, that's Big Bird's sister. She was Mrs. Claus and was a big part of it. I can't even tell you all the people that helped with this," he said.

Hall also extended his thanks to this year's sponsors that include Bird's Cycle Shop, BTW21, ND, TRASH Ministry, the Henry County Enterprise, Jerry's Pizza, Bassett Funeral Service, Radial, Eden Jewelry, Rust and Chrome, Christmas Cheer, Papa's Pizzeria, Sportlanes, Daniel's Auto Glass, Restoration Water Damage Experts, Madhouse, and Bassett Furniture.

Veterans Honored from page 1

Thank you," Fowlkes said in closing.

The Veteran of the Year award began in 1992 and is given by the Veteran Service Organization. It recognizes a veteran who demonstrated an outstanding career and continues to serve their community.

The Veterans Service Organization of Martinsville and Henry County also presided at the ceremony which included Henry County and Martinsville officials, veterans and others.

Debra Buchanan, who serves on the Henry County Board of Supervisors, presented the Outstanding Military Veteran Award.

"It's a privilege to be here before you today, gathered to honor our veterans and to remember their achievement and dedications, and say 'thank you for your sacrifice,'" Buchanan said.

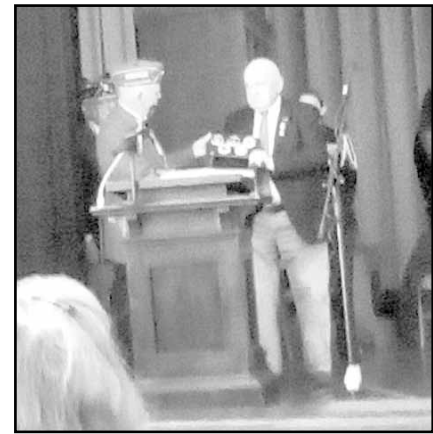
While thinking "of the heroes that are here with us today, and those who can only be with us in spirit, I can't help but feel overcome," she said, adding that she stood "in the midst of our nation's most precious resource: The American Patriot."

Buchanan was among those serving on the Board of Supervisors when the award was created for "the nominee who best represents what service to our country and our community means." With the support of Martinsville City Council, the field of applicants was expanded to include veterans who lived in the city.

Tommy Slaughter, also a member of the Henry County Board of Supervisors, presented the 2022 Outstanding Military Veteran Award to Russell Stone.

"Russell, this is a plaque from the city of Martinsville and Henry County recognizing you as the 2022 Outstanding Military Veteran award. It is proudly presented in recognition of your distinguished military and community service," Slaughter said.

Stone began his military career in 1967 when he joined the Marine Corps. He helped with processing Marines in and out of Vietnam before being stationed there himself. While in Vietnam, Stone stepped on a landmine, losing both of his legs below



W.C. Fowlkes was presented the Veteran of the Year award.

the knee. He was then honorably discharged.

Afterwards, Stone became an advocate for disabled veterans and other disabled people, helping to develop better prosthetics and improve handicap accessibility. He also helped start a wheelchair basketball team.

Slaughter then shared his own experience with Stone at a wheelchair basketball fundraiser.

"First time I met you was on the basketball court when I was a police officer, and we were asked to help y'all with a fundraiser. Before the night was over with, I knew you well. We thought we were going to have to take it easy on y'all and y'all like to have killed us," Slaughter said, chuckling.

Stone encouraged those attending to stand up for what they believe in and for the democracy of the United States.

"We live in a different time now. We are bombarded with different ideas and different thoughts, but the military and our government, our democracy, has to stand. I will fight verbally to make sure that this does stand. We have to stand for what we've accomplished and what we have done in the past and God knows what we can do in the future," he said.

Stone ended his comments with a patriotic send off and his gratitude.

"God bless you and God bless America and God bless all of the veterans. Thank you," he said.

Results of housing assessment study presented

Maddy Oliver
Staff writer

The results of a citywide housing assessment study conducted in Martinsville by Summit Design and Engineering, were presented to Martinsville City Council on Nov. 15.

Mark McCaskill, Community Development Director, gave a brief overview of the study before taking questions.

"This report is the result of a planning grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development," McCaskill said. "These planning grants you can apply for them on a routine basis, at least once a year, and they are to get information together to help guide conversations with city council and with decision makers for future community block grants."

The city received \$20,000, \$17,000 of which went to Summit Design and Engineering for the study. The study is based on the findings of the consultants along with graduate

students and professors of Virginia Tech's Center for Housing Research. Every housing structure was evaluated from the right-of-way.

Much of the information amassed is required to apply for Community Block Grants.

"I found it interesting that this report identifies the Southside as an area that is in need, and as we identified in the spring and just yesterday, that is an area that has not had block grants and definitely could be a contender for the next one that we apply for," Mayor Kathy Lawson said.

McCaskill agreed that the Southside was identified as a good place to look for the next Community Block Grant.

Council member Danny Turner questioned why it seemed so many out of town investors were interested in Martinsville's property.

McCaskill said this study focused on housing conditions and not investing or finances.

The study will soon be available on the city's website for residents to view.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS														
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COUNTY OF HENRY REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing has been scheduled for **November 30, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following this public hearing, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the application to the Board of Supervisors.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the following application on **December 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia.

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

Case R-22-18 Eduardo G. Gerrero

The property is located at 1736 Dillons Fork Road, in the Blackberry District. The Tax Map number is 39.3/330,330X,330D. The request is to rezone approximately 2-acre from Suburban Residential District S-R to Commercial District B-1. The applicant wishes to establish an automobile sales lot on the property.

The application for this request may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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

Classified Advertising DELIVERS

Animal Shelters

from page 1

He also believes that money and the ratio of pets to adopters are issues leading to the overpopulation issues confronting shelters.

"We've got more dogs in our area than we have adopters. On a daily basis, we've got dogs coming in, but we don't have people coming in to adopt dogs. And that's a sign that people don't have time for them and it's not something on their priority list of having a companion animal, or they just don't have the money," he said.

Pet owners also find that keeping up with the maintenance of their pets is a challenge, combined with the consequences for failing to abide by related city ordinances.

"People get flustered with the care of their animal and being held accountable with the responsibilities of it," Clark said. As a result, "they just sign them over."

Both shelters have taken measures to try and cut down on the numbers of pets in the shelters.

"We did open a spay and neuter clinic in house to help promote some spay and neuter for our community" last year, Gupton said. "That's the number one goal to bring down population, is to spay and neuter and prevent more from coming into the shelters."

"We are offering discounted adoptions. We've run adoption specials almost every month this year to kind of remove barriers for people who are interested in adopting, but can't necessarily afford the full adoption fees," she said.

The reduced adoption fees have encouraged adoptions, and although spay and neuter efforts take longer to take effect, Gupton is hopeful the shel-

ters will start seeing results soon.

The city shelter has implemented more drastic methods to keep numbers down.

"We have recently had to go from completely a no kill shelter, they've had to send me to euthanasia training. We've had to begin euthanizing because we're unable to get dogs back into their home or we're unable to get dogs rehomed to new adopters," Clark said.

However, Clark has also been using other methods to try and get dogs adopted and relieve the overpopulation.

"I've tried to build relationships with other shelters in the area where we can work together. I've spent a lot of time on our social media, you know we have a Facebook page that I post our stray animals and the dogs that are available for adoption," he said.

There are always ways for the community to help, as well. Adoption is always the goal, but short term help, such as fostering, helps.

"Providing foster homes for the animals or adoptive homes if they're looking for a new friend instead of going out and buying a designer breed. Adopting one of the shelter animals is a huge way to help the overpopulation. And helping support spay and neuter endeavors. Helping to control feral cat colonies through spay and neuter, things like that are huge for the community to do," Gupton said.

Donations are always one of the biggest things community members can do to help. Money is always helpful, as it can be hard to come by for shelters, but it is not the only donation that is appreciated.

"Donations are always helpful for us. I know in the city, we work off a very,



very small budget that not only operates our shelter, but also works our animal control as well. Vet bills that happen because of cruelty cases come out the same budget that keeps the lights on at the shelter. If you want to donate some food, we're always open to take dog food or cat food, wet or dry, and we're always open for leash and collar donation as well," Clark said.

At the SPCA, many non-money donations are also appreciated.

"We are always in need of basic supplies like canned dog food, canned cat food, bleach, paper towels, blankets, regular bath towels, things like that. And we do have a full wish list on our website that can be accessed with more items: dawn dish detergent, high efficiency liquid laundry detergent, dish washer detergent, dog collars, dog leashes, dog harnesses, things like that," Gupton said.

But the biggest thing is for adopters to understand the responsibility they are taking on when they adopt a new pet.

"The biggest thing for the community, I think, is to remember that we still exist and to also remember, when you take on the responsibility of a companion animal, it's really nice, especially a puppy when you first get them. But you need to remember that it's also a commitment long term," Clark said.

Clark said that despite some of the measures implemented at the shelter, the wellbeing and happiness of each pet is always the goal.

"Even in this time of overpopulation for dogs, we're still doing everything we can to make sure these dogs live a good life. I've partnered with several organizations in our community where folks come by and they walk the dogs, I've even opened it up to community service hours for our court system. We really care about the wellbeing of the companion animals here in our community and we want to see them live good, long lives with their families," he said.

Officials with the Henry County Animal Shelter could not be reached for comment.

Thanksgiving meal returns to in-person event

The Harvest Youth Board announced the annual W. Dan Prince III Thanksgiving Eve Dinner will be held on Wednesday, November 23, from 1-4 p.m. at Martinsville High School. The dinner, forced to move to a drive-through format the last two years because of the pandemic, will again welcome individuals for a hot meal in-person this year.

The free, traditional Thanksgiving meal will be available for dine-in, carry-out and delivery. Martinsville and Henry County community members wishing to order a meal for delivery

should call (276) 730-9017 by Sunday, November 20. Individuals dining in or carrying out meals do not require reservations. The menu consists of a traditional Thanksgiving meal — turkey, green beans, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, bread and a cookie.

This year, families with children under 12 will receive a free book. After the success of their literacy-focused event, Books and Bunnies, held in the Spring, the Harvest Youth Board wanted to find a way to include the current board's focus on literacy with the annual Thanksgiving Eve meal.

The W. Dan Prince III Thanksgiving Eve Dinner has served more than 10,000 meals since 2016 with the help of hundreds of volunteers. The meal serves as a signature event for the Harvest Youth Board and "is a great way to get the community back together, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic," said Olivia Keller, Harvest Youth Board vice chairman.

"I'm extremely excited that we are once again holding the W. Dan Prince III Thanksgiving Eve Dinner, in person, just as it was before the pandemic. To be able to get back to serving the

community hot meals and to see so many people gather and celebrate the holidays is an honor," said Cristiano DiMaro, Harvest Youth Board special events chairman.

A successful dinner requires volunteers. Volunteer duties include cooking, serving and delivering meals. Delivery drivers must be 18 years and older. Individuals who want to volunteer can visit www.theharvestfoundation.org/thanksgiving-eve-dinner to register. Volunteer registration closes on November 16. However, volunteers, especially delivery drivers, can join in on the action on the day of the event.

To find out more about the Harvest Youth Board, visit theharvestfoundation.org/youthboard.



Photos of past W. Dan Prince III Thanksgiving Eve Dinners.

Martinsville Speedway to host 28th annual Christmas Toy Drive to benefit Grace Network of Martinsville & Henry County

As part of Martinsville Speedway's 75th anniversary, the track will hold the 28th Annual Christmas Toy Drive on Saturday, Dec. 3 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. The annual event will welcome the greater Martinsville region to donate an unwrapped toy or \$25 for the opportunity to drive laps around the iconic track in their personal vehicles. The Christmas Toy Drive will benefit the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County.

"As we enter the holiday season, we will rally the community to support the 28th Annual Christmas Toy Drive, so we can share the joy of Christmas with those in need," said Clay Campbell, Martinsville Speedway President. "We are grateful for our valued partners and fans across the region who will join us in supporting this event to impact families in our community through the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County."

Over 28 years, the annual Christmas Toy Drive has impacted over 20,000

area children through nearly \$300,000 in donations and over 50,000 toys to unwrap on Christmas morning in Martinsville and Henry County. The Christmas Toy Drive is one of the most popular events in the region with residents from Henry County and the surrounding counties in Virginia and North Carolina coming to support the community and take laps on the same historic half-mile short track as NASCAR's biggest stars. Last year's Christmas Toy Drive raised over \$17,000 and provided nearly 2,000 toys to local families.

On Saturday, Dec. 3, Martinsville Speedway staff will welcome the community to the track and receive donations from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. For laps around the track, drivers must sign waivers and be 18 years of age or older with a valid state-issued driver's license. All participants must adhere to Virginia state laws regarding the usage of seat belts and child safety restraints.

The donated toys and monetary

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TRACK LAPS FOR TOY DRIVE

AT THE SHORT TRACK

BENEFITTING: THE GRACE NETWORK OF MARTINSVILLE AND HENRY COUNTY

TIME: 6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

PRICE: \$25 PER CAR OR AN UNWRAPPED TOY

ENJOY AN EVENING AT THE TRACK WHILE SUPPORTING A GREAT ORGANIZATION.

donations will be distributed to area children through the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County, which is a faith-based, first-stop center for resources for families in crisis. The organization supports those in the community who need support to keep a roof over their heads, homes warm and lighted, and food on

the table with short-term assistance and long-term solutions. To learn more about the Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County, visit gracenetorkmhc.org.

For more information on the 28th Annual Christmas Toy Drive, visit www.martinsvillespeedway.com/events/tracklapsforcharity.

County's Parks & Rec receives two state-wide awards

The Henry County Parks and Recreation Department took home two awards from the 68th annual Virginia Recreation and Park Society (VRPS) Conference held in Virginia Beach, Nov. 5-8. Both awards were given in recognition of the work that went into launching the inaugural Henry County Fair, with the department securing the "Best New Special Event" for the fair and the "Most Creative Marketing Piece" for the fair's website.

"There was a lot of effort put in by our staff and volunteers to make the Henry County Fair a success and these awards are a testament to that hard work," said Roger Adams, director of the county department. "On behalf of our department, I'm extremely honored and thrilled to receive this recognition amongst our peers across the state."

The "Best New Special Event" award is given annually in recognition of the most

outstanding "special event" as defined as a competition, parade or festival that occurs one time per year for no more than seven contiguous days. The "Most Creative Marketing Piece" is given in recognition of the department and designer for excellence in promotional materials. Eligible materials include e-newsletters, websites, online advertisements, videos, coupons, magnets and apparel.

Only nominations from the period of January 1 – December 31, 2021 were considered for this year's awards.



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Localities among several to receive grants for security upgrades

The Virginia Department of Education recently announced \$12 million in state School Security Equipment Grants had been awarded. The grants are intended to protect students, faculty and visitors in 431 schools in 90 school divisions by funding or helping to fund voice and video internal communication systems, mass notification systems, security card access systems, visitor ID badging systems, surveillance cameras, two-way radios, security vestibules, interior school bus cameras, two-way radios for buses and other security enhancements.

Locally, Martinsville City Schools will use the \$200,000 grant to outfit all classroom doors in Martinsville High School and Martinsville Middle School with key card access points, thus eliminating the need for keys to enter classrooms and increasing the level of security in each building.

Employees will be able to access classrooms with their school-issued security badge. Key card access is currently used at entry points to each school building, according to a release from the city school division.

"This is yet another layer of school security that operates almost invisibly, keeping our students and staff safe without detracting or distracting from the learning environment," said T.J. Slaughter, Director of School Safety & Emergency Management. Slaughter

said he hopes to eventually implement key card classroom access division wide.

Henry County received \$250,000 for Bassett High, Fieldale-Collinsville Middle, Laurel Park Middle and Magna Vista High.

Patrick County was awarded \$181,984 for Blue Ridge Elementary, Hardin Reynolds Elementary, Meadows of Dan Elementary, Patrick Springs Elementary, Stuart Elementary and Woolwine Elementary.

"The systems and equipment purchased through these grants will help school divisions control access to school buildings, respond quickly to emergencies and maintain orderly learning environments for students," Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow said. "Every student and every teacher should feel safe in their classrooms, during school activities and when traveling to and from school. In many cases, the equipment purchased addresses vulnerabilities identified in annual school security audits."

The criteria for making the awards — developed by VDOE and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services — give priority to schools most in need of modern security equipment, schools with relatively high numbers of offenses, schools with equipment needs identified by a school security audit, and schools in divisions least able to afford security upgrades.

Intersection at Brown and Cleveland streets converted to Four-Way-Stop

The intersection of Brown and Cleveland Street will be converted to a Four-Way Stop on November 21.

The existing lights will be bagged for two months. Providing there are no

issues, the traffic lights will be removed. Flyers have been distributed to the immediate neighborhood. If you experience any issues, email Jeff Gauldin at jgauldin@ci.martinsville.va.us.

FSA County Committee Elections Open This Week

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) began mailing ballots this week for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county and urban county committee elections to all eligible agricultural producers and private landowners across the country. Elections are occurring in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for these committee members who make important decisions about how federal farm programs are administered locally.

Producers and landowners must return ballots to their local FSA county office or have their ballots be post-marked by Dec. 5 in order for those ballots to be counted.

Producers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program to be eligible to vote in the county committee election. A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation but may not have applied or received FSA pro-

gram benefits. Additionally, producers who are not of legal voting age but supervise and conduct farming operations for an entire farm are eligible to vote in these elections.

Each committee has from three to 11 elected members who serve three-year terms, and at least one seat representing an LAA is up for election each year. Ballots must be in the mail or delivered in person by close of business Dec. 5, 2022, to be counted. Newly elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2023.

Producers can find out if their LAA is up for election and if they are eligible to vote by contacting their local FSA county office. Eligible voters who do not receive a ballot in the mail can request one from their local FSA county office. Visit farmers.gov/service-locator to find your local USDA Service Center and fsa.usda.gov/elections for more information.