

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, September 16, 2023

(USPS-6)

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Davis, Mills tackle issues at forum

Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis (left) and challenger Del Mills (right) tackled various issues at a September 7 Candidate Forum hosted by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Appalachian Power. (See inside for the full story.)

Indictments issued in 2016 death investigation

Debbie Hall
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In what is hailed as a “relentless pursuit of justice,” one man has been indicted in connection with the 2016 death of Everett Odell Bivins, Jr.

At a press conference held Tuesday, September 12, Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis and Commonwealth’s Attorney Andrew Nester announced that Kenneth Edward Gearheart was indicted by grand jurors in Henry County on one count each aggravated murder of a witness, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony and possession of a firearm by a violent felon in connection with the incident.

An indictment is not an indication of guilt, but rather a grand jury’s finding that enough evidence exists to warrant a trial.

Davis said that on August 8, 2016, the Martinsville-



See Indictments, page 11 Kenneth Edward Gearheart

Reed Creek candidates square off at forum

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

The two candidates vying for the Reed Creek District seat on the Henry County Board of Supervisors offered their views on several topics at a Candidate Forum hosted by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Appalachian Power on September 7.

Pam Cobler and Gordon Metz discussed their views on everything from solar to economic development, education,

See Reed Creek, page 11



Gordon Metz (left) and Pam Cobler (right), candidates for the Henry County Board of Supervisors Reed Creek District seat, answered questions at a recent Candidate Forum.

Festival Latino set for Sept. 23

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

The 4th annual Festival Latino of Southern Virginia is set for Saturday, September 23. Held by the Southern Virginia Latino Association (SOVALA), the event

will be from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Smith River Sports Complex Festival Grounds.

In addition to celebrating Latino culture in the middle of Latino Heritage Month, SOVALA member Sharon Ortiz-Garcia said the festival will also

serve as an opportunity for community members to get to know the different vendors that will be set up.

“The different organizations that are going to participate with

See Festival, page 11

Covington leaves a legacy of wisdom and knowledge

Debbie Hall
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Retired Henry County Circuit Court Judge Kenneth M. Covington, 94, died on Monday, September 11, but his wisdom, fairness, and knowledge of the law will be remembered for decades.

Covington was “the best I’ve ever seen,” said retired Circuit Court Judge David Williams, who practiced before him as both a private and commonwealth’s attorney.

“I was blessed, I truly was” to practice before Covington for many years, Williams said. “Practicing in front of Judge Covington was like taking a post-law school graduate course in litigation.”

Covington served Henry County as Commonwealth’s Attorney for 12 years and then as judge of the Martinsville Municipal Court and Henry County Court, which later became a district court.



He retired as a Judge of the 21st Circuit Court of Virginia.

Not only was Covington knowledgeable about the law, but he was also “the best judge of people I’ve ever seen. He knew when to give them a break and he knew when to put the hammer down,” Williams said. “He had this unique ability. He was tremendously kind to people, and he understood people ... their ups and downs, their downs and outs.”

See Covington, page 11



State legislators recently honored Teddy Martin II for his service. Martin currently serves as chairman of the Henry County School Board.

Martin’s efforts commended by state

Debbie Hall
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Teddy D. Martin II, chairman of the Henry County School Board and past president of the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA), was recently honored for his service by state legislators.

House Joint Resolution No. 783 noted that Martin was named president of the VSBA during the organization’s annual conference in 2021. Before that, Martin served as chairman of the VSBA’s Blue Ridge Region and president-elect, “providing valued leadership that helped the organization fulfill its mission of promoting excellence in public education through leadership, advocacy, and services.”

Martin was the VSBA’s representative on the COVID-19 Education Response and Recovery Work Group, where he helped to guide Virginia “through an unprecedented public health crisis that

had an outsized impact on students in public schools.”

The resolution noted that beyond Martin’s work with the VSBA and Henry County School Board, he serves as the human resources director of the GENEDGE Alliance, Virginia’s “only manufacturing and economic development organization partnered with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership in Martinsville.”

See Martin, page 11

4th Festival Latino of Southern Virginia
Saturday, September 23
11:00 am - 5:00 pm
Smith River Sports Complex Festival Grounds

SOVALA Latino Association
2023 Festival Latino Planning Committee

The 4th annual Festival Latino of Southern Virginia is set for Saturday, September 23 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Smith River Sports Complex Festival Grounds.

VISIT
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FOR MORE UPDATES



Red Cross facing a national blood shortage



Donors needed now as hospital demand outpaces blood donations

The American Red Cross is experiencing a national blood shortage. Fewer donors than needed gave this summer, drawing down the national blood supply and reducing distributions of some of the most needed blood types to hospitals. Hurricane Idalia further strained the blood supply with blood drive cancellations and reduced blood and platelet donations in affected areas.

Donors of all blood types are urgently needed, and there is an emergency need for platelet donors and type O blood donors to make an appointment to give now to ensure patients across the country continue to receive critical medical care.

When Idalia slammed into the Southeast — leading to widespread power outages, travel hazards and flooding — the storm also

forced the cancellation of over a dozen blood drives and caused hundreds of blood and platelet donations to go uncollected. This compounded a shortfall of about 30,000 donations in August. Right now, blood product distributions to hospitals are outpacing the number of blood donations coming in.

The Red Cross needs blood and platelet donors now. Schedule an appointment to give by downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.

org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Locally, the Martinsville Elks lodge is holding a Special Event Blood Drive on Friday, Sept. 15, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with another drive scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 21, from 1 to 6 p.m. The lodge is located at 300 Fairy St. Ext., Martinsville.

Stone Memorial Christian Church is hosting a blood drive on Friday, Sept. 29, 12 to 5 p.m. It is located at 3030 Virginia Ave., Collinsville.

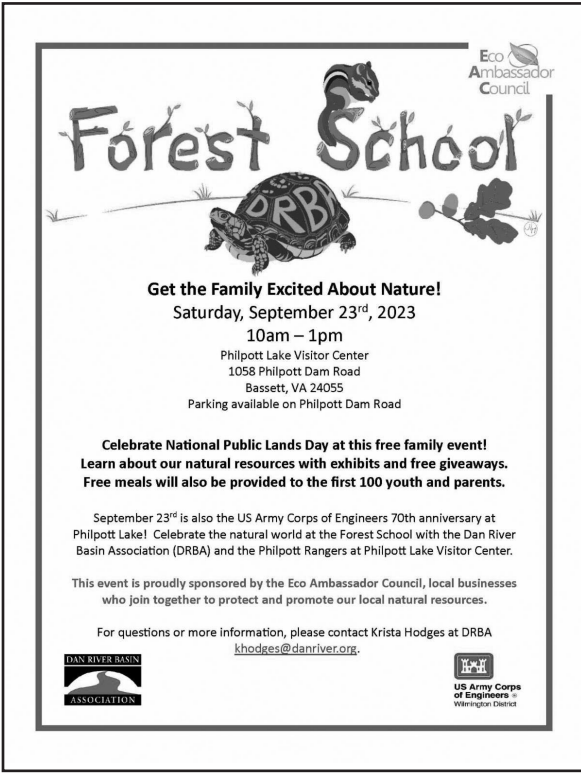
Forest School Event at Philpott Lake

Join the Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers at Philpott Lake for an event that is sure to get the family excited about nature. September 23 is going to be an exciting day at Philpott Lake as we celebrate the US Army Corps of Engineers 70th anniversary at Philpott Lake, along with National Public Lands Day. To commemorate the day, DRBA has partnered with the rangers at Philpott to present a family-friendly event, Forest School.

Forest School will be held on Saturday, September 23, from 10 a.m. — 1 p.m. at the Philpott Lake Visitor Center, 1058 Philpott Dam Road, Bassett.

“We are looking forward to Forest School, and we are excited that it coincides with National Public Lands Day. We can’t think of a better way to celebrate National Public Lands Day, than coming out and learning all about public lands. We are also excited about having the public here to help Philpott Lake celebrate its 70th anniversary,” said Dillon Brown, Interpretive Park Ranger, Philpott Lake.

This is a free family event which will provide learning



BY THE DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION

opportunities about our natural resources. Educational exhibits and activities will be set up in the grassy area for youth to participate in, with giveaways. Free meals will be provided to the first 100 youth and their parents.

DRBA’s Education Outreach Manager, Krista Hodges, said, “This is going to be a family friendly event that will give children and parents a fun and safe opportunity to learn about nature while also spending time

together.”

This event is proudly sponsored by the Eco Ambassador Council, local businesses who join together to protect and promote our local natural resources.

DRBA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and promoting the Dan River watershed through recreation, education and stewardship. To learn more about the Dan River Basin Association, visit www.danriver.org.

Martinsville Middle School Students to present Most Influential Americans

Under the guidance of teacher Beverly Woody, members of the Martinsville Middle School Debate & Speech Team will present and defend their choices of the most influential American at 3 p.m. on Sunday, September 17 in the Historic Henry County Courthouse.

The program is part of the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society’s monthly Sunday Afternoon Lecture.

This past spring, sixth graders engaged in a history debate. Working in teams, the students researched different historical figures and presented arguments to support their choices. As teams of history students debated, sixth grade English classes in the audience listened carefully and made their own selections for the most influential figure from each debate. These cross-curricular projects are designed to synthesize a range of

essential skills the students have built over the school year, including research, public speaking, and critical thinking at a higher level.

Woody serves as regent of the Patrick Henry Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and on the Board of Directors of the Patrick County Historical Society & Museum and on the Board Development Committee of the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society. She was named Teacher of the Year 2023 by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

“History is so much more than just remembering facts and dates,” Woody said previously. “When we study our history, we build a connection between the past and the future.”

John Phillips, Historical Society President, said, “The school project was so creative and successful that the Historical

MHC
MARTINSVILLE-HENRY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

M Martinsville City Public Schools
Empowering Success One Learner At A Time

Sunday Afternoon Lecture

“Martinsville Middle School Students’ Most Influential Americans”

Presented and Defended by the Debate & Speech Team under the guidance of Beverly Woody

Sunday, September 17, 2023
3:00 P.M.

Historic Henry County Courthouse
1 East Main Street, Martinsville

Free Admission • Handicap Accessible
Heritage Center & Museum open after event

Society is excited to provide a platform for the students to share their efforts with the public. Join us in support of our youth. They just might change your mind of the most influential American.”

Admission to the Sunday Afternoon Lecture series is free, made possible by

corporate sponsors, Carter Bank & Trust and The Lester Group. The Historic Henry County Courthouse is fully handicapped accessible. The Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum will be open following the presentation.

Sheriff candidates field questions at forum



Sheriff Wayne Davis addressed those attending the forum, as challenger Del Mills waited for his turn at the podium.



A September 7 Candidate Forum attracted several voters. The event was hosted by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Appalachian Power.

Taylor Boyd
Staff writer

Contenders for the Henry County Sheriff’s post fielded questions at a September 7 Candidate Forum hosted by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce and Appalachian Power. The event was moderated by Phil Gardner, of Gardner, Barrow & Sharpe, P.C.

Interim Sheriff Wayne Davis and Del Mills provided a brief introduction, their training and experience, qualifications for office, and other information, and then responded to questions that had been disseminated to them a few hours before the forum.

Body cameras and dash cameras give you an opportunity to be essentially an eyewitness to how your deputies are performing in the scope of their duties. Body cams and dash cams give a judge or a jury the opportunity to be an eyewitness to events involved in the commission of crime and the arrests for crime. What is your position on equipping as many deputies as possible with such equipment? Aren’t there funds available for the equipment, training, and retention of such footage?

Mills said he is absolutely in favor of equipping every officer with body cameras and dash cameras.

“Body cameras provide accountability and transparency, and body cameras provide a visual and audio record of interactions between police and the public. They promote accountability by ensuring officers are held responsible for their actions and behaviors during encounters with the public,” he said.

Mills said footage captured by the cameras can be used as evidence in investigations, help solve disputes, and hold individuals accountable for their actions as they capture real-time documentation.

“Body cameras also supplement written reports, and provide an additional layer of detail and accuracy. Body camera footage can be used as a tool for training, and evaluating officers,” he said.

Mills said supervisors can review footage to identify if and where officers may need additional training. He noted the cameras also allow the Sheriff’s Office to access tactics, decision-making, and communication of the officers, which leads to improved performance and professionalism.

The presence of body cameras, Mills said, can

encourage officers and civilians to modify their behavior during interactions.

“Knowing that they’re being recorded encourages officers to adhere to policy and guidelines which promote professionalism and prevent misconduct. Similarly, individuals interacting with law enforcement may be less likely to engage in confrontational behavior while they know they’re being recorded,” he said.

In May at the Republican forum, Mills said he and others met with the Virginia Attorney General’s Office which encouraged departments to apply for funding to meet these needs and additional equipment.

Davis said the office currently uses both body and dash cameras, “an invaluable tool in the world of policing.”

At the sheriff’s office, body-worn cameras are issued to every patrol deputy, School Resource Officer (SRO), community policing deputy, street crimes deputy, and animal control officer. There are

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

The Martinsville-Henry County Lions Club regularly meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Pacific Bay Restaurant, 530 Commonwealth Blvd, Martinsville.

Monday, September 18

Martinsville City Council will hold a Strategic Planning Session at 3 p.m. in the Council Chambers located in the Municipal Building in Martinsville. The council will meet in closed session at 5 p.m.

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board Academic & Student Affairs Committee will meet at 11 a.m. in Room 124 in the Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the committee will not receive public comment.

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board Legislative Committee will meet at 11 in Room 133 in the Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the committee will not receive public comment.

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board will meet at 11:30 a.m. in the Hooker Exhibit Hall, Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the Board will not receive public comment.

Events

Friday, September 15

MHC is for Book Lovers Trivia and Dinner with Authors/Silent Auction, from 6-8 p.m. at the Spencer-Penn Centre, \$30 adults/\$20 children. Limited seating.

Saturday, September 16

Bassett Highway 57 Cruise In will sponsor a Classic Car Ride starting at Cross Point Church to Bassett. Registration starts at 1 p.m., with

participants to leave the Church at 2 p.m. Proceeds from the \$10 per vehicle fee will be divided between the Henry County Sheriff's Office, the Martinsville Sheriff's Office and the City of Martinsville Police Department for their benevolence funds. A pre-registration form is available at bassetthighway57cruisein.com.

B99.9 Back the Blue Night at the Bassett Hwy 57 Cruise-In The Bassett Highway 57 Cruise In, 3525 Fairystone Park Hwy; Bassett, (Bassett Furniture Corporate Headquarters), 3-7 p.m.

MHC is for Book Lovers Bookfest at the Spencer-Penn Centre, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Altrusa of Martinsville and Henry County, September meeting at 9 a.m., First United Methodist Church, Uptown Martinsville.

TheatreWorks Community Players Open Mic Poetry Night, 6-8 p.m. at the Blackbox Theatre, 44 Franklin St., Martinsville. Tickets are \$5 night of show. To sign up as a participant and for more details, visit www.twcp.net.

Friday, September 22

Savory September. Buon Appetito! The event begins at 6:30 p.m., and will include cuisine provided by local chefs, a 50/50 raffle, and live music. Tickets for admission are \$50 and available for purchase at PiedmontArts.org or at Piedmont Arts. Raffle tickets are \$20 each or \$100 for six. Available at Piedmont Arts.

Saturday, September 23

Festival Latino, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Smith River Sports Complex on Irisburg Road, Axton.

Watercolor Painting Workshop led by award-winning artist, Dr. Jim McIntosh, 9:30 to 1:30 at Imagination Lavender Farm, 3590 Green Hill Drive, Martinsville. Cost \$40 Limited Slots - (supplies included). Free light lunch. Call or text (276) 734-2828 to reserve your space.

An evening of Music with seasoned musicians Riggs Roberson & Griffin Haley, 5 to 8 p.m. at Imagination Lavender Farm, 3590 Green Hill Drive,

Martinsville. Bring a chair and cooler of your favorite beverage and enjoy an evening of great music. No admission (donations appreciated). Food is available from Brenda's Catering (ribs, BBQ and all the fixings).

The Library of Virginia On The Go will visit the Martinsville Main Library from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with activities that include exploration of genealogy resources, discussion of regional and family history, oral history recordings and special guest Fran Snead, director of the Bassett Historical Center.

Tuesday, September 26-Saturday, September 30

Create a Welcome Gnome Wreath at the library. Held at various branches on different days. Visit the closest branch to register. A \$5 supply fee is required at registration.

Friday, September 29-Saturday, September 30

Fieldale Recreation & Pools will have a fundraising YARD SALE from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the Recreation Center, 70 Marshall Way, Fieldale. Lots of bargains! Great Christmas gifts!

Saturdays through November 18

Martinsville Uptown Farmers' Market is open from 7 a.m. to noon, with the freshest fruits and veggies, homemade snacks, locally raised beef, and more. July 5-September 27, the market is open Wednesdays from 7 a.m. to noon.

ONGOING

The Bassett Ruritan Club hosts Rook Music & More on Fridays from 10 a.m. - noon. Play Rook, work puzzles, make a craft and listen to a mixture of bluegrass, country a& gospel music by different bands each week. If you want, you can bring a snack to share. This event is free to the public. Any donations received will go to the Bassett Ruritan Club to pay for electricity etc.

Tuesdays in September - A series of

four genealogy classes will be offered at the Bassett Historical Center on Tuesdays in September (5, 12, 19, 26), from 10 a.m. until noon. Classes are free and open to the public, but there will be a limit of 12 participants. Call (276) 629-9191 to register.

TheatreWorks to receive a percentage of all sales from "The Giving Tap" (special brew) at Mountain Valley Brewing this month. In addition, TheatreWorks is hosting Trivia on Monday nights (September 18 & 25) and Bingo on Thursday nights (September 14 & 28) at the brewery, beginning at 7 p.m. each evening at Mountain Valley Brewing, 4220 Mountain Valley Road, Axton.

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.

Book Bingo on the 4th Tuesday of the month at the Martinsville Branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library, 11 a.m. to noon. Call (276) 403-5430 to register.

Medicaid eligibility renewals have resumed. Martinsville-Henry County Coalition for Health and Wellness (MHCCHW) offers Medicaid/FAMIS application and renewal assistance for Virginia residents from birth to 64 years of age in-person: Wednesdays 10 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. at Community Storehouse, 128 E. Church St (lower level of the old Leggett Building) in Martinsville, or by phone, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MHCCHW's specially trained Medicaid/FAMIS Outreach Advocate is available to help. Call or text Ann Walker at (276) 732-0509 to learn more or for an appointment.

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.

Electronic Title

Transfer now offered for Qualified Vehicle Sales

As part of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV's) renewed efforts to provide superior service to Virginians, the agency is expanding its already extensive menu of online options on its newly designed website. Qualified vehicle buyers and sellers now have the ability to transfer vehicle ownership electronically. The electronic titling (e-titling) program gives an individual selling a vehicle to an individual buyer the ability to transfer the title through DMV's website.

The seller, buyer, and vehicle must meet certain requirements in order to take advantage of the e-titling program. Requirements for e-title transfer include:

*Buyer and seller must be Virginia residents with myDMV accounts

*Sale is one owner to one buyer

*No liens present on the title

*No holds on customers' accounts

*Sale for a passenger vehicle (car, sport utility vehicle, truck; no trailers, mopeds or all-terrain vehicles)

"The next time you buy a car from someone who isn't a dealer, you may be able to transfer ownership without having to go to a DMV office," said DMV Commissioner Gerald Lackey. "With the launch of our reimagined website, we continue to look for innovative ways that allow Virginians to take care of their DMV business anytime and anywhere."

For a complete list of e-titling requirements, visit dmv.virginia.gov/etitle.

Sports Schedule

Following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of Sept. 18-22:

9/18	2pm	Golf	Bassett at District Tournament (Caswell Pines Golf)
	2om	Golf	Magna Vista at District Tournament (Caswell Pines Golf)
9/19	6pm	Boys Soccer	Southwest Virginia Academy at Carlisle
	7pm	Volleyball	Bassett at Halifax County
	7pm	Volleyball	Magna Vista at George Washington
9/20	5pm	Cross Country	Bassett at Halifax County (Edmunds Park)
	5pm	Cross Country	Magna Vista at Halifax County (Edmunds Park)
	5pm	Cross Country	Martinsville at Halifax County (Edmunds Park)
9/21	2pm	Golf	Bassett at Christiansburg (Auburn Hills GC)
	2pm	Golf	Magna Vista at Christiansburg (Auburn Hills GC)
	4:30p	Boys Soccer	Virginia Episcopal School at Carlisle
	7pm	Volleyball	Bassett at Mecklenburg County
	7pm	Volleyball	Martinsville at Magna Vista
9/22	7pm	Football	Halifax County at Bassett
	7pm	Football	Tunstall at Magna Vista
	7pm	Football	Mecklenburg County at Martinsville

Library of Virginia's mobile programming vehicle heads to Martinsville Branch Library

The Library of Virginia will bring its state-of-the-art vehicle, LVA On the Go, to the Martinsville Branch Library, 310 East Church St., Martinsville, VA, on Saturday, Sept. 23 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Debuting as part of the Library's yearlong 200th anniversary celebration, LVA On the Go will bring some of the Library's vast resources, staff expertise and programming to every corner of the commonwealth. The statewide tour is designed to enhance awareness of the Library's collections and resources, strengthen ties to local organizations, capture stories and histories from community members and provide a memorable and fun experience.

"As we approach our third century, it's important that we offer additional ways for individuals of all ages who may not ever have the opportunity to visit us in Richmond to learn about our rich and diverse collections and programs and share their stories," said Librarian of Virginia Sandra Treadway. "Our

custom-built vehicle presents opportunities to connect to a wider audience across the state."

Attendees at the Martinsville Branch Library event can explore research resources, register for a Library card, discuss regional and family history, discover educational materials and enjoy children's activities. There will also be Library staff presentations and activities as follows:

- 10:30 a.m. - Genealogy 101
- 11:00 a.m. - LVA Newspaper Resources
- 11:30 a.m. - LVA Digital Resources
- 12:00 p.m. - Virginia Untold: The African American Narrative
- 12:30 p.m. - Bassett Historical Center

For more information, visit lva.virginia.gov/200.

LVA On the Go vehicle images are available here. <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/gvvgzctbwj7ebn9whv6z3/h?rlkey=jg8r5hb47uen2knh79gfuf4yz&dl=0>

Submit your community

news and photos to

newsreporter@theenterprise.net

Questions

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also body cameras available to criminal investigators, vice investigators, and civil process deputies if needed.

“We have a policy for that. Our agency policy is that deputies turn the camera on at every call for service, for every traffic stop, and even casual citizen encounters that become more than just casual, they are required to activate those cameras,” he said.

Davis said these policies are in place to ensure accountability and transparency. There are also in-car cameras inside every patrol vehicle for the same purpose.

“They are required to activate those at every traffic stop. In fact, anytime we activate the blue lights they automatically activate for accountability and transparency,” he said.

While the cameras are great tools for being able to go back and review what happened during calls, Davis noted there are pros and cons for the system.

The pros include the ability to review events with ease in detail.

“They can either dispel or confirm allegations against law enforcement. They are great tools for courtroom purposes so a judge and or jury can view this firsthand from the officer’s perspective. They provide actual footage of the events the deputies were subjected to,” he said.

Davis said one con is the cameras being mounted at chest height, not eye level, and not rotating like the deputy’s head.

“Another con is they capture detail in low light situations that the human eye cannot capture. So, when we review those, we have to keep it in mind. Another con is these cameras are expensive,” he said.

Davis said the department has 60 cameras at a cost of \$1,000 each. In-car (dash) cameras are \$5,000 each and are an annual recurring cost.

“There is grant funding that becomes available from time to time, there is equipment training and retention of the video, however, they have stipulations such as matching funding, which is typically not budgeted for, and they’re typically available only to agencies who don’t already have body camera policies in place,” he said.

The nation has been rocked and its citizens shocked by the slaughter of students and teachers in mass shootings. Please outline your plans to ensure that your department responds as quickly and efficiently as possible to an active shooter inside a school. Please outline what you will recommend the protocol be with respect to what school officials should do. Please outline the protocol of what your department is supposed to do. Please set forth specific training drills to ensure proper performance of your deputies. Should there be and will there be, if you are elected, live practice drills? Will you have a specifically designated person who is training and educated and an expert on such subjects? Should children be involved in live drills?

For the first time in the county’s history, Davis said an SRO is assigned to all county schools.

“Those school resource officers are the absolute first line of defense against any active shooter. They are all trained law enforcement officers, many of them have been trained in advanced tactics, some are even former SWAT team members, and all of them have received training in active shooter response,” he said.

Davis said every law enforcement officer is equipped with the tools and training needed to stop an active shooter, and every patrol division supervisor is equipped with a ballistic shield capable of stopping rifle fire and advanced breaching capabilities so they can get into any emergency situation.

“We have a 25-member SWAT team here at the Sheriff’s Office, I spent 21 years on that team, and as the commander, we spare no expense in training or equipping to make sure we are prepared for any active shooter,” he said.

Davis said the team has conducted live training inside Henry County schools for nearly two decades, though it has not been advertised.

“These are live practice drills with force-on-force training designed to simulate real gun battles. In 2013, I completed the Department of Homeland Security’s federal law enforcement Active Shooter Response Emergency Training to teach other officers,” he said, adding there are eight other federal certified instructors in the department.

While the department and the school division perform several lockdown drills annually, Davis does not support involving students in live drills because he doesn’t believe any child should be subject to any tactical type of drill where there are simulated casualties.

“This would introduce not only the Sheriff’s Office but the Henry County Public School System, to potential liability. This can be highly traumatic to the child, and in fact, modern best practices recommend law enforcement officers don’t even conduct an interview with the child to prevent the introduction of trauma, much less a live drill where there’s a simulated gun battle and or casualties. That is a terrible idea,” he said.

In 2023, Mills said there have been 198 school shooting incidents.

“A well-trained and coordinated response is crucial to dealing with an active shooter threat in our school system,” he said. “The school resource officer will be the first line of defense, will be your first officer to respond to an active shooter and he needs to respond in a timely manner.”

Mills said once the sheriff’s office is alerted of an active shooter, officers will respond to the school location as the school alerts through the 911 system in a direct line.

“Officers will secure the perimeter to prevent the shooter from escaping and protect potential victims from the outside immediate danger zone. Officers will also work to prevent unauthorized individuals from entering into the area,” he said.

Law enforcement will also gather information upon arrival about the shooter including his location, identity if known, and the number of potential victims. Mills said this information helps guide the tactical response and decision-making process.

“The primary goal of law enforcement is to neutralize the shooter and stop the threat. Officers will form specialized response teams such as SWAT. I’ve been a member of the SWAT team, and I’ve trained in the schools. It’s imperative that every officer has that same training and general information of the schools,” he said.

Mills said the goal is to engage the shooter and use appropriate force to eliminate the threat. Once the threat is neutralized, officers will secure the area and begin evacuating the students and staff from the school.

“The role that school officials play is critical in an active shooter situation. The school officials are responsible for implementing the emergency response plans and working closely with law enforcement to ensure a coordinated and effective response,” he said.

Whether a 400-person jail should or should not have been built is water over the dam. This fact is we have it and the Board of Supervisors, and the current Sheriff are obviously in favor of filling it up. This will require the Sheriff to be the ultimate person in charge of a facility housing 400 people who do not want to be housed there, 24 hours a day, seven days a week providing food, clothing, shelter, safety, and necessary medical treatment. We will take up to 70 federal prisoners and up to 100 prisoners from basically anybody in Virginia who wants to send a prisoner to us. Obviously, we will get sent the troublemakers and the worst of the worst and we don’t have the luxury of sending them back. Please address your view of the wisdom of filling the jail up with prisoners from wherever we can get them. Please address your view of the drain on the sheriff’s resources to properly manage such a full-house facility. Please address how you plan to staff the facility and ensure the safety of prisoners who are pulling time from our local courts.

Mills said the 400-bed, \$72 million modern facility was designed with rehabilitation in mind.

“As sheriff, my main concern is the safety and security of both the inmates and the staff. Currently, there are approximately 100 uniformed staff in the detention center. The vast majority of the staff has less than 18 months of service,” he said.

Mills said the Henry County Board of Supervisors was sold a faulty bill of goods when it was promised a million-dollar surplus in funds. Instead, \$210,000 was generated.

He believes this occurred because of planning issues.

“My plan is to safely bring inmates from neighboring jurisdictions, jurisdictions such as Franklin County,



Pittsylvania County, Martinsville City has already agreed and sending inmates to the Henry County Jail,” he said.

Regarding federal inmates, Mills said those inmates who have not been sentenced will have court dates in federal court in either Danville or Roanoke.

“This is going to be a burden because additional equipment is needed, and manpower. The single most dangerous time for an officer is in the transportation of inmates to and from court. Any transportation of an inmate is going to require two officers per inmate,” he said, adding this step ties up a lot of manpower.

To house 400 inmates, Mills said the center must be fully staffed, and therefore the department has to deal with issues of employee retention.

“We’ve got to work to make the detention center a safe place for people to work. You’ve got to increase morale. Morale increases retention,” he said.

Mills said since July, nearly 20 officers have either resigned or been terminated, and that this type of attrition cannot be sustained to safely run the center.

He also believes leadership must stand up to be accountable and be approachable to the center’s staff.

Mills said federal inmates and local inmates should be housed separately, not only for classification reasons but for restrictions the federal inmates may have based on federal policy.

“The majority of federal inmates across the nation are either sentenced for drug trafficking offenses or firearm violations. This will take a diligent effort for all staff to ensure field training is properly disseminated. Field training is so important to the officers,” he said.

Davis said the plan for the Adult Detention Center was presented to the Henry County Board of Supervisors in 2016.

“The five-step plan estimated that by 2023 our inmates here in Henry County would be between 400 and 467. This study is required by the Virginia Department of Corrections, and based on its estimated needs this community spent over \$70 million to build a state-of-the-art adult detention center,” he said.

Before it was completed, Davis said it was estimated Henry County could generate about \$1 million in revenue annually by housing inmates from other jurisdictions.

Davis said the problem now is if there’s a failure to generate this revenue, the department still must balance its budget through other means like cutting training, equipment, or other line items.

“Those estimates were done pre-COVID and didn’t take a lot of things into account. “We’ve seen that local inmate populations are down across the entire Commonwealth,” he said.

Davis said he reached out to Pittsylvania, Franklin, and Patrick counties, and the city of Martinsville about housing inmates. Pittsylvania and Franklin counties are currently under contract with other jails, and 20 inmates from Martinsville are currently being housed at the center.

When the center opened, the State Compensation Board provided funding to staff the facility for 400 inmates.

“That is a rate of one deputy per three inmates. This means this facility at full staff is already ready to house 400 inmates. We currently have an average daily population of only 250,” he said.

In August, Davis said he signed an intergovernmental agreement with the U.S. Marshall’s Service for the Western District of North Carolina.

In its initial phases, the Adult

Detention Center will house a maximum of 50 federal inmates at \$65 per day per diem, which generates \$1.1 million in annual revenue. When the facility is ready and properly staffed, it can be expanded to house 200 federal inmates for \$4.7 million in annual revenue.

“That income is needed, and also reduce the burden on Henry County, and thereby the taxpayers,” he said.

Davis said the federal inmates the center will house from the Marshall Service will be criminal offenders who are awaiting trial as pretrial detainees.

“Despite the rumors that have circulated in this community, they’re not known terrorists, ICE or immigration detainees, and none of these inmates will ever be released from the Henry County Adult Detention Center to walk the streets of Martinsville and Henry County,” he said. “They will be returned to Charlotte, North Carolina where they will be processed out or sent to federal prison to serve out their terms.”

The U.S. Marshall’s Service will be responsible for the transportation.

Davis also addressed some of the other rumors regarding the center.

“These are not the worst of the worst, as stated in the question. We do in fact reserve the right to send them back if they cause problems for our staff. This will not be a drain on our resources because we have a state-of-the-art facility that already has the staffing for 400 inmates, we’re only at 250,” he said.

Please take this final opportunity to address points of disagreement each of you may have with statements made by the other. This is not an invitation to be nitpicky and critical, simply an opportunity to point out where you disagree with the other candidate on matters of policy and why you think your approach would be better. Also, an invitation to address something that was not asked in previous questions.

Mills said his campaign motto is “service before politics,” and it’s rooted in the idea that public officials should put the needs of the people first.

“It encourages elected officials to act in the best interest of the citizens, make decisions based on the greater good, and work towards the betterment of the county as a whole,” he said.

Mills, who combined his campaign with former candidate Daryl Hatcher, said he is a conservative, family-oriented man with Christian values. He promises to work diligently to ensure the safety of Henry County’s residents and improve officer morale.

“Rest assured, your promotion and your ascension through the Henry County Sheriff’s Office will be based on your merit, and again, you’re going to be encouraged to reach your full potential and you’ll be aided and assisted by any means possible,” he said.

Davis said he is the only certified law enforcement officer seeking the position of sheriff.

“Not only that, but my entire team is also fully certified by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services,” he said. “These laws were written decades ago. It’s 2023, the sheriff must be up to date with the most modern, best practices. He supervises 239 employees that are required to be certified by the Department of Criminal Justice Services. How can we have a sheriff that’s not” certified, he asked.

Mills is not a certified law enforcement officer.

Nominations underway for Virginia's premier natural history, natural science, and conservation awards

Nominations are now open for the 35th annual Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation Thomas Jefferson Awards - Virginia's premier natural history, natural science, and conservation honors.

Established in 1987, the Thomas Jefferson Awards is a statewide initiative that has honored individuals, organizations and corporations for outstanding contributions to natural history, the natural sciences, and the conservation of Virginia for over 3 decades. Each award is named for Virginians, by birth or adoption, who have established traditions of excellence in the world of science and who have brought recognition and prestige to the Commonwealth. Awards open for nomination this year include:

The Thomas Jefferson Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Natural Science

This award is presented to an individual who has consistently made outstanding contributions to natural science in Virginia.

The Thomas Jefferson Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Natural Science Education

This award is presented to a Virginia educator who has made significant contributions to natural science education at any academic level.

The W. Bruce Wingo Conservation Award

This award is presented to an individual or organization in recognition of significant conservation efforts in Virginia.

Nominations must be submitted by November 10. Nomination forms, criteria, and a listing of previous award winners can be found on the Virginia Museum of Natural History website at www.vmnh.net/events/thomas-jefferson-awards.

Appalachian Power's proposed plan gains approval

The State Corporation Commission (SCC) approved the 2023 Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) development plan for Appalachian Power Company for new solar and onshore wind generation capacity. The company is required to submit an annual plan to the SCC to comply with the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA).

The SCC found that Appalachian Power's plan is reasonable and prudent giving due consideration to the statutory factors contained in the VCEA.

The Commission approved six new power purchase agreements ("PPAs") totaling 184 megawatts, one renegotiated PPA totaling 20 megawatts and acquisition of an out-of-state wind facility totaling up to 146.2 megawatts.

The Commission denied the company's request for cost recovery associated with a legacy wind contract, finding the economic analysis did not show positive value for customers.

The SCC also approved a revenue requirement of \$16,373,821 for the

recovery of VCEA-related resources for the rate year of October 2023 through September 2024.

In its final order, the Commission stated, "The Commission ... is guided in these matters by the statutes and the record. The Commission has continued to exercise its delegated discretion in a manner that faithfully implements the VCEA's carbon-reduction requirements, while best protecting consumers who expect and deserve reliable and affordable service."

Grant Opportunity for Folk & Traditional Arts Projects in Central Appalachia



Mid Atlantic Arts' Central Appalachia Living Traditions: Folk and Traditional Arts Experiences grants fund public-facing projects and events in Appalachian Regional Commission-designated counties of Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia that bring community members together around folk and traditional arts practice and cultural knowledge. Funded projects will encourage broad public awareness, understanding, and appreciation of living traditions and/or grow and disseminate artistic skill and cultural knowledge within the community. Because this program intends to diversify and expand the types of folk arts and cultural activities available in communities throughout the region, applications

must be for new projects or projects that expand and/or diversify existing programming.

Non-profit organizations and folk and traditional artists/practitioners in ARC-designated counties of Ohio, Virginia, and West Virginia are eligible to apply for grant amounts from \$1,000 to \$10,000. No match is required. The majority of project activities must take place within the designated counties.

Eligible project activities include but are not limited to hands-on learning experiences, workshops where traditional artistic practices are taught or demonstrated to the public or a group of peer practitioners, public art projects, exhibitions of folk and traditional art, a performance

project or series, film/video, podcast, or archival collection or fieldwork with a significant public-facing component.

Priority will be given to projects that engage multi-generational participants as well as projects occurring in communities identified as under-resourced or marginalized, including the most geographically remote counties in the region.

To apply, review our guidelines here and apply at midatlanticarts.smartsimple.com. Applications opened September 5.

The deadline for applications is October 20.

Contact Joel Chapman, Program Associate, Folk and Traditional Arts, at jchapman@midatlanticarts.org with questions or for additional information.

Plan to address COVID-19 learning loss, absenteeism unveiled

ALL IN VA, a comprehensive plan to support Virginia's students facing the continued detrimental impacts of COVID-19 learning loss, declining academic performance and absenteeism, was unveiled by Gov. Glenn Youngkin last week.

Virginia's Standard of Learning scores demonstrate that student achievement remains well below pre-pandemic levels. The Youngkin administration is taking further, aggressive action to ensure all Virginia students get the academic support they need to recover learning loss, boost their attendance and academic performance.

"The shuttering of our schools led to lasting learning loss for our children. Especially in grade 3 through 8, we must redouble our efforts," Youngkin said. "ALL IN VA focuses on the foundational elements of education, attendance, literacy and learning, and provides a playbook to school divisions to meet the needs of our students. The ALL IN VA plan fosters collaboration and partnership between school divisions, our Department of Education, community leaders and most importantly, students and their parents. I challenge all of us to work together with urgency to create a brighter future and deliver the education our students in the Commonwealth were robbed of for far too long."

The plan is a three-pronged approach to accelerate the learning loss recovery by addressing:

- Attendance, with the launch of a Chronic Absenteeism Task Force of educators, business members, transportation and health experts, community partners, and families who will quickly develop recommendations for school divisions to reduce chronic absenteeism, including barriers related to transportation and health.

Additionally, the state Department of Education (VDOE), will create a resource guide to support local school divisions in increasing school attendance in addition to the resources provided through the #AttendanceMattersVA initiative.

- Literacy, by Accelerate the Expansion of the Virginia Literacy Act (VLA) through Grade 8. Hire and Train Grade 4-8 Reading Specialists. School divisions will use additional funding to hire Grade 4 through 8 reading specialists, and the

Virginia Literacy Partnership will provide training to ensure middle grade reading teachers have instructional support.

Provide high-quality instructional materials. VDOE will ensure educators have the best tools and high-quality instructional materials from the approved VLA list.

Ongoing professional support. Include professional development and implementation support for those school divisions that use these high-quality instructional materials to deliver effective science of reading instruction and create statewide support networks to provide ongoing support to help school divisions accelerate ahead of 2024-2025 implementation.

- Learning by investing in an intensive statewide tutoring initiative to support educators and school divisions as students begin to accelerate their learning to pre-pandemic levels of academic achievement.

All In Tutoring Playbook. VDOE will provide proven models of high dosage academic tutoring that help facilitate school division's ability accelerate learning recovery.

High dosage tutoring. Students will receive 3 to 5 hours of tutoring per week. Students who are at risk (received a score of low proficient on their 2023 SOL) receive tutoring for 18 weeks, while students who are not proficient receive tutoring for up to 36 weeks.

Small-group ratios with trained tutors. Students will be tutored in groups with a 1:10 ratio led by current teachers, retired or part-time teachers, and/

or trained tutors.

Flexible tutoring time for maximum results. Tutoring can occur before or after school, during the school day, or during school breaks including summer depending on the needs in the school and the community.

Personalized sessions guided by standardized recommendations. Tutoring will entail personalized sessions that will be guided by digital tools used across all participating school divisions.

Content will be provided at no cost. Digital content, tutor resources, and progress monitoring tools will be provided to local school divisions in both math and literacy.

"Grade 3 through 8 Virginia students are still struggling to recover the learning loss from the pandemic and are not performing as well as their pre-pandemic peers," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Lisa Coons. "The 2022-2023 SOL data demonstrates just how important school attendance is for students' academic success. VDOE recommends school divisions allocate this \$418 million in learning loss resources to proven programs that will achieve the greatest student impact--approximately 70% for high-dose tutoring, 20% for Virginia Literacy Act implementation, and 10% for chronic absenteeism response."

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OPINION

Regarding celebrities defending their terrible friends

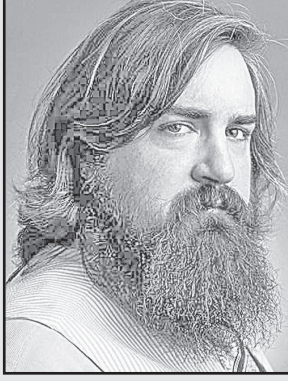
Dear Honorable Judge Albedo,

I'm writing to you today to tell you about my friend, Manny Patterson. I first met Manny when I was 20 years old in 1998, and he instantly became a friend and role model to me. He has been nothing but a positive influence on my life.

As a friend, Manny is an extraordinarily honest and intentional human being. In 25 years of friendship, I cannot recall him ever lying to me. He's a person who's always there for you when you need him. We have traveled together, raised our families together, and shared countless wonderful moments. He is not only a friend to me, but has demonstrated himself to be a good friend to others.

Now, I am aware that the judgment has been cast on Manny as guilty on 73 counts of first degree murder by strangulation, and I understand that the families and surviving victims have a great desire for justice. I simply ask that my testament to Manny's character be taken into consideration during sentencing. I do not believe he presents an ongoing danger to society, and to have his daughter grow up without a present father would be a tertiary injustice in and of itself.

I would first like to point out that I do not personally believe my friend Manny to be the Flatwoods Strangler, and the fact that the violent stranglings that have plagued the Flatwoods community for thirty years ceased as soon as he was



By Ben R. Williams

arrested is a case of correlation, not causation. However, even if my friend Manny WAS the Flatwoods Strangler, it seems to me that after violently strangling 73 people to death, he would surely have the "strangling bug" out of his system. In either case, Manny does not present an ongoing danger.

Furthermore, Manny has a large number of friends and acquaintances, VERY few of whom have ever been strangled to death. I sincerely doubt a supposed "Flatwoods Strangler"

would have that level of self-control. Frankly, I have been disappointed that this strangulation trial has spent so little time acknowledging all those who haven't been strangled.

As someone who knows Manny well, I simply have a hard time believing that he would be capable of such acts. I can't help but think back on all the kindnesses I've seen him perform. When we were younger men, for example, the cast of our show was invited to a black tie event and one coworker revealed to Manny that he did not know how to tie a bowtie. Manny spent three hours teaching him, tying that bowtie around his neck over and over again, until he was certain that he had it down. That, your honor, is the mark of a good friend.

Additionally, I find it hard to believe that Manny could have possibly had time to commit all these crimes considering that he's such a homebody. On the nights that many of these strangulations took place, I actually received phone calls from Manny in which he told me that, if anyone should ask,

he was at home watching TV. How could he have been in two places at once? Through the use of some sort of high-tech sci-fi machine? I'll remind your honor that those haven't been invented yet, to my knowledge.

Truly, Manny Patterson is one of the finest human beings that I have ever known. He's done so much incredible work for so many charities. He's won arm wrestling matches, cow milking competitions, pickle jar opening contests, you name it; if someone asks for support for their charity, Manny will never fail to raise one of his impossibly strong hands.

In closing, your honor, I hope you will show some leniency to my dear friend Manny. I simply cannot square the man I know with these lurid accusations. I have never personally witnessed this sort of behavior. The only behavior I have witnessed is kindness. I'll admit, your honor, that I have experienced a lot of cruelty from people over the course of my life, but Manny is a shining exception; he has never once mocked me for being born without a neck.

News from the 9th:

Biden Policies Make the U.S. Look Weak Abroad



Morgan Griffith Representative

All Americans have personally felt the negative consequences of the Biden Administration's domestic policy choices. Rampant inflation, spurred in large part by the multi-trillion-dollar

spending packages touted by the President, is now costing families an extra \$700 per month in spending.

And then there are the Biden Administration's energy policies, which have severely hampered domestic oil and gas production and made permitting new fossil fuel projects extremely difficult (including recently canceling Alaskan drilling leases). As a result, everyone continues to pay

more at the pump.

Everywhere we go, prices are up and in turn, life is more difficult.

Unfortunately, the Administration's flawed policies are not only seen here in the U.S. — they also extend to the world stage.

This past August marked the two-year anniversary of Biden's chaotic and deadly withdrawal from Afghanistan. Within hours of the withdrawal, Afghanistan's President

Ghani had fled, and control of the country ceded to the Taliban.

The Administration's poor planning led to troops abandoning Bagram Airfield in the middle of the night, leaving behind approximately \$7 billion worth of military equipment, including guns, ammunition, military vehicles, aircraft, etc.

In addition, our chaotic exit led to the death of 13 U.S. service members, after two ISIS-K suicide bombers, freed from prison by the Taliban, detonated bombs at the Kabul

International Airport, where our military was leading evacuation efforts.

And now I believe we've seen our failure to withdraw in an orderly manner, that would be expected of a professional military, has opened the door to aggression elsewhere by our adversaries.

Our failed withdrawal has allowed Iran to push the narrative that the West is unreliable, its policies destined to fail, and that they themselves are the only reliable actor in the Middle East.

Many argue, including myself, that our country's

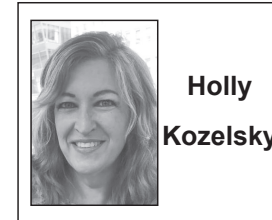
failure in Afghanistan essentially gave Vladimir

Putin a greenlight to invade Ukraine. Putin's National Security Advisor Nikolai Patrushev publicly argued that given what happened in Afghanistan, Ukraine could not rely on the U.S. as it lacked the patience to achieve a military victory and, in the end, we would be disloyal to our allies in Ukraine, just as we were in Afghanistan.

Within weeks of the Afghanistan withdrawal, Putin began a buildup of

See 9th, page 7

My Mother and the Other Lady



Holly Kozelsky

Finally my mother agreed to let me help her clear out some of that stuff she had in storage and hadn't used in years. This was several years

ago, and by that point, she wasn't walking out to the outbuilding or going up or down stairs to the basement or second level of the house. Since she hadn't used so many of her old things in so long, I'd been asking her if I could help her clear them out.

It took a couple of years to talk her into it, and when she did, this was the plan: I would

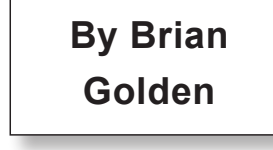
bring things to her, and she would decide if they should be given to charity, thrown out or kept.

I should have had the foresight just to walk most of it to my car and some of it to her — she never would have known the difference — but I was a dutiful daughter.

On a stifling 92-degree day, I cleared

See Mother, page 7

An Empty Barrel Makes the Most Noise



By Brian Golden

You know the type. He or she is the loudest at parties, always showing off at work, boasting about their accomplishments to anyone who will listen, or acting as the know it all. There is no specific age, occupation, or education level that categorizes this type of person.

People who act in this fashion are big turn-offs to many. Given the option, you probably seek to escape them whenever possible. Why do people behave in this manner? There are many reasons as well as theories. The cause is unimportant. What does matter is not getting caught by their conduct.

How do you prevent behaving like an empty

barrel yourself? Believe in yourself. You don't have to prove anything else to others. There's no need to convince anyone of the legitimacy of your dreams. You follow your path because it leads to your destination, not to make an impression.

We all strive to be good at what we do. However, bragging about your competence is never appreciated. Those who do boast are viewed as attempting to make up for some deficiency. It's OK to be proud of your accomplishments. Real achievements speak for themselves. Keep in mind that your objective is to achieve your dreams, not to impress others.

Rather than talking about yourself, show an interest in what someone else has done. Not only is a good listener appreciated, you will learn a

great deal. Everyone has something to teach you, but you have to keep your ears open to discover it.

You encounter empty barrels in all settings; at work, socially, with family, and even with strangers in public. How can you avoid being impacted by them? Each situation requires a different strategy.

At work, the offending person can be a boss, a coworker, or a subordinate. In dealing with your boss, you have to endure some contact. Keep your exposure as brief as possible by focusing your communication on specific work issues. Whenever possible, you can excuse yourself by saying you have to get back to work.

When interfacing with coworkers, also stick to business. If you initiate social conversation, you open the door for annoying behavior. Always be polite. Don't insult, put down, or embarrass anyone. Excusing yourself to get back to work is effective with coworkers as well.

In managing subordinates, lead by example. You set the tone as to the type of behavior you consider appropriate. If someone is out of line, always speak to him or her in private. Never criticize in public.

Family can be more of a challenge. Depending on the relationship, you may not be able to avoid or minimize interaction. What you can do is try to change the subject as often as necessary. You won't be able to change

See Empty, page 7

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CLUES ACROSS

- Undergarments for women
- Periods of time
- Dramatist Henrik
- Any thick messy substance
- Examination
- Japanese city
- Daze with a blow
- With fireplace residue
- Synthetic acrylic fabric fiber
- Pittsburgh University
- Scorched
- Potato state (abbr.)
- Anger
- Suitable for use as food
- To wipe out, obliterate
- Used of unskilled work, esp. domestic
- Loose earth, soil
- Petrol container

CLUES DOWN

- Pear variety
- The Sator-___ Square
- Light purplish-blue
- Plants of the genus Cassia
- Shelf unit for ornaments
- Live in
- Arthur ___, Wimbledon champion
- A thwarting and distressing obstruction
- Cut off from others
- Tree trunk outgrowth
- Tower used for storing silage
- Br. public boys school
- ___ Ling mountain range
- ___ Clapton, musician
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- Peruvian province
- Diagonal cut of cloth
- A narrow path or road

CLUES ACROSS

- Great (60's slang)
- Conditions of balance
- Foes
- Sec. of Energy Steven
- 6th day (abbr.)
- Without qualification or exception
- Sarah's title
- Leisurely stroll
- Austr. Army History Unit
- Bowfin genus
- S.A. mountain chain
- ___ Scott Case 1857
- Mound
- Springfield, IL candy founder
- Marin
- Frambesia
- Reduced price event

CLUES DOWN

- Fraternal Order of ___
- The boundary of a surface
- Granular old snow
- Rt. angle cleaving tool
- Irreducible material
- Oldest man-made rayon fiber
- Affirmative! (slang)
- Burial cloths
- Surface layer of grass & roots
- Not shaky
- Kidney-shaped nut
- Nursemaids in India
- Alkali bee genus
- Warble
- A citizen of Denmark
- Approves food
- Golf ball supports
- Pearl Harbor actress Rue
- Coarse curly-leafed greens
- Cancer detecting smear

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Empty

from page 6

the offending person, so don't waste energy trying. You have discretion regarding who you interact with socially. Those individuals you find annoying can be avoided. Excusing yourself and walking away is always an option. When confronted by an empty barrel, you aren't obligated to respond. Just because someone asks you a question or makes an annoying statement doesn't mean you have to answer.

When facing an empty barrel, you won't convince them of anything. You won't change their behavior. You don't have to defend yourself. The maxim, "Never argue with a fool, onlookers may not be able to tell the difference," has a lot of validity. Stand aside and let the empty barrels roll by.

Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com Copyright 2023 Bryan Golden.

9th

from page 6

Russian troops and weapons on the Ukrainian border. By February 2022, Russia invaded.

However, what was projected to be a war lasting little more than a few weeks by both Russia and the American military establishment, has turned into a prolonged war.

Now with the war raging on, Russia's supplies have dwindled and many of our other adversaries have come to their rescue.

U.S. intelligence reports say that China has been a huge supporter of Russia's war effort, helping them evade Western sanctions.

China has increased their purchase of Russian oil, gas, and other energy exports. Additionally, they are allowing Russia to use their financial system to conduct transactions otherwise blocked by Western sanctions.

China has also sent Russia navigation equipment, parts for fighter jets, and drones/drone parts.

Iran has also helped by supplying Russia with drones and other military equipment.

Further, North Korea and Russia are close to reaching an agreement, in which North Korea would supply Russia with artillery shells and anti-tank missiles, in return for access to Russian technology for satellites and nuclear-powered submarines and supplies of food.

While our previous Administration was able to ease tensions with North Korea, this Administration's actions

are leading to a strengthened North Korean economy and their unpredictable military becoming more lethal.

On China, we already know that since 2021, they have "employed multiple diplomatic tools in an attempt to erode U.S. and partner influence, such as highlighting the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and criticizing U.S.-backed security partnerships," according to the Department of Defense's 2022 report to Congress.

Perhaps that's why earlier this year China was emboldened to deploy a spy balloon over the U.S. in order to collect intelligence.

And the Biden Administration showed weakness when it didn't intercept the offending balloon until it crossed the whole daggone country.

What's next? Taiwan. Right now, China is watching us, calculating how we will respond if they invade Taiwan.

I worry our missteps on the world stage these past two years have indicated to China that invading Taiwan might be a sound move.

Why wouldn't they? From a foreign viewpoint, our country's President and his Administration are too weak to do what is necessary to defend Taiwan and other allies in the South Pacific.

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

Mother

from page 6

the spiders and their webs from the outbuilding door. By the time I got inside the stuffy outbuilding I was dripping in sweat. I reached up for the first box and was showered by scrambling earwigs. By the time I made it back to the house dust, dead bug parts and a few squirming live earwigs were stuck to me.

I opened the heavy box in front of her. It contained an assortment of flower pots.

"Keep those. Keep those. Those are good. I might need those in the spring," said the woman who had not picked up a trowel nor run her fingers through soil in several years. "Put them back."

Next, the antique doll parts. For a spell she had been constructing porcelain dolls and making their outfits.

"Oh! I forgot about those," she exclaimed in delight. "Put them over there. I'll need them."

Then came the box of the brown and burgundy gingham and wooden Christmas ornaments she used for a couple of years on a straw Christmas tree. "Oh!" she exclaimed in shocked disappoint-

ment. "Mice have gotten into them! They're ruined! Now what will we put on that tree?" She had a few themed Christmas trees but in recent years the only tree that had gone up was whatever I decorated in the corner of the room where she spent most of her time anymore.

She let me haul those to the curb. Back in the outbuilding, I swept up the remnants of the disintegrated straw tree to be able to reach the next thing.

It was the red cardinals, glass bells and silver garlands for one of the other Christmas trees that hadn't seen the light of day in years.

"We need those!" she exclaimed. Fresh from the glory of one throwaway, I was stung.

Camping gear: "Put that back. That stuff is good."

Old patio furniture: "All that needs is a fresh coat of paint."

Punch bowl and cups: "That would be nice to use at Christmas. Put that over there."

Pasta maker: "Oh, I forgot I had that. Fresh spaghetti would be good," said the woman who

no longer cooked anything involving more than two steps. "Put that on the kitchen table for now until we decide what to do with it."

After three weekends of that, the outcome was a couple of bags sent to the trash, and several piles of boxes in the house that, before the project had begun, had been tidy.

The outbuilding, upper level and basement remain full. After Mom passed away, my stepfather let me empty out some of the stuff. Then he passed away. Finally, the new woman who had made his final days happy has offered for my sister and me to go to the house to get whatever of Mom's stuff we want.

That's where we are headed this weekend. Finally, I'll get that box of pots and the red-glass-silver Christmas decorations and the camping gear and the patio furniture out of the outbuilding.

Or maybe I'll just get that big box of old family photos and Mom's recipe box, and leave the rest for that other lady to deal with.

LEGAL NOTICES

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL23001171-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT
3160 Kings Mountain Rd., 3rd Floor, Martinsville, VA 24112

HERMILIA GARCIA HERNANDEZ v. DANIELA JIMENEZ RODRIGUEZ
299 GARRETT ROAD, RIDGEWAY, VA 24148

The object of this suit is to:
OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINCULO MATRIMONII
It is ORDERED that DANIEL A. JIMENEZ RODRIGUEZ appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before October 27, 2023 at 10:45 a.m.
August 21, 2023

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL23000534-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT
3160 Kings Mountain Rd., 3rd Floor, Martinsville, VA 24112

KELLY MARTIN v. JACOB PAUL VILT
ADDRESS UNKNOWN

The object of this suit is to:
OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINCULO MATRIMONII
It is ORDERED that JACOB PAUL VILT appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before November 10, 2023.
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
COUNTY OF HENRY
COOPERATIVE MARKETING ORDINANCE
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 58.1-4034(G)(2), Code of Virginia, that the Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing during its regular meeting on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of receiving comments on a proposed ordinance to allow a cooperative marketing arrangement between the Martinsville Speedway and Virginia sports betting permit holders. Any marketing activities must be conducted in compliance with state law, the existing zoning and other site plan authorizations permitted for the Martinsville Speedway site. A copy of the proposed ordinance authorizing the cooperative marketing relationship may be obtained by contacting the County Administrator's Office at 276-634-4601.

VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation
ADVERTISEMENT FOR SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT SERVICES WITH OPERATOR SIGNUP

The Virginia Department of Transportation invites heavy equipment owners to sign up for the rental of their equipment with operators for SNOW & ICE REMOVAL purposes in Martinsville Residency which includes the counties of Henry, Patrick and Carroll during the winter of 2023-2024. Price per hour shall include operators, fuel, tire chains, supplies and required insurance. VDOT will need dump trucks, pickups with plows, motorgraders, backhoes, dozers, track loaders, tractors, rubber tire loaders and farm tractors. All equipment shall be equipped for night work and be in good mechanical condition to ensure a safe and dependable 24/7 operation. VDOT reserves the right to determine acceptability of equipment size and condition for the task. Contractors submitting prices meeting the requirements of the Agreement may be contracted with and may be eligible to receive a mobilization payment and a minimum guaranteed payment for the season.

Contractors must submit their application on the electronic M7B bidding site at <https://plow4va.com/>. All new and returning Contractors must be active in the Virginia eProcurement Portal (eVA) in order to do business with the Commonwealth of Virginia (<https://eva.virginia.gov/>).

Applications received by 7:00 PM on Monday October 2, 2023 may be eligible for a mobilization bonus. See the EVA posting for additional information, including contract requirements.

Questions can be directed to the Martinsville Residency from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday - Friday. Phone: 276-629-2582
Email: SalemDistrictSnow@vdot.virginia.gov
EEO/AA Employer

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County Enterprise
on Facebook

ABC NOTICE
MAA VEDAI 5 LLC trading as MAA Vedai 5 LLC, 8432 Fairstone Park Hwy, Bassett, Henry, VA 24055.
The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a retail license for beer & wine off-premises.
Hareesh Kumar Chaudhari and Mukesh Bhai Patel, members
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or (800) 552-3200.

**COUNTY OF HENRY
REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **September 13, 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 **September 26, 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-23-13 Kirk B. and Jenny M. Spitzer
The property is located in the north east corner of the intersection of Chatham Rd and Sharon Dr, in the Iriswood District. The property is part of Tax Map number is 22.2/51. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 5 acres from Agricultural District A-1 to Commercial District B-1. The applicant wishes to construct an approximately 10,000 sq ft building to locate their contracting business.

Case R-23-14 William S. May, III
The property is located on the north side of Stones Dairy Rd, approximately 0.2 miles north west of its intersection with Blackberry Rd and across from address 3327 Blackberry Rd, in the Blackberry District. The property is shown on Tax Map number is 25.9(10)B/28-47. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 2.5-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Mixed Residential District M-R. The rezoning would allow the potential for placement of double wide manufactured homes, on a permanent masonry foundation. The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

**COUNTY OF HENRY
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **September 27, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of Special Use Permit and Variances for the following cases.

Case S-23-10 CF VA Solar #111, LLC / Pivot Energy
A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-1801 through 211808; and 21-302 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a Large Scale Solar Energy Facility. The property is located on the east side of River Rd., approximately 0.4 mile south of 3359 River Rd., in the Horsepasture District. The property is zoned as Agricultural District A-1, as shown on part of Tax Map 40.6/110. The proposal is to develop a 5MW solar facility on 18-acres of a 275-acre parent tract.

Case S-23-11 CF VA Solar #106, LLC / Pivot Energy
A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-1801 through 211808; and 21-302 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a Large Scale Solar Energy Facility. The property is located beyond the south end of River Rd., in the Horsepasture District, and is zoned as Agricultural District A-1. The Tax Map is 41.4/54. The proposal is to develop a 5MW solar facility on 22-acres of a 440-acre parent tract.

Case S-23-12 Phillip L. and Terri D. Johnson
A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-302 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the use of the property as an event center. The site is located at 1380 River Rd. The driveway is just north west of its intersection with Shadyview Ln. The property is in the Horsepasture District, zoned as Agricultural District A-1, and shown on Tax Map 28.7/85C.

Case S-23-13 Room to Bloom Child Care, LLC / Raegan Lane
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a Family Day Care Home to accommodate up to 12 children. The property is located at 1811 Penn Store Rd. in the Horsepasture District, and is zoned Agricultural District A-1 as shown on Tax Map 57.9/34.

Case V-23-02 Rebecca Peters
A request for a Variance was received under Section 21-306 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for an addition to a residence to extend to within 7.5' of the side property line instead of the required 15'. The residence is located at 45 Wind Dancer Ln., in the Ridgeway District and is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 52.6(45)/5A.

Case V-23-03 Shawn A. Foley
A request for a Variance was received under Section 21-601 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a swimming pool that will be located closer to the road than the main structure on the property. The property is located at 10 Woodberry Road in the Blackberry District and is zoned Suburban Residential District S-R, as shown on Tax Map 25.3/290C.
The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

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HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE
henrycountyenterprise.com

Weekly Publication
Published Each Saturday

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

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

OBITUARIES

Kenneth M. Covington



Retired Henry County Circuit Court Judge Kenneth M. Covington of Martinsville, Va. passed on September 11, 2023, surrounded by family. He was born in Martinsville, Va. on January 1, 1929 to John G. "Glennie" Covington and Fannie B. Covington of Ridgeway, Va.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of 65 years, Norma Pulliam Covington; son, Benjamin "Benny" C. Covington; brothers, J.G. Covington Jr., Billie W. Covington, Jack R. Covington, all of Ridgeway, and sisters, Peggy C. McCall of Rocky Mount, Va. and Jane C. Hargreaves of Tullahoma, Tenn.

Surviving is his son John R. "Randy" Covington (Wendy) of Ridgeway; daughters Kim C. Darnell (David) of Anna Maria Island, Fla., Patti Covington of Martinsville, VA., and Jane R. Covington (Crane Jones) of Brentwood, Tenn.; grandchildren, J.R. Covington Jr., David Darnell Jr. (Allie), and Anne Marshall (John); great-grandchildren, Hudson Darnell and Bennett, Maddie, and William Marshall.

Judge Covington was a lifetime member of Broad Street Christian Church where he served as deacon, elder, trustee, and former chairman of the board. He graduated from Bluefield College

and T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond. He served in the U.S. Army in Korea during the Korean Conflict as a member of the K MAG as an advisory member to the Korean Army Judge Advocate General, helping to establish a judicial system for the Korean Army. During this service, he became an honorary member of the Korean Bar and earned a bronze star.

Following his military service, he served Henry County as Commonwealth Attorney for 12 years and then as Judge of the Martinsville Municipal Court and Henry County court, which later became a district court. He retired as a Judge of the 21st Circuit Court of Virginia and was known widely for his wisdom, fairness, and knowledge of the law.

"Practicing in front of Judge Covington was like taking a post law school graduate course in litigation", said Retired Circuit Court Judge David Williams, who practiced before him

as both a private and commonwealth attorney.

As a native son of Martinsville-Henry County, he deeply loved this community and its people and had an encyclopedic knowledge of its history. He judged people in the courtroom but not in life: his grace and kindness touched many lives, both inside and outside of the courtroom. His mind and spirit were ageless: he learned to play guitar in his early eighties and purchased a home on a trout stream in his late eighties, where he enjoyed the natural beauty of Carroll County and spent many great times with his Laurel Fork friends.

A visitation will be held on Friday, September 15, 2023 from 5-8 p.m. at Broad Street Christian Church, 106 Broad Street. A graveside service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 16, 2023 at Oakwood Cemetery, 107 Cemetery Street, Martinsville, Va. and will be officiated by Rev. Tim Mills.

Memorials may be made to Broad Street Christian Church, Old Well Christian Church, or the SPCA of Martinsville-Henry County.

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

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

Crystal Sue Hall



Crystal Sue Hall, age 59, of Axton, Virginia passed away on Saturday, September 2, 2023. She was born May 21, 1964.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Charles Anderson and Irene Sailor. As well as her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Joseph and Annie Hall and brother-in-law Tony Hall.

Survivors include her husband Ronald Hall, daughter Deidre (Andrew) Bunch, and son Joseph Hall. As well as her 4 grandchildren Alyssa Bunch, Kairi Hall, Connor Bunch, and Matthew Bunch. She also leaves behind a brother-in-law, 3 sisters, and many nieces and nephews.

Crystal was a loving wife and mother, and had a kind and gentle soul. She was willing to help anyone in need with a smile on her face. Everyone she came into contact with instantly loved her. She enjoyed laying around with her two chihuahuas, tending her houseplants, creating unique one-of-a-kind jewelry, reading and studying her Bible,

and most importantly spending quality time crafting and creating with her beloved grandbabies.

A visitation for Crystal was held Friday, September 8, 2023 at McKee-Stone Funeral Home, 109 Broad Street, Martinsville, VA 24112. The funeral was officiated by Pastor Gary Martin of Grace Church. Interment followed at 1:00 pm at Roselawn Burial Park, 103 Clearview Drive, Martinsville, VA 24112.

In place of flowers Crystal's family asked that donations be made in her name to a charity of your choosing.

McKee-Stone Funeral Home served the family.

Ethel Hundley Jamison



Ethel Hundley Jamison, 93, of Martinsville, Va. went home to be with the Lord on September 6, 2023. She was born and raised in the Figsboro area of Franklin County on September 20, 1929 to Clifford Benjamin Hundley and Nannie Mason Hundley.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her sisters, Hazel Elizabeth Jamison, Irene Young Sutton and Betty Louise Stilwell; her brothers, James Clifford Hundley and Johnny Edwin Hundley; her late husband, Woodrow Wilson Jamison.

She is survived by her children; Mildred Bush (Gary) of Kingsport, Tenn., Sharon McGhee (Mac) of Elliston, Va., and Timothy Jamison of Martinsville, Va.; five grandchildren, Celeste Holler (Brady) of Southern Pines, N.C., Sara Miramontes (Eric) of Johnson City, Tenn., Danielle Hale (Chris) of Blacksburg, Va., Christian and Isabella Jamison of Martinsville, Va.; six great-grandchildren, Nate, Eli, and Maddie Holler, Mila

Miramontes, Taylor and Caleb Blankenship; her sister, Becky Ann Eanes; her brothers, Harry J. Hundley and Robert B. Hundley all of Martinsville, Va.; also many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

She served in several churches in Joplin, Springfield, and Louisburg Missouri, Tazewell, Tennessee, Christiansburg and Roanoke Virginia. She was very active in Christian women's fellowship groups including Sunday school teacher, choir member and church secretary. She was a member of Rich Acres Christian Church.

She was a graduate of Rocky Mount High School in 1947. She received several business certificates from Patrick

& Henry Community College. She worked as a bookkeeper for many years with Farmer's Supply Company in Martinsville, a telegraph operator and manager with Western Union Telegraph Company. She retired in 1989 from First Baptist Church where she served as their financial secretary for 14 years.

A visitation was held on Saturday, September 9, 2023 at McKee Stone Funeral Home. The funeral was officiated by Pastor Tim Hunt. A private entombment will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Martinsville Volunteer Fire Company, 65 West Church Street, Martinsville, Va. or the Martinsville Henry County SPCA, 132 Joseph Martin Hwy, Martinsville, VA 24112

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

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

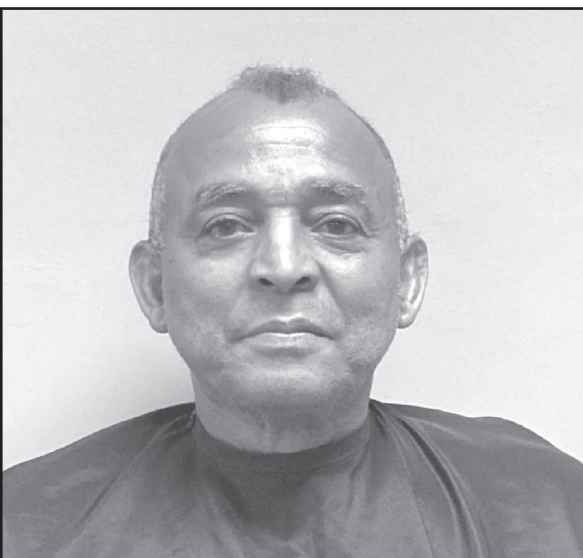
Search warrant leads to arrest

The Henry County Sheriff's Office SWAT Team and Investigators executed a search warrant at 9:04 a.m., on September 7 at 6683 Stones Dairy Road, Bassett, and seized multiple ounces of suspected cocaine, 160 scheduled II prescription pills, an alleged illegal firearm, four vehicles, two pieces of heavy equipment, and an undisclosed amount of U.S. Currency.

A man found at the front door of the home was apprehended without incident.

Douglas Eugene Martin, 69, of 6683 Stones Dairy Road, Bassett, is being held with no bond on charges of

possession with the intent to distribute - 3rd



Douglas Eugene Martin

offense, possession of a firearm while in possession of a scheduled I/II substance and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

Anyone with information about narcotic trafficking operations is asked to contact the Henry County Sheriff's Office at (276) 638-8751

or Crimestoppers at 63-CRIME (632-7463).

The Crimestoppers Program offers rewards of up to \$2,500 for information related to crime.

The nature of the crime and the substance of the information determine the amount of reward paid.

Roanoke man died in drowning accident

At around 10:45 a.m. on September 11, the Franklin County Communications Center received a 911 call to report a missing person last seen around the Smith Mountain Lake area. The Franklin County Sheriff's Office responded to the area to search for the individual and located a body in the water.

SML Marine Fire Rescue (commonly termed with us as Bedford Fire Boats) was on scene to help pull the victim from the water to the ground. Scruggs Volunteer Fire & Rescue was the medical unit at the scene to pull the victim out of

the water. Franklin County Public Safety was also at the scene.

The victim has been identified as Jerson Martinez, 25, of Roanoke. The body was transported to the Medical Examiner's Office.

The investigation will remain active pending official autopsy results, but the sheriff's office reported that currently, there do not appear to be any suspicious circumstances.

The Office of the Sheriff expresses our deepest sympathies to the victim's family and friends during this tragic time.

Meningococcal Disease Outbreak Reported

The Virginia Department of Health has reported a statewide outbreak of meningococcal disease.

It initially began as a regional outbreak in the eastern part of the state one year ago in September, and health department experts don't know what's led to this increase in cases over the last year.

However, they've found - through genetic sequencing - that these cases are highly genetically related.

Most patients are African American adults between ages 30 and 60.

Dr. Laurie Forlano, state epidemiologist with Virginia Department of Health, described healthy habits to stay safe.

"General health protection practices are advised," said Forlano, "like washing your hands, staying home when you're sick, not sharing things - like lipstick or cups, or drinking glasses, toothbrushes, etc. And that can keep you healthy from a lot of things that can be transmitted person to person."

Meningococcal disease symptoms include fever, chills, headache, stiff neck, nausea and possibly a rash. Rarely it can develop

into a more serious illness like meningitis or septicemia.

People can be treated with antibiotics, though some are being asked to get vaccinated if they haven't been recently.

More information is on the Virginia Department of Health website, vdh.virginia.gov.

Some of the groups at greater risk of catching this include people who are immunocompromised, or who don't have a spleen.

Dr. Forlano noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has helped prepare the health department for this kind of outbreak.

"COVID-19, unfortunately, gave us lots of opportunities to practice our skills in disease surveillance and disease investigation," said Forlano. "We have a lot of really talented epidemiologists on our team."

While the pandemic helped exercise these skills, she said the components to handle it successfully were already in place.

Local health departments in the state respond to every meningococcal infection. When these reports are received, they confirm each diagnosis with the person's healthcare provider.

Boone to serve as assistant superintendent of operations and administrative services

Dr. Benjamin Boone was appointed assistant superintendent for operations and administrative services by the Henry County School Board at its September 7 meeting.

A 20-year veteran of Henry County Public Schools, Dr. Boone has served students in a variety of roles, including teacher, coach, middle school assistant principal, elementary principal, and director of student support services. He currently serves as director of finance, a position he's held since 2019.

"I am grateful for the wonderful opportunities I have had working collectively with families, teachers, and other school staff members throughout Henry County," said Dr. Boone. "Henry County Public Schools is an exceptional school system, and I am looking forward to the new opportunity as assistant superintendent for operations and

administrative services. Putting students first and working together with families, school leaders, staff, and community members will help to ensure all students are provided with meaningful educational experiences that prepare them for a successful future."

The assistant superintendent for operations and administrative services is responsible for supervision and oversight of the finance and payroll, facilities maintenance, pupil transportation, and school nutrition departments. It is also responsible for providing a wide range of services to students, staff and members of the school community, and for providing leadership for financial decision-making, budget development, and safeguarding the school division's assets.

"I am confident Dr. Boone's diverse experiences in Henry County Schools will serve him well in this



new capacity," said Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis, division superintendent. "In his previous positions, he's worked with every department and a cross section of the school community, and his dedication to students, staff and families is evident in every decision he makes."

Boone holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Virginia Tech; a Master of Arts in Education from Cambridge College; and a Bachelor of Arts in History from Longwood University. He has an active Postgraduate Professional License with endorsements in Administration and Supervision PreK-12 and History.



The Floating Lotus returns this month

The Floating Lotus, an event to honor your loved ones, celebrate a friendship or commemorate a special event in the most beautiful and memorable way, will return September 28 at 6:30 p.m. The event will be held in Riverview Park, 1072 Irisburg Road, Axton on property that is adjacent to the Smith River Sports Complex.

Your purchase, 100 percent, will support the protection of our local natural resources and provide environmental education for thousands of youngsters.

Lotus flowers represent eternity, purity and divinity. Buy yours and set them in the water at sunset. Bring a camp chair and blanket and reflect and remember and celebrate in a beautiful

setting.

If unable to attend the event, the Dan River Basin Association (DRBA), which is sponsoring the float, will ensure your flowers are set afloat.

The cost is only \$20 for up to 30 Lotus Flowers by visiting <https://www.danriver.org/lotus>. At the event, purchases are cash only, \$5/each flower, or \$20 for up to 30 flowers.

Participants will also get a voucher for a free slice of The Boardwalk Baker cheesecake and a drink.

The Lotus Flowers are made from recycled materials, and this year, you can take your Lotus Flowers home with you after the event.

All flowers will be retrieved from the water after the event.

Fall Forestry and Wildlife Field Tour

Combining education, networking, sightseeing, and good food, the Fall Forestry and Wildlife Field Tours have provided the opportunity to learn about sustainable forestry and wildlife management for over 45 years. This year's tours, offered by Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Virginia Forest Landowner Education Program in Virginia Tech's College of Natural Resources and Environment in collaboration with Virginia's natural resource agencies, companies, and associations, will be in Bland County October 6th.

Stop 1: Demeter Tree Farm. The Sargents are sustainably managing over 500 acres for timber, wildlife, and a family legacy. At this half-day stop, we'll hear about the tools they are using to achieve their ownership goals on their certified

Tree Farm.

Lunch catered by Taste of the Mountains
 Stop 2: Bradshaw Firewood. Firewood is a high-value product that can be made from low-value trees. Bradshaw Firewood is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1989. They process firewood year around and sell it in small bundles or in bulk. At this stop we'll learn about their operation.

Stop 3: Harvesting Timber and Managing Wildlife. Visit a mechanized timber harvesting operation in the Round Mountain area to learn about regeneration harvests. We will see and learn about the forest and wildlife management in this young forest.

Stop 4: Managing for Wildlife - With Fire Find

out about the numerous benefits of using prescribed fire in Appalachian forests.

The one-day tour will be held in Bland County on October 6. Pre-registration is required, as space is limited on a first-come, first-served basis. The registration fee of \$25 per person, which covers lunch, refreshments, and transportation. Please register by noon, Friday September 29th.

<http://forestupdate.frec.vt.edu/onlineregistration.html>. For more information, contact Bill Worrell at 276-889-8056. A limited number of scholarships are available for K-12 teachers.

Bill Worrell,
 Virginia Cooperative Extension

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

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

SERVICES	SERVICES	FOR SALE
Woodwrx, Inc. Est. since 1988 Carpentry/Cabinetry - fine woodworking, design, tile, closet & garage organizers, repairs, etc. Originally based in Palm Beach County- References. Bob Morehouse Phone: 276-930-1703 Cell: 561-881-8292 E-Mail: Bob@Woodwrx.net Website: Woodwrx.net.	Custom spreading of agricultural lime available. Also have hay for sale in 4x4 & 4x5 net-wrapped rolls. Call for information and pricing 276-694-7443 or 276-692-5475. Call 276-694-3101 or email submissions@theenterprise.net to get an ad in the paper.	TWO (2) BURIAL PLOTS IN PATRICK MEMORIAL GARDEN. LOCATION: LEFT CENTER MAIN SECTION. INCLUDES TWO \$1300 VAULTS, CURRENT MEMORIAL GARDENS SALE PRICE, \$4400 - MY PRICE NEGOTIABLE. MSG / CALL - 276-693-0229

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For more information, call the office at (276) 694-3101

Initial claims remain at pre-pandemic levels

The number of initial claims decreased in the latest filing week to 2,568 and remained at typical pre-Pandemic volumes experienced in 2019, according to data from the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).

For the filing week ending September 2, the figure for seasonally unadjusted initial claims in Virginia was 2,568, which was a decrease of 209 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 13,092, which was 166 claims lower than the previous week but an increase of 9.5% from the 11,955 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of claimants. Of those, over half (51 percent) of continued claims were from professional, scientific, and technical services (1,988), administrative and support and waste management (1,808), health care and social assistance (1,200), and manufacturing (1,176). Eligibility for benefits is determined on a weekly basis, and so not all weekly claims filed result in a benefit payment. This is because the initial claims numbers

represent claim applications; claims are then reviewed for eligibility and legitimacy.

In the week ending September 2, the advance U.S. figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 216,000, a decrease of 13,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 1,000 from 228,000 to 229,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs[1], unadjusted, totaled 190,190 in the week ending September 2, a decrease of 3,240 (or -1.7 percent) from the previous week. There were 172,835 initial claims in the comparable week in 2022. Looking at preliminary data, most U.S. states reported decreases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. Ohio's preliminary weekly change (-2,909) was the largest decrease. New York's preliminary weekly change (-2,114) was the second largest decrease. Oregon's preliminary weekly change (-801) was the third largest decrease. Florida's preliminary weekly change (-773) was the fourth largest decrease. Virginia's preliminary weekly change (+99) was the sixteenth largest increase.

Axton woman dies in Friday crash

A single vehicle crash that claimed the life of an Axton woman on September 8 remains under investigation, according to a release from the Virginia State Police.

The crash occurred at 7:34 p.m. on Virginia 641, near U.S. 220 in Henry County.

A 2010 Nissan Xterra was traveling north on Virginia 641, when the vehicle ran off the right side of the roadway and struck a tree.

The driver of the vehicle was identified as Teresa Smart Milligan, 60, of Axton. Ms. Milligan was not wearing her seatbelt and died at the scene.

Historical Society taps Kozelsky to lead

The Board of Directors of the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society has hired Holly Kozelsky as its full-time executive director following a statewide and regional search. She will begin on October 1, which coincides with the first day of Local History Month in Virginia.

Kozelsky's appointment comes at a pivotal time for our Historical Society with the museum annex expected to be completed by next summer.

"We are blessed to have secured an individual of Holly's caliber and experience. She is the right candidate at the right time," John Phillips, president of the society, said in a release. "With this announcement, I must commend the current and previous Boards of Directors and volunteers who have completed the work of the Historical Society over the past 27 years with intermittent part-time help. Roles and responsibilities may change, but the Board's love for and commitment to our work will endure."

Beth Chapman will continue as the part-time Office Coordinator.

"I have had the rare fortune in life that I have loved every minute of my job," said Kozelsky, a former editor of the



Holly Kozelsky was tapped to serve as the full-time executive director of the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society.

Martinsville Bulletin. "That sets the standard pretty high for a career change, and so I wouldn't want anything less than a fulfilling and exciting role in the community. Being the director of the MHC Heritage Center & Museum is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see a museum through a significant expansion such as what the Historical Society is doing now."

The expansion will allow the center to house "Dr. Mervyn King's nationally recognized collections, including tools, Marklin toys, antique steam engines, and Native American artifacts," Kozelsky said. "That puts the museum on two levels: of local interest — this community is appreciative of its rich history — and of national and even international interest, to history buffs from all over who have specific, unique interests in those collections. What a boon to our area!"

Kozelsky holds a bachelor's degree in education from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She worked for the Martinsville Bulletin for 18 years as copy editor, reporter, Accent Editor and, for the past two years, as Editor. Before that, she was a real estate agent and a Spanish-language interpreter for 10 years in her hometown of Siler City, North Carolina.

She and her daughter, Mary, a freshman at Magna Vista High School, live in a century-old farmhouse in the Dyer's Store community with their dog, cats, birds, and chickens. Kozelsky enjoys gardening, fixing up her old house in a manner appropriate to its age, and visiting museums. She and her daughter often take long trips and never make their appointed arrival times because on a whim they will stop in at any history museum whose sign they see along a highway.

Let your creativity flow at "Make Some Noise" Open Mic Night

Piedmont Arts' second event in the "Make Some Noise" Open Mic Series will get underway at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 12 in the Piedmont Arts galleries. October's event will be hosted by Bryan Hancock, a hip-hop artist and arts advocate from Roanoke. Admission for the "Make Some Noise" series is free, and each event will feature a cash bar. Sign-up sheets will be available at the door.

Grab the mic and express yourself through music, poetry, comedy or spoken word. Anything that you have written or created can be showcased in this series. Slots will be capped at five minutes to ensure everyone gets a chance to share their work and shine. Piedmont

Arts is thrilled to create an event that will allow the artists of Southwest Virginia to share their work in a safe and exciting space.

Bryan "Harvest Blaque" Hancock is a Perry F. Kendig Award Nominated actor, Slam poet, and musician. He is currently a cast member of The Big Lick Conspiracy Comedy Troupe. Hancock is also the Host/Curator of the bi-weekly poetry show Soul Sessions. He also is in his second-year residency at Carillon Healing Hearts working in grief and loss, the teen psych unit, and with fellow colleagues for the essential soul project that connects essential workers on Friday evenings to share their poetry and talents.

Learn more at PiedmontArts.org.



Bryan Hancock, hip-hop artist and arts advocate, will host the second "Make Some Noise" Open Mic event.



An inclusive and encouraging environment awaits at the Piedmont Arts "Make Some Noise" open mic series.



Local author, content creator, and producer Natalie K. Hodge emceed and shared her own poetry at the first event.

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

Festival from page 1

us on that day are going to be able to offer information in both English and Spanish to the festival attendees,” she said.

Ortiz-Garcia said fest goers will have an opportunity to learn about the community’s health services and organizations, education services, private businesses, and non-profit organizations.

“So, it’s not only a celebration of the Latino culture, but also the opportunity to learn about many services that sometimes individuals are not aware of that are available in our community, specifically in Henry-Martinsville and the surrounding areas,” she said.

Eli Salgado, founder and lead organizer of SOVALA, said informational vendors include the American Red Cross, Martinsville & Henry County CrimeStoppers, Martinsville & Henry County Economic Development Corp., Southside Survivor Response Center, Harvest Foundation, and United Way.

“Some of the others include Henry County Public Schools, Martinsville City Public Schools, Danville City post-schools, and local police agencies like the Henry County Sheriff’s Office,” he said.

There will also be colleges and universities present like New College Institute (NCI), Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC), Randolph College, Liberty University, Ferrum College, and Old Dominion University (ODU).

Salgado said food vendors include Taqueria La Juquilita, Asador El Vergel, El Morelense, Taqueria La G, Santos Hernandez, Jesus Gaspar Hernandez, and others.

“We’ll actually have a vendor that will sell hot-dogs for people also who may not be into Latino food, so we’ll have a variety of options when it comes to that,” he said. There will be live music by Colmillo Sureño and Grupo Imperior Mexicano and the DJ will be Sonido Amistad Mixteca de Carlos Lopez.

Performances will be by Tiny Tots Tamers and Danza San Jose.

Sponsors for the festival include Bouncy Events, Colmillo Sureño, Made Two Manifest, Sandy Gourley Realtor and Piedmont Realty, Martinsville Surgical Associates, and Sonido Amistad Mixteca de Carlos Lopez.

Ortiz-Garcia said the festival first started about 10 to 12 years ago

after a small group of Latino members in the community were contacted by the Harvest Foundation to develop a Latino Health Fair.

The purpose of that event was to provide information related to health and education to the community’s Latino and Hispanic members.

“Because through that strategic planning effort from Harvest Foundation back then, they found out that the Hispanic/Latino members of the community didn’t know about the services available in Henry-Martinsville and how could they potentially benefit from some of them, or how to access them, and what medical facilities are here,” she said.

The festival was last held in 2018 with a little more than 1,000 people attending.

Salgado said the organization is excited to be back after a four-year hiatus.

“We had to put a pause on holding it because of the pandemic, and we were picking up on trying to do it every other year. With the pandemic over last year, everybody felt pretty good, but we were still not comfortable with doing anything,” Salgado said. “But this year was the year.”

Covington from page 1

Williams said he always thought “if I was half as good as Judge Covington when I went on the bench, I’d be satisfied. He was just the best I ever saw.”

“Judge Covington was the template and touchstone for so many judges, myself included,” retired Patrick County Circuit Court Judge Martin Clark said. “His influence has been—and will continue to be—generational. He was wise, smart, fair, and knew the law, but just as important, he knew people.

“Notably, he was thoroughly patient and professional, but somehow, everyone—from litigants to lawyers—understood an important, unspoken rule: It wasn’t wise to cross Ken Covington. He simply had a gift and a presence that set him apart,” Clark said.

“He ran a perfect courtroom and made it seem effortless. Sadly, he was the last lion from this part of the world, but he surely schooled us all, and we’re all better for having crossed paths with him,” Clark said.

Ward Armstrong, of The Armstrong Law Firm in Martinsville, recalled that Covington “was a great jurist. He knew the line, what reasonable doubt was as well as any judge could.”

Noting that baseball players don’t mind if an umpire uses a wide strike zone or a narrow strike zone, so long as it’s consistent, Armstrong said “You could always count on Judge Covington. He knew

where the strike zone was, and that was day in and day out.”

Covington also lived by the creed of tempering justice with mercy, Armstrong said.

“He could be tough, but he also understood that people make mistakes. He was the kind of judge that all judges aspire to be, and all lawyers learn from,” Armstrong said.

A native son of Martinsville-Henry County, Covington deeply loved the community and its people and had an encyclopedic knowledge of its history, according to his obituary. He judged people in the courtroom but not in life: his grace and kindness touched many lives, both inside and outside of the courtroom. His mind and spirit were ageless. He learned to play guitar in his early 80s and purchased a home on a trout stream in his late 80s, where he enjoyed the natural beauty of Carroll County and spent many great times with his Laurel Fork friends.

Covington lived in the Ridgeway area of Henry County.

Ridgeway Mayor Craig O’Der, Jr., also a law enforcement officer, said that Covington “was the model jurist. He set the example as a jurist. He will be missed.”

O’Der recalled often seeing Covington in the community.

“He was always friendly,” O’Der said. His death “is a great loss to our community.”

Martin from page 1

Additionally, Martin was the recipient of the VSBA’s “highest level of recognition, the Award of Distinction, each year he served on his local board and was recognized as the 2020 VSBA Blue Ridge Regional Member of the Year.”

A graduate of Patrick & Henry Community College, Old Dominion University, and Western Governors University, Martin organizes a semi-

annual Red Cross blood drive that is one of the largest in the Henry County area.

Martin currently serves the VSBA as immediate past president and as co-chairman of the VSBA Task Force on Workforce Readiness, the resolution noted.

It was carried by Sen. Bill Stanley and Dels. Danny Marshall, Les Adams, and Wren Williams.

Indictments from page 1

Henry County 9-1-1 Center received a call in reference to a body that had been discovered at an abandoned house located at 5176 Appalachian Dr. in the Fieldale area of Henry County.

When deputies arrived at the scene, they located what Davis described as “badly decomposed remains” lying near the wood line.

The remains were transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the Western District of Virginia for an autopsy and to determine identity.

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Roanoke used DNA analysis to positively identify the remains as those of Bivins, Davis said and added the manner of death was ruled a homicide.

Bivins was last seen on August 1st, 2016, and he was officially reported missing on August 5, 2016.

“We diligently investigated this case but eventually, we stopped receiving leads and tips,” Davis said. “Our investigators never let this case rest and relentlessly pursued what information we had.”

Nester, Davis said, “is an invaluable partner to this

office and he offered additional resources and invested his time into this investigation.”

Davis also noted that Henry County Sheriff’s Lt. Thomas Kenny “worked relentlessly over the last seven years to bring this case to a conclusion.”

Nester said life without parole is the maximum punishment for the charges.

“We do look forward to this case working its way through the court system,” he said.

In 2019 Henry County Sheriff’s Office narcotics investigators charged Gearheart with 14 drug distribution charges. He was sentenced to 203 years, and it was “ultimately determined he would have to serve 95 years,” making him eligible for parole on July 18, 2081, Nester said.

Gearheart is currently being held in the Keen Mountain Correctional Facility in Buchanan Virginia. He was served with the recent indictments on Monday, September 11, Davis said.

Both Davis and Nester said they hope the charges bring “some level of closure for this (Bivins) family.”

The Victim/Witness Director contacted Bivins’ spouse, Nester said, and added Mrs. Bivins “was grateful for our work.”

Davis said Bivins’ mother also had been contacted.

A counsel hearing is the next step of the process for Gearheart, Nester said, adding that Gearheart can either retain representation or the court would appoint an attorney. The case would then be scheduled for trial or disposed of otherwise.

“On behalf of the Henry County Commonwealth Attorney’s Office,” Nester thanked Davis and his “entire staff for diligent work over many years to keep this case alive and pursue justice.” He also thanked those who served as grand jurors for “devoting their time.”

Anyone with additional information about the incident is asked to contact the Henry County Sheriff’s Office at (276) 638-8751 or Crimestoppers at 63-CRIME (632-7463). The Crimestoppers Program offers rewards of up to \$2,500 for information related to crime. The nature of the crime and the substance of the information determine the amount of reward paid.

Reed Creek from page 1

law enforcement, and the budget.

Budget

The three “pillars” for the county’s expenses, Cobler said, are “70 percent of the budget is education, 20 percent is public safety and law enforcement, and 10 percent is health and human resources,” noting that the county has been able to work within its budget, both with the agencies and to attract businesses to the area to the best of its ability.

“County staff is capable of bringing solutions to issues and challenges. I do believe there’s always work to be done, and I look forward to rolling up my sleeves on behalf of the voters in the official capacity of the Reed Creek Board of Supervisors seat,” she said.

Cobler said she isn’t sure how the county arrived at the fact that economic development became a priority over education and public safety.

“Economic development is a systematic, ongoing problem that requires an ongoing, systemic answer. It is a pillar for success that requires a good education, a good and safe community, quality of life where we can live, work, and play, and healthcare,” she said. But “they are all legs of a strong economy and a strong government.

“We must have them all,” she said and added economic development is dependent on all those things.

Metz said he favors returning some funds to taxpayers.

It is his understanding that the state mandates the county can take 10 percent of its budget and keep it year to year in case of an emergency.

“The understanding is we’re more at 20 percent on the budget, which in

my opinion is taxpayers’ money,” Metz said. “I think that as a board, we ought to decide how much money we need each year to take care of all the items we need to cover in Henry County, and either give a tax break back to people or whatever.”

While he believes the top priority is a great place for economic development to be, Metz said without education, no one would come to the county to work.

“We need to train our people. We’re in a position where we need to educate our people in jobs that they can use,” he said.

Regarding law enforcement, Metz said if the county isn’t a safe place to live and work, economic development will not come.

“One of the main things that people look at when they come to an area is what are the amenities in that area,” he said.

Solar

While he is a staunch supporter of property rights, Metz believes the county’s response to solar energy projects needs to be done the correct way.

“I worked very hard for the land I have, and my father worked before me. If I want to sell that land, I should have that right. I also have the need to be aware of my neighbors. If I went to put a hog farm in, people wouldn’t like it very much, or maybe a junkyard,” he said.

Metz said he thinks residents should be cognizant of the needs of their neighbors. He also believes setbacks should be done “with low vegetation, medium, and high so that we have setbacks that the property owners besides of them won’t lose the value of their

property.”

One thing that will determine where solar farms will go is the availability of transfer stations to connect to the solar farms, and this is why the Axton area is popular for the farms, Metz said.

“We have got to check to make sure that these companies that have created LLCs, which gives them one more movement away from responsibility” and often have contracts with a stipulation called force majeure, a legal term that basically means “if circumstances are whether it’s economic or whatever are uncontrollable,” the LLC has “the right to get out of the contract,” Metz said.

“We have to make sure that the contracts (for solar projects) in Henry County don’t have that clause in them. We need to make sure that we have a way of disposing of them,” he said.

Cobler said she has a basic understanding of solar energy and in listening to constituents understands that “our constituents in Henry County are saying overwhelmingly that they do not want Southern Virginia, Southside Virginia, Southwestern Virginia to become the home of solar farms.”

If elected, Colber said she would listen to the voters and do what is best for Henry County as a whole for what residents want for their land and their lives.

Solar farms “do produce tax revenue for the county, but the landowner is the clear beneficiary of any solar project. There is no permanent economic advantage, except to the land owner,” she said.

Cobler believes that a 1-percent cap on solar farms is reasonable and well justified. She said she supports the board’s decision.

“Let’s face it, are these electrons that are flying around with the solar panels really benefiting a single person in Henry County once they hit the grid,” she asked rhetorically.

Reversion

Cobler said there are many areas where Henry County and the City of Martinsville can work together, and some areas where partnerships are already in place, including the jail, as well as parks and recreation.

“Other areas could include public works, maintenance, common facilities, office use and space, and the use of technology. It can all be done without reversion, without raising taxes, and through attrition,” she said.

Cobler said this is not a new concept as the city and the county have had Revenue Sharing Agreements in place for years at the industrial parks.

“I am not supportive of reversion, but I am supportive of continued and improved communication and collaboration,” she said.

Metz said the reversion issue has been going on for several years and will continue to do so.

“In the end, I think we’re going to have to deal with reversion, I don’t think the city has any choice when it gets down to the bottom line. I think they’re going to have to do something, and unfortunately, or fortunately, we, the county, have to be ready to do what’s necessary,” he said.

Metz believes the General Assembly will have to play a part in this since it will have to set up the guidelines for this in the end.

“As it’s set up now, it’s not really clear in the guidelines,” he said. “We spent a couple of million dollars going in and out of this reversion” and those funds were taxpayer money.

Inaugural Arts Festival to take place at Piedmont Arts



Spending a beautiful fall day in the Gravelly-Lester Art Garden, the home of Piedmont Arts' inaugural Arts Festival.

In a desire to create more opportunities for local artists to showcase their work and talents, Piedmont Arts is set to host its inaugural Arts Festival on Saturday, Oct. 14 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Gravelly-Lester Art Garden. This event is free and open to the public and will feature work by painters, craftspeople, and performing artists of all kinds. Food trucks will be set up in

the Alliance Bee parking lot. In addition to artists and performers, the Teen Arts Council will be set up for face painting.

"Events like this are so exciting because they really bring everyone together," says Lauren Ellis, Piedmont Arts' program coordinator. "It's a celebration of the creators of our area. Creating an opportunity for them to

showcase their work in a beautiful environment has been so much fun and is already so rewarding."

Ellis is hoping to make this a part of the regular rotation of Piedmont Arts events.

"The first step is to just make it happen," she said. "Then you can build from there. Now what we need is for folks to come out and experience it!"

She is grateful for the enthusiasm from the artists and performers, and hopes it will inspire the community to come out, participate, and enjoy a beautiful Fall day in Martinsville.

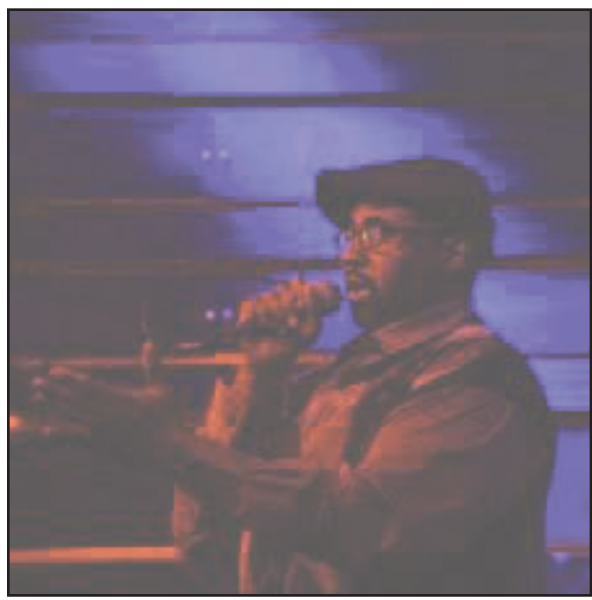
Piedmont Arts is located at 215 Starling Ave., Martinsville. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is free. Learn more at PiedmontArts.org.



Performance artist, songwriter, and puppeteer Mike Moran will perform at the Arts Festival.



Woven baskets, like these created by local artist Janeise Harmon, will be amongst many artisan products available at the Arts Festival.



Poet and hip-hop artist Bryan "Harvest Blaque" Hancock will be one of many performing artists at the festival.



Incredible Virginia-based visual artists Laura Burk will be in attendance at the Arts Festival.

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George and Meritha Alderman created these handcrafted ceramic pieces. Their work and others will be featured at the Arts Festival.