



Several Carver Road and John Spencer Court area residents attended the Henry County Board of Supervisor's meeting Tuesday to discuss the community impact of a business operation.

School budget, change in dog tags among items discussed Tuesday

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

The Henry County Board of Supervisors and the Henry County School Board held a brief joint meeting Tuesday to discuss the school division's potential budget request from the county.

Schools Superintendent Sandy Strayer said the locality provided over \$18 million to the division last year.

"This year, if we only receive the same amount that we received last year, which is above the required local effort, that \$18 million, then we would fall short of the priorities that we had in our budget," she said.

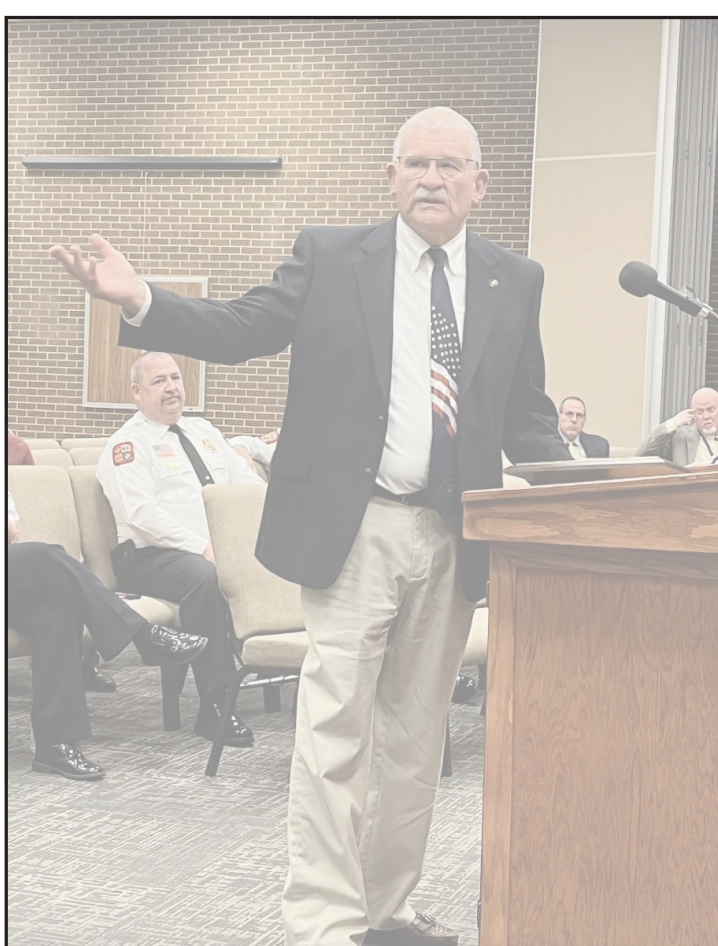
Strayer said \$19 million is needed, or an increase of \$700,000 over last year, to fund budget priorities that include pay raises for staff.

"We want to see our teachers have that one step and that five percent increase," Strayer said, and added, "our classified staff have the one step and a seven percent increase, our transportation staff have a 7.5 increase, and administrators to have a 5-percent increase."

Other priorities include fuel, updated buses, and maintenance due to rising utility costs.

Strayer said part of what the school

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Henry County Sheriff's Lt. Col. Steve Eanes addressed those attending the Henry County Board of Supervisors meeting Tuesday after he was presented with a resolution honoring his years of service. Eanes retired on February 28.

Apartments in former school now available to start renting

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

The inauguration of the Fieldale School Apartments was celebrated with a February 28 ribbon cutting that was attended by several county officials and others.

Debra Buchanan, of the Horsepasture District on the Henry County Board of Supervisors, said the 23-apartment complex in the former Fieldale School building will help address housing issues.

"JRS Realty Partners, LLC, are helping lead that effort," she said.

There are 17 one-bedroom apartments in the former school as well as four two-bedroom units, and two one-bedroom units with a loft.

Buchanan added that the Fieldale School Apartments project "is the first of four projects in a series of redevelopments called the Martinsville-Henry Historic Collective."

Future projects include

the former John Reed Smith School, the former BB&T building in Uptown Martinsville, and a loft complex on Fayette Street. The four projects will bring over 100 additional apartment spaces and several available commercial spaces to the community.

Buchanan said the projects will not only provide homes for workers but also pay homage to the historic buildings that helped shape the community.

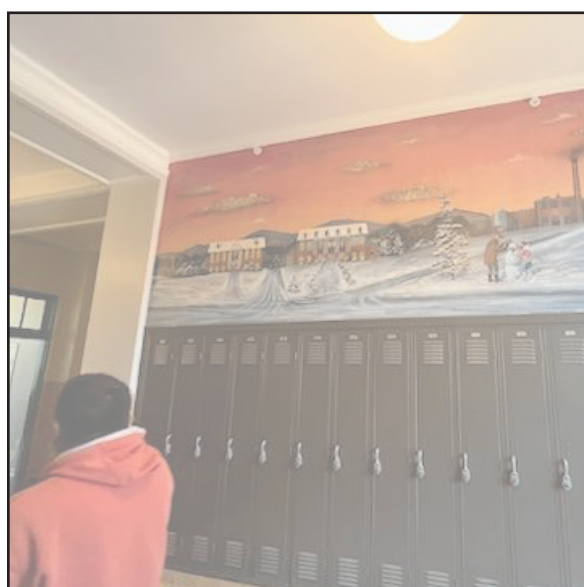
While the purposes of the buildings may change, Buchanan said she believes history is being preserved because schools have historically been the bedrock of communities where precious resources grow and thrive.

"The renovation on the Fieldale School will allow this legacy to continue, and as our workers start their families,

See **Apartments**, page 5



A ribbon cutting for the Fieldale School Apartments was held on Feb. 28. Pictured left to right, are John Garland; Debra Buchanan; Mark Heath, CEO and president of Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp.; and Jim Cherney.



Lockers and chalkboards in the former Fieldale School were preserved, and the murals were restored when the building was converted into apartments.

Martin recognized for service on council



Outgoing Martinsville City Council member Chad Martin discussed his seven year tenure during his final meeting Tuesday.

by Tara Lucas

Martinsville City Council recognized one of its own during a regular meeting Tuesday.

Chad Martin, now a former council member, was recognized for his seven years of service after resigning to accept a position in North Carolina.

Martin, whose final day was February 28, thanked his family, friends, City

Manager Leon Towarnicki, and several others for their support and mentorship during his tenure.

"This job does not pay. There has to be some level of care for the community to stand up here and do this," Martin said.

City Council members agreed to hold a preliminary hearing at the March 14 meeting for those inter-

See **Martin**, page 7

Fast Track making a big comeback

by Tara Lucas

Fast Track is a two-night, trade show that will be held March 7 and 8 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the Commonwealth Center on Franklin St., commonly known as the Clock Tower. The event will take place on the 3rd floor of the venue. The first night is considered a VIP night, and a ticket is required for admission. The second night of the event is open to the public; admission is \$2 or two non-perishable food items.

This will be the first show since 2020 due to previous Covid restrictions. The theme is "Open For Business."

Sharon Shepherd, deputy director of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce, said this year's show will feature about 120 exhibitors from the local community and surrounding areas.

"We have some local, some from Danville, some from Greensboro, and just over the border in North Carolina," Shepherd said of exhibitors. "It's more of a regional thing."

Many are repeat exhibitors from previous shows, along with some new participants.

Kimberly Keller-Bonacci, the chamber's Uptown Entrepreneurial Development Manager, said a wide variety of exhibitors will be set up from various industries,

such as healthcare and manufacturing.

"It's a good way for businesses to get exposure as well as a good way for them to network with other businesses there," Keller-Bonacci said.

The event is an opportunity for many local businesses, manufacturers, and non-profit organizations to showcase their products and services.

"It's a great opportunity for Martinsville and Henry County and our extended boundaries to show off what all is here," Shepherd said.

This year's event marks the 27th annual year for Fast Track in Martinsville. In the past, Fast Track has had between 3,500 and 5,000 visitors across the two days.

"This year we really don't know what to expect," Shepherd said. "We've had a couple of regular exhibitors not

See **Fast Track** page 2

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UPDATES



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Monday, March 20

P&HCC Local Board meeting will be held at 12:30 p.m. in the Hooker Exhibit Hall, Frith Economic Development Center.

Events

Friday March 10

Music Night returns to Spencer Penn Centre. Long-time favorite Travis Frye and Blue Mountain will play in Alumni Hall. Gate opens at 5 p.m. with the band going on at 6:15 p.m. Admission is a \$5 donation. Concessions will be sold.

Thursday, March 16

Riddick Dance, 6:30 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. A contemporary African American

dance company featuring a broad repertory, expressive movement and a fusion of dance styles. Riddick will perform three pieces: Limerick of Our Souls, a dance-theater assortment including love stories, poems, and speeches; ONE, a mixed media piece dealing with love, loss, forgiveness, and conflict resolution through the enlightening, meditative music of Alice Coltrane; and The King Project, improvisational dance theater laced in visual projections based on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speeches, "I Have a Dream" and "I've Been to the Mountain Top," and his "Letter from Birmingham Jail." A reception will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the performance starting at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase from www.piedmontarts.org.

Sunday March 19

Create your own barn quilt at Spencer-Penn, from noon to 4 pm. All supplies are provided. Cost varies, depending on size. Class will be filled on a first paid first served basis. Once payment is received, design choice should be sent to the instructor, Lauren, at misslaurenbyron@gmail.com. Questions may be e-mailed to Lauren at the above e-mail address or to Susan at spc.susan@yahoo.com.

Saturday, March 25

The Harvest Youth Board's Books & Bunnies, which features an Easter Egg Hunt, crafts, interactive activities, food trucks and books, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Smith River Sports Complex Amphitheater, 1000 Irisburg Road, Axton.

ONGOING

Begin your journey of health and wellness by joining the Blue Ridge Regional Library's new Walking Club. The club meets Wednesdays in March.

Henry County Parks & Recreation invites you out for a trek along the trail. Call the HCPR Senior Services office at (276) 634-4644 to find out where the week's trek is happening! Trail Trekkers meet Thursday of each week (weather permitting) at 1 p.m. in the fall and winter and 9:15 a.m. in spring and summer.

The Blue Ridge Regional Library offers free one-day passes to the Virginia Museum of Natural History and the Henry County YMCA with your library card. The

passes are good for one day and exclude special events. There is a wait period before you can check out the pass again. For more details and exclusions, visit brrl.lib.va.us.

The Fontaine Ruritan Club hosts Bingo every Tuesday at 1903 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville. Doors open at 5:30 and games begin at 7. Money from Bingo supports community service awards, scholarships, and other community efforts.

MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness (MHCCHW) offers Medicaid/FAMIS application assistance for those from birth to 64 years of age. No sign-up fees, no premiums, no deductibles. In-person application help is available on Wednesdays at Community Storehouse, 128 East Church Street LOWER LEVEL from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Call or text Ann Walker at (276) 732-0509 for more information.

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. Call (276) 647-9585

Library's new walking club promotes health, builds community

by Tara Lucas

The Martinsville Branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library recently started a walking club to promote fitness and community among library patrons.

According to the club facilitator and library circulation assistant Kayla Webb, the club will meet each Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the library.

"It's not going to be anything strenuous, we're just going to walk around uptown. Maybe a mile to and from," said Webb.

Club participants will meet in the library meeting room and start out with light stretches to warm up. In the event of rain or bad weather, exercise will be held in the meeting room. The indoor exercises will also be low impact.

"No Olympic training here," laughed Webb.

Library Program Coordinator Leandio Gravely noted that previous fitness programs that had been offered by the library ceased due to the emergence of Covid-19.

The walking club "is low impact and a great way for people to socialize with people in the community and meet new people," said Gravely. "Our cost is amazing. It's free."

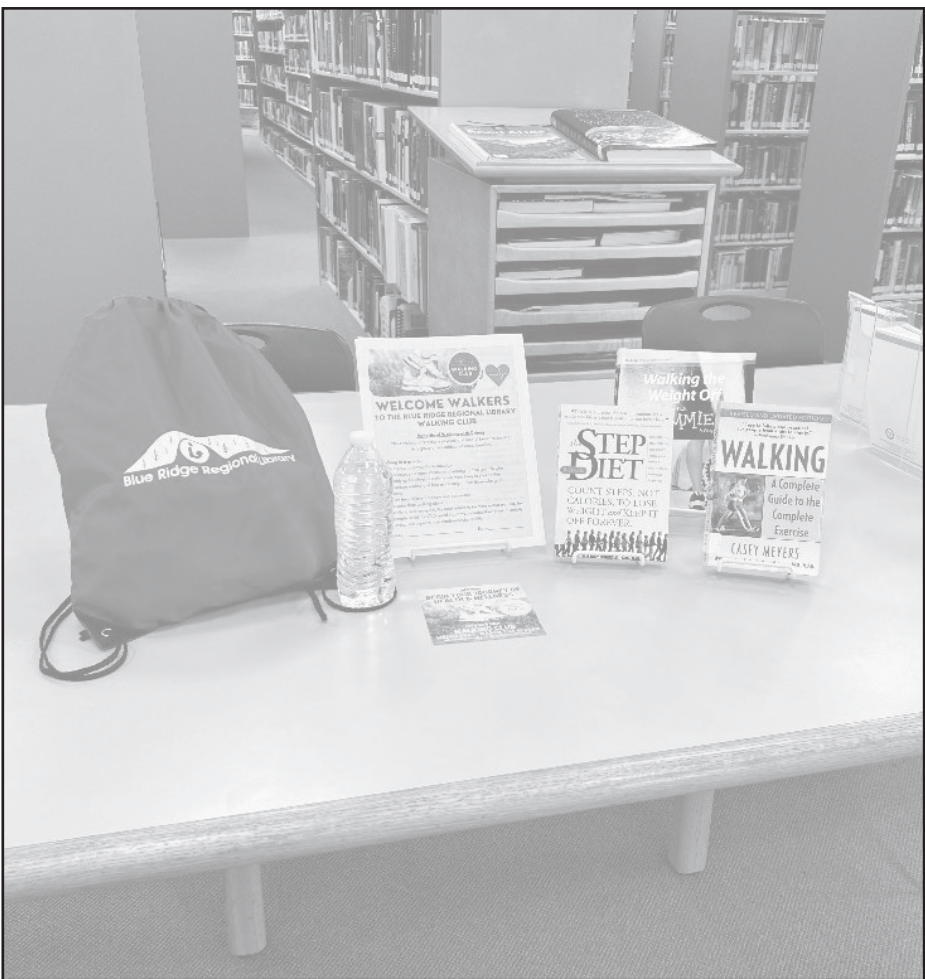
Gravely and Webb emphasized that the program is a way to get people excited about coming to the library again.

"We're moving out of the pandemic, it's not completely over, but we're trying to move forward," Gravely said, and added that many seniors that frequent the library have lost their spouses and they come in to meet people. Programs are a great way for patrons to connect with others.

The walking club is open for 12 participants and there are still some spaces available. Individuals that sign up will receive a welcome kit containing the following items:

- Walking club informational packet
- Blue Ridge Regional Library drawstring tote
- Walking log (to track personal progress)
- Blue Ridge Regional Library Ink pen
- Bottle of water

Interested individuals can visit the Martinsville library or call them at (276) 403-5430 to get additional information or to sign-up for the club. If anyone would like information on the health benefits of walking, the library has books available for checkout on the subject matter.



Some spaces are available in a walking club at the Martinsville Branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library. Participants receive a welcome kit in a Blue Ridge Regional Library drawstring tote that is filled with a walking log and other goodies.

Ridgeway student among those named to President's List

Shailey Holland-Penn, of Ridgeway, was among the more than 1,100 students named to the President's List at Coastal Carolina University for the Fall 2022 semester. Students who made the President's List have achieved a 4.0 grade

point average during the semester.

Coastal Carolina University is a dynamic, public comprehensive liberal arts institution located in Conway, located just minutes from the resort area of Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Bill Protecting Churches Passes Virginia Senate 35-5

A bill proposed by Del. Wren Williams, R – Stuart, to protect churches and other places of worship from being discriminately shut down passed the Democrat-controlled Virginia Senate 35-5. Williams introduced HB2171 in response to former Governor Northam shutting down churches and places of worship during the Covid-19 pandemic while leaving other businesses open.

"Freedom to gather and worship is a fundamental American right that is worth fighting for," said Williams. "Passing this bill is a spectacular win for the millions of church-going Christians and people of every faith all across Virginia. I am amazed and humbled at this victory for religious freedom."

HB2171, which already passed the House on February 7th, will now go to the Governor's desk.

Fast Track

from page 1

participate because they were concerned about Covid, the flu, and RSV." Some previous exhibitors were unable to participate due to staffing issues.

Attendance this year also is challenging to predict.

"It's hard to tell if we are going to have the same amount of attendees or more," said Keller-Bonacci.

Fast Track visitors will not be required to wear a mask, but they are encouraged to do what makes them feel safe.

Keller-Bonacci said hand sanitizing stations will be situated in various locations during the event.

In addition to support from exhibitors, the community, and the region, Fast Track wouldn't be possible without sponsors. This year's corporate sponsors are Ameristaff and Sarver Cleaning Services. The VIP sponsor is SleepSafe Beds. The Lester Group is the location sponsor. The wireless sponsor is MyNet, which is offered by the City of Martinsville.

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School

from page 1

division is asking for is to help with employee shortages.

“Sadly, all staff positions are short, and we have throughout the year usually 50 positions at any given day short of staff members,” she said.

Because of the shortages, the division parked school buses 42 times between August and February.

“As you know the people who live on the outskirts of our community have the hardest time getting to our schools and when we don’t provide our transportation that is definitely a problem for our learners. But when we don’t have drivers, we cannot have someone who is not a licensed driver drive our school buses,” she said.

The school division’s local funding request will be discussed again once the amount of state funding is finalized.

In other matters, supervisors:

*Approved a proposal to consider lifetime dog tags, as proposed by Henry County Treasurer Scott Grindstaff. The suggested fee would be set at \$20 per lifetime license.

Currently, the county sells a one-year and a three-year both sexed and unsexed license. “We still sell to kennels, this will not affect kennel tags,” he said.

The switch to lifetime tags would reduce the burden on residents to get a new license every year and reduce the workload in his staff, Grindstaff said, adding that dog owners would still be required to maintain a current rabies vaccination and provide proof to animal control officers when asked.

The required public hearing will be held during the 6 p.m. meeting on March 13.

*Heard from several Carver Road and John Spencer Court area residents about issues regarding the operations of one business.

Van Drewery said issues include the noise that emanates from the lumber yard virtually 24 hours a day.

“We think it’s excessive, it’s to the point that residents are having a difficult time sleeping. It happens almost 24 hours a day around the clock,” he said.

Drewery said the dust blowing from the property is almost unbearable, causes breathing problems, and makes it hard to see.

*Approved a resolution honoring Lt. Col. Steve Eanes for his years of service in Henry County.

*Approved the items of consent.

*Heard an update from Mark Heath, president, and CEO of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp.

*Approved several additional appropriations.

*Approved a resolution authorizing the Blue Ridge Airport Authority to administer and oversee a funding request to the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

*Heard an update about the Blue Ridge Airport construction.

*Approved a resolution approving of the county’s participation in the proposed settlement of opioid-related claims.

*Approved entering into a deed of affirmation between the county and the Lester Group concerning land located near the Henry County Administration Building.

*Reappointed Barry Helmstutler and Marshall Stowe to the Industrial Development Authority.

*Reappointed Scott Barker to the Dan River Alcohol Safety Action Board.

*Heard an update from VDOT Assistant Resident Engineer David Kiser.

*Heard a presentation from Blue Ridge Regional Library Program Coordinator Leandio Gravley.

*Approved a resolution to create the Claude A. Cobler Outstanding Volunteer EMS Officer of the Year Award.

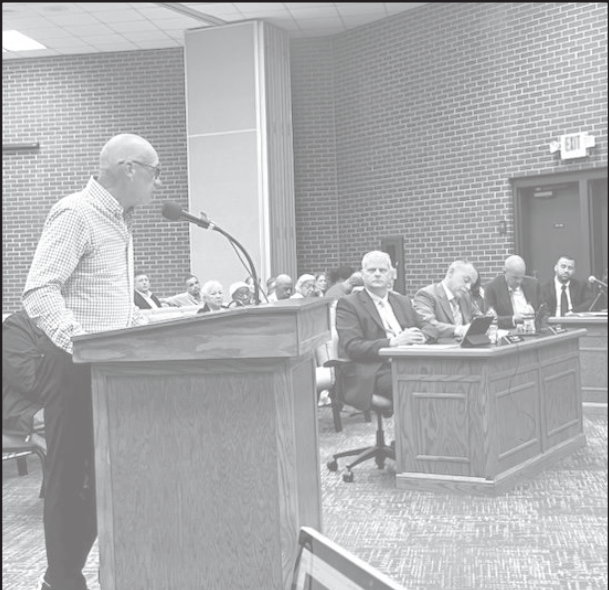
(For more photos, visit www.henrycountyenterprise.com)



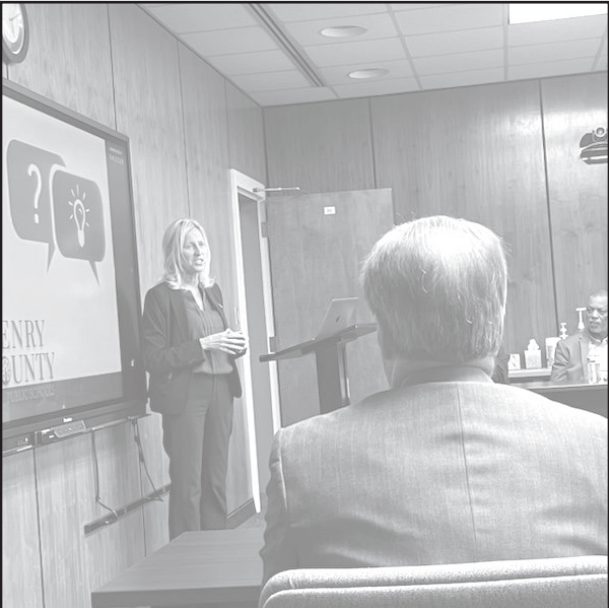
Members of the Henry County Board of Supervisors, Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry, and other law enforcement officers recognized Lt. Col. Steve Eanes’ 45 years of service to the community.



The Henry County Board of Supervisors and the Henry County School Board met jointly Tuesday.



Van Drewery was among several Carver Road and John Spencer Court area residents to discuss the community impact of a business operation.



Henry County Schools Superintendent Sandy Strayer (standing) presented the school division’s potential financial request to the boards.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Bay Area Transis Auth. (abbr.)
5. Pull apart by force
9. Ancient Egyptian King
12. Missing soldiers
13. Capital of Japan
14. Diamond month (abbr.)
15. Spheres
16. Surpassing good
17. British thermal unit
18. Philippine island & seaport
19. Legally argued
20. Belonging to singer Fitzgerald
22. Bowler hats
24. Has a strong odor
25. Doyens
26. London Gallery
27. Rural delivery
28. Rods
31. Stonhenge plain
33. Withdraw from membership
34. Execute or perform
35. Central or Yellowstone
36. Municipality in Norway
39. Bay of NW Rep. of Ireland
40. Skin designs
42. Son of Jephunneh
43. Baseball’s Ruth
44. Clare Booth __, Am. writer
46. Black tropical American cuckoo
47. Filled with fear or apprehension
49. 6th Jewish month
50. Wide metal vessel used in cooking

CLUES DOWN

1. Big man on campus
2. Made public by radio or television
3. Labelled
4. Inform positively
5. Drinks habitually
6. Supplemented with difficulty
7. SW Scottish river & port
8. American poet 1874-1963
9. Pads
10. Ingestion or intake
11. Tie up a bird before cooking
13. Bulrushes of the genus Scirpus
16. Turned rod on a spinning wheel
21. Having or covered with leaves
51. Make by pouring into a cast
52. Colombian city
53. Heat unit
54. Carpenter, red and army
55. Adam and Eve’s garden

CLUES DOWN

1. Big man on campus
2. Made public by radio or television
3. Labelled
4. Inform positively
5. Drinks habitually
6. Supplemented with difficulty
7. SW Scottish river & port
8. American poet 1874-1963
9. Pads
10. Ingestion or intake
11. Tie up a bird before cooking
13. Bulrushes of the genus Scirpus
16. Turned rod on a spinning wheel
21. Having or covered with leaves
23. The 44th U.S. President
28. Midway between S and SE
29. Tuberculosis (abbr.)
30. Inspected accounting procedures
31. A twilled woolen fabric
32. Potato state
33. The work of a sailor
35. Involving 2 dimensions
36. Fanatical or overzealous
37. Consolation
38. Wild sheep of northern Africa
39. Erect leafless flower-bearing stalk
40. Afrikaans
41. Weighing device
43. Very dry champagne
45. Emerald Isle
48. A resident of Benin

OPINION

Scott Adams, stable genius

I have strong feelings about Scott Adams, creator of the comic strip “Dilbert,” which in an ideal world would be a sentence that nobody has said since roughly 1998.

Adams made headlines just recently because multiple newspapers are dropping his comic strip after his recent racist rant went viral.

On a video Adams posted to Youtube, he talked about a Rasmussen poll that asked people if they agreed with the statement “It’s OK to be white.”

According to the poll, 26 percent of black respondents outright disagreed with the statement.

This shouldn’t be too surprising since “It’s OK to be white” began life on the internet cesspit 4chan as a response to “Black Lives Matter” and has since become a slogan adopted by white supremacists; I would assume that a substantial portion of the 26 percent of people who disagreed with the phrase took issue with its modern usage.

However, that wasn’t Adams’ takeaway. Adams’ takeaway was that black people constitute a hate group and should be avoided at all costs.

“I would say, based on the current way things are going, the best advice I would give to white people is to get the hell away from black people,” Adams said. “Wherever you have to go, just get away. Because there’s no fixing this.”

“I don’t think it makes any sense as a white citizen of America to try to help black citizens anymore,” Adams continued in a video that he recorded and posted on YouTube of his own volition. “It doesn’t make sense. There’s no longer a rational impulse. So I’m going to back off on being helpful to black America because it doesn’t seem like it pays off.”

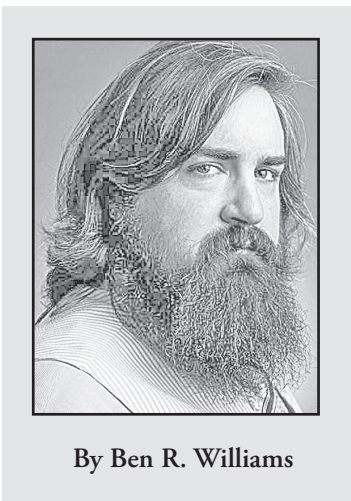
Now, if you’re not terribly familiar with Scott Adams, you’re probably thinking, “man, that’s some pretty full-throttle racism coming from anyone, much less the dude who writes Dilbert.”

However, for folks like me who have been following Adams a long time, it wasn’t much of a surprise.

For reasons I cannot fully explain, I really liked Dilbert when I was a kid in the 1990s. I liked comic strips in general; The Far Side, Calvin and Hobbes, and Bloom County were my favorites, but Dilbert was somewhere in the top ten. I thought it was a pretty funny strip, and I owned a few Dilbert collections.

Based on my love of Dilbert, I even read a few of Scott Adams’ other books, including “God’s Debris: A Thought Experiment,” which struck me at the time as a fascinating philosophy text but now reads like your friend’s burnout Libertarian older brother just came upstairs to rant at you for two hours after hotboxing the basement.

I used to subscribe to Scott Adams’ newsletter, and I also followed his blog. He was terminally online before a lot of people even considered owning a home computer, and if you emailed him, chances were good he would reply. I speak from experience.



By Ben R. Williams

Around the early to mid 2000s, I drifted away from Adams. He began to come across as the smartest guy in the room, boasting of his 180 IQ and MENSA membership and talking about how his training in hypnotism allowed him to manipulate people. He claimed that he had improved his health and made wonderful things happen in his life through “positive affirmation,” and he presented himself as the kind of guy who had all the answers to society’s ills if only all the dummies out there would listen.

At some point around 2016, I started following Adams again, but it was different this time; now I was the guy at the NASCAR race who only showed up to see the wrecks. Adams correctly predicted that Donald Trump would be elected President in 2016 — although he said that he supported Hillary Clinton publicly only because he knew he would be murdered if he didn’t, which is a pretty inflated sense of self-importance coming from the Dilbert guy. When he was proven right about Trump’s victory, he began a journey down a deep rabbit hole of right-wing extremism.

Since then, Adams has pushed debunked COVID

cures. He predicted that if Joe Biden were elected, Republicans would be hunted down and killed “within a year.” He also became an unbelievable misogynist and has dabbled in some light Holocaust denialism. If I listed out all the insane reactionary stuff Scott Adams has said in the last few years, this would be a five-part column.

For whatever reason, however, Adams’ racist rant on YouTube was the straw that broke the camel’s back, and now dozens upon dozens of newspapers have finally dropped Dilbert.

I’m darkly fascinated by Adams in the same way I’m fascinated by all famous people who make a pile of money based on a fairly minor talent and then go out of their way to self-destruct.

What’s different with Adams is that I think I understand what happened to him. It’s the exact same thing that’s happened to people all over this country.

I don’t get my news from social media; I use my social media as a hub for my interests. In turn, social media algorithms provide me with more of the stuff that they know I’m interested in. If you were to look at my Facebook feed, you would assume that the three most important topics in human history are pinball and arcade repair, 1970s heavy metal, and Simpsons memes. That’s it, nothing else is worth noting.

If you’re using social media for your hobbies, these algorithms are fairly useful. If you’re using social media as a news source, it will only give you news that’s like the other news you’ve read.

How many people do you know who talk about how all major cities are simultaneously on fire and engaged in an active race war? Or

how everyone knows the 2020 election was rigged? Or how everyone knows that COVID is a hoax?

These are people who have unknowingly crafted their own echo chambers, places where their fears and anxieties are amplified and fed right back to them. Their entire worldview becomes skewed to the extreme like a funhouse mirror.

When Scott Adams correctly predicted Trump’s 2016 victory, he had a brief experience with a different kind of fame. He started getting interviewed by folks who shared his extreme beliefs, and he almost seemed to be mulling a transition from newspaper cartoonist to political pundit.

Adams was on the edge already, but his journey into the world of political extremism only seemed to amplify and distort the ideas he’d only flirted with earlier in his career. It couldn’t have been hard for the constantly-online Adams to craft his own echo chamber, one that served to reaffirm the most hateful and racist ideas that his “genius” level intellect could conjure.

From there, it’s a pretty brief journey to recording a video where you tell white America that it should avoid black America at all costs while being oblivious to the fact that spouting racist madness is a solid way to destroy your career.

Just a few days after Adams posted his video and his world imploded, he posted a follow-up video, seeming shocked that his legacy had been ruined by “cancel culture,” the modern term for what we used to call “the consequences of your own actions.”

So long and good riddance, Scott Adams. You either die a Dilbert, or you live long enough to become the Pointy-Haired Boss.

Richmond Report

Bill Stanley
State Sen.

The last two weeks of the 2023 General Assembly saw a flurry of work as the remaining bills were both debated, and ultimately decided. As a result, the time we spend on the floor of the Virginia Senate chamber increases significantly as we rush towards “Sine Die,” where the House and Senate adjourn for the year unless called back

to the Capitol for other matters. Literally, “Sine Die” is Latin for “without day,” which means that we have adjourned.... indefinitely. But alas, and yet for another straight year, both the House and the Senate have failed to reach an agreement on the Commonwealth’s 2023 budget before the conclusion of the session on Saturday – so once again, the work of Virginia remains uncompleted.

These last two weeks of session have consisted of final bill consideration by each chamber of the other chamber’s bills. Before a bill can be sent to Governor Youngkin for his consideration, it must be approved by majorities in the House and in the Senate. Crucially, both chambers must approve identical versions of the bill. And here, identical means identical. Every word, letter, and punctuation mark must be the same when a bill passes the House as it was when it passed the Senate – and vice-versa. This can make for what looks like a redundant process, but it is still absolutely necessary.

In many instances, a bill approved by both chambers will have different language and provisions. When this happens, the differences between the two versions of the same bill must be rectified. A committee of conference, usually consisting of three delegates and three senators, is appointed to iron out the differences. During

the final days of a General Assembly session, most of the work is done by legislators appointed to these committees.

I made points to the full Senate in support of House Bill 1752, a House companion bill identical to Senate Bill 1029. The new legislation will open up broadband service by making it cheaper and quicker to bring fiber optics broadband across railroad tracks to affected areas particularly in Southside and Southwest Virginia. Both bills passed both Chambers and on their way to the Governor for his signature.

If the legislators assigned to resolve differences on a particular bill reach an agreement, the bill goes back to both chambers for a final vote. Frequently, the legislator describing the result of the agreement announces to their chamber that there is “peace in the valley.” Because scores of bills have differences that must be resolved by conference committees, you hear this cliché a lot during the

final days of every General Assembly session.

In these final days, several of my bills won approval (and luckily were not referred to a committee of conference), and are now headed to Governor Youngkin for his signature. Out of the 13 that I filed, 9 bills crossed over to the House, and 8 survived for final approval by the Governor. I am confident that he will sign each piece of legislation. The following bills of mine that await final approval are:

A bill to add an additional General District Court Judge for the 22nd Judicial Circuit for Pittsylvania County;

A bill to permit broadband fiber cable to cross railroad tracks unimpeded by Norfolk Southern or CSX so the “last mile” of fiber optic cable can be laid in Southside and Southwest Virginia;

A bill that will create a gateway for our region to promote our green open spaces for residential land development (rather than solar projects);

A bill that will stop the theft of Catalytic converters by eliminating the market place for them to be sold here in Virginia;

A bill that empowers the Virginia Employment Commission to go after the fraudsters that ripped off our unemployment fund to the tune of 1 Billion dollars during the Covid pandemic;

A bill to create standards for our public school systems to modernize their schools in order to deliver all children an equal and 21st century education, regardless of their zip code; and

A bill that stops children under the age of 18 from accessing pornography websites in Virginia.

While we adjourned, the Senate of Virginia’s work for this year is not complete. We still have a budget problem to solve, and we of course have to come back to the Capitol on April 12 to consider Governor Youngkin’s amendments to the legislation we passed this session. And so it continues....

Youngkin to consider electric rate relief bills

Gov. Glenn Youngkin soon will consider two bills -- HB1604 and HB1777 – aimed at providing relief for rising electric rates throughout Southwest and Southside Virginia.

Both bills passed the General Assembly this week, according to a release from Del. Wren Williams’ office. Williams, R-Stuart, supported both proposals.

HB1604 reforms how the State Corporation Commission regulates electricity rates and sets the profit limits that power companies are allowed to earn on electricity rates.

HB1777 shortens the Commission’s tri-annual evaluation schedule so rates are re-evaluated every year.

“Electricity rates have sky-rocketed and Southwest Virginians are struggling to afford their electric bills. I’ve heard from literally thousands of Virginians about how they’re suffering, from single moms and struggling families to retirees on a fixed income,” Williams said.

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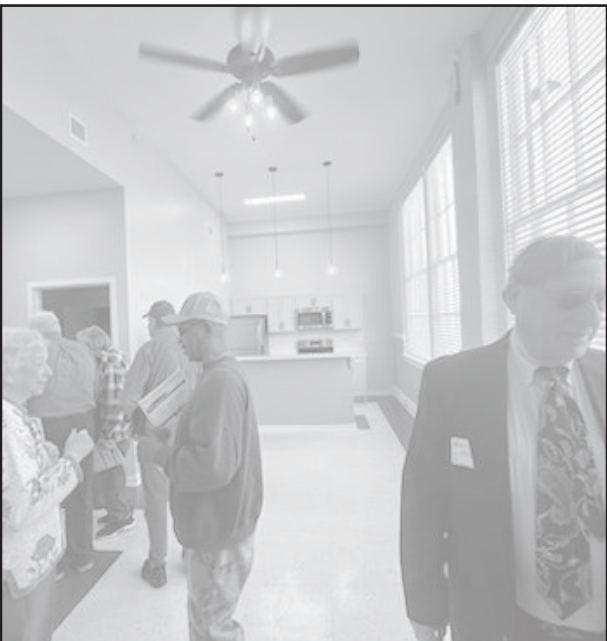


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Apartmentsh1

from page 1



Fieldale School Apartments include 17 one-bedrooms, four two-bedrooms, and two one-bedrooms with loft.

these halls and former classrooms will again allow children to grow and thrive,” she said.

JRS Realty Partners, LLC, partner Jim Cherney said the company got involved in the project because it was a win-win-win situation that allows the company to support the economics and opportunities of municipalities and work towards historic preservation.

An added attraction for Cherney was “creating first-rate homes that are unique and that are convenient to other resources, and most passionately affordable for the people who serve this community.”

JRS partner John Garland said the project allowed the company to breathe new life and purpose into a building that served the community for many years before falling into disrepair.

“Our first challenge was to get everything out of the building. There were \$32,000 worth of dumpsters left here just to bring everything out of the school,” he said. “Then, when we got all the stuff out, we got to spend \$42,000 removing asbestos.”

The restoration effort also faced supply chain challenges in getting materials for heat pumps and power and dealing with termite damage, rot and water damage, window restoration, and other issues.

“So, \$3 million later we got” the building “ready to rent apartments, and we’re really excited about that,” he said.

Garland said rent is from \$895 to \$1,150 per month, depending on the unit and features.

“They’re negotiable because they’re different sizes. Probably the best ones are the ones off of the auditorium behind the stage because they’re loft apartments,” he said.

Chalkboards and lockers were kept because of their historic value.

“The Department of Historic Resources (DHR) tells you that you have to. So, if you don’t want to, which we wanted to, you still have to because DHR will make you,” he said.

The company decided to restore the old murals for the same reason.

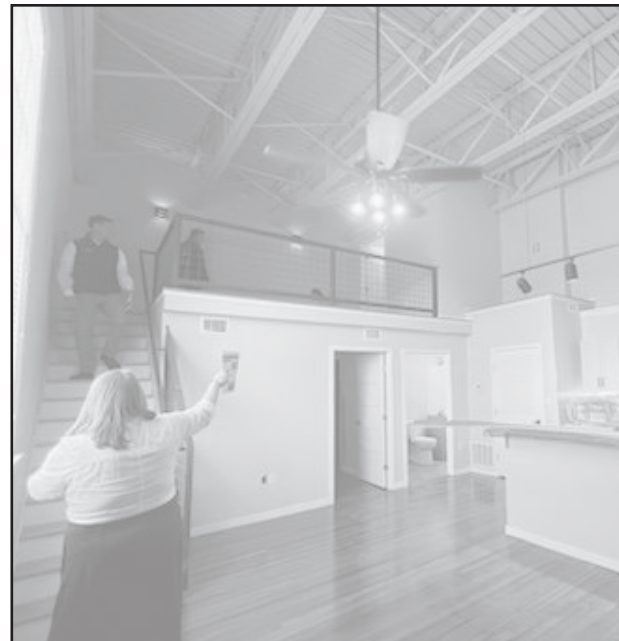
“They bring memories back to the people who used to go to school there, and I just thought they were nice. They were part of the historic fabric, and we try to keep all the historic fabric of the building,” he said.

Garland said he wanted to design the apartments so he would like to live there. “We feel like they’re pretty well appointed,” he said.

For rental information, call (540) 777-3711, or visit www.hometownholdings.com.

For more information on projects in the collective, visit www.historiccollective.com.

For more photos of the event, visit www.henrycountyenterprise.com.



Southern Gentlemen to return to Historical Center

The Historical Center will welcome The Southern Gentlemen Bluegrass Band back for another wonderful concert at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 28 March. This

event held in the Susan L. Adkins Memorial Meeting Room is free and open to the public.

The Southern Gentlemen Band was founded by Johnny


Johnson on May 12, 1999. These Gentlemen are a Traditional Bluegrass and Bluegrass Gospel Band committed to preserving TRUE AND REAL

BLUEGRASS MUSIC. They have been featured on Nationwide Television including PBS, RFDTV and Blue Highways TV as well as being featured on radio broadcasts and

worldwide on the internet. They are committed to giving their fans and audience 100% on their shows with over 140 years of combined professional showmanship. One of

the distinctive features of the Southern Gentlemen is their wealth of original material. It is not uncommon for the band to feature a new song at just about every show.





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Project in Henry County awarded recreation grant

Henry County was awarded \$641,750 from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the National Park Service for Phase 6 Development of the Dick & Willie Passage Trail.

The project was among six outdoor recreation projects totaling more than \$5 million through the Land and Water Conservation Fund program.

The federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Assistance Program, or LWCF, is a matching reimbursement program established to acquire and develop park areas. The parks are protected in perpetuity for the purpose of public outdoor recreation.

The projects for 2022, representing a variety of proposals throughout the state, were selected from 18 applications received during an open application process.

Other projects to receive awards are:

Callan Drive Recreation Park Development, Town of Marion, \$1,713,739;

Gordonsville Park Development, Town of Gordonsville, \$1,605,750;

Lakeview Park Development, Colonial Heights, \$251,675;

Moore's Creek Acquisition, City of Charlottesville, \$175,000;

Neabsco Regional Park Boardwalk Development, Prince William County, \$750,000.

Counties, cities, towns, park and recreation authorities, tribal governments and state agencies are eligible to compete for funding. Significant planning and environmental review must be completed in order for the National Park Service to authorize a project as part of the selection process.

More than 50 receive opioid overdose prevention training

Fifty-six people received opioid overdose prevention training at Ferrum College on February 22. Hosted by the College's Division of Nursing in partnership with the Virginia Department of Health and Piedmont Community Services, the REVIVE! education event trained participants on how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose emergency using naloxone.

Assistant Professor of Nursing Johnathan B. Phillips emphasized the significance of the opioid overdose prevention training reaching beyond the college campus so that Ferrum community could come together for a common goal.

"Faculty, staff, and stu-

dents of Ferrum College joined our non-campus neighbors to learn how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose emergency using naloxone. Our community needs to realize that opioid use, abuse, and overdose are real and occur in rural areas such as Ferrum and Franklin County," said Phillips, who added, "Overdoses are not always intentional or a result of addiction. The life saved could be from an accidental overdose by a grandmother or child."

Tracy Holley, director of First at Ferrum and First Year Experience programs said that she attended the training because overdoses are becoming an issue in the community. "I wanted to

obtain the training so that I can be more educated and potentially help others to see the dangers with opioids. I am proud of Ferrum College's Division of Nursing for providing education and training to bring awareness and equipping us with what we need to help combat this epidemic," said Holley.

This was the second REVIVE! training offered by the Ferrum College Division of Nursing this academic year and participants included 18 students, 31 employees, and seven community members. Combined with the 36 participants in the fall event, 92 individuals have received the opioid overdose prevention training at the College.

American Legion Post presents classes to students



American Legion Homer Dillard Post #78 offers Flag Courtesy Classes to local elementary schools as part of its Americanism efforts.

The purpose of the class is, "to build patriotism in our youth and to develop a thorough understanding of the proper flag display and courtesy."

In the last academic school year, the class was given to fifth-graders at Albert Harris, G. W. Carver, and Meadow View Elementary Schools. This school year, the class was given to fifth graders at Rich Acres, Axton, Stanleytown, Sanville, and Drewry Mason elementary schools. On Wednesday, February 22, the class was given to fifth graders at Patrick Henry Elementary School in Martinsville, thus completing all elementary schools in Martinsville and Henry County.

Each student attending the class was given a composition notebook donated by Commander Sonny Richardson, and his daughter Pam.

Pictured in the attached photo from left to right, (front row) are Jonathan Hodge, Maya Williams, DeMarion Clark, and Elaina Hairston. (Back row) Commander Richardson, Vance Hairston, David Penn, (Principal) Cameron Cooper and Curtis Millner, Sr.

Two MVHS seniors to play at Ferrum



Seated (left to right) are Lucy Jordan, sister; Teresa Carillo, mom; Alondra Vera; Gustavo Vera, father. Standing (left to right) are John Gibbs, activities coordinator; Gustavo Vera, brother; Pamela Martin, assistant coach; Duane Whittaker, principal.



Seated (left to right) are Bryan Ruiz, brother; Sandra Ruiz, mother; Jennifer Ruiz; Sandy Ruiz, sister. Standing (left to right) are John Gibbs, activities coordinator; Pamela Martin, assistant coach; Duane Whittaker, principal.

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

Martin

from page 1

sted in filling the vacancy.

An overview was given of Monday night’s Southside Community Meeting at Wesley Memorial Baptist Church. Residents voiced concerns about cars, utility trailers, abandoned homes, coyotes, and an out-of-service fire hydrant.

Vacant homes, abandoned cars, and trash were among the issues noted by council members during the tour.

Police Chief Rob Fincher said there has been a 21 percent reduction in crime in the southside area based on an analysis between January 2022 and January 2023.

“The leading crime we are having in the area is assaults,” said Fincher. He indicated that most of the assaults are domestic. He also encouraged southside residents to lock their car doors to prevent vehicle theft.

In addition to those prevention measures, Fincher said the city will be divided into four zones. An officer will be assigned to each zone to help monitor specific crime trends or service trends to determine where additional resources may be needed. Local police are also using additional efforts to monitor traffic and areas of potential criminal activity.

At that meeting, an Oakgrove Avenue resident who identified herself as ‘Jane,’ broached the issue of abandoned vehicles along her street. Mayor L.C. Jones said that the issue would be investigated. Another resident was concerned about the impression that the abandoned vehicles make on potential residents of the city.

A Park Street resident who identified herself as ‘Gail,’ addressed an issue with a fire hydrant that has been bagged up for an extended time frame. “It concerns me,” she said.

Coyotes are an issue on Park Street, according to Betty Cannady, who said that some pets in the neighborhood were harmed.

“Coyotes are classified as wildlife and they are a nuisance animal,” Fincher said, adding that there are different regulations to remove coyotes and the locality is working with the Department of Game and Inland



Chad Martin, now a former member of the Martinsville City Council, was recognized for his seven years of service during a final meeting Tuesday. Martin is pictured with council members and his infant son.

Fisheries for a solution. Fincher indicated that it is important for residents to be aware of potential food sources such as pet food which also attracts coyotes.

“The biggest concern is our pets because that is what they are going to target,” Fincher said, noting that it is rare for a coyote to attack a human.

Vice-Mayor Aaron Rawls addressed traffic as a concern in the city.

“Speeding is a big issue,” he said, adding that crosswalks are not properly recognized by motorists. There is a Transportation and Safety Committee, led by its chairman, Mike Sanguedolce, which hopes to resolve many traffic-related issues in the city and county as well. Sanguedolce was recently appointed to the committee.

Jones also noted officials are in the process of creating a Community Advisory Board which will deal with many of the specific issues addressed at the meeting.

At a meeting Tuesday, council member Tammy Pearson said the board will not be a replacement for

residents reaching out to council members. Rather, the board will study ideas and bring potential solutions to the council.

“I think that is going to help this city council to make better decisions based on true citizen input and feedback,” Pearson said.

The board will serve as a liaison between the citizens and the council. It will consist of 8-10 members. Additional information will be available on the city website in the near future.

Noting the formation of a Martinsville Youth Advisory Board, Pearson said, “we want to give our youth the opportunity to engage in government and make sure their voices are being heard.” The board’s membership will be Martinsville High School students. The hope is that they will bring their issues as well as potential solutions to the council.

In other matters Tuesday, the council:

- *Heard an update from the United Way about an eviction prevention program. Individuals who used the program were triaged based on need. Eighty-seven people requested help over the past year, and the program was able to serve 68, or about 78 percent of the total requests. A total of \$119,000 was requested by those approved, and \$92,000 was paid out, including \$87,000 for rental assistance and \$4,000 in utility assistance.
- So far this year, the United Way has had requests from 58 people seeking help and has been able to provide intake through the eviction prevention program for 33. Statistically, there are 60 eviction cases each month in the area.
- *City Resident James Dalton addressed several issues.
- “Most of the time you report on the same houses, same cars,” he said and added that he feels the city gets involved in many larger projects whereas smaller ones go unnoticed. “I’ve got confidence in the council that we are going to do something different,” Dalton said.
- Council member Kathy Lawson referred to Dalton as a great resource to the community.
- Jones said Dalton’s frustration is shared among the council members.
- “We have a plan to fix these issues,” Jones said.
- In addition to The Community Advisory Board, the council hopes to create a reporting system where residents can indicate issues and track the progress.
- *Council appointed three additional members to the Transportation and Safety Committee during Tuesday’s meeting. The committee will have its first meeting with the Martinsville Police Department at 10 a.m. on March 14.
- *A Community Meeting for the West End area will be held on March 27.



City resident James Dalton addressed the Martinsville City Council on Tuesday, highlighting several areas of concerns.



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COUNTY OF HENRY
REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings have been scheduled for **March 15, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following these public hearings, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on each application to the Board of Supervisors.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct public hearings on the following applications on **March 28, 2023 at 6:00 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 input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearings.

Case R-23-04 William W. Hitt
The property is located on the south side of Ward Rd, between the addresses of 178 and 400 Ward Rd, in the Iriswood District. The Tax Map is 43.2(61)A/1. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of 8.1-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant wishes to build a home on the property and use the land for agricultural purposes, including the keeping of animals.

Case R-23-06 Everything Outdoors, LLC / Travis Crouch
The property is located in the south west corner of the intersection of Virginia Ave and Camilla Dr, in the Reed Creek District. The Tax Map is 16.8/126A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 1-acre from Agricultural District A-1 to Commercial District B-1. The applicant wishes to potentially construct a billboard on the property. This particular use would also require the issuance of a Special Use Permit by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Case R-23-06 Everything Outdoors, LLC / Travis Crouch
The property is located in the north east corner of the intersection of Camilla Dr. and Thornwood Dr., in the Reed Creek District. The Tax Map is a portion of 16.8/124. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 5-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant wishes to construct a large storage shelter on the property. The application 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

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Fayette area focus of local movie

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

The New College Institute (NCI) held a viewing of the educational movie “Once Upon a Time: A Village on Fayette,” in partnership with the Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI) on Feb. 21.

FAHI Executive Director DeShanta Hairston said the movie underscored “why the Fayette area is so important to not only the black community in this area but to the entire community, and the impact that it made in the establishment of what Martinsville came to be and what it is today.”

The 28-minute video showed the importance of Dr. Dana Baldwin, the church, and education in growing the area into

a bustling focal point of the Black community. It also portrayed how the Civil Rights Movement in the area was tackled through oral histories and interviews of local figures.

The event description stated the film “provides a moving tribute to the people of Fayette and serves as a reminder of the importance of preserving our history and telling the stories of those who came before us.”

FAHI was established in 2004 by residents who wanted to preserve the history of the Fayette Street area.

Hairston said the organization is making efforts to move forward to expand the organization and its physical location to allow it to showcase the area’s history.

“The Martinsville

Black history is just so rich and extensive that the space that we have, there is literally something covering every wall that we have right now,” she said, adding that the displays are “briefly even touching on the history that’s in the Fayette area.”

In addition to teaching and preserving the history of the Fayette Street area, Hairston said FAHI wishes to promote Black history in the entire Martinsville-Henry County area. That also requires the organization to expand its physical space.

“We’ve purchased the three adjacent properties next to the building that we already are located in, and so we are making efforts to try to gain money to be able to get some projects done, she said.

In the last couple of months, FAHI held exhibits on the Divine Nine, the nine local African American fraternities and sororities in the area. A display about the history and legacy of African American Churches in the area was also held.

Hairston said FAHI plans to create a dis-

play on local African American athletes in the future.

“We need to show the youth of today what Martinsville once was so we can bring back a hope for the African American community and also educate other communities on what we have built for ourselves in our community,” she said.

FAHI is open Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the first and third Saturday of every month from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information, go to www.fahimu-suem.org, or Facebook. [com/fayetteAreaHistoricalInitiative](https://www.facebook.com/fayetteAreaHistoricalInitiative).



More than 50 local residents attended the viewing of “Once Upon a Time: A Village on Fayette.”



Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI) Executive Director DeShanta Hairston said the organization wishes to teach and preserve the history of the Fayette Street area and Black history in the entire Martinsville-Henry County area.

Hey, 80s kid. Get to know your colon health!



March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month—the perfect time to schedule your colonoscopy. A colonoscopy is a screening that helps identify cancers early, when the odds of successful treatment are highest. Schedule your appointment today if you have any of the following risk factors:

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Historical Society to sponsor “Power in Pearls” Tea



Celebrate Women’s History Month with the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society at its “Power in Pearls: An Afternoon Tea at One Starling” on Sunday, March 12, 3 to 5 p.m., at One Starling, 1 Starling Avenue.

Attendees will enjoy tea, sherry, mimosas, music, and traditional, English refreshments by British native and chef Janet Ashby. Tickets are \$25 per person and must be purchased in advance by calling 276-403-5361 or visiting the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum, 1 East Main Street, Martinsville, Virginia, Tuesday-Friday, 1-4 p.m. Attendance is limited to 50. All pro-

ceeds will benefit the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society.

The purpose of Women’s Health Month is to commemorate and encourage the study, observance, and celebration of the vital role of women in American history. Ruth Bader Ginsburg stated, “As women achieve power, the barriers will fall. As society sees what women can do, as women see what women can do, there will be more women out there doing things, and we’ll all be better off for it.” John Phillips, Historical Society President, said, “We encourage you to celebrate Women’s History Month to honor women who have devoted their lives to bettering our community

and beyond. Using Coco Chanel’s advice, ‘A woman needs ropes and ropes of pearls,’ the afternoon tea is the perfect occasion to acknowledge the female’s ability to balance influence and grace.”

Located at the corner of Starling Avenue and Church Street, One Starling is a foursquare house originally built in 1925 by Nicholas and May Schottland. Nicholas and his brother, Michael, founded Virginia Mirror Company. It is now a bed & breakfast and event space owned and operated by Historical Society Life Members Cindy and Steve Edgerton. For a virtual tour, visit <https://onestarlingnbevents.business.site/>.

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