

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, December 16, 2023

(USPS-6)

www.henrycountyenterprise.com • \$1.00

Special election set to fill vacant seat

By Debbie Hall

Gov. Glenn Youngkin is calling for a special election on January 9 to fill the vacancy in the 48th House District, which includes the City of Martinsville and portions of Henry and Pittsylvania counties.

The seat is currently held by Del. Les Adams, who announced he will resign when his current term in office ends.

Adams represents the current 16th House District. He was reelected in November to serve as the delegate for the 48th District in the first election for that seat following redistricting.

"Although I have been elected to continue serving as Delegate for the new 48th House District in the next session, I will decline to accept the oath of office to be seated with that General Assembly so that I may make myself available for another position of service," Adams wrote in a letter notifying some of his constituents.

In a letter to the House Clerk notifying him of Adams' decision, he wrote that although he was elected to continue serving, "I will decline to accept the oath of office ... so that I may make myself available for another position of service."

First elected in 2013, Adams served five terms in the General Assembly. In



Del. Les Adams will step down at the end of his current term.

addition to his leadership on various House Committees, he was recently the Vice-chairman of the Virginia State Crime Commission and is the Vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Center for Rural Virginia.

"It has been a tremendous privilege to represent the people of Pittsylvania,"

(See Special Election p. 2)

Pace, Phillips seek GOP nod for vacant state seat



Will Pace

By Debbie Hall

Will Pace and Eric Phillips are seeking the GOP nomination for the vacant 48th House District on Dec. 14 in Chatham.

A special election next year after Del. Les Adams declined to accept the post. (See related story.)

Pace said he is "running to continue on the conservative leadership that Les Adams has given our district over the past 10 years. ... I know I have what it takes to represent" everyone in the district.

Pace has held several positions, including serving on the Chatham Town Council and as the Mayor of Chatham for six years. He has served as chairman



Eric Phillips

of the Pittsylvania County Republican Committee since 2016, and also as chairman of the Fifth Congressional District Republican Committee.

Self-described as a "true conservative," Pace said that if elected, he would fight against attempts to restrict "our right to bear arms, keep parents out of their children's education, and defund our police."

Additionally, he would "work to lift some of the weight of rising costs off of your shoulders by cutting the grocery and gas taxes. As a Pro-Life Christian, I will protect the rights of the unborn to ensure that every life has the chance to thrive."

(See Pace, Phillips p. 2)

Long-time director steps down from PA post

Bernadette Moore, the director of exhibitions and marketing at Piedmont Arts is leaving the position, after 17 years of dedicated service.

Piedmont Arts announced Moore's departure in a recent release, noting that her "passion and commitment have significantly contributed to the success and growth of Piedmont Arts."

"She is responsible for the organization's incredible rotating exhibits, thriving social media presence, updated gallery spaces, and leading the museum through the American Alliance of Museum's Museum Assessment Program," the release stated.

A drop-in reception honoring Moore will be held at Piedmont Arts on Wednesday, Dec. 20 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. This will be a wonderful opportunity to express gratitude for her tireless efforts and wish her well in her future endeavors.

Moore's impact on the arts in Martinsville and Henry County spread far beyond her work at the museum.



Bernadette Moore is leaving Piedmont Arts to pursue new opportunities in her hometown.

She was an active member of the City of Martinsville's Arts and Cultural Committee and worked closely with

(See PA Director p. 2)



From left to right, Teddy Martin, Henry County school board chairman, HCPS Teacher of the Year Brittany Brummitt, Career Technical Education Director Michael Minter, and HCPS superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis.

School board honors Flanagan for 20 years of service

By Taylor Boyd

The Henry County School Board honored Terri Flanagan, of the Horsepasture District, for her 20 years of service on the board at its December 7 meeting.

Teddy Martin II, chairman and of the Reed Creek District, read a resolution honoring Flanagan for her tenure on the board, including her service as the board's vice-chairman from 2004-2006.

"Mrs. Flanagan has demonstrated commitment to excellence in meeting the educational needs of all the citizens in Henry County, and

whereas during her tenure on the Henry County School Board, the school system experienced significant advancements in academic achievements and school accreditation while also making strides to close the achievement gap," he read.

Flanagan has actively supported all facets of the school program, including equitable curriculum offerings, the implementation of the one-to-one iPad initiative, improvements and construction at Meadow View Elementary School, and the cafeteria and kitchen at G.W. Carver Elementary School, and

the availability of extra-curricular and co-curricular programs for Henry County students.

(See School Board p. 2)

Santa, Cops & Kids event successful



More than 100 children and between 30-40 officers participated in the annual Santa, Cops & Kids event in Martinsville and Henry County.

By Taylor Boyd

More than 100 youngsters and between 30-40 officers participated in the annual Santa, Cops & Kids event in

Martinsville and Henry County.

The event is a collaboration between the Henry County Sheriff's Office, the

(See Santa, Cops & Kids p. 2)

VISIT
[HTTP://WWW.HENRYCOUNTYENTERPRISE.COM](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)
 FOR MORE UPDATES



Everything You Need In One Convenient Location!

- Climate Controlled
- Indoor Units
- Outdoor Drive Up Units
- Small & Large Sizes
- City Center Location
- Tractor Trailer Access
- Business & Commercial Sizes
- Boxes & Moving Supplies
- U-Haul Trucks
- 24/7 Access

• Keypad Security with Personal PIN Code

10 E. Market St., Martinsville, VA • 276-670-7867

Special Election

(cont. from page 1)

Henry, and the City of Martinsville over the course of the past decade, and I will always be grateful to you for affording me that honor. I am filled with appreciation for my family and friends who supported me during each election and lifted me up in prayer when I was in Richmond. I am truly blessed by God to have such relationships," he wrote.

During his tenure, Adams said he

has "had the opportunity to meet and work with many remarkable people and have enjoyed fulfilling experiences I will long cherish as a member of the historic institution that is the House of Delegates. My love for our people, the Commonwealth, and this place we call home, has only grown stronger.

A Pittsylvania County native, Adams wrote that "as a son of

Southside Virginia, I deeply value the time I was able to help lead as a legislator for the Commonwealth and am proud of what has been accomplished. There has never been a moment when I did not appreciate the significance of this role within our system of self-government. In my stewardship of this office, I strove to consistently display dignity and respect to my constituents and colleagues alike, even during con-

tentious debates, while remaining true to my principles and the communities I represented."

An attorney at law, Adams lives in Chatham with his wife Melanie and their two sons.

The last day for candidates to file for the special election is December 18, 2023. Information about candidacy requirements is available on the Department of Elections website.

Pace, Phillips

(cont. from page 1)

While serving as the Mayor of Chatham, Pace also worked to oppose higher taxes.

Currently, Pace works as the Legislative Assistant to Delegate Otto Wachsmann and serves on the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, after having been appointed by Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

Pace, who lives in Chatham, is also a member of several civic groups, including the Chatham Rotary Club and Chatham First. Pace is a graduate of Virginia Tech's Certified Planning Commissioners

Program and the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Development Program.

PHILLIPS

In a social media post announcing his intention to seek the office, Phillips said his experience and "deep community ties" make him the frontrunner to replace Adams.

He noted that he was endorsed by Sen. Bill Stanley and Dels. Wren Williams and Danny Marshall, and that he is thankful for Adams' service.

Phillips said he is excited "for this

opportunity to represent Southside and Southwest Virginia. Now more than ever, our community needs a fighter who will stand up for our rural values."

If successful in his bid for office, Phillips said he would "fight to bring needed infrastructure investment projects like the Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor, to protect our students and defend parental rights, and work to create jobs, cut taxes and regulations and ease the burden on hardworking Virginians."

Phillips, of Henry County, serves on the Board of Directors for the Boys

and Girls Club of the Blue Ridge, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Uptown Partnership. He is chairman of the Martinsville Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and serves as chairman of the Henry County-Martinsville Republican Committee. Phillips also serves on the Republican Party of Virginia's governing board, the State Central Committee.

He and his wife, Rebecca, have three children and a recent grandchild.

PA Director

(cont. from page 1)

VisitMartinsville to promote arts-based tourism in the area. She spearheaded the creation of the Gravely-Lester Art Garden along with Kathy Rogers, Will Gravely, and Susan McCulloch.

In addition, she served on the board of the Rives Theatre and the Uptown Design Committee.

Moore also worked closely with the city and other organizations to bring public art to Uptown.

"The scope and scale of her accomplishments are vast and the community is indebted to her tireless work promoting the arts and culture here," the release stated.

"Piedmont Arts is a shining star in

the community and I have truly loved my time here," Moore said. "Leaving such an amazing museum and community is bittersweet, but I look forward to future opportunities in my hometown."

The staff of Piedmont Arts also are feeling her impending absence.

"As we bid farewell, I reflect on her

17 years of exceptional dedication," Executive Director Heidi Pinkston said. "Bernadette's creative vision and unwavering commitment have left an indelible mark on Piedmont Arts. While we will miss her leadership, we celebrate her legacy and wish her continued success in all her future endeavors."

School Board

(cont. from page 1)

Champ Hardie, of the Ridgeway District, commended Flanagan for her tenure on the board.

"You know Mrs. Flanagan, that is quite an accomplishment," he said.

Hardie said before Flanagan became a school board member, she was a successful substitute teacher, who subbed for him from time to time.

"When I returned to school, my students would ask me if I was absent again could I get Mrs. Flanagan to sub for me. The students really loved her," he said.

Ben Gravely, of the Iriswood District, said it was a pleasure to work with Flanagan.

"I know years ago when I was in the school system as a building principal some of the decisions that you made impacted us tremendously, and I really appreciate the support that you've given our school system over 20 years," he said.

Thomas Auker, of the Blackberry District, said, "We sit side by side" during the meetings "so she keeps me straight, I keep her straight. We've been together as a team, she has more years than I do, but she has been a great friend."

Cherie Whitlow, member-at-large, thanked Flanagan for her work and dedication to the school system.

"I hope you enjoy retirement to the fullest," she said.

Elizabeth Durden, of the Collinsville District, also thanked Flanagan for her dedication to county students, and Martin thanked Flanagan for all the opportunities the board has had to learn from and serve with her.

"We will certainly miss you, and we'll gladly have you back here any time and thank you again," Martin said.

In other matters, the board:

- *Held a swearing-in ceremony

for Champ Hardie, of the Ridgeway District; Teddy Martin II, of the Reed Creek District, and Cherie Whitlow, member-at-large. Stephanie Brinegar, who will represent the Horsepasture District, also was sworn in.

*Recognized the 2024-2025 teacher of the year from each of the schools.

*Presented a certificate from the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) to Gravely for serving as a delegate to the 2023 VSBA Delegate Assembly.

*Approved the All In Virginia Initiative spending plan.

*Announced the winners of the holiday card contest.

*Recognized students for their accomplishments in cross country, football, marching band, and other organizations.

*Heard updates to the VSBA regulations from Superintendent Dr. Amy

Blake-Lewis.

*Approved the consent agenda.

*Approved the 2024-2025 academic calendar.

*Approved changing the 2023-2024 calendar to make December 27 and December 28 school board holidays.

*Approved the purchase of four 65-passenger conventional school buses.

*Awarded a contract for vehicular fuel to Clark Gas & Oil.

*Awarded a \$299,600 contract to RRMM Architects to pay for providing professional architectural and engineering services for new elevators for G.W. Carver Elementary School, Campbell Court Elementary School, and Drewry Mason Elementary School. The funds will be from the one percent sales tax.

*Approved the school security equipment grant as presented.

*Heard the superintendent's report.

*Heard comments from the board.



From left to right, Henry County Public School Teacher of the Year Brittany Brummitt from the Career Academy, first runner up from G.W. Carver Elementary McKinley Smith, and second runner up Kay Newcomb from Rich Acres Elementary School.



Teddy Martin, chairman and of the Reed Creek District, presented a resolution to Terri Flanagan, of the Horsepasture District, honoring her for her 20 years of service on the school board.



Several school teams were recognized at the meeting.



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 Henry County Board of Zoning Appeals meets at noon in Conference Room 205 of the County Administration Building on Kings Mountain Road, with a public hearing to start at 1 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room.

Events

Thursday, December 21

Yoga in the Galleries: 108 Sun Salutations, 5:30 p.m. Join instructor Elizabeth Walsh in the Piedmont Arts galleries for a time-honored traditional yoga practice for the winter solstice. Walsh has RYT 500 yoga training and 10 years of teaching experience. This is a vigorous practice that can be adapted for first-time yoga students and fitness of all levels. The group will do 108 sun salutations. The practice is mentally clarifying and will leave your body tired with a soreness from the inside out as a result of stretching and strength that will make you feel more alive. Bring a mat, water and hand towel. Dress in comfortable clothes. \$15 per person. Pay instructor. No advance registration.

Tuesday, December 26

Chix with Sticks, 10:30 a.m. Knitters are invited to work together in the Piedmont Arts classroom on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Sessions are self-guided and provide a space to socialize while creating. Bring your own supplies. Advanced registra-

tion required. Free to members, \$5 for nonmembers who will pay at the door.

Tuesdays in December (19, and 26)

Senior Studio, 1 p.m., Piedmont Arts. Seniors are invited to craft and create together in the Piedmont Arts classroom. Sessions are self-guided and provide a space to socialize while creating artwork. Bring your own supplies. Free for members; \$5 for nonmembers.

Ongoing

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.

AWANA meets at Blackberry Baptist Church on Sundays, from 4-6 p.m.

TOPS FIELDALE VA 0626 meets each Tuesday at 5:45 pm at the Rangeley Ruritan Building on 134 Calloway Drive, Fieldale, VA. New members are welcome. For more information, call Patti at (276) 358-0489.

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 & gospel music by different bands each week. If you want, 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.

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 p.m. 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.

Santa, Cops & Kids

(cont. from page 1)



The Grinch crashed the shopping spree, bringing joy to all in spite of himself.



Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis (center) and some of the other officers participating in the Santa, Cops & Kids event.



Whether on the faces of officers or youngsters, smiles were a mainstay of the event.



Officers from law enforcement agencies in Henry County and Martinsville helped 100 youngsters shop for Christmas in the annual Santa, Cops & Kids event. (Photos courtesy of the Henry County Sheriff's Office.)



Martinsville Police Department, and the Martinsville Sheriff's Office.

"It was an absolutely great event," Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis said.

Youngsters who participate in the event must be approved via an application process, Davis said. Applications are distributed to civic organizations and local schools, and parents may apply for their children to be part of the program.

"Those applications are also looked at against applications from other Christmas benefit organizations as well to be fair and make sure people aren't going to all of them, and to spread the event throughout the community," he said.

Davis said once the children are

selected, they are notified, and their parent or guardian provides their transportation to Walmart.

There is an allotment of \$100 per child, and participants have free reign over how that money is spent, Davis said. The only exceptions are no violent video games, nothing firearm-related, and no real knives.

"An officer will get with them and take a shopping buggy and we just shop the store," he said. "We walk around with them, and we talk with them. We try to get to know them and give them a chance to get to know us as law enforcement officers and see that we're really there to help them, we're part of their community."

Davis said the officers try to take the time spent shopping to build a

good relationship with the youngsters and have a good time.

Officers who participate in the shopping event volunteer their time to do so, Davis said.

"We just notify our employees of the date and time and invite them all to come. So, everyone who comes really has a heart for the community and the children," he said.

While the children benefit from the event, Davis said he believes the officers "benefit more than anyone from the time we get to spend with them."

Davis said every officer spent a lot of time in the toy aisle this year. For example, the young girl he was helping spent time perusing the toy aisle, the plush stuffed animals, and the mini craft items.

That youngster, Davis said, was a special case. Her father worked for the Henry County Sheriff's Office and died from cancer earlier this year.

"She requested that I shop with her personally, and I did so," he said. "She was rather frugal with her money, so it took her well over an hour to get to her \$100 limit."

Many youngsters shop for others in their family as well, Davis said.

"I saw several kids purchasing shoes, and I saw some over in the toiletry areas buying some lotions for their parents and things like that," he said.

Those wishing to donate to the Shop with a Cop program should make a check out to the Martinsville Police Department Benevolent Association.

Bassett center to host series of genealogy classes

A series of classes on genealogical research will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Bassett Historical Center on each Tuesday in February.

Genealogy 1 and Genealogy 2, offered on February 6 and 13, are for those just

beginning their family research and will cover the basics of research and the materials available at the center.

Genealogy 3 and Genealogy 4, offered on February 20 and 27, will cover the use of several different genea-

logical websites.

To benefit from the 3rd and 4th classes, participants will need to have taken the first two classes and/or have a basic understanding of computer use.

There is no charge for the classes.

When you sign up for Genealogy 1, you will automatically be signed up for the other three classes. The classes are limited to 12 people. Call the Historical Center at (276) 629-9191 to reserve a spot.

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

OPINION

Changes in perspective

Sometimes when you see something from someone else's eyes it looks way different than what you had gotten used to seeing it as.

That really stinks when it's something you like -or, at least, used to like.

Sweetheart and I like different things, but we get along really well and indulge each other our delights.

He never had set foot in the ultra common but still-aiming-at-fancy coffee shop chain my daughter and I go to until he went with me.

He wasn't impressed. Whenever my daughter and I go out of town and need a stop, we stop there. I like to get a cappuccino, and she gets some kind of frothy fancy drink.

So when Sweetheart and I went on a little getaway last weekend, I was hoping to indulge my travel habit, but shy about asking, considering how I knew he felt about it.

On the way home, though, he gave me a chance to pick where to stop. He was offering, and I did have a hankering for a cappuccino.

"Well, there's a Such-and-Such coffee shop up ahead two miles," I said, after checking the Maps app.

He didn't look too thrilled but he didn't complain out loud, either.

He pulled off the highway and made the turns to get to the coffee shop.

Its parking lot was packed. The drive-in line circled around the building, but we were going to go in to take advantages of the facilities. After slowly squeezing the pickup truck in and around the traffic, we saw the sign on the door that said the inside was closed.

Ah, shoot. You know that feeling when you extended yourself and it didn't work out. That was the case here.

However, he agreed to an attempt at a second branch of that coffee shop just a couple of miles down the road.

We got there. It was crowded, busy and noisy. The "decor" was stark and industrial black and grey. You could see the crumbs and trash all over the counters where they made the coffee. This coffee chain that used to be so comfortable and inviting 10 and 20 years ago now just looks like a warehouse to get to people's money with as little effort as possible.

I ordered while he went to the restroom, and then I headed back there.



Holly Kozelsky

This place made its bathrooms for both men and women a few years back, which always has disconcerted me. I don't like sharing bathrooms with men. When I got in there, I couldn't even tell if the door was locked or not. It was a computer-type lock rather than a manual lock. Not even knowing if the bathroom door is locked or not makes it exponentially more unpleasant to share a bathroom with strange men.

The man waiting his turn behind me started to go in as I was fiddling with the lock. I told him I wasn't leaving yet, just trying to figure out how to tell when the door was locked.

The man suggested I shut the door and try to lock it and he'd pull on it to let me know if it was locked or not. That seems kind of helpful and kind of creepy, but I didn't see any other solution so we did that.

That totally unpleasant bathroom experience behind me, I rejoined Sweetheart in the coffee line.

"This woke place has those bathrooms for both men and women," he said. "I don't like that. I'd rather us men have our own bathroom."

"I wish y'all did too," I replied.

We got our drinks and went back to the truck.

A few miles down the road, he asked me how much his plain coffee cost.

I mumbled an avoidance of an answer.

"It isn't worth it," he said. "That hotel coffee that you won't drink is a whole lot better than this."

I took a sip of his.

It was disgusting.

He was right.

I felt sorry for him being stuck with that bitter drink.

Though I like my usual order, going to this chain coffee shop has been worse and worse over the years.

By now he'd never believe me if I said some of those coffee shops do make good stops.

A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

On December 7, 1941, just before 8:00 am, the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service launched a surprise attack on the United States. The U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, located on Oahu, Hawaii, was attacked by 353 Imperial Japanese fighters in two waves.

The attack destroyed eight massive U.S. battleships and more than 300 airplanes. In total, 2,403 Americans were killed as a result of the attack, and 1,178 others were wounded.

Almost half of the Americans who died that day were aboard the USS Arizona. An 1,800-pound bomb was dropped on the battleship and landed in the ship's forward ammunition magazine. The ship then exploded and sank, killing 1,000 men who were trapped inside.

Seven and a half hours later on that day, Japan officially declared war on the United States and the British Empire.

The following day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed the nation in a Joint Session of Congress. The opening line of the speech began, "Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy..."

The United States, up until the attack on Pearl Harbor, was a neutral nation. On December 8, the United States Congress declared war on Japan, and so led to the U.S. formally entering World War II.

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor was designed to destroy the United States' Pacific fleet. Almost the entire fleet was moored around Ford Island in the harbor and hundreds of airplanes sat in nearby airfields.

However, as it turns out, one of our Navy's most important types of vessels, our aircraft carriers, were not there that day. These aircraft carriers played the critical role of bringing planes to distant battle areas around the Pacific.

All three of the Pacific Fleet's carriers were away from Pearl Harbor on December 7. The USS Enterprise was on its way back to Pearl Harbor, after transporting 12 Marine Corps F4F-3 Wildcat fighters to Wake Island. The USS Lexington was sent to Midway Island to deliver 18 Marine Corps SB2U Vindicator dive bombers. The last, USS Saratoga, was in San Diego after going through months long refit.

Our other four carriers, USS Ranger, USS Yorktown, USS Hornet, and USS Wasp were stationed on the East Coast.

The absence of the carriers that day proved to be crucial to the United States' success in future battles in the Pacific. American



Morgan Griffith

Representative

aircraft carriers played important roles in the Battle of Coral Sea (May 4-8, 1942) and the Battle of Midway (June 4-7, 1942).

The USS Lexington and USS Yorktown successfully damaged a Japanese carrier and sunk supporting ships during the Battle of Coral Sea. However, the USS Lexington was critically damaged (and later scuttled), and the USS Yorktown was badly damaged as well. Despite this, USS Yorktown was able to return to Pearl Harbor for repairs. The carrier was put to sea only 72 hours later, even though it was originally thought repairs would take weeks. Accordingly, Yorktown was able to provide support at the Battle of Midway.

During Midway, Yorktown took on counterattacks by the Japanese, providing cover for USS Enterprise and USS Hornet. Though the Japanese crippled Yorktown, their losses proved substantial, having lost four aircraft carriers during the battle. It is considered a turning point in the War in the Pacific.

A Side Note

Jeannette Rankin was the first woman to be elected to federal office in the United States. She was also the only member of Congress to vote against declaring war on Japan and entering World War II. She had been one of a handful of members who earlier in her life had voted against entering World War I as well. While some may argue there were valid reasons to vote against WWI, there was no justifying voting against defending ourselves from the Japanese after their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

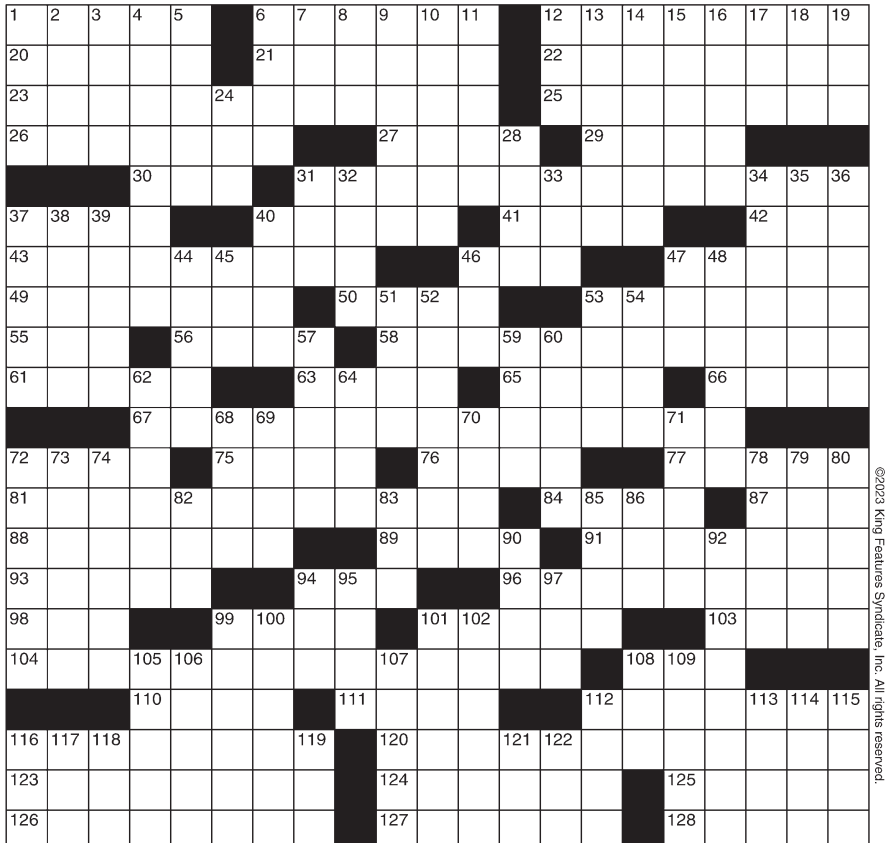
It is important to remember Pearl Harbor and honor the lives lost on that day. It is also important to remember our nation unified, fought, struggled, and prevailed.

On the 82nd anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, I commend our men and women in uniform, both past and present, for their service.

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.

Super Crossword LOVE OF SOLVING

- ACROSS 1 Picked instrument 6 Type of small grocery store 12 Blobby light source 20 Viva voce 21 Spoil, as "my parade" 22 Roast joke 23 Like baggy clothes 25 Winter wreath ornament 26 Gave away temporarily 27 Money, informally 29 Jagger of the Stones 30 "Raggedy" doll 31 Monty Python tune about a logger 37 Addams who created Morticia 40 Quick attack 41 Cover girl 42 "gratia" ("by the grace of God") 43 Dwell in the company of 46 Outer: Prefix 47 "the Night" (2007 Joaquin Phoenix film) 49 Had to admit a goof-up 50 "Behold!" to Caesar 53 Totally bummed out 55 Stuff in a sty 56 Avian hooters 58 Texas banner 61 Big twitch 63 Safari sight 65 Envoy's asset 66 "There — comparison" 67 Chinese black tea with a smoky flavor 72 Anita of jazz 75 Env. notice 76 Estrada of TV 77 Ones starring 81 Best Actress winner for "The Farmer's Daughter" 84 Grammy winner 127 Shows as an "encore" 128 Clifflike DOWN 1 Tennis need 2 Skin soother 3 Lunch hour 4 "Be right there" 5 Classic theater 6 Liverpool or Leeds native 7 Horse bit 8 Morse bit 9 Conundrum 10 Of yore 11 Trig measure 12 Slice (off) 13 Zoo attraction 14 Gondola city 15 Smart — (cocky sort) 16 Guitar riffs 17 Year, in Brazil 18 Roughly half of all adults 19 Beginning to mature? 24 Amusement 28 Frightful dino 31 Chilling Chaney 32 Strong desire 33 "Selena" actress, to her fans 34 Nonalcoholic beer brand 35 Georgia city near Atlanta 36 Ornamental street tree 37 Bivalve mollusks 38 Ask for moola 39 Brand of skin care and cosmetics 40 Turkey, e.g. 44 Pleasant odor 45 Do some yard maintenance 46 Poet's twilight 47 Major battle 48 Crude model of a despised person 51 Choke up 52 Give the OK 53 Strong desire 54 Big mil. alliance 57 Dull, dark bluish-gray 59 Decorative sewing case 60 Burlap bags 62 Most cunning 64 — uncertain terms 68 Pricey liver spread 69 Superhero creator Lee 70 Agcys., e.g. 71 "Nifty!" 72 Chum from way back 73 El — (treasure city) 74 Vying venues 78 Uplift 79 Whirlybird blade 80 Drawn-out battle 82 Six-pt. scores 83 Driver's 180 85 Year, to Caesar 86 Garnet, e.g. 90 Ladd of "Shane" 92 Shows lip-curling contempt 94 Holiday tree 95 "Orinoco Flow" vocalist 97 Texter's "I'm shocked!" 99 Carry to excess 100 Spanish explorer Hernando 101 Grew vigorously, old-style 102 Former Disney exec Michael 105 Sword types 106 Duck type 107 Mosaic maker 108 Autumn mo. 109 Manicurists file them 112 Divests (of) 113 Ireland, in Ireland 114 Be a drifter 115 See 89-Across 116 "Rambo" setting, briefly 117 Era or eon 118 "— Doubtfire" 119 Fluffy lap dog, for short 121 Safari sight 122 Safari sight



Social media distilled

Your social media post:

I got an ice cream maker for my birthday and I just churned some homemade pistachio ice cream. It was delicious!

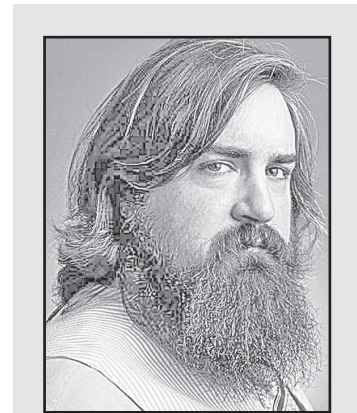
The reply:

Hello, it's me, the single most humorless and pedantic person you have ever met in your life. We briefly encountered one another eight years ago under circumstances you can no longer fully remember, and there's a good chance we have passed one another in public multiple times since without recognizing each other. However, I monitor your social media closely and I have a lot of thoughts about the seemingly innocent thing you just posted and you're going to hear all of them.

First things first, I am lactose intolerant, and I cannot believe you would brag on social media about eating ice cream. Many of us would LOVE to eat ice cream, but unfortunately, our physiology does not allow it. Maybe you think there's something funny about someone eating dairy and then having flatulence so loud that it sets off a car alarm, but believe me, there was NOTHING funny about the time it happened to me and I happen to have a very well-developed sense of humor.

What's more, did you know that every time a cow is milked, it shaves five years off of its life? A guy outside of the co-op told me that once, and he had a face tattoo indicating that only God could judge him, so who am I to question his wisdom? Milk is murder, meat is slavery, and eggs are misdemeanor embezzlement.

Furthermore, I CANNOT believe that you chose to make pistachio ice cream. Talk about adding insult to injury! Do you have any idea how much water it takes to grow one single pistachio? The equivalent of eight Olympic swimming pools, probably! And do you know where they grow pistachios? California, which is facing a terrible drought! I saw a documentary just the other day about how bad the drought is in California; everyone there is dirty and sunburned and once a week, the Governor pulls these big levers and water pours out of this mountain that's shaped like a skull, and that's all the water anybody gets. And then Charlize Theron drove this big rig around the desert and a guy



By Ben R. Williams

named Mad Max teamed up with her. Best documentary I've ever seen in my life.

Finally, I can't believe you would brag about churning your own ice cream. As you no doubt well know, I suffer from Elective Fatigue Syndrome (EFS), which prevents me from doing strenuous activity when I don't really feel like it. This disease, which is recognized by nearly a dozen doctors of homeopathy, afflicts literally tens of people every year. We suffer so greatly and hardly anyone even knows about our disease because we don't feel like writing a pamphlet about it. I don't mean to sound dramatic, but when you boast about how easily you churn ice cream, you might as well be setting me on fire and then scissor-kicking me into a combine harvester.

Now, I know you're just going to say what you always say: "This post isn't about you." That seems unlikely because every situation I have ever encountered and every comment I have ever overheard has been about me. No statement has been fully evaluated until I've had the opportunity to swoop in with my carefully curated chiding mother hen personality and surgically drain every last drop of joy and levity from its tattered carcass. Much like Judge Holden in Cormac McCarthy's "Blood Meridian," whatever exists in creation without my knowledge exists without my consent, and I do not consent to your pistachio ice cream.

Anyway, I generally enjoy your posts, I just hope you'll be more considerate in the future and try to avoid such controversial topics.

Conference Center Leader to Retire

After 20 years of service to the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR), Leslie Dobbins has announced her retirement from her position as Vice President of the Institute Conference Center, effective Jan. 31.

Dobbins' commitment to excellence has helped elevate the Institute Conference Center (ICC) to one of Southern Virginia's most prestigious meeting and event destinations.

"For over 20 years it has never felt like work because I absolutely love what I do every day. I believe in the mission, and I am beyond grateful to have had this incredible opportunity to work with so many capable and dedicated individuals," said Dobbins.

Dobbins joined the ICC team in 2003 as Sales and Event Planner before being promoted to General Manager and then Director; she was named Vice President in May 2022. Her hospitality career spans 40 years and includes previous positions as Membership Development Director and Social Director for well-known hospitality organizations in Milwaukee and Louisville. Locally, she has served on the boards of the Danville Science Center, Smart Beginnings, Danville Concert Association and the Garden Club of Danville. Dobbins attended Sweet Briar College and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin.

IALR is indebted to Dobbins for numerous accomplishments, some of which include:

- Leadership and development of an experienced ICC staff who worked by her side for most of her tenure
- Cultivation of a high-quality food service provider
- Opening IALR's on-site café, Megabytes
- Implementation of a dedicated "on-call" staff who embrace IALR's mission of economic transformation
- Leading the ICC team's creation of a meaningful holiday community service project for 14 years (Decorating the Trees for a Cause, followed by Wreaths for a Cause, raising a total of \$157,333 for area non-profits)
- Managing the \$2.8 million renovations of the ICC which began simultaneously with the pandemic
- Overseeing upgrades to the Charles Hawkins Building high bays
- Collaborating with Facilities to oversee the construction of the Rapid Launch Facility

"Leslie's dedication, attention to



Leslie Dobbins

detail and commitment to excellence are pertinent factors in the success of the ICC. Her team members continuously strive to support the Conference Center's function in the same way. During my brief tenure with IALR, I have grown to sincerely appreciate Leslie's love for the organization, our mission and the community. She will be missed by all, and I wish her the best in future endeavors," said Dr. John H. Hughes IV, Executive Vice President of Operations at IALR.

Dobbins' team also say they will miss their longtime leader.

"Leslie is a hard-working and fair supervisor. She has held this team together like glue, and we are going to miss her terribly," Diana Parrish, Event Planner and Service Operations Coordinator at IALR.

"Leslie is a great person to work for, or as she would always say, 'we work together.' I could not work for a better person; she is honest, has integrity and you always know she has your back and is very appreciative of the job you do," said Ellen Bass, Sales and Marketing Manager at IALR.

"I give credit and thanks to the ICC team who have been integral in the growth and success of our department," said Dobbins. "Professionally and personally, I am indebted to Diana, Ellen and Theresa (Lewis, Information Desk Specialist) for their unwavering dedication and support every step of the way."

Dobbins' position, Vice President of the Institute Conference Center, will be posted on the employment section of the IALR website in the coming days.



Annual "Christmas at the Farm" Event to be held in Ferrum

Join the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum (BRIM) at the 1800 farm museum for the annual traditional Christmas in the Blue Ridge on Friday, December 15 from 5 to 8 p.m., at the Blue Ridge Institute & Museum, 10530 Franklin St. in Ferrum.

The event includes cookies and cider and a variety of vendors selling Christmas gifts at the pavilion.

The house will be open, and the farm will be lit with lanterns.

Costumed interpreters will be spinning wool, making crafts with children, and have the fires burning.

This annual event is free and open to the public.

For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/335759362437173>.

Congressional staff plan final meetings of year

Congressman Morgan Griffith's Ninth District staff members will be available in Patrick County and Martinsville on December 18.

Staff members will be in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of the City of Martinsville's Municipal Building, at 55 W. Church Street, from 10 – 11:30 a.m.

They will return to the Patrick County Administration Building, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart, from 12:30 – 2 p.m., and meet with residents in the

Conference Room.

In the event of inclement weather (heavy snow, sleet, icy rain, etc.), traveling office hours may be rescheduled to avoid putting constituents at risk. If a locality's schools are closed, then its office hours will be closed as well.

Call the Christiansburg Office at (540) 381-5671 or the Abingdon Office at (276) 525-1405 with any questions or to schedule an appointment time in the event of office hour closure.

C-PEG launches application process for spring boot-camp

The Chambers's Partnership for Economic Growth (C-PEG) is launching its application process for the Spring 2024 round of Startup and Grow Martinsville-Henry County. Startup Martinsville-Henry County is a mentoring program with an intensive eight-week entrepreneurial boot-camp program for startups. Grow Martinsville-Henry County is a four-week boot-camp for growing companies who have been in business for 2 years or longer. The application process is competitive, and applicants must comply with the program guidelines. Applications for both programs are due by noon on Friday, January 5.

Partners include C-PEG, City of Martinsville, Henry County, the Campbell Family Group and the George W. Lester, II fund through the Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia. Additionally, Appalachian Power is a sponsor of Startup and Grow Martinsville-Henry County, and American National Bank is the small business sponsor for Chamber and C-PEG events.

Since 2015, when the initiative originally began as Startup Martinsville in the Uptown Martinsville area with a Community Business Launch grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the geographic area has grown to

include the entire footprint in the City of Martinsville and Henry County thanks to support from both locales and private sector funding. C-PEG received additional grant funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission which awards a dollar-for-dollar match to businesses from the targeted sectors including agribusiness, technology, small-scale production, manufacturing, and health care businesses.

To date, the initiative has successfully graduated 314 individuals from its training programs, awarded 74 businesses with over \$571,724 in cash and in-kind funding. These businesses have created over \$5 million in new capital investment and created over 270 new jobs.

C-PEG partners with Patrick & Henry Community College to deliver the entrepreneurial boot camp sessions as well as Longwood's Small Business Development Center, and a host of staff from the City and County, local entrepreneurs and business experts.

"Small business is a vital component of our economy! It's rewarding to see the participants put in the work to bring their new business concepts to our community! I can't wait to see the brilliant ideas and creativity in the next round of applications," stated Brenell Thomas, C-PEG Executive Director.

Those interested in participating are encouraged to complete the application packet that is available online at www.martinsville.com/startup by the deadline of January 5, 2024. Applications are being accepted for both StartUp and Grow MHC boot camps. However, the Grow MHC program will begin in February 2024 while StartUp is planned for March 2024.

Contact the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce with any questions at (276) 632-6401 or mhccoc@mhccchamber.com.

Movie Town 276-638-4040

NOW PLAYING:
Wonka(PG),
Wish(PG),
Hunger Games: Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes(PG-13),
Napoleon(R), and
Troll: Band Together(PG)

<http://www.movietowntheatre.com>
 or call for showtimes (276) 632-7400

Tis' The Season of Giving



Charles Williams, Williams Auction Co., LLC presents a \$1,000.00 check to Nancy Arnold of Fieldale Heritage, Inc., to assist with the maintenance & renovations of the former Fieldale "Y."



Charles Williams, Williams Auction Co., LLC presents a \$1,000.00 check to Todd Norman, Captain of the Fieldale Volunteer Fire Department, for ongoing services & maintenance.

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

SPRINGLAKE STOCKYARD

LIVESTOCK AUCTIONS
 EVERY SATURDAY AT 1 P.M.

- We sell cattle, goats, sheep & pigs.
- State Graded Feeder Sale every Saturday

For directions to our facility, weekly updates of upcoming events and current sale prices, please visit our website:
www.springlakeauctions.com.

Please feel free to call us at
 (540) 297-1707.

We appreciate your business!
 1069 SICKLE COURT, MONETA, VA 24121

CLASSIFIED

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.

CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINE: MONDAY AT NOON
Call (276) 694-3101

SERVICES

276-229-9410 or Facebook
Thomas Land Solutions LLC

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.

Thomas Land Solutions LLC

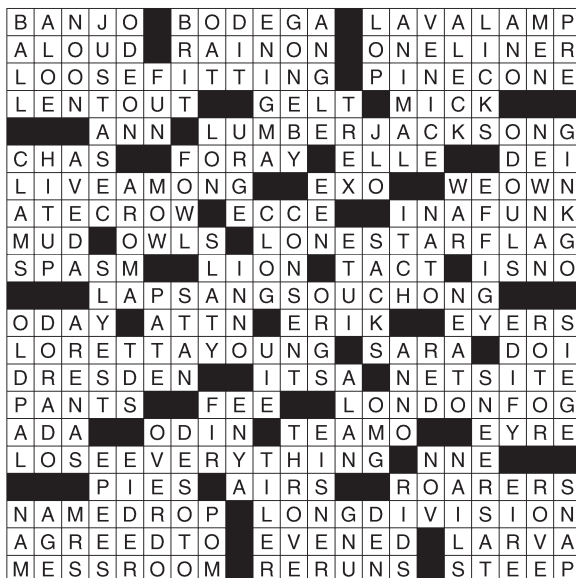
Forestry mulching, overgrown property cleanup, bush-hogging, pasture & field reclamation, ATV & walking trails, hunting lanes, skid-steer, tractor and mini-excavator work. Free estimates. Call

FOR SALE

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

If you've read this far, you can see how a classified ad in the Henry County Enterprise can work. Let our readers know you're hiring with a classified ad in The Enterprise for as little as \$8 a week. Call 276-694-3101 or email submissions@theenterprise.net for more information.

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



ADVERTISE!

Music icon Emmylou Harris tops Rooster Walk 14 band lineup

Emmylou Harris, a 2018 Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award winner and member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, will bring her band to headline the 14th annual Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival. Joining her at the top of the band lineup will be celebrated guitarist Cory Wong, an exploding star on the international music scene.

Harris has been estimated to have sold more than 15 million records worldwide. She has also earned 13 Grammy Awards and placed 27 singles into the top 10 US country chart. She will make her Rooster Walk debut with a Saturday evening set at the festival, which will take place May 23-26, at Pop's Farm in Martinsville.

Wong will also make his RW debut when his band performs a Friday night headlining set. A former member of Vulfpeck, Wong's live shows are lauded for their instrumental wizardry, incredible cohesiveness and their sheer, energetic fun.

The final batch of RW14 band additions will be announced by February 2024.

Tickets for Rooster Walk 14 are now on sale at www.roosterwalk.com, which also features all the information needed to plan for an amazing experience.

The festival will take place Thursday-Sunday of Memorial Day weekend in the rolling foothills surrounding Martinsville. Rooster Walk is a 4-day festival celebrating



From a previous Rooster Walk

music, art, and the great outdoors at the idyllic Pop's Farm venue. With 40+ bands performing on 6 different stages, an amazing roster of stellar music steers the Rooster Walk experience.

In addition to approximately 80 sets of live music, the family-friendly Rooster Walk will offer a wide variety of kids' programming, family fun, craft beer, great food, arts and numerous opportunities to enjoy Virginia's great outdoors with kayak river floats, pedal boats, bike rides, yoga, a disc golf course and beautiful on-site camping.

Rooster Walk has been named one of the Top 5 festivals in the state by the Richmond-Times Dispatch. It also was voted the region's Most Creative Charitable Event by readers of Virginia Living Magazine for three consecutive years. The festi-

val was created in memory of late Martinsville natives Edwin "The Rooster" Penn and Walker Shank, who graduated from Martinsville High School in 2000.

A portion of proceeds from the festival will be donated to local and regional charities, including Rooster Walk's own Penn-Shank Memorial Endowment Scholarship Fund for students at Martinsville High School, and the Rooster Walk Music Instrument Program for public band programs in the local city and county school systems.

The festival is produced by Rooster Walk Inc., a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to promoting music, arts and education in its home of Martinsville-Henry County. Since 2009, Rooster Walk Inc. has donated more than \$320,000 to local and regional charities.

Your Community, Your Voice
Serving Henry County, Martinsville, and Surrounding Area
HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE
henrycountyenterprise.com

Weekly Publication
Published Each Saturday

Michael Showell, Publisher
Debbie Hall, Editor
dhall@theenterprise.net
(276) 694-3101

Wendi Craig, Advertising Manager
advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com
(276) 340-2445

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

VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

Route 58 Business (AL Philpott Highway) and Route 930 (Dogwood Drive) Intersection Improvements Henry County

Find out about a project to reduce congestion at the intersection of Route 58 Business (AL Philpott Highway) and Route 930 (Dogwood Drive) in Henry County. Traffic from the nearby middle school backs up at this intersection particularly in the morning and afternoon.

The project entails adding a right turn lane on Route 930 onto westbound Route 58 Business and adding a right turn lane from westbound Route 58 Business onto Route 930. Entrances at the nearby gas station also will be modified.

Review the project information and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation in the form of a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion at VDOT's Salem District Office located at 731 Harrison Ave. in Salem, 540-387-5353, 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623), TTY/TDD 711. Please call ahead to ensure the availability of appropriate personnel to answer your questions.

If your concerns cannot be satisfied, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request that a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Hayden Hill, Virginia Department of Transportation, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem, VA 24153 on or prior to **December 22, 2023**. If a request for a public hearing is received, notice of date, time and place of the hearing will be posted.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you have questions or concerns about your civil rights in regards to this project or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact Hayden Hill at the phone numbers listed above.

State Project: 0058-044-077, M501, P101, R201
Federal Project: NHP-044-2(070) UPC: 119457
From: 0.024 mile west of intersection of Route 930
To: 0.071 mile east of intersection of Route 930

Advertise With Us!

What we offer:

- Flexible pricing
- Highly Customizable Packages that include print, digital or both
- Deeply discounted rates
- Seasonal Specials

What we have:

- A team of Advertising Specialists who will work with you to customize a package, STRETCH your advertising dollars, and accomplish your advertising goals
- A talented team of designers who will work to help you reach your base.

Join our family and put our talented team to work for you today.

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

P&HCC to Lead Regional Work-Ethic Focused Instruction

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) is one of three community colleges awarded a grant for \$85,000 from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) as part of the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP) to support delivery of the Mike Rowe Works (MRW) Work Ethic Certification. MRW curriculum was developed in partnership with Wichita State University Tech to examine the importance of work ethic, personal responsibility and a positive attitude.

"Skill and competency development at Virginia's community colleges prepares students to secure paid internships and career opportunities," said Dr. Alisha Bazemore, assistant director of innovative work-based learning initiatives at SCHEV. "The overlay of the MRW Work Ethic curriculum provides a soft skills foundation for those students to become more marketable to potential employers."

P&HCC, as a National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) Leadership School, was one of two schools in Virginia, and twenty schools nationally, to pilot the Mike Rowe Works Work Ethic Curriculum in 2020 through a partnership of NC3, the Mike Rowe Works Foundation, and Wichita State University Tech. Shannon Whitlow, P&HCC's Career Services Coordinator at that

time, became a Master Instructor for the program. P&HCC offered the training to multiple cohorts of students, primarily in the college's unique programs that serve underrepresented students, including Hope Center Ministries recovery program, Guided Career Exploration youth program in partnership with Virginia Career Works - West Piedmont, and the Road to Success in Virginia Program, which provides assistance for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients. P&HCC issued 51 Mike Rowe Works Work Ethic Certificates during the pilot. Now, P&HCC will take the lead on a regional project serving V-TOP Region 3 in partnership with Danville Community College and Southside Virginia Community College.

"Patrick & Henry Community College is proud of the work accomplished as part of the pilot program that introduced the Mike Rowe Works Work Ethic curriculum across the country at community colleges and we are honored to lead the region in implementing the program in our area," said P&HCC president Dr. Greg Hodges.

As the Southern VA Works Collaborative, P&HCC will work with Danville Community College (DCC) and Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC) to serve V-TOP Region 3. This includes P&HCC's service region (Henry County,

Patrick County, and the city of Martinsville). Danville Community College serves Pittsylvania County, Halifax County, and the city of Danville. Southside Virginia Community College serves the following counties: Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Greensville, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward.

The three community colleges have committed to partnering on instruction to serve the entire V-TOP three region. All three community colleges enjoy strong working relationships with the workforce development boards which serve Region 3: Virginia Career Works - West Piedmont and Virginia Career Works - South Central, including representation on the Boards. Virginia Career Works partners will assist with outreach and recruitment for the program. Additionally, all three community colleges are partners with K-12 and higher education centers through GO TEC, a highly successful talent pathways initiative through GO Virginia Region 3.

V-TOP is administered by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia in partnership with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the Virginia Business Higher Education Council. It is funded by the General Assembly's Commonwealth Innovative Internship Fund and Program.

Sports Schedule

Following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of Dec. 18-23:

12/18	7pm Girls Basketball Bassett at Dan River 7pm Girls Basketball Chatham at Magna Vista 7pm Boys Basketball Dan River at Bassett 7pm Boys Basketball Magna Vista at Chatham	12/21	6pm Girls Basketball Liberty at Magna Vista TBA Girls Basketball Carlisle vs TBA (Tournament)		(at Morehead H.S.) 7:30p Boys Basketball Martinsville at Morehead H.S. (Tournament)
12/19	5pm Wrestling Magna Vista vs multiple schools (at Patrick County) 7pm Boys Basketball Bassett at William Byrd	12/22	TBA Wrestling Bassett at William Byrd TBA Girls Basketball Martinsville at Morehead H.S. (Tournament) TBA Boys Basketball Magna Vista at Hidden Valley (Tournament) TBA Girls Basketball Carlisle vs TBA (Tournament) 6pm Boys Basketball Carlisle vs McMichael	12/23	TBA Wrestling Bassett at William Byrd (Tournament) TBA Wrestling Martinsville at William Byrd (Tournament) TBA Girls Basketball Martinsville at Morehead H.S. (Tournament) 6pm Boys Basketball Carlisle at Morehead (Tournament) 7:30p Boys Basketball Martinsville vs McMichael (at Morehead H.S.)
12/20	5pm Girls Basketball Carlisle vs WSCN (Tournament)				

Two Martinsville Teams Earn First Place Wins at State Robotics Competition



The Tree Huggers, a LEGO Robotics team from Patrick Henry Elementary School, with their first place trophy in Division 1 Core Values at the state FIRST LEGO League Robotics tournament.

Two teams from Martinsville City Schools emerged victorious this weekend, securing first-place trophies at the VA+DC FIRST LEGO League Challenge state championship held at James Madison University. The competition hosted more than 100 teams from Virginia and Washington, D.C.

The Tree Huggers, a Division 1 team from Patrick Henry Elementary, claimed the top spot in the state for their division in Core Values. Additionally, Absolute Zero, a Division 2 team representing Martinsville Middle School, earned first place in their division for their Innovation Project.

Expressing his enthusiasm, Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley said, "I am excited about the continued success of our robotics program. Students and staff continue to excel at a high level in this area. Our community will reap benefits from these accomplishments!"

This achievement follows a regional qualifying tournament held in November, where four teams from Martinsville—comprising nearly 40 students in total—advanced to the state championship. The qualifying teams were Absolute Zero, the Mindshifters, the Tree Huggers, and the Bot Squad. A total of 57 Division 1 teams and 57 Division 2, representing schools from across

Virginia and D.C., advanced to the state tournament.

"We are extremely proud to have four teams from our district qualify to compete at the state robotics tournament," said Tammy Allen, coordinator of STEM, Math, and Science. "The teams competed against the best in the state, so it was an incredible honor to have two of our teams bring home trophies. We are so proud of all the hard work our teams and coaches put in and were thrilled to see it pay off with success in the competition. We hope to have even more teams qualify for the state tournament next year!"

FIRST LEGO League is a STEM-based competition that promotes valuable skills. There are four main judging components: the Robot Game, Robot Design, Innovation Project, and Core Values. In the Robot Game, teams undertake the challenge of designing, building, and programming a robot to complete various missions within a 2.5-minute timeframe.

For Robot Design, teams present a concise overview of their mission strategy, robot design, and programming methods. In the Innovation Project, teams identify a problem related to the year's competition theme and propose a solution. Additionally, teams are evaluated on their embodiment of the Core



Absolute Zero, a LEGO Robotics team from Martinsville Middle School, with their first place trophy in Division 2 Innovation Project at the state tournament.

Values of FIRST LEGO League, which include discovery, innovation, impact, inclusion, teamwork, and fun.

"This hands-on robotics experience allows students to apply science, math, coding, engineering, and critical thinking skills in an engaging and collaborative setting," Allen explained. "It sparks passion and interest in STEM from an early age."

By participating in meaningful technical challenges and solving problems together, students sharpen both hard and soft skills like communication, planning, and teamwork. Presenting their solutions in competition also prepares them for public speaking and presenting in future careers. The program builds technical prowess, collaboration abilities, real-world readiness, and self-confidence.

Some students who participate in LEGO Robotics are inspired to pursue studies and careers in scientific or technical fields.

"Eight of our kids on previous [robotics] teams are either enrolled in engineering programs or are enrolling in engineering programs" after graduation, said Absolute Zero coach Lizzy Fulcher. "I truly believe that comes from the experience that they had in robotics."

The Tree Huggers are: Wesley Walker, Symphony Phillips, Margot Sharp, Kenneth Lucas, Kavany Flores, Katie Wall, Jade Holland-Dallas, Hailey Turner, Emery Taylor, and Adelyn McKenzie. They are coached by Emily Harrell and Jemeisha Childress.

Absolute Zero is coached by Liz Lynch and Lizzy Fulcher. Team members are: Hudson Grant, Bridgette Brent, Colby Robertson, Zariyah Bouldin, Kyla Steward, Meagan Price, Chris Santiago, Noah Wright, and Mya Williams. The team is mentored by Martinsville High School students Reagan Wright and Nayti Patel, who were members of Absolute Zero when they were in middle school.

Administrative, support and waste management top initial claims

Initial unemployment insurance claims increased in the latest filing week to 1,945 but remained slightly below typical pre-pandemic volumes experienced in 2019, according to data from the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA).

For the filing week ending December 2, the figure for seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia was 1,945, which was an increase of 841 claimants from the previous week. Falling after a holiday week likely played a part in the large increase. Continued weeks claimed totaled 11,984, which was an increase from the previous week and an increase of 52% from the 7,899 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of continued claims. Of those, over half (52 percent) of continued claims were from professional, scientific, and technical services (1,729), administrative and support and waste management (1,708), manufacturing (1,307), and health care and social assistance (1,068). 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 December 2, the advance U.S. figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 220,000, an increase of 1,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 1,000 from 218,000 to 219,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 293,511 in the week ending December 2, an increase of 93,761 (or 46.9 percent) from the previous week. There were 287,976 initial claims in the comparable week in 2022.

Looking at preliminary data for the week after Thanksgiving week, most U.S. states reported large increases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. California's preliminary weekly change (+14,057) was the largest increase. New York's preliminary weekly change (+9,343) was the second largest increase. Texas's preliminary weekly change (+7,698) was the third largest increase. Georgia's preliminary weekly change (+6,481) was the fourth largest increase. Virginia had the 26th largest increase (+739).

SUPPORT COMMUNITY JOURNALISM

WE OFFER FLEXIBLE ADVERTISING PACKAGES, IN PRINT, ONLINE, OR BOTH.

SPECIAL DEALS AND PROMOTIONS OFFERED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!

CALL US TODAY AT (276) 694-3101 OR (276) 340-2445

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Attempted murder charge lodged in Dec. 7 incident

A Bassett man was charged with attempted murder in connection with an incident in the Claudville community of Patrick County, according to a release from Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith.

Smith said the incident occurred around 3:40 a.m. on December 7, when video surveillance allegedly captured footage of a man with a gasoline can and the occupied home at 23 Mills School Road being ignited. The home is located in the Claudville area of the county.

Shortly after 4 a.m. that day, a man crashed his vehicle approximately 12 miles from the home, Smith said.

Daniel Shields Reynolds, 39, was arrested by the Virginia State Police as a result of the crash, and charged with driving under the influence, Smith said.

On the afternoon of December 7, the resident at 23 Mills School Road discovered smoldering melted siding and other burned material on her home, and contacted the sheriff's office, Smith said, adding that Reynolds had been released from the Patrick County Jail just before the call reporting the fire damage.

Smith said that Reynolds and the resident at 23 Mills School Road had been involved in a relationship.

"That fact that the home did not become fully engulfed in flames is a miracle, otherwise we would most likely



Daniel Shields Reynolds

be dealing with a loss of life," Smith said in a Friday release.

Smith said the Henry County Sheriff's Office was "an enormous help in locating and arresting Reynolds" in connection with the incident.

Currently, Reynolds is being held without bond in the Patrick County Jail. In addition to attempted murder, he also is charged with arson in connection with the incident.

Sheriff lieutenants Foley and Steve Austin are handling the case. Anyone with information is urged to contact Foley at (276) 692-6660 or Austin at (276) 692-5950.

Bipartisan proposal would enforce sanctions on terrorist organizations

U.S. Sens. Mark R. Warner, D-VA, and Jack Reed, D-RI, joined by Mike Rounds, R-SD, and Mitt Romney, R-UT, to introduce bipartisan legislation to crack down on terrorist organizations like Hamas by applying sanctions to foreign parties that facilitate financial transactions with terrorists.

Currently, these sanctions are imposed only in limited circumstances, primarily on the terrorist group Hezbollah following passage of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act in 2015. The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act introduced today will expand this type of sanctions to cover all U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs), including Hamas, and other foreign parties that are controlled by or act on behalf of those FTOs.

"The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act will make sure that the Treasury Department has the tools necessary to enforce our sanctions against Hamas and other terror groups," said Warner. "I'm pleased to join Senators Rounds, Reed, and Romney in introducing this bipartisan legislation to improve our national security."

Under the terms of the Terrorism Financing Prevention Act, the U.S. Department of the Treasury is required to identify any foreign bank or foreign digital asset transaction facilitator that knowingly facilitates transactions with an FTO or related party. Once these actors are identified, the bill requires imposition of sanctions on them, restricting either their use of U.S. correspondent bank accounts (in the case of a bank), or barring their digital asset or other transactions with U.S. persons (in the case of a digital asset transaction facilitator).

The bill also contains a key provision from the Crypto-Asset National Security Enhancement and Enforcement (CANSEE) Act the senators previously introduced, giving FinCEN authority to restrict transactions with "primary money laundering concerns" that do not involve a U.S. correspondent bank account. This provision will provide FinCEN with appropriate tools to address threats involving digital assets and non-traditional finance networks, just as they currently can where correspondent accounts are involved.

"It is critical that the Department of the Treasury has the necessary counter-terrorism tools to combat modern threats," Rounds said. "The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act takes common sense steps toward rooting out terrorism by sanctioning foreign financial institutions and foreign digital asset companies that assist them in committing these heinous acts. Cutting off funding for terrorist organizations at the source will save lives. I am pleased to co-lead this bipartisan legislation that takes decisive action to disrupt terrorist finance networks."

"The October 7 attacks on Israel perpetrated by Hamas have made it more urgent and necessary for the U.S. to counter the role that cryptocurrency plays in the financing of terrorism. Our legislation would expand financial sanctions to cover all terrorist organizations—including Hamas—and it would equip the Treasury Department with additional resources to counter terrorism and address emerging threats involving digital assets," said Romney.

The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act also authorizes the resources the Treasury Department needs to carry out these programs.

Cases of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever prompt CDC advisory

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued a Health Alert Network (HAN) Health Advisory to notify healthcare providers and the public about an outbreak of Rocky Mountain spotted fever (RMSF) among people in the United States with recent travel to or residence in the city of Tecate, state of Baja California, Mexico.

RMSF is a severe, rapidly progressive, and often deadly disease transmitted by the bite of infected ticks, although many patients do not recall being bitten by a tick. Doxycycline is the treatment of choice for patients of all ages.

As of December 8, 2023, five patients have been diagnosed with confirmed RMSF since late July 2023; all had travel to or residence in Tecate within 2 weeks of illness onset. RMSF is endemic in multiple border states in northern Mexico, including but not exclusive to Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Nuevo León. Healthcare providers should consider RMSF in

their differential diagnosis of patients who have reported recent travel to Tecate, Mexico, or other areas of northern Mexico and subsequently develop signs or symptoms of an unexplained severe febrile illness.

Recommendations for the Public:

*Seek medical attention if you or a family member has traveled to Tecate or another city in northern Mexico where RMSF has been known to occur, and develops fever, headache, or rash within 2 weeks of return to the United States.

*Protect against tick bites by treating your dog for ticks, using EPA-registered insect repellent, and wearing protective clothing.

*Perform thorough tick checks on yourself and children after outdoor activities or when around dogs with ticks. Promptly remove any ticks.

*Learn about RMSF symptoms and seek medical help if you suspect that you or a family member may have this disease.

Burn ban lifted in county

Henry County on Monday, Dec. 11, rescinded its local burn ban on outdoor burning, effective immediately. However, this action does not alter the state's ban that goes into effect on February 15.

The county implemented the ban on November 8, due to dry conditions.

During this year's fall fire season, which ran from Oct. 15 to Nov. 30, the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) responded to 156 wildfires that burned nearly 25,000 acres and damaged 13 structures. Suppression efforts by DOF and the agency's firefighting partners are credited with saving 224 homes and 268 other structures, with an estimated protected value of \$46.8 million. For comparison, 89 wildfires burned 2,654 acres in the 2022 fall fire season.

"With 35 consecutive days of suppression efforts, this fall fire season provided tremendous challenges," said State Forester Rob Farrell. "Our wildland firefighters once again answered the call to protect Virginia's communities and natural resources. These successes would not be possible without our local, state and federal partners, as well as supporting resources from other states."

Drought conditions combined with seasonal factors such as low humidity, high winds, and dry leaves and grass, allows wildfires to start easily, spread quickly and

be difficult to contain. Although the fall fire season has ended, the threat of wildfire is always present, and many parts of Virginia are still in a drought.

"Until drought conditions lift, fire danger will remain elevated," said DOF Director of Fire and Emergency Response John Miller. "The leading cause of wildfires this year was once again escaped debris burning. Many localities have implemented fire restrictions, so check with local officials before conducting any outdoor burning. Even if no fire restrictions are in place, we encourage those in drought areas to delay all outdoor burning until the drought is lifted."

Follow these tips when burning debris:

*Check with local officials before burning.

*Avoid burning if your locality is in a drought.

*Avoid burning on dry, windy days.

*Keep your burn pile small.

*Stay with your fire until it's completely out (drown, stir, drown again, ensure it's cool).

*Have a rake or shovel and charged water hose on hand.

*Have a phone ready to call 911 if a fire escapes your control.

*Consider a "green" alternative to burning yard debris: compost your organic yard waste.

Council postpones discussion of PCA adjustment

By Taylor Boyd

The Martinsville City Council took no action on a recommendation to adjust the electric rate's Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) at its Tuesday, December 12 meeting.

Councilmember Kathy Lawson's motion to approve the adjustment died for lack of a second.

Mayor LC Jones asked City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides if the council could address the issue at the next council meeting so "everybody could get an opportunity to look into it a little bit more, I think it just came up this week," he said.

The issue will be discussed at the Tuesday, December 19 city council meeting, "and if we need to schedule briefings with council members, we can also do that," Ferrell-Benavides said.

City utilities Director Durwin Joyce said the proposed electric rate increase is to 0.0094 per kilowatt hour (kWh), which is about a 5.2 percent increase in the PCA.

Joyce said for example, the rate for 1,000 kWh will go from \$152.50 to \$160.44.

This change would go into effect on bills issued after January 1.

Joyce said there's about a \$1.2 million deficit compared to the current budget, "which is substantial for us."

The current increase in the PCA is zero. It was set to zero last year when the base rate was increased.

Joyce said one thing that makes budgets difficult projections is the fact it's weather-related. While there have been talks about snow, he said temperatures are expected to be a little above normal.

"That affects our sales. Right now, we're a little behind on sales of where we had budgeted. We're not close, and we'll have to see where that goes as the year goes on. One cold month can get you right back to where you thought you were," he said. "It works well for us in keeping with our budget. But, of course," customers know the colder "it gets, the more their power bill is and they certainly don't like that."

Joyce said several factors are driving the increase including the market uncertainty following the COVID-19 pandemic, economic recovery which decreased demand, and the increase in natural gas prices.

New methane safeguards protect VA communities

Edwin J. Viera

Virginia News Connection

New methane safeguards can protect communities in Virginia and the U.S.

A new rule targets leaks from wells and pipelines, which can emit at least 2.6 million tons of methane per year. Lowering emissions can provide numerous economic and health benefits for state residents.

However, Virginia utility companies are only building up their gas infrastructure; a common trend in Southern states.

Greg Buppert, senior attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center, described why it is happening.

"It is a model that utility companies are very familiar with," Buppert explained. "They've, for years, operated coal-fired power plants. A gas fired power plant uses the same business model. And so, in some sense utility companies like to do what they know how to do."

He added gas is no longer a bridge fuel to renewables, noting further climate change research revealed its harms. Virginia enacted

legislation in 2020 requiring utilities to use 100% renewable electricity by 2050. Yet, work is underway by Dominion Energy to develop a gas-fired power plant near the James River.

A natural gas pipeline extension recently received federal approval to go through a Virginia city already affected by the fossil fuel industry. Residents and state environmentalists voiced their opposition. Buppert pointed out the new rules can help residents deal with the effects the pipeline will have.

"The rule will help protect communities from the worst impacts of some of that new infrastructure," Buppert noted. "The administration has in the works additional rules related specifically to power plants. And these are indeed important and critical steps."

Leaking methane can cause asthma, other respiratory problems and even cancer. Methane emissions have taken center stage at COP28, the international climate summit. Though more than 150 nations promised to reduce emissions by 30% by 2030, they're still uncertain how to attain this.

Pedestrian and cyclist deaths should not be 'the cost of doing business'

By Ryan Nadeau/Capital News Service

Alcohol, distraction or speeding were the most deadly factors for pedestrians and cyclists in Virginia for at least the past three years.

Those factors contributed to nearly 3 in 4 pedestrian deaths and 2 in 3 cyclist deaths between Jan. 1 and Nov. 30.

Crash statistics were initially trending down, but rose enough in the past month that this year has not been an improvement. Total pedestrian-involved crashes are up this year at 1,487, while cyclist-involved crashes remain slightly down at 529. Virginia traffic data is collected using the Traffic Records Electronic Data System.

State data shows pedestrian deaths this year, through November, decreased from 172 to 117, but cyclist deaths have increased.

Carla "Jonah" Holland was one of 11 cyclists killed in Virginia in 2022. She and Natalie Rainer were hit by an intoxicated driver while biking on a rural road in Henrico County. The driver was 18 at the time and was recently sentenced to 10 years in prison.

"The cost ends up being so much greater than just one person," Rainer said. "In my story, it's Jonah's life, but it's also [the driver's] life. His life is altered as well."

Rainer woke up four days after the accident to discover her friend was gone. Even as she heals, and gets back on a bike, the scars remain — on her chest, arms, abdomen, legs and pelvis.

"My life has been touched but I will still have the privilege to live out my life in a full manner," Rainer said.

The cost goes beyond just the loss of a loved one — there is a loss of safety and peace in the community, she said.

"It creates an atmosphere where people do not feel safe to exist in space and that is unacceptable," Rainer said. "Maybe people are willing to kind of brush the issue to the side because it doesn't personally affect them."

Across the nation: How does Virginia compare?

Pedestrian fatalities increased in Virginia between 2021-2022. It was the fifth highest percentage increase in the nation, according to data from the national Governors Highway Safety Association.

Overall, Virginia ranked 24th in total pedestrian fatalities per 100,000 people last year.

Drivers nationwide hit and killed just over 7,500 pedestrians in 2022 — the highest since 1981, according to GHSA data. Unreported Oklahoma data could make the toll higher.

This means that, on average, about 20 people a day are struck and killed on American roads.

Pedestrian fatalities in Virginia may be down this year, but total injuries are higher, with one month still left to go. Conversely, cyclists are seeing less injuries and more deaths as a result of these crashes.

Infrastructures: Progress in Alexandria

Sen. Scott Surovell, D-Fairfax, stated in an email that these "preventable tragedies" result from a number of factors, such as impaired driving or road design. He added that, while legislation such as his "hands free" law has helped, the complicated issue needs further investment.

"There's no one silver bullet," said Alex Carroll of Alexandria's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.

Carroll manages the Complete Streets program for Alexandria. The program aims to make it safer to work and travel in the region.

Infrastructural needs are a large piece of the puzzle, according to Carroll.

"There are probably very few crashes where you can say there was nothing about the infrastructure here that could have prevented this," Carroll said.

A recent five-year analysis found that 70% of fatal and severe crashes in Alexandria occurred on 10% of the city's streets. This data allows programs like Complete Streets to focus where change is needed most, Carroll said.

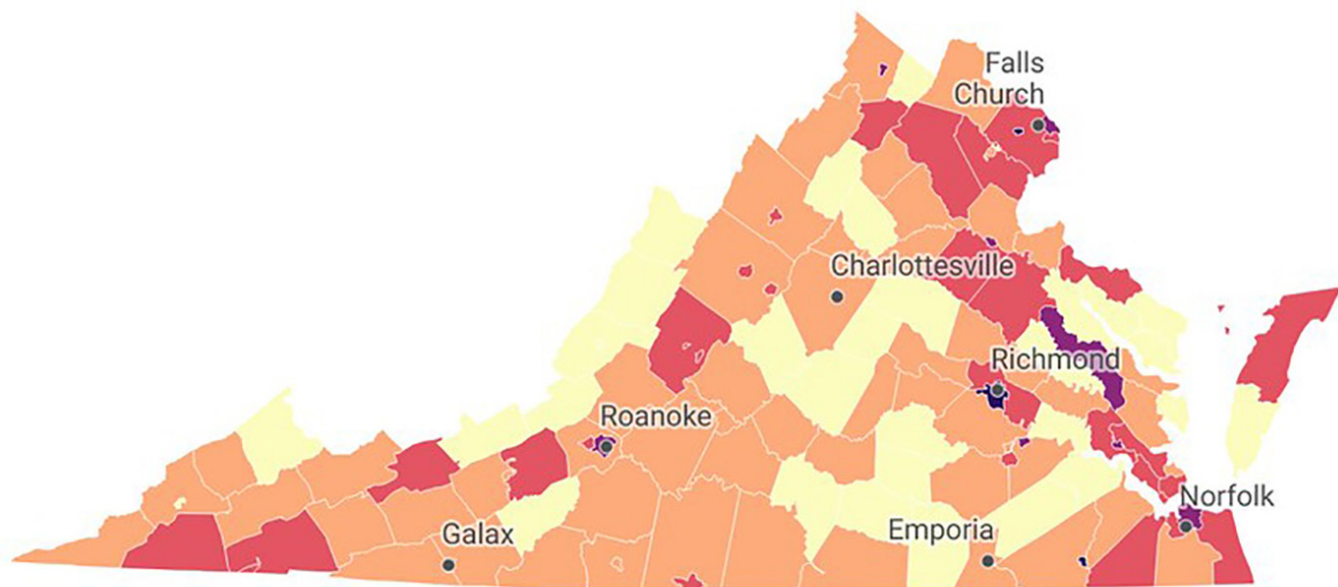
Localities need money and resources to implement better infrastructure. However, low-cost starting options are available, which Carroll said can provide "90% of the benefit at 10% of the cost."

Pedestrian-involved crashes by locality, per 100,000 people

Data from start of year through November shows that crashes are up compared to all of 2022. Click on locality to see total crashes.

Pedestrian-Involved Crashes per 100,000 people

< 1 1-15 15-30 30-45 ≥ 45



Pop. totals from 2020 U.S. Census data to calculate rate.

Map: Ryan Nadeau/VCU Capital News Service • Source: Virginia Traffic Records Electronic Data System (TREDS) • Created with Datawrapper

Data from start of year through November shows that crashes are up in 2023 compared to all of 2022. Crash data is from TREDS. Population totals from 2020 U.S. Census data. (Infographic by Ryan Nadeau/VCU CNS)

Options include giving pedestrians more time to cross at intersections, adding "no right turn on red" signs and lowering speed limits, among others. Reducing speed limits is often controversial, but even small decreases in speed have produced positive results in Alexandria, Carroll said.

A more expensive option is something called a "road diet," when travel lanes are removed and replaced with measures such as crosswalks or bike lanes to reduce driver speed and traffic. It has helped in places where crossing pedestrians felt like they were in the video game "Frogger," Carroll said.

Several Virginia localities, including Alexandria, adopted Vision Zero — an international design philosophy that began in Sweden in the 1990s. Its central goal is to reduce traffic fatalities to zero, through belief that pedestrian deaths are preventable.

"We can't accept the status quo of people continuing to die and be severely maimed on our streets," Carroll said.

Vision Zero work is a bit like "trying to turn a ship around," Carroll said — results are not always immediately apparent. While the goal is rather ambitious, she says it's worth the effort.

"It's important to remember that, at the end of the day, those numbers are people," Carroll said.

Traffic enforcement and humanizing the statistics

Lt. Robert Netherland of Henrico Police's Traffic Enforcement Unit knows how it feels to receive a death notification.

His sister was a University of Virginia student when she was hit and killed by a drunk driver.

"I remember like it was yesterday—and we're talking back in the early 1980s," Netherland said.

Death notifications are a part of the job, and his experiences allow him to empathize with the over 100 families he's had to contact.

A number of factors, from impairment to distraction to visibility, contribute to pedestrian and cyclist incidents, according to Netherland. Legislative changes like the "hands-free" law have had reasonable success, but others have made his job a bit more difficult, he said.

Del. Patrick Hope, D-Arlington, patroned a 2020 bill that made several changes to traffic enforcement law when it passed, including a shift in how jaywalking can be penalized. Virginia law now prevents officers from stopping a pedestrian solely because they are jaywalking.

"People just kind of walk where they want to," Netherland said, and added it has contributed to an increase in pedestrian fatalities.

It decreases the chance of a crash if pedestrians cross at designated intersections, Netherland said. Pedestrians and cyclists are less likely to be seriously injured because vehicles typically slow down at intersections.

Pedestrians do not hold all of the responsibility, Netherland said. All parties sharing the roadways need to



A "ghost bike" placed on Osborne Turnpike in honor of Carla "Jonah" Holland. Holland was killed by an intoxicated driver while biking with her friend, Natalie Rainer, who was injured in the same crash. (Photo: by Ryan Nadeau/VCU CNS)

increase their awareness, remove distractions and slow down.

Carroll agreed "victim-blaming" language does not help, and emphasized how Vision Zero's philosophy involves the assumption that people will make mistakes — such as crossing where they shouldn't.

"If you rely on people to not make mistakes in order to improve your safety goals, you're never gonna get there," Carroll said.

Harsher penalties and more direct messaging could push through the "numbness" and encourage all travelers to be safer, Netherland said.

VCU Police began efforts to increase campus traffic enforcement following the January crash that killed university student Mahrokh Khan while she crossed the street. This initiative resulted in over 800 traffic citations between February and May, according to data provided by VCU Police.

Virginia State Police recently launched Operation DISS-rupt, a campaign to target unsafe and distracted drivers. Interstate 64 enforcement on Oct. 19 and 20 resulted in 362 speeding violations, according to data provided by VSP. Additionally, there were 200 instances of reckless driving and 75 violations of the "hands-free" law.

Deaths decreased over Virginia's Thanksgiving holiday compared to last year, according to VSP. The number of driving under the influence arrests were about the same, though reckless driving and speeding citations were up.

Education and rejecting 'status quo'

The acceptance of these fatal and severe crashes as "the cost of doing business" cannot be allowed, said John Saunders, director of highway safety for Virginia DMV.

"If we had as many people die in airplane crashes as we see dying on our highways, no one would fly," Saunders said.

The DMV uses crash and law enforcement data to target its messaging, according to Saunders. It distributes safety messages about how to cross streets, maintain visibility and

practice safe driving habits through many partners.

Drivers' tests ask applicants about how to safely share the road, but the DMV does not design test questions. The Virginia Department of Education does, according to Saunders. The VDOE did not respond to a request for a statement.

Drivers often only take the one test to get a license, so continued education is important, he said.

"It's sometimes awhile since folks have really taken a close look at pedestrians, and being a pedestrian, and how dangerous that is," Saunders said.

It will take a continued beating of the drum to raise awareness and improve safety, he said.

"We have a responsibility, especially as drivers, to make every effort to do all that we can to ensure that everyone gets home safely each and every day," Saunders said.

Ending traffic violence as a community

These statistics represent neighbors, family and friends.

"Ultimately we can't separate cycling incidents from pedestrian incidents, and even other drivers being involved in crashes," Rainer said. "We're talking about traffic violence, which is on the rise."

Local governments have started to tackle the problem, but it won't help unless people take accountability, she said, from putting down cell phones to taking the foot off the gas.

"We've got to start to find ways of helping people to understand that we are connected," Rainer said. "When you see a cyclist on a bike on the road, they're not an obstacle in your way, right? That's a human being ... we need to look at each other as valuable."

VCU InSight reporter Reiley Matthews contributed to this article.

Capital News Service is a program of Virginia Commonwealth University's Robertson School of Media and Culture. Students in the program provide state government coverage for a variety of media outlets in Virginia. VCU InSight is the capstone broadcast news program.

Youngkin launches new initiative to help families with childcare, early learning

Virginia will make a significant investment in early learning and childcare via the Building Blocks for Virginia Families initiative to empower parents with childcare choice, reduce red tape, expand available childcare options for parents, and provide needed support for parents to continue in the workforce.

Last week, Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced Building Blocks for Virginia Families, which builds on Virginia's strong foundation and expands a marketplace to serve more families across the Commonwealth. Key attributes of the plan include:

- Ensures every low-income working family currently receiving public support continues to have access to high quality early childhood and after school programs with over \$448 million annually in total investment
- Strengthens parent choice—of home-providers, public school pre-schools, community co-ops, church programs, and private day centers
- Creates an innovative childcare payment system driven by parents that making it easier for employers, philanthropies, local governments, community partners and families to contribute and support the success of Virginia's

early learners

- Cuts unnecessary red tape for providers so they can operate effectively, efficiently, and safely

- Eliminates childcare deserts by infusing \$25 million to refurbish excess space at our colleges to launch new early learning hubs

- Reduces childcare educator shortages by maintaining \$1 million scholarship program to increase the skills of Virginia's early education workforce and \$10 million per year for direct-to-childcare educator incentives that have been shown to reduce teacher shortages and increase educator retention in childcare

"Building Blocks for Virginia Families will ensure families can choose the early option that best supports their children in their most formative years and enter school ready to learn," said Youngkin. "By prioritizing parent choice and cutting red tape for families and providers, we are delivering a best-in-class model for early learning and childcare."

Through the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act, Virginia used \$794 million to expand childcare and early education programs. Over the past two years, Governor Youngkin invested funds to

support parents' post-COVID return to the workforce by increasing parent choice and fully implementing one of the nation's strongest early learning data quality measurement and continuous improvement systems.

The expiration of federal funding put 27,000 children at risk of losing access to quality care. Through Building Blocks for Virginia Families, every eligible child will be able to continue to access high quality options that meet their family's specific childcare needs and Virginia will remain the national leader in innovative approaches to quality early education and childcare.

The Commission, staffed by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (ECF), created a series of guiding principles and recommendations which informed the development of the Building Blocks for Virginia Families approach. They also incorporated findings from a recent Vanderbilt University study that found a significant ROI on the learning investments from Virginia's early childhood programs.

"Today, we open the door to the next era of early care and education in the Commonwealth. Government cannot be the sole answer to every challenge including ensuring access to quality

childcare," said Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera. "The Building Blocks for Virginia Families plan is about public and private stakeholders coming together. We will address childcare deserts, early childhood provider shortages and introduce innovation and partnerships into how we pay for childcare for a sustainable system."

"It's a great day for Virginia! Governor Youngkin has made a bold commitment to sustaining Virginia's best-in-class public-private parent choice system through seminal investment and innovative reforms," said President of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation Kathy Glazer. "The Youngkin Administration has clearly recognized the importance of keeping Virginia's families 'whole' with childcare services that support their children's school readiness, their own reliable workforce participation, and the productivity of businesses in communities across the Commonwealth. Alongside our Ready Regions and Mixed Delivery partners, we are proud to continue to work with and support the efforts of the Administration through steady access to high-quality early childhood care and education services for Virginia's families."

Banjarahama celebrates county's musical heritage, tourism efforts

Sammy Shelor's Banjarahama, held Saturday, Dec. 9 December, at Patrick County High School, also featured Nu-Blu. Several people were interviewed by Nu-Blu Bluegrass Ridge TV Show to promote Patrick County's

tourism efforts before the Banjarahama got underway.

All photos by Mary Dellenback Hill's phone video camera. Hill represents the Dan River District on the county's Tourism Advisory Council (TAC).



Sammy Shelor, celebrated performer and widely known as 'Master of the Banjo,' hosted the Banjarahama. Shelor discussed his type of banjo music and related how he began playing the instrument as a youngster.



Sammy Shelor and the Lonesome River Band warm up before performing at the Banjarahama Saturday in Stuart.

Average price at the pump dropped last week

Average gasoline prices in Virginia have fallen 8.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.02/g on Monday, according to GasBuddy's survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Prices in Virginia are 11.1 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 8.0 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 8.4 cents in the last week and stands at \$4.10 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.29/g Sunday while the most expensive was \$4.29/g, a difference of \$2.00/g. The lowest price in the state Sunday was \$2.29/g while the highest was \$4.29/g, a difference of \$2.00/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 9.6 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.11/g today. The national average is down 23.7 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 10.1 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Virginia and the national average going back ten years:

December 11, 2022:	\$3.10/g (U.S. Average: \$3.21/g)
December 11, 2021:	\$3.20/g (U.S. Average: \$3.34/g)
December 11, 2020:	\$2.07/g (U.S. Average: \$2.17/g)
December 11, 2019:	\$2.32/g (U.S. Average: \$2.58/g)
December 11, 2018:	\$2.26/g (U.S.

Average:	\$2.41/g
December 11, 2017:	\$2.28/g (U.S. Average: \$2.45/g)
December 11, 2016:	\$2.11/g (U.S. Average: \$2.21/g)
December 11, 2015:	\$1.85/g (U.S. Average: \$2.01/g)
December 11, 2014:	\$2.48/g (U.S. Average: \$2.61/g)
December 11, 2013:	\$3.18/g (U.S. Average: \$3.24/g)

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices:

Roanoke- \$2.99/g, down 6.1 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.05/g.

Richmond- \$2.99/g, down 8.6 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.07/g.

West Virginia- \$3.10/g, down 9.7 cents per gallon from last week's \$3.20/g.

"For the 12th straight week, or three straight months, the national average has continued to decline, now at its lowest level of 2023 heading into the prime of the holiday season as oil prices continue to struggle amidst cooling demand," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "With nearly 80,000 gas stations in the U.S. now priced below \$3 per gallon, and 23 states also seeing average prices of \$2.99 or less, motorists are getting substantial relief at the pump in time for the holidays. The trend is likely to continue in most states this week, while the national average could soon fall below \$3.05 per gallon, the lowest since 2021. The good news may continue into 2024, with GasBuddy's annual Fuel Outlook being released in just a few weeks."

10 Tips to Help Children with Special Needs Enjoy the Holidays

The holidays are upon us, and while there's loads of merry-making and fun to be had – the changes and sensations of the season can add stress to the lives of children with special needs and their families. The Episcopal Center for Children (ECC), a nonprofit organization serving children with special needs ages 5-14 in the greater Washington, DC area, offers the following tips to help.

"Children with special needs enjoy the holidays but they are especially sensitive to the changes in routines that the holidays bring," said Stephanie Nash, LICSW, president and CEO of ECC. "Making a plan, thinking about your child's needs, and adjusting your expectations can help you create a positive holiday experience for the entire family."

Tip #1 – Make a plan for the holidays and share it with your family. Create a schedule for your family's holiday activities and post it for your child to see. You may find it helpful to use pictures to help a young child. Talk about the schedule with your child, so he or she can anticipate what will happen.

Tip #2 – Remind your family about holiday plans. Review the schedule. Discuss the schedule with others in your home, so they understand what is going on and how they can best support your child with special needs (and everyone else in the family), so everyone can have a fun holiday.

Tip #3 – For holiday gatherings, give your child a job and a plan. Ask your child to help collect coats, give out treats, or greet arrivals. Rehearse the plan. Give your child a schedule or plan for a festive occasion so he or she knows what to anticipate and when things will happen.

Tip #4 – Maintain routines as much as possible. There may be special activities for the holidays, but try to keep your child's schedule as close to "normal" as possible. Routines are key for helping children coping with special needs, and it's especially important for children to stick to regular medication and sleep schedules as much as possible.

Tip #5 – If your child is sensitive to unfamiliar smells, help manage them. Cinnamon is a common holiday fragrance. One way to help a child experience this smell minimally (and gauge reaction to it), is

to add cinnamon to play compound before an event. Ask guests visiting your home to not wear heavy perfumes if your child is sensitive to them and think about other smells like evergreens.

Tip #6 – Eat healthy foods and consider how new or special foods impact your child. During the holidays there are all sorts of fun foods and treats to enjoy. Some children are more affected than others by dietary changes. Pay attention to your child's moods and how diet and situational changes may be impacting him or her. If you are at an event, bring along food that is familiar to your child if you think it may be needed.

Tip #7 – Take breaks when needed. Sometimes children need a break from the hubbub of holiday activities and busyness. Fill a bag or backpack with a few favorite toys, games or activities. If you see your child is getting stressed, get out the bag and find a quiet spot to play.

Tip #8 – Do not allow presents to be a hindrance to enjoyment. Toy packaging today can frustrate children and parents alike. Children who have trouble with fine motor skills may find unwrapping some gifts frustrating. You can adjust packages to their comfort level by loosening ribbons and paper, or pre-cutting fasteners. Ask others who give your child gifts to be aware of his or her needs when it comes to wrapping presents. Some children find it dis-orienting to unwrap things that are new and unfamiliar to them. If that is the case for your child, wrap a few favorite toys for your child to unwrap.

Tip #9 – Get your child into the spirit of the season through gift giving. Gift giving provides an opportunity to practice social skills. Help your child make a gift for someone else, and practice how to give the gift to that person. Let your child experience the joy of giving.

Tip #10 – Give your child the gift of your attention. Holidays can be busy for grown-ups and children. Make sure you spend a few minutes of quality time with your child every day. Give your full attention. Practice active listening, where you listen to what your child is saying and then repeat it back to them to demonstrate that you are listening. Focus on offering connection and support.

**THANK YOU FOR READING
HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE**

God's Pit Crew receives Spirit of Virginia Award



The Governor and First Lady pose with Randy and Terri Johnson at the Spirit of Virginia Award Ceremony. (Contributed photo)

In November, the Governor and First Lady donated the sixth Spirit of Virginia Award of 2023 to God's Pit Crew, a nonprofit, faith-based crisis response organization serving victims of natural disasters and communities lacking essential resources.

God's Pit Crew was established by Danville residents Randy and Terri Johnson who were motivated by their faith to serve communities devastated by tornadoes in Oklahoma. Today, God's Pit Crew has expanded to a national, volunteer-backed operation combating humanitarian crises caused by wildfires, hurricanes and other disasters. In 2022, the organization distributed over 3.4 million pounds of food, water and essential products to individuals and families across the United States, as well as over 30,000 survival kits colloquially known as "Blessing Buckets."

Call 276-694-3101 or email submissions@theenterprise.net for more information.

A holiday fixture steeped in tradition grows in Virginia

Mistletoe lore dates back centuries—to the Celtic druids and Norse mythology—as a symbol of fertility, peace and love.

The plant's legends eventually made their way across continents when European settlers immigrated to North America and discovered a plant that closely resembled the mistletoe from their homeland.

"(European mistletoe) is actually a different species and different genus, but they look really similar," explained Jordan Metzgar, a biologist and curator for the Massey Herbarium at Virginia Tech. "When Europeans came to North America, there was this other mistletoe here, so they just transferred a lot of the mythology and traditions with it."

Metzgar explained that of the seven native mistletoe species in the

U.S., only one grows in Virginia—Phoradendron leucarpum—commonly called American mistletoe or Eastern mistletoe. And while it's the plant of holiday romance, its true characteristics are a little more ominous.

"It's in the genus Phoradendron, which literally translates to 'tree thief,'" Metzgar said. "It grows on trees, taps into their vascular systems and steals nutrients and water from them."

Mistletoe's tiny white flowers form into clusters of snow-white berries during the late fall and winter, and are a favorite among birds, which spread them from tree to tree. The seed's sticky coating adheres it to limbs and trunks where "it'll germinate and make a little seedling, and right away it

bores into the tree it's growing on" using a special rootlike organ called a haustorium, Metzgar explained.

A hemiparasite, the woody shrub needs trees to survive, but it also photosynthesizes, allowing it to stay a festive green throughout the winter. But despite being closely associated with wintertime holidays, "it's really not cold-tolerant at all," Metzgar noted. "We're pretty close to the northern edge of its range here in the Eastern U.S."

Mistletoe thrives in the temperate climate of Virginia's coastal plains and swampy forests. Its bushy clumps can easily be spotted standing out against bare branches during the late fall, winter and early spring.

And though the large clusters can damage trees and girdle limbs, mis-

tletoe is a long-established native and a normal part of the forest ecosystem. It grows on a range of trees, particularly oaks, red maples and gum trees.

Some landowners harvest Virginia mistletoe on their own, but others can find sprigs for their holiday decorations at local florists, garden centers, nurseries and other holiday retailers. Many tree farms also sell it alongside their Christmas trees. Mistletoe may be favored for holiday décor, but it's best to keep away from children and pets. It contains a toxic protein called phoratoxin, which can cause nausea, vomiting, weakness and other issues when accidentally consumed.

See more in Cultivate magazine at bit.ly/3Gy0KHu.

SPECTRUM MEDICAL

Spectrum Medical Physical Therapy is dedicated to providing the Martinsville and Henry County community with physical therapy services at the highest level of rehabilitation care!

You can now be seen by a Physical Therapist with no doctor's referral needed using Direct Access Physical Therapy. Just call us directly and schedule your first appointment today!

DIRECT ACCESS PHYSICAL THERAPY!

CERTIFIED PARKINSON'S DISEASE REHAB!

Jason Keese, DPT is our certified PWR! Moves therapist. PWR! Moves therapists can address your motor and non-motor symptoms, create activities to target gait, agility, strength, freezing dexterity, and posture.

We offer the following treatment programs:

- General Orthopedics
- General Wellness
- Work Conditioning
- Sports Specific Athletic Training
- Functional Dry Needling
- Stroke/Neuro Rehabilitation
- Vestibular Rehabilitation
- Parkinson's Disease Rehabilitation
- Post-Surgical Rehabilitation



Brittany Smart, PTA



Brad Hylton, DPT



Jason Keese, DPT



Martinsville Location
1075 Spruce Street
Martinsville, VA 24112
(276) 790 - 3233 Opt 1

SPECTRUM MEDICAL



See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Wetlands forming on VA surface mines, impacts uncertain



Edwin J. Viera
Virginia News Connection

A recent report found wetlands forming on surface mines in Virginia can benefit the state.

The wetlands form because surface mining flattens land. There are lingering questions about how wetland creation balances the loss of naturally occurring wetlands from the same mining.

Wally Smith, vice president of the environmental group Clinch Coalition, was surprised to see how many wetlands surface mining created. He pointed out wetlands can combat increased flooding.

“When you have all these new wetlands that are occurring on the top of a mountain where there was historically not a wetland there. When it does rain and you do have a storm event, the runoff that’s coming off of that site, some of it at least, is going to end up stored in those wetlands,” Smith explained. “That can potentially slow the amount of water and runoff that’s going to make its way downstream and contribute to a flood.”

He cautioned it is dependent on the health of the wetlands. If they are not as strong, they could fall apart, leading to increased runoff and flooding. Smith observed only time will tell how

impactful the new wetlands are.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported flood days doubled between 2010 and 2020. By 2050, the agency estimated parts of Virginia could experience 85 days of flooding each year.

Virginia policymakers have taken steps to slow flooding, but critics see the wetlands as insignificant. Some might be filled or drained with construction and land management activity. Smith hopes the report’s findings encourage policymakers to reconsider how wetland conservation is done.

“Think about, what value does that wetland have, for both that property and the surrounding landscape?” Smith urged. “I think we need a reevaluation of how we’re protecting, and if we’re protecting, many of these wetlands, even if they’re artificial on a former surface mine.”

Aside from wetlands, other Virginia environmental groups are working to reforest former mine lands, paying for it with carbon offset credits. The state’s Department of Energy has taken charge through funds allocated by Congress in 2016. Between 2017 and 2020, the state received four \$10 million grants for the work.

Increases in respiratory viruses prompt temporary visitor restrictions

Due to a steady increase in respiratory virus cases in our communities, Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist is implementing temporary visitor restrictions for children ages 12 and younger, beginning Thursday, Dec. 7, at all Wake Forest Baptist hospitals:

- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Brenner Children’s Hospital
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Davie Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist High Point Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Lexington Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Wilkes Medical Center

Children ages 12 and under may be permitted to visit hospitalized patients in special circumstances, as determined by the treating physician and nursing unit leadership.

In addition, patients and visitors are strongly encouraged to wear masks while in certain high-risk settings and in all inpatient rooms. Visitors ages 13 and older should not have any symptoms of respiratory viral illness or a confirmed case of COVID-19, flu or RSV.

It is important to note that some areas may have additional restrictions. Patients and visitors are asked to follow directions provided by staff.

Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist urges people to continue to take measures that are known to limit the spread of respiratory viruses. These include staying home when sick, washing hands, covering the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and staying up to date on vaccines.

Patients are asked to only visit emergency departments if they are experiencing a serious or life-threatening illness or injury. Those who need medical attention for more routine symptoms such as cough, fever, fatigue and other flu-like symptoms should contact their primary care provider. Other options include urgent care centers and immediate virtual care.

Current visitation guidelines can be found at www.wakehealth.edu/patient-and-family-resources/preparing-for-your-visit/visitor-guidelines.



ROOSTER WALK

14

MAY 23-26, 2024

AT POP'S FARM IN MARTINSVILLE, VA

SECOND ROUND ANNOUNCEMENT

EMMYLOU HARRIS + CORY WONG

BROKE MOUNTAIN BLUEGRASS BAND

FT. TRAVIS BOOK OF THE INFAMOUS STRINGDUSTERS, ANDERS BECK OF GREENSKY BLUEGRASS
ROBIN DAVIS, JON STICKLEY OF JON STICKLEY TRIO & ANDY THORN OF LEFTOVER SALMON

TWO NIGHTS OF DANIEL DONATO'S COSMIC COUNTRY

TAUK MOORE + DOGS IN A PILE + COUCH

CAITLIN KRISKO & THE BROADCAST + YARN + ARKANSAUCE

SNEEZY + MOUNTAIN GRASS UNIT + ISAAC HADDEN ORGAN TRIO

SOL DRIVEN TRAIN + J & THE CAUSEWAYS + STICKS N THORNS

TRAVIS BOOK & FRIENDS + COLBY T. HELMS & THE VIRGINIA CREEPERS

CLAY STREET UNIT + THE JARED STOUT BAND + MIGHTY JOSHUA

TC CARTER BAND + LUA FLORA + BIG FAT GAP

JULES & THE AGREEABLES + DJ WHAT + MAGICIAN HUNTER RHODES

PIRATES OF THE PIEDMONT

AND MANY MORE TO BE ANNOUNCED!





ART + FOOD + CRAFT BEER + CAMPING
DISC GOLF + ADVENTURES + FAMILY FUN

TICKETS AND PARKING PASSES SELLING FAST!

TICKETS AT ROOSTERWALK.COM

USE CODE LOCAL FOR \$10 OFF ADMISSION TICKETS