

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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(USPS-6)

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Stanley continues to push for NCI as lawmakers begin session

By Debbie Hall

State Sen. Bill Stanley is continuing his fight for the New College Institute (NCI) in Martinsville, with four of his initiatives centered around education.

Senate Bill (SB) 62, would require NCI to design and implement any workforce development programs necessary to support the initiatives of the Office of the Governor, including adult education and workforce training programs. The proposal also requires the NCI to collaborate with the Department of Education, the Virginia Community College System, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the Virginia Board of Workforce Development, and other relevant agencies and organizations.

The General Assembly convened its 60-day session on Wednesday, with local legislators in the minority of the new Democratic majority that emerged in both the House and the Senate after the November elections.

Stanley, R-Moneta, also the chairman of the NCI Board of Directors, in



State Sen. Bill Stanley

December learned that while Gov. Glenn Youngkin's proposed budget provided nearly \$4.7 million in funding for NCI (See Stanley p. 2)

Phillips sails to victory in special election

By Taylor Boyd

Eric Phillips, a businessman from Henry County, won the special election on January 9 for the 48th District House of Delegates seat. The district spans all of Martinsville, most of Henry County, and a portion of Pittsylvania County.

Phillips won 4,317 votes, or 70.2 percent, of the votes cast.

Melody A. "Mel" Cartwright, the democrat in the election, received 1,783 votes, or 29.2 percent of all votes cast.

Phillips said he feels good about the victory. "It's been a whirlwind, you know, finding out last night that we won and having to get everything together and heading straight to Richmond," he said of the General Assembly session which convened on Wednesday, Jan. 10.

Phillips said he and his team were hopeful that he would win the election, and worked in advance to secure housing for him in Richmond during the session.

"I ended up sleeping in my own bed last night, just getting up really early. The governor called me at 6:30 this morning to congratulate me and welcome me to the House here," he said.

Phillips was one of the 99 member-elects of the House sworn in on January 10. He believes the individual swearing-in will occur sometime later this week.

Phillips said he sought the post because he wanted to do good things for the district.

"It's my home. I love it there, I love the people, I love our culture, and there's a lot of opportunity in our area. I came to Richmond



Del. Eric Phillips (left) won the January 9 special election and now represents the 48th District. He is pictured with Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, when the General Assembly convened on Wednesday.

to hopefully help capitalize on that as much as I possibly can," he said.

Cartwright said she called Phillips to express her congratulations.

"This journey has been enlightening and educational, presenting challenges that have tested my resilience. The experience, though demanding, has only fueled my passion for our community," she said.

Cartwright said she'd willingly embark on this journey again to continue making a positive impact on the place she deeply cares about, her hometown, and the surrounding areas.

More than \$62,000 awarded to StartUp MHC graduates

By Taylor Boyd

Eleven StartUp MHC graduates received a total of \$62,044 from the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce's Partnership for Economic Growth (C-PEG).

Brenell Thomas, president of the chamber and executive director of C-PEG, said the 11 graduates completed the eight-week Success Mindset entrepreneurship boot camp.

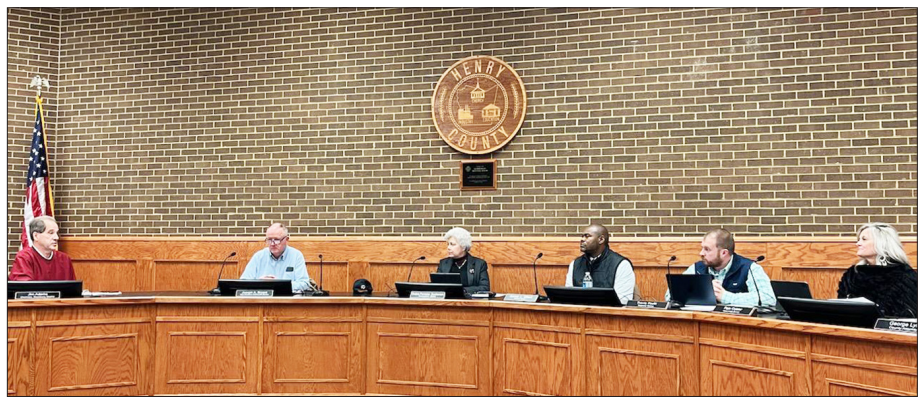
"As a component of that program, these businesses completed a business plan in December, and 12 delivered a pitch for funding," she said.

All the participants received the training at no cost. Any participant who opens a business will receive a one-year free membership with the chamber of commerce.

(See StartUp p. 2)



J & A Mobile Detailing- Brenell Thomas, Jamie Hardin, Martinsville Mayor LC Jones.



The Henry County Board of Supervisors selected Jim Adams and Joe Bryant to serve as chairman and vice chairman, respectively. Adams (far left) and Bryant are pictured along with the remainder of the board at a reorganizational meeting on Tuesday.



Jim Adams



Joe Bryant

Adams, Bryant to lead county

The Henry County Board of Supervisors selected its chairman and vice-chairman for the upcoming year during its 2024 Organizational Meeting on Jan. 9.

Jim Adams, of the Blackberry District, was chosen to serve as chairman, and Joe Bryant, of the Collinsville District, was selected as vice-chairman.

"It is an honor to once again be selected by my peers to serve in a leadership position," said Adams, who was selected to lead the Board for the eleventh time during his 22-year tenure. "We've always prided ourselves on our teamwork and our ability to listen to one another to work towards our collective goals. Thank you for the confidence that you've shown in me."

Bryant will serve his third term as vice-chairman after he was selected for the position following his 2021 re-election bid.

"I'd like to thank my fellow board members for selecting me to be the vice-chair-

man," Bryant said. "I look forward to working with the new members on the board. Each year brings its own unique challenges but I'm confident in our team and our ability to work together for the betterment of our county. I look forward to seeing what 2024 has in store."

In other matters, the board:

- Set the regular meeting dates for 2024. The Board will meet every fourth Tuesday in the month except December, when the Board chose to meet on Dec. 17 to avoid scheduling conflicts with the holidays.
- Adopted the Board's bylaws for 2024.
- Adopted the budget calendar for the fiscal year 2024-2025 County Budget.
- Scheduled its 2024 Planning Session for Feb. 6 from 3:30-7 p.m.
- Scheduled a public hearing on January 23 at 6 p.m., to receive input on a proposed siting agreement with Shifting Sands Solar, LLC.

Local racing legend Johnny Bryant dies at age of 82



Johnny Bryant (Photo courtesy of the Bryant family)

By Jeff Reid
John "Johnny" Pedigo Bryant, of Fieldale, who thrilled race fans in the 70's in a modified AMC Gremlin, passed away on Monday, Jan. 8, 2024, after a lengthy illness.

Bryant will be remembered for win-

ning the Winston Modified portion of the 1985 Winn-Dixie 500 at Martinsville Speedway on Oct. 27, 1985.

It was the same race week where Richie Evans, who won 12 of the first 28 races to clinch his ninth NASCAR modified title, died during a practice run just three days before the race when a stuck throttle sent him into the turn-three wall.

(See Bryant p. 3)
The Tour raced on that weekend, with Bryant collecting his only career Tour win. Bryant was driving for North Carolina car owner David Riggs, and they are the last southern car owner and driver combination to win a Modified race at

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Stanley

(cont. from page 1)

in 2025, it included no funds in 2026.

Stanley has filed a total of 11 proposals for consideration, including SB 5, which would establish a Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Computing (STEM+C) Competition Team Grant Program and Fund to encourage interest in STEM+C-related subject areas and support STEM+C-related extracurricular team-building activities in public schools in the Commonwealth by providing grants to qualified schools, as defined in the bill, for use in establishing or supporting STEM+C competition teams.

Another of Stanley's proposals, SB27, would establish the Public School Trades Incentive Fund and the Public School Trades Incentive Program to provide grants on a competitive basis to any school board that seeks to restore high school programs that teach students skilled trades that lead to earning industry-recognized certifications or credentials or create or restore middle school programs that encourage and recruit students to participate in high school programs that teach students skilled

trades that lead to earning industry-recognized certifications or credentials.

The Department of Education would be tasked with administering the program and establishing rules and procedures relating to applications and awards as it deems appropriate, provided that it considers and gives appropriate weight to certain criteria for grantees. The bill permits any grantee to use program funds for equipment, curriculum development, or instructor training.

The proposal also requires each grantee to track students who complete any program for which the school board received funds to determine the effectiveness of the new or restored middle school programs in recruiting students to participate in restored high school programs and restored high school programs in matching students with high-paying jobs in the fields in which they are certified or credentialed.

SB28 would permit each school board to develop and implement a policy to prohibit the possession or use of cell phones and other handheld communication devices during regular

school hours.

Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, filed six proposals, including House Bill (HB) 443, which would provide local governments with standardized public notice requirements for certain meetings, hearings, or intended actions. Additionally, it would standardize the frequency with which and length of time in which notices of certain meetings, hearings, and other intended actions of localities must be published.

The notice provisions included in the bill are organized into three groups: publication required at least seven days before a meeting, hearing, or intended action; publication required twice, with the first notice appearing no more than 28 days before and the second notice appearing no less than seven days before a meeting, hearing, or intended action; and publication required three times, with the first notice appearing no more than 35 days before and the third notice appearing no less than seven days before the meeting, hearing, or intended action.

The bill also standardizes descriptive information in such notices related

to proposing, amending, or repealing ordinances; adoption of local budget; and zoning ordinances and planning-related actions.

Another of Williams' proposals, HB445, would require the State Corporation Commission to review and approve premium rates applicable to dental plans issued in Virginia. Under the bill, benefits are deemed to be reasonable in relation to premiums, provided that the medical loss ratio of the policy form, including riders and endorsements, is at least as great as 85 percent.

The bill provides that if the commission finds that the premium rate filed is not meeting or will not meet a medical loss ratio of 85 percent, the commission would require appropriate rate adjustments, premium refunds, or premium credits as deemed necessary for the coverage to conform with the medical loss ratio standard of 85 percent.

Del. Eric Phillips, newly elected to represent the 48th District, won a special election on January 9 - one day before the session began. He has filed no proposals.

StartUp

(cont. from page 1)

Thomas said a collective partnership between the City of Martinsville, Henry County, the C-PEG staff, the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, the Campbell Family Group, the George W. Lester II fund, the anonymous fund through the Community Foundation serving Western Virginia, and other organizations make the program possible.

The 11 grant recipients include:

* J & A Mobile Detailing, a full-service mobile detailing business started in June 2023. It is owned by Jamie Hardin, who prides himself on the work he does on boats, RVs, cars, and mobile homes. He plans to launch this business in Martinsville while serving commercial and individual customers in Martinsville, Henry County, and surrounding areas. Hardin received \$2,500 for the purchase of a generator, water tank, and pressure washer.

* Triple Dog Dare Ya Hotdogs and Catering, a business that provides gourmet hotdogs and Bavarian pretzels. Lisa Cotter started the Axton, VA, business in March 2023. This business will stand out because of its commitment to using high-quality ingredients. Cotter received \$2,780 to assist with the purchase of a refrigerator/cooler, rear refrigerator rack, and generator.

* Counseling with Kelli, LLC has been in operation since October 2023. Currently located at the West Piedmont Business Development Center, Counseling with Kelli, LLC offers clients a person-centered

approach to their mental health treatment. Kelli Palmer is a licensed clinical social worker and certified clinical trauma professional with almost 10 years of professional experience in the mental health field. Her practice specializes in trauma treatment with a continued emphasis on improving the lives of veterans and civilians in the MHC and surrounding areas. Palmer received \$3,200 which includes in-kind office space rental for 6 months in the West Piedmont Business Development Center (WPBDC) and funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission and CPEG to assist with marketing.

* AK the Scientist, started by Ariel King in November, works to introduce science to the community in a safe and kid-friendly way by inspiring children and families to explore the wonders of STEM with cost-efficient science products. Located in Martinsville, this small-batch production of DIY science kits qualified for funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission. King received \$4,500 to help buy various pieces of equipment, and the award includes in-kind office space rental for 6 months in the WPBDC.

* Martinsville Psychiatry, PLLC, is a mental health clinic that applies multiple modalities of treatment for mental health disorders. It was opened by Amanda Jewell, a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner and registered nurse licensed in NY and VA who began her career in

2006. Jewell received \$5,000 to purchase office equipment as this business also qualified for funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission.

* One Medical Service 18 and Up LLC, a new non-emergent urgent care facility opened last week and is located on Virginia Avenue in Collinsville. It is owned by Dwight Holt, an operator, registered nurse, and nurse practitioner, who brings more than 30 years of experience in the healthcare industry. Holt has been practicing as a family nurse practitioner for the last 15 years. This facility is unique in that it will accept cash or debit/credit card payments only. The business received \$5,000 to assist with the purchase of equipment and this award is made possible because the business qualified for funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission.

* Inge Drafting and Design, a home-based Computer-Aided Design company, focuses on creating high-resolution 3D floor plans for individuals with needs for custom renovations, additions, and/or new construction. Owner, Antoino Inge, brings several years of experience in this industry. The business qualified for funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission and will receive \$5,670 to assist with software licensing.

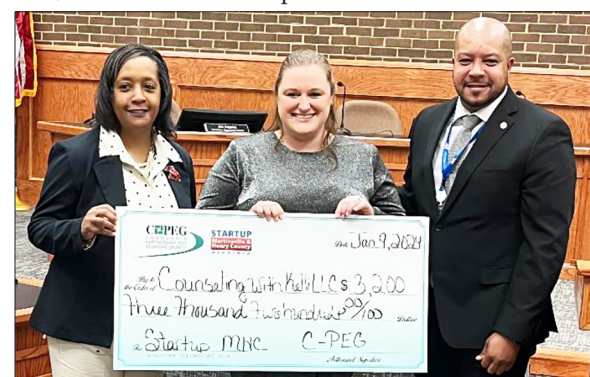
* Butters by Keesha, a small-batch production business that crafts all-natural holistic beauty and wellness products using

high-quality organic ingredients, was started by Keesha Manns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Manns opted to enroll in the StartUp program so that she could gain the basics of running a business. Butters by Keesha received \$5,888 to assist with the purchase of equipment.

* Charis Express, LLC, a Martinsville-based business was acquired in March 2023 by Joven Millner. Charis provides black car service as well as first-class transportation services to all clients and serves customers located in Martinsville, Henry County, and the surrounding areas. Charis Express, LLC was awarded a grant of \$7,500 towards the purchase of a minivan to add to their fleet.

* Off the River Campground LLC seeks to provide a safe and pleasurable outdoor experience for families and individuals seeking to enjoy the comforts of nature. In June 2022, owner Sarah Evans became the operator of the 6-acre campground in Ridgeway, nestled off the Smith River. Evan received \$10,000 to assist with the remodel of a handicap-accessible building for a bath house.

* Solvacy, an AI-driven digital marketing companion for businesses, was started by Kenneth Harkness, who ensures that Solvacy delivers online marketing that is not only intuitive but also impactful because it uses research and development, in-depth analytics, and AI-driven content suggestions. Solvacy received \$10,000 to assist with application development.



Counseling with Kelli, LLC- Brenell Thomas, Kelli Palmer, Martinsville Mayor LC Jones.



AK the Scientist- Brenell Thomas, Ariel King, Martinsville Mayor LC Jones.



Martinsville Psychiatry, PLLC- Brenell Thomas, Amanda Jewell, Martinsville Mayor LC Jones.



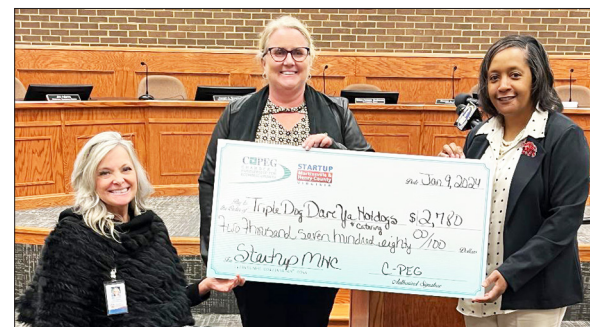
One Medical Service 18 & Up LLC- Brenell Thomas, Dwight Holt, Travis Pruitt, Ridgeway District on the Henry County Board of Supervisors.



Inge Drafting and Design- Brenell Thomas, Antoino Inge, Martinsville Mayor LC Jones.



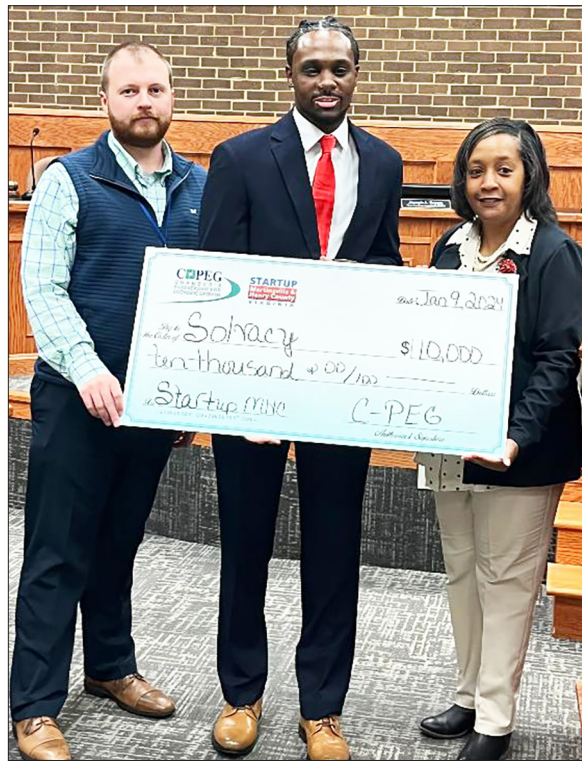
Butters by Keesha- Brenell Thomas, Keesha Manns, Henry County Board of Supervisors Travis Pruitt, of the Ridgeway District.



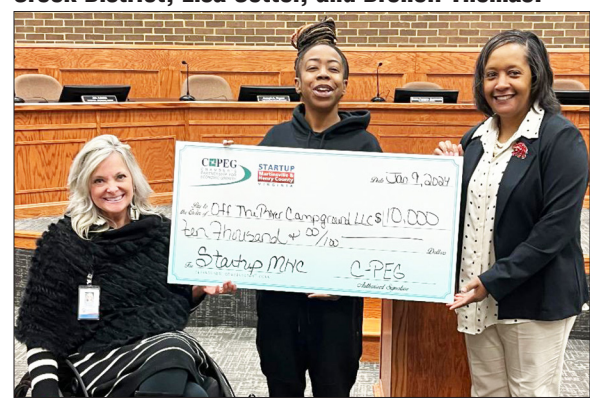
Triple Dog Dare Ya Hotdogs and Catering- Henry County Board of Supervisors Pam Cobler, of the Reed Creek District, Lisa Cotter, and Brenell Thomas.



Charis Express, LLC- Martinsville Mayor LC Jones, Joven Millner, Brenell Thomas.



Solvacy- Henry County Board of Supervisors Travis Pruitt, of the Ridgeway District, Kenneth Harkness, and Brenell Thomas.



Off the River Campground, LLC- Henry County Board of Supervisors Pam Cobler, of the Reed Creek District, Sarah Evans, Brenell Thomas.

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

Thursday, January 11

Martinsville School Board meets at 6 p.m. in the School Board Office, 746 Indian Trail, Martinsville. The board will consider the first reading of the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget.

Events

Friday, January 12

Music Night at the Spencer-Penn Centre. Hard driving old-time string band, Gap Civil, will play in Alumni Hall. Gate opens at 5 p.m. with the band starting at 6:15 p.m. Admission is a \$5 CASH donation. Come enjoy some great mountain music and dancing! Concessions, including our ever-popular Spencer Penn hotdogs, will be sold.

Saturday, January 13

The Bassett Ruritan Club, 277 Philpott Dam Road, Bassett, will be having their monthly breakfast from 6 am to 10 a.m. The breakfast is all you can eat and includes sausage, fried bologna, eggs, apples, gravy, biscuits, pancakes (buckwheat and regular), juice and coffee. The cost is \$8, \$4 for kids 12 and under.

Auditions for a One-Act Play Festival, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., at TheatreWorks Community Players, 44 Franklin Street, UPTown Martinsville. All experience levels.

Sunday, January 14

Auditions for a One-Act Play Festival, 2 - 4 p.m., at TheatreWorks Community Players, 44 Franklin Street, UPTown Martinsville. One Act Plays include "If Walls Could Talk" - A drama following a family as the generations pass; the more things change, the more they stay the same. (10 - 12 actors). "Waiting on the Train Southbend, IN" - A drama wherein a group of people trying to get home are delayed at the train station, forcing them to pause and benefit from each other's life advice. (7 actors). "Dating in the Time of Zombie" - A dark comedy. A scientist clings to nor-

mal life by attempting to hold a speed dating event, despite Zombies as constant distraction. (6 actors).

Monday, January 15

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Wednesday, January 17

The registration fee of \$50 (lunch included) is due for the Danville Master Gardeners' 11th SPRING TO GREEN, Less Work Garden More Seminar. Registrations will be accepted after that time (space permitting), but lunch is not included. The event will be held at the Olde Dominion Agricultural Center (ODAC) on Route 29, Chatham. Speakers are Pat Lust, Goochland/Powhatan Master Gardener; Bryce Lane, former host of "In the Garden," and Mary Ann Hansen, retired Virginia Tech Extension Plant Pathologist. For more information, call Debra Bailey at (336) 340-1981, the Danville Extension Office at (434) 799-6558, or register online at Eventbrite.com. Registration is limited to 125 participants.

Monday, January 22

Meet and Greet hosted by Ridgeway District Supervisor Travis Pruitt, 6-7:30 p.m. at the Ridgeway Rescue Squad, 108 Magnolia St., Ridgeway. Guest speakers will be featured, and light refreshments will be served.

Saturday, January 27

Piano Bar, 7 p.m. Doors open at 6:15 p.m., at TheatreWorks Community Players, 44 Franklin Street, UPTown Martinsville. The cast, musicians and Emcees of the 6th annual Piano Bar are ready to have a great audience sing-along to a myriad of music. Our theme this year is Peace, Love and Soul! Tickets are \$10.

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 FIELDVALE 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.

Bryant

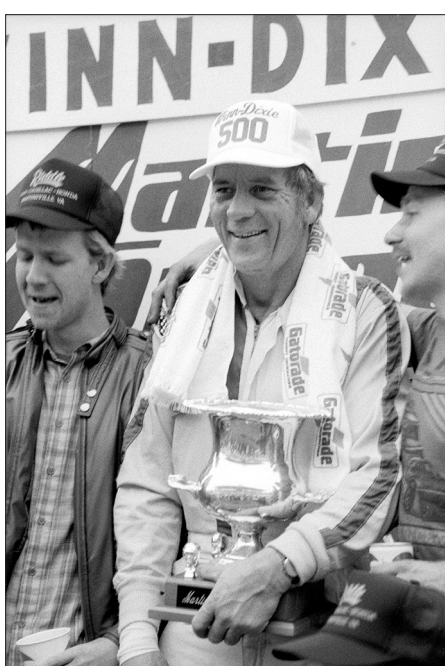
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Martinsville.

"I still remember that win," Bryant told the Martinsville Bulletin in 2014. "We had a good car that day and I got some breaks and was able to win a race here."

"The NASCAR Modified races at Martinsville were always huge events due to the fact that the races pitted the best in the northern modified world against the boys in the south," Riggs Racing posted on their Facebook page on the 30th anniversary of the race on Oct. 26, 2015. "Even former Riggs driver Junior Miller will tell you, the last true southern boy to win at Martinsville was Johnny Bryant in 1985, in a machine prepared by David Riggs." Riggs passed away in 2014 following a battle with cancer.

"Johnny Bryant won it for us, and it tickled me to death," said Miller, who won more than 200 career races and who was inducted into the Caraway Speedway Wall of Fame in 2023. "Back in the '70s and '80s, the northern boys had a lot better car and a lot better motor, but the boys in the south have stepped it up a notch or two and we are a lot more competitive with than we used to be...a team of good ole' southern boys beat those



Johnny Bryant celebrates a win. (Photo courtesy of David Allio)

guys from the north when David and Johnny won."

Funeral arrangements and obituary were not available at press time. Online condolences at www.collinsmckeestonebassett.com.

AITC announces new scholarship opportunity for students

The Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom introduced the Doug Stoughton Memorial Scholarship opportunity for graduating high school seniors and current college students pursuing a future in agriculture or education.

Scholarship winners will receive \$1,000 to further their studies at a 2- or 4-year college or university. The scholarship was created in honor of the late Doug Stoughton, a past Virginia Farm Bureau Federation special programs director who had a passion for furthering youth education in agriculture, and who left a lasting impression on both AITC and VFBE.

"Doug was very instrumental in advocating for AITC and agricultural literacy," said Tammy Maxey, AITC executive director. "This scholarship allows us to honor his legacy and the impact he had, while providing an opportunity for students pursuing a career in agriculture or education."

Interested students can apply

online at form.jotform.com/VaAITC/AITCScholarship. Applicants are required to submit a high school transcript and two letters of recommendation.

Additionally, applicants will need to submit personal statements describing their extracurricular activities and community service, leadership experience, interest in agriculture and education, and how the scholarship will benefit them.

Applications are due March 31 and can be emailed to aitc@vafb.com. Scholarship winners will be notified by May 31.

For more information about this scholarship and other AITC initiatives, visit virginia.agclassroom.org.

The Virginia Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that promotes a greater understanding and appreciation of agriculture through education and outreach activities. To learn more and support, visit virginia.agclassroom.org.

DMV sets holiday closings for 2024

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) announced its offices will be closed on the following days for state holidays and observances this year:

January 15: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February 19: George Washington Day
May 27: Memorial Day
June 19: Juneteenth
July 4: Independence Day
September 2: Labor Day
October 14: Columbus Day and Yorktown Victory Day
November 5: Election Day
November 11: Veterans Day (observed)

During these closures and anytime, you can renew your tags, update your address, renew or replace your driver's

license or ID card, in addition to dozens of other services available at dmv.virginia.gov. Most transactions take minutes to complete, saving you a trip to a DMV location.

Also, please check the hours of your local DMV Select location as they may operate outside of the state holiday closing schedule. DMV Select offices, mostly run by local governments, primarily process vehicle-related transactions, such as registration renewals, title registrations and license plates. For more information on DMV Select and to find a select location near you, visit our website.

The Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday schedule will be announced at a later date.

Council approves change to charter

By Taylor Boyd

The Martinsville City Council approved changes to the city's charter about the reversion process at its January 9 meeting.

At a previous council meeting the council went through a number of charter changes and had a list of items, City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides said.

"One item that was accidentally left off for your discussion was a provision to focus on the revision," she said of the item that basically required formal action for any other discussions on reversion.

"There is currently legislation that exists, and there's currently something that's outstanding from the Governor's Office. However, this would be putting it in our charter also," she said.

Vice-mayor Aaron Rawls said the charter change would ensure a discussion would occur so the public would be informed.

"Most importantly, pragmatically for the safety of the city, I think there's a lot of assumptions made about reversion that weren't true, and when elections are required, one of the great benefits of election is there are two sides, and each side has to present its case may the best-case

win," he said.

Rawls said this did not happen with the reversion process previously, with many assumptions accepted by the citizens that would not have been true.

"That would have done a lot of harm to the city," he added.

Rawls said making this change to the city's charter would make sure people get properly informed, get to have a say so, and "also get to choose if they receive their charter, whether they give up their representation to become a member of the county of Henry, and all the other."

Rawls said this change has the same language with some minor semantic changes as Senate Bill 85.

"So, we adopted what's already been accepted by the past General Assembly," he said.

In other matters, the board:

*Heard a presentation on the Baby Bonds program.

*Recognized city employees who were eligible for service awards for the October 1-December 31 period.

*Recognized city employees who retired in 2023.

*Heard comments from council members.

*Heard comments from the city manager.

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OPINION

The costs of constant connectivity

Alert!
The third-grade play will be held tomorrow at 1 p.m.
Well, that's great, but my kid is in high school.
Notice!
Choir practice has been moved from 4 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Well, alright, but my kid is in drama, not choir.
Important message for parents!



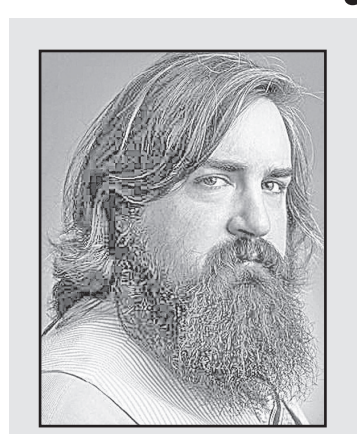
Holly Kozelsky

Please remember to always accompany young children to and from the bus stop. Click here to learn more about bus regulations and our Student Code of Conduct.
Alright, thanks, she never waited for the bus on her own when she was little, but she can manage that now.
Ah, the days of constant communication, a parent's dream.
Thanks to technology, the schools hound us not only about our own children but everyone else's as well.
It's enough to make you miss the good old days of the simple flyer. If the parents had to know something, they'd read about it on some crumpled piece of paper the kid pulled out of the backpack.
Sure, the kid normally pulled it out at 10 p.m. the night before something you had to prepare for, but with hindsight being 20/20, I'd take that every day over the constant "bings" and "beeps" and app sign-ins and glowing notification icons that appear constantly now on the phone and computer and the ring of the telephone on the automated calls.
There is nowhere to hide. The schools chase us down with text messages, emails, automated phone calls and apps we are supposed to have on our phones and sign into.
It's worse when you're at work, expecting an important call from a colleague or doctor or repairman fixing something serious at home. You've got to answer that call, or at least check the message to ease your mind - and you're meeting with clients or the boss. When the phone dings, you try to sneak a

peek without being rude - but it's just another school message that doesn't apply to your child.
A never-ending stream of frivolous announcements bombards us from everywhere like missiles.
The problem is it doesn't take us long to get burnt out on them. It has created a Boy Who Cried Wolf situation. When an important message finally comes in, we don't notice it, because we've already become immune to the nonstop daily bothers of things that have nothing to do with us.
You want to know about the date of the program your kid has a starring role in? Sure, it's in there somewhere. Just sit down for a spell (might as well pour a cup of coffee or, blessed be, something strong). It's going to take a while.
You've got to dig through phone messages (from two sources, not just one) and emails and that app. Scroll on past announcements for sports your kid doesn't play, programs your kid isn't in, information on lunches your kid doesn't buy, notes for kids much older or much younger than yours, invitations to craft shows and fundraisers and merchandise sales that don't support your kid's activities, suggestions on pencils and pens and electronics, warnings that your kid shouldn't be smoking or vaping, helpful advice on how to sneak vegetables into your kid's pizza or desserts, meeting information for clubs your kid is not in and even is not old enough or young enough or in the right classes to be qualified to join ...
And just give up and call another parent, or email the teacher to ask.

Varkon the Defiler announces candidacy

WASHINGTON, D.C. — It's bad news for Joe Biden this week as a new Republican frontrunner has emerged: Varkon the Defiler, an intergalactic warlord who announced his candidacy on Tuesday.
Varkon, a 12-foot-tall multi-limbed monstrosity whose very visage causes madness in humans, recently escaped from the distant prison planet Altair IV and has set his sights on the U.S. presidency. If elected, he has promised to enslave humanity and build a "Brainflyer Laser" that will destroy Altair IV once and for all.



By Ben R. Williams

"For a thousand years I slumbered on that cursed rock, quietly plotting my revenge," Varkon said in his campaign announcement at D.C.'s Waldorf Astoria. "Soon, Altair IV will be annihilated and this hateful planet will know the true meaning of fear. I demand the votes of all Americans. Those who support me will be killed first and thus spared the horrors to come."
Former Donald Trump campaign chairman and current convicted felon Paul Manafort described Varkon the Defiler as "the only clear choice."
"Varkon the Defiler is basically Trump without the baggage," Manafort said. "He's obsessed with revenge. He hates humanity. He wants to see his enemies driven before him and crushed into the earth. But he's never said a kind word about Jeffrey Epstein, so he's got that going for him."
Outspoken Democratic campaign consultant James Carville said that in his view, Democrats are going to have a difficult choice at the polls this November.
"The Democrats are all the time whining about identity politics and trying to put silver spoon socialists into positions of power," Carville said. "Like him or loathe him, Varkon the Defiler has tapped into what the American voters really care about: vengeance and cruelty."
Already, Varkon the Defiler has unveiled his five point plan for his presidency.

haggard voice yet they cannot recognize it for they will have lost themselves in the dark."
"Vote Varkon the Defiler 2024," he added.
"He's got my vote," said Mary Griffin of Tunica, Mississippi. "I'm not crazy about his policy of killing most of humanity and driving the few survivors insane, but it's not like the Democrats are any better."
Already, many potential voters have latched onto the fact that the construction of the Brainflyer Laser will require the use of all of the cobalt and lithium on the planet.
"That means no more electric cars," said Bud Jenkins of McMullen, Alabama. "I get to keep driving my Ram, and he gets to blow up that jerk planet or whatever. Politics are about compromise, something the Democrats have forgotten."
"The American voters recognize that Joe Biden is just too old to serve," said commentator Laura Ingraham. "Varkon the Defiler has existed since the dawn of the universe, but as far as anyone can tell, he's some sort of immortal entity. He's also a much better speaker."
So confident is Varkon the Defiler of his chances in the upcoming Presidential election that during a recent rally, he boasted that he could "stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and vaporize somebody and (he) wouldn't lose any voters." To prove the point, he then aimed a ray gun of some sort at Republican Presidential hopeful Chris Christie and pulled the trigger, reducing the former Governor of New Jersey to a small puddle of smoking green goo.
"His terror pleased me," Varkon quipped, stirring laughter and applause from his supporters.
"That Varkon is a real straight shooter," said Hunter Hughes of Seville, Georgia. "Look, I'm not exactly looking forward to getting enslaved and murdered. But as long as he's doing it to the liberals too, I call that a win."

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Super Crossword

ACROSS	LEGAL THRILLERS
1 Highest roll of a single die	77 Sedate
4 Peak in Thessaly	78 Steinbeck migrant
8 Freaks out	79 Close
15 Subjective paper piece	81 In — (more than sleeping)
19 Never dying	82 Arm bone
21 Kind of cherry named for its shape	84 Eatery list
22 — sci. (coll. major)	85 Baseballer Musial
23 Scaled-down symphony group [1994]	87 Is really mad
25 Mallorca, por ejemplo	90 Grain fungi
26 "King" primate	91 "Watch Me (Whip—)" (2015 hit)
27 Writer Ferber	92 "Apollo 13" actor Gary
28 Anti-bias job agcy.	93 Bills worth 100 bucks
29 Gown fabric	94 "You got that right!"
30 Program interacting with a remote server [1993]	95 Meat in a sub
34 Bygone times	96 Coal-mining guys
38 Nurtured	98 MMA fighter Rousey
39 Kids' song with French lyrics	99 Armageddon nation
40 — to go (gung-ho)	100 Little laugh
41 "It's ch-chilly!"	104 Silent "yes"
42 Whimpered like a baby	105 Like villains
44 Place to disclose sins [2010]	106 Russo of film
48 Coinage for something with no name	107 Gymnast Korbut
53 Beginning on Thessaly	109 Elly May Clampett's pa
54 "To — much is given ..."	110 Good Grips kitchen brand
55 Nantes' river	111 "— a trap!"
57 Sets of points on graphs	112 Ark.-to-Ill. dir.
58 Shallowest Great Lake	
60 Waltz or tango [1997]	
63 Itinerant band member, say	
66 State after wedlock	
68 Having more seepage	
69 Panels that may reverse decisions [2008]	
71 Melody	
72 Jungle roarer	
73 Ouzo flavorer	
74 Exact lookalike	
76 Brand of rodent killer	
80 Horse-man of myth	
83 Greeting act conveying confidence [1991]	
86 First-rate	
88 Flub it up	
89 Actress Shire	
90 Plant snugly	
94 — cone	
4 Celestial ball	
5 Like a cold, hard gaze	
6 Manhattan eatery since 1927	
7 Isolated	
8 Ad — committee	
9 Hatchet part	
10 Ram or ewe	
11 "The Fox and the Crow" storyteller	
12 Tabby's scratcher	
13 Bobby of hockey	
14 Venus Williams' org.	
15 Sedative drug	
16 Sticky little sheet	
17 "Mama" Cass	
18 Actress Wiest	
20 Texter's "Yikes!"	
24 Bolted to escape	
29 Riyadh native	
30 Sugar source	
31 Shore filer	
32 "Not yet sure what my answer is"	
33 Director Joel or Ethan	
34 Killer whale	
35 Neighbor of Myanmar	
36 Early James Bond foe	
41 Dust jacket write-up	
42 Demi and Dudley	
43 Departs	
45 Cupcake flourish	
46 That lady	
47 Less spicy	
49 Honey-coated Easter entree	
50 Anderson of "WKRP in Cincinnati"	
51 Cicero's "Lol!"	
52 Cake layer	
56 ICU workers	
59 Actor Stephen	
60 Iran's former name	
61 Ball-shaped	
62 Put on, as an outfit	
63 After-bath powder	
64 Andy Taylor's boy	
65 Sitting atop	
66 Suffix with ball	
67 Innocent types	
70 President before Donald	
71 Shallow pan	
74 Swarms	
75 Huge conflict	

Gray named to WPPDC's marketing team

Amanda Gray joined the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) in September as Tourism and Marketing Specialist.
"We are thrilled to welcome Amanda to our team," said Kristie Eberly, the agency's newly named executive director.
Gray "comes with significant experience in her field, which will greatly enhance the WPPDC's ability to continue to collaborate with our localities on projects and programs. We are confident she will be a valuable asset to the organization and look forward to seeing her positive impact on our communities," Eberly said.
Gray previously was the Marketing Director for Mulberry Creek Skilled Nursing & Assisted Living in Martinsville.
A graduate of Emory & Henry College where she double majored in Mass Communications and Sports Management. She's been in the marketing field for more than 13 years throughout the West Piedmont region in sports tourism and healthcare. Gray served on the Ridgeway Town Council where she helped implement the Summer Sunset Series.
"I greatly enjoyed working with key leaders in the Ridgeway community to host events for our town residents to enjoy with their loved ones," Gray said. "I am eager to work closely with all the localities in our region to ensure the success of my main projects - Life in SOVA, Grown in SOVA, and the development of the Outdoor Recreation Initiative."
Gray enjoys traveling throughout



Amanda Gray

the region with her son, Bennett, participating in all the area has to offer such as Fairy Stone State Park, the Virginia Museum of Natural History, and the Smith River Sports Complex.
The West Piedmont Planning District is a regional planning organization serving the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; the cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the Town of Rocky Mount. The WPPDC seeks to carry out its mission by facilitating regional thinking and dialogue among the district's local government, K-12 and higher educational institutions, economic development organizations, workforce development, and other key stakeholders. Learn more at westpiedmontpc.org.

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Hines, Peters transfer divisions



Martinsville Police Capt. Sandy Hines (left) has taken command of the Police Services, Investigations, and Logistics Division, and Lt. Ben Peters is now the supervisor of the Criminal Investigation Unit. The Martinsville Police Department said the new posts are considered lateral transfers within the department's organizational structure. "We are confident their proven leadership will significantly benefit the department in these new roles," the department noted in a statement.

New office to focus on providing resources to students, schools

Helping schools address the unprecedented rise in mental health and behavioral challenges facing Virginia students post-pandemic, the Virginia Department of Education has created the Office of Behavioral Health and Wellness to help focus resources and attention to our students who are struggling with these evolving challenges.

Sharpening the focus on the "Right Help, Right Now" resources available to Virginia students, the office will assist schools with teams of professionals focused on three key areas:

*Behavioral Health & Instructional Support

Focusing on issues regarding behavioral and mental health including school counseling, school discipline, the causes and impact of chronic absenteeism, and the effects on children and teens who rely on social media

*School Health & Wellness

Centering on issues such as opioid and drug use abatement, emphasizing the dangers of fentanyl and its spreading use amongst children and teens, and overdose prevention

*Student Services

Dedicated to removing many of the wrap-around barriers to success facing

children today, including working with military families and students in foster care, as well as equipping students for post-secondary access and success

The office will also develop the Virginia Behavioral Health Comprehensive Framework, designed to assist in improving student outcomes through increased behavioral supports spanning between schools and communities.

"Our students and our schools are facing different issues than they faced before the pandemic," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Lisa Coons. "We have redesigned several positions across the department to create the Office of Behavioral Health and Wellness. This office will bring a multifaceted approach to better equip educators, staff and parents in supporting our students and responding when a crisis occurs."

Joseph Wharff, a professional educational administrator with over 20 years of leadership in school services and school counseling with Henrico County Public Schools and VDOE, will serve as Director of the new office. The new office and its director will work directly with Coons.

Family Preservation Project helps keep VA families together

Edwin J. Viera
Virginia News Connection

Virginia legal advocates are partnering on a program to keep families together.

The Family Preservation Project is a collaboration between the Virginia Poverty Law Center and the Virginia Legal Aid Justice Center. The goal is to create a better approach to family separation cases with improvements to the whole system.

An Annie E. Casey Foundation report found neglect is a growing reason Virginia kids are placed in foster care.

Valerie L'Herrou, deputy director of the Center for Family Advocacy at the Virginia Poverty Law Center, said sometimes, it is a different story.

"Something like an eviction, or some other legal matter, can precipitate children going into foster care when their families have done nothing wrong," L'Herrou pointed out.

The two organizations say they are bringing a holistic approach to legal work, providing wraparound legal services for evictions and family separation, along with parent advocates who've been through the system guiding others through separations.

Virginia's Promoting Safe and Stable Families program also helps connect families and children to necessary services to get through a crisis.

One sticking point L'Herrou and oth-

ers want to change is the price attorneys are paid for taking on family separation cases. The flat rate of \$120 per case has turned into a deterrent for those who charge much higher rates for hourly services. She said this creates a lack of proper legal representation for families.

"Attorneys are just not accepting the cases because basically, they can't afford to," L'Herrou acknowledged. "Even when they do, they're not doing anything -- they're not putting any time into it -- because in their minds simply, showing up to court is enough. So, one of the recommendations is to raise that \$120 flat fee to \$445."

For the first time in 20 years, the Virginia State Bar Association will be advocating at the Virginia General Assembly on the matter, seeking methods to improve the quality of legal services for certain child dependency cases. The association's request will go before the state Supreme Court for approval.



Teddy Martin



Ben Gravely

Martin, Gravely reelected to posts

By Staff Reports

Teddy D. Martin II, of the Reed Creek District, and Ben Gravely, of the Iriswood District, will again lead the Henry County School Board of chairman and vice chairman, respectively.

The board also:

*Heard from Janet Lewis, who led the Poetry Out Loud program in county schools, which participated in the competition for the first time due to a grant from the Commission of the Arts. One student each from Bassett and Magna Vista high schools won. The winning two students will progress to the virtual regional competition in February.

*Learned that Homer Dillard Post #78 spent much of the fall conducting flag etiquette training at elementary schools. Two students from Sanville Elementary School presented some of what they had learned, folding a flag in front of the board.

Curtis Millner, who is a member of the post, said its members "really enjoyed doing this. We hope to do it again next year," starting in September. Millner added that the post also offers a number of other programs to students.

"We would like to do what we can because we realize that these students are our future. We'd like to do all that we can to help," Millner said.

Read a resolution for Principal Appreciation Week, which is Jan. 14-20.

*Heard from Greg Preston, executive director for the Piedmont Community Services Board, told the school board that his agency is the school division's partner for community health service. He added that part of the agency's effort for 2024 is to educate various entities about community service boards, and to focus on prevention "in order to combat substance abuse."

WPPDC Commissioners appoint Eberly to lead agency

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) Board of Commissioners selected Kristna (Kristie) Eberly to serve as the next executive director at a November 30 meeting.

Eberly began her duties on December 1, following Michael Armbrister, who served as the executive director for three years.

Eberly joined the Planning District Commission in November 2020 and served as the Associate Director, Regional Programs Director and Interim Executive Director. Before joining the WPPDC, Eberly spent more than 16 years with the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland as Executive Coordinator focusing on economic development, grant writing and administration and legislative activities. She also has experience as Grants Administrator for two Maryland cities, Crisfield and Pocomoke.

"The West Piedmont region is on the cusp of so many great things. People on all levels are working to recruit business and industry, expand educational opportunities, improve broadband access, expand housing choices, grow the tourism industry, and support local small business and the West Piedmont PDC is proud to be a partner in these endeavors," Eberly said.

"We will continue to partner with our local governments and regional organizations to secure state and federal funding, strengthen our communities and make the most of the opportunities available," she said. "I am honored and grateful to be appointed executive director and



Kristna (Kristie) Eberly

look forward to collaborating with our partners on new projects and programs to benefit our communities. I chose to make rural Virginia my home and was so fortunate to discover the West Piedmont region and all it has to offer."

"The West Piedmont Board is excited that Ms. Eberly has accepted the position," stated Jim Adams, chairman of the WPPDC. "We have full confidence in her abilities to steer the WPPDC into the future and carry on the PDC's collaborative efforts with communities to help them achieve their goals."

The West Piedmont Planning District is a regional planning organization serving the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; the cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the Town of Rocky Mount.

Fire officials unable to determine cause of December blaze

The cause of a blaze that claimed the life of a Collinsville man has been ruled undetermined, according to Henry County Fire Marshal Lisa Garrett.

Alvis Dwight Little, 69, of 175 Conestoga Court, died in the December structure fire, according to Garrett.

The Henry County Department of Public Safety, the Collinsville Volunteer Fire Department, the Bassett Volunteer Fire

Department, and the Fieldale Volunteer Fire Department responded to the fire call at 175 Conestoga Court in Collinsville around 10:23 p.m. on Dec. 28.

Upon arrival, fire crews found a single wide trailer on fire. A man was found as firefighters worked to extinguish the blaze. He was pronounced dead at the scene and was transported to the Medical Examiner's Office in Roanoke for identification.

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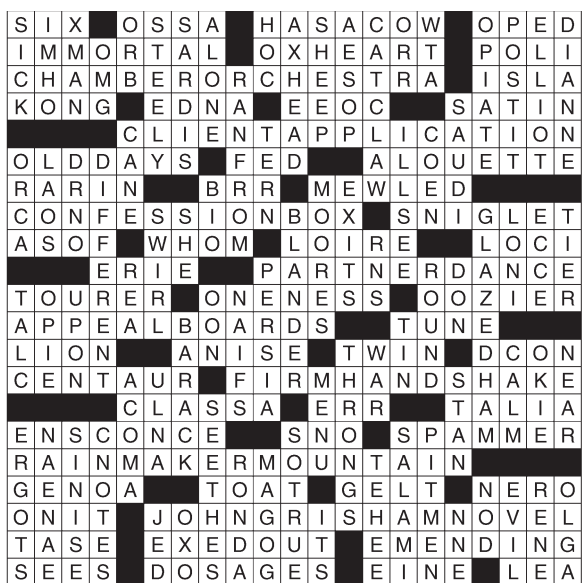


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ADVERTISE!

Farmers and lawmakers connect at series of regional legislative meetings

While farmers are busy tending to their land and livestock, state lawmakers soon will be busy debating and voting on policies that impact those agricultural activities. As more than 50 freshmen legislators adjust to their leadership roles—many in newly mapped districts—farmers wonder how they can all get on the same page.

Following November's general election, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's governmental relations and field services staff facilitated in-person connections between farmers and lawmakers through a series of 20 regional legislative meetings. These casual sessions are held annually and allow farmers to establish relationships and create ongoing dialogue with legislators regarding farming issues most important to the organization's 33,000 grassroots members.

Farmers from Amelia, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico and Powhatan counties gathered in Chesterfield Dec. 12 to meet with Del. Mark Earley, R-Midlothian; Sen. Ghazala F. Hashmi, D-Richmond; Del. David Owen, R-Henrico; and Sen. Glen Sturtevant, R-Midlothian. Farmers briefed them on pressing issues like funding for agricultural best management practices, crop protectant regulations, the large animal veterinarian shortage, and the encroachment of solar facilities on workable agricultural lands.

With a daughter working in the animal agriculture sector, Powhatan County hay producer Betty Walters is concerned about the shortage of large animal veterinarians in rural Virginia. School debt vastly outpaces earnings for farm vets.

"Virginia is one of the largest ag-producing states,

and a lot of that is beef cattle," she said. "Do you need to get a vet out in the middle of the night, on a weekend, or a Sunday morning? There might not be someone available to help."

She said tuition relief might be a good start, and more training opportunities for vet techs may bridge the gap. Farm Bureau has requested state funding to address the shortage, and has asked for a stakeholder workgroup to study solutions.

Jonathan Lyle, a Goochland County produce grower and forestland owner, said the idea of solar energy collection is appealing. But he thinks panels should be installed away from prime farm soils and forestland, and instead be placed on brownfields like reclaimed lands, rooftops and urban structures.

As a conservationist, he applauded carbon-reduction efforts, "but I don't think we have to do this at the expense of agriculture," Lyle said. "We're not saying don't do it all. But let us be stewards of the land and have a seat at the table."

Hashmi, who sits on the Senate Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee, said she will introduce a bill this upcoming session to encourage installation of solar panels on parking decks.

"It's a good alternative," she said, adding that Chesterfield's new Lego plant will have solar-paneled parking decks that harness energy to help power the facility.

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LEGAL

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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT
3160 KINGS MOUNTAIN RD, 3RD FL., MARTINSVILLE, VA 24112
JAVIER SARABIA LOPEZ v. ELIA PEREZ GARCIA
AV. BORDO DO XOCHIIACA, MEXICAN IO LOTE 35
Esado de Mexico 56353

The object of this suit is to:
TO OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINCULO MATRIMONII
It is ORDERED that ELIA PEREZ GARCIA appear at the above-named court and protect her interests on or before FEBRUARY 11, 2024
DECEMBER 13, 2023

[Signature]
[] JUDGE [] CLERK

LEGAL

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
COUNTY OF HENRY, VA
SOLAR FACILITY SITING AGREEMENT
Pursuant to Section 15.2-2316.8 of the Code of Virginia, the Henry County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at 6:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as can be heard, in the Summerlin Meeting Room on the first floor of the Henry County Administration Building at Kings Mountain Road in Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive citizen input on a proposed Solar Facility Siting Agreement between Henry County and Shifting Sands Solar, LLC.
A copy of the full text of the proposed Solar Facility Siting Agreement may be viewed in the Office of the County Administrator in the County Administration Building at Kings Mountain Road, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

LEGAL

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
COUNTY OF HENRY, VA
PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO FY24 HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET
Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 15.2-2507, Code of Virginia, that the Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing during its regular meeting on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of receiving comments on the proposed amendment to the Henry County Public Schools FY2023-24 Budget as necessary to appropriate a total of \$4,175,201 received from the Commonwealth's "ALL In Virginia" Initiative. The appropriation exceeds 1% of the total Schools budget. The proposed budget amendment does not constitute an obligation on the part of the Board of Supervisors to appropriate funds for any items or purpose. For more information, contact the County Administrator's Office at 276-634-4601.

LEGAL

HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
Pursuant to Section 33.2-909 of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, the Henry County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building at 3300 Kings Mountain Road in Collinsville, Virginia.
The purpose of the public hearing is to receive citizen input into the issue of abandonment of Secondary Highway Route 9199, the bus entrance into a former public school located at 1425 Greensboro Rd, in the Ridgeway District.
Also, Pursuant to Section 33.2-915 through 33.2-922 of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, the Henry County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building at 3300 Kings Mountain Road in Collinsville, Virginia.
The purpose of this public hearing is to receive citizen input on the proposed abandonment of a 50' street space off Oak Level Rd., in the Reed Creek District. The 50' street space is shown on a map entitled "Map 1 of Stoneleigh Farms" in Map Book 43, Page 39, in the HCCCO. A new preliminary map has been prepared to further show what is intended to be abandoned, and is available for inspection.
The documents showing the location of these proposed abandonments is available for public inspection in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection, Room 205, Henry County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Road, Collinsville, Virginia, between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.
Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

Sports Schedule

Following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of Jan. 15-20:

1/16 7 pm Girls Basketball Magna Vista at Halifax County
 7 pm Girls Basketball Martinsville at Tunstall
 7 pm Boys Basketball Halifax County at Magna Vista
 7 pm Boys Basketball Tunstall at Martinsville

1/17 5 pm Wrestling Bassett, Magna Vista, Mecklenburg County at Tunstall
 5:45p Girls Basketball North Cross at Carlisle
 6 pm Wrestling Martinsville at Giles
 7 pm Boys Basketball North Cross at Carlisle

1/18 4:30p Girls Basketball Carlisle at Greensboro Day School
 5 pm Wrestling Bassett, Liberty at Staunton
 7 pm Boys Basketball Carlisle at Chatham

1/19 5 pm Swim & Dive Bassett vs Martinsville (at Hargrave Academy)
 5 pm Swim & Dive Magna Vista vs multiple schools (at Martinsville YMCA)
 6 pm Boys Basketball Carlisle at Greensboro Day School
 7 pm Girls Basketball George Washington at Bassett

7 pm Girls Basketball Northside at Magna Vista
 7 pm Boys Basketball Bassett at George Washington
 7 pm Girls Basketball Martinsville at Mecklenburg County
 7 pm Boys Basketball Mecklenburg County at Martinsville

1/20 3 pm Boys Basketball Magna Vista at Franklin County
 4 pm Boys Basketball Martinsville at Graham (at Virginia H.S.)

Student Briefs

Area students named to Dean's List

Several area students were named to the fall 2023 Dean's List Emory & Henry College. To be named to the Dean's List, a student must be a full-time student and earn a 3.6 GPA for the semester.

- Caitlin Barker, of Collinsville.
- Rachael Cardwell, of Ridgeway.
- Maria Cheki, of Martinsville.
- Axton student earns Midway University

Dean's List Honors

Midway University is pleased to announce Jessica Hudler has been named to its Dean's List for the 2023 Fall Semester. To be named to the list, a student must be classified as full-time and obtain a 3.60 grade point average for the semester. There were 419 students who made the Dean's List.

Local students named to Dean's List

Shenandoah University recognized the 1,126

students who made the Fall 2023 Dean's List, including two from Martinsville-Henry County:

Fabiola Vazquez Becerra, of Martinsville, and Jacob Gilbert, of Collinsville.

To qualify for the Dean's List, students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs must complete at least 12 semester hours and earn a semester GPA of 3.50 or higher. Dean's List students who achieve a semester GPA of 3.90 or higher are also recognized on the university's President's List.

Manufacturing is the leading industry for initial claims

The manufacturing industry led the number of initial unemployment insurance claims, according to the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA). The number of claims edged up in the latest filing week to 2,070 but remained slightly below typical pre-pandemic volumes experienced in 2019.

For the filing week ending December 30, seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia were 2,070, which was an increase of 51 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 12,357, which was little changed from the previous week but an increase of thirty percent from the 9,545 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of continued claims. Of those, over half (58 percent) of continued claims were from administrative and support and waste management (1,767), professional, scientific, and technical services (1,665), manufacturing (1,178), health care and social assistance (1,052), and construction (986). 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 30, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 202,000, a decrease of 18,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 2,000 from 218,000 to 220,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 268,020 in the week ending December 30, a decrease of 6,820 (or -2.5 percent) from the previous week. There were 278,487 initial claims in the comparable week in 2022.

Looking at preliminary data, most U.S. states reported decreases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. California's preliminary weekly change (-7,572) was the largest decrease. Texas's preliminary weekly change (-6,080) was the second largest decrease. Missouri's preliminary weekly change (-2,551) was the third largest decrease. Florida's preliminary weekly change (-1,583) was the fourth largest decrease. Virginia had the 20th largest increase (+57).



(L to R): Ferrum College environmental science professor Delia Heck and Rev. Melanie Mullen, the church's director of reconciliation, justice and creation care.

Ferrum College Professor Speaks at the UN COP28 Faith Pavilion Panel in Dubai

Episcopal delegates are advocating for stronger actions to help solve the global climate crisis, and Ferrum College's Dr. Delia Heck is a leader in this global conversation. Last month, ninety thousand world leaders and climate representatives participated in COP28, the 28th United Nations Conference of Parties, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates where Dr. Heck served as a panelist representing the Episcopal Church.

COP28 is the first U. N. conference with a faith pavilion where participants could engage in faith-based sessions with stakeholders, political delegations, and other leaders to promote climate action.

The Episcopal Diocese of California is one of more than 50 faith organizations that collaborated to establish the faith pavilion. They hosted a panel discussion called "A Case Study in Faith-Based Advocacy and Witness" featuring Dr. Heck who serves on the church's Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism.

"The experience of COP28 was like drinking out of a water tanker - overwhelming and yet extremely satisfying. The pace of change for so long has seemed glacial, but two things happened this year that were unexpected: Loss and Damage was funded and there was agreement that the world needs to transition away from fossil fuels," said Heck.

In his closing remarks, COP 28 President Al Jaber mentioned the impact of speaking from the heart that made these two milestones possible, and Dr. Heck agrees that the human heart was visible and impactful. "It was clear at COP28 in the storytelling of climate justice, of nature-based & indigenous solutions, youth-led initiatives, and of the ways in which faith

organizations and this church shows up on a daily basis...There were so many stories, not only of hope, but of courage, action, faith, justice, young people, women, and impacted communities from around the world."

Dr. Heck is also a member of the Episcopal Relief and Development's Climate Resiliency Community of Practice; she provided a debrief of COP28 to this community on December 27th. "Folks in that group wanted to know what we as members of the global north are going to be doing to ensure that the Loss and Damage agreements are met. If we profess on Sunday mornings that we are followers of the Way of Love, then the choices we make the rest of the week must reflect that care for creation.

"We as people of faith, are called to care for all our siblings which means that our actions must align with our words. I shared with the Community that we must keep telling stories from our hearts of the actions we are taking. We must not give up. Every day there are opportunities to love God and love our neighbors - we must not pass them by - there is no more time to watch and wait. Hope is a concept that is only manifest by the actions that we take as we pursue climate justice, reconciliation, and a just transition."

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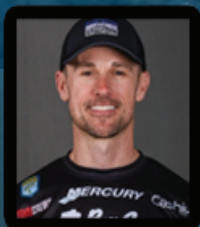


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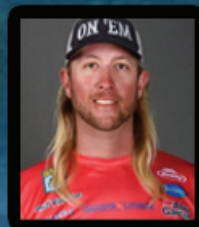
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Open Mic Night is back at Piedmont Arts with a winter event



The galleries provide a perfect backdrop of creative energy for the open mic events.

After a brief winter break, the “Make Some Noise” Open Mic Night returns at Piedmont Arts on Thursday, Feb. 8, at 7 p.m. in the galleries. Hosted by local writer Monique Holland, the community is invited to come share their original poetry, spoken word, music, and comedy at this free event. A cash bar will be available with beer and wine.

Grab the mic and express yourself through music, poetry, comedy or spoken word. Anything that you have written or created can be showcased at this series. Slots will be capped at five minutes to

ensure everyone gets a chance to share their work and shine. Piedmont Arts is thrilled to create an event that will allow the artists of Southwest Virginia to share their work in a supportive and exciting space.

The event will be hosted by Monique Holland. As a reporter for the Martinsville Bulletin, Holland’s words have had a tremendous impact on Martinsville and Henry County. Holland is a constant and beloved creative presence in the community and the museum is thrilled to have her support as emcee for this event.



A spoken word poet from Blacksburg shares his work to an enraptured audience.

Famed cattiewoman and author Dr. Temple Grandin met with women agriculturalists at Virginia farm skills event

Farm women from 26 counties converged in Central Virginia to hear from renowned cattiewoman, author and professor Dr. Temple Grandin.

An animal scientist at Colorado State University, Grandin has authored dozens of books and papers on livestock handling and animal behavior. As a scholar with autism, she’s also written extensively on neurodivergence. She discussed her latest book, Visual Thinking, at the two-day Women Increasing Skills and Education event.

Virginia Cooperative Extension’s WISE program was held in December at Graves Mountain Farm & Lodges and Senterfit Farms, where participants honed skills in equipment operation, fencing, farm safety, cat-

tle handling and more. Program leader Amy Gail Fannon Byington, a senior Extension agent in Lee County, said the WISE programs are small gatherings that boast big-impact outcomes.

“A small-group environment allows all participants to learn without a crowd watching,” she explained. “Increasing confidence is one of the main drivers behind the program.”

The Virginia Cattle Industry Board partnered with WISE and the Virginia State Dairymen’s Association to bring Grandin to Virginia, where she participated in livestock demonstrations and was the keynote speaker.

In 1976, Grandin put herself in a cattle-handling chute to personally observe visual distractions stressing livestock. As a result, she

designed a curved chute for alleviating those issues. Grandin’s success as a humane livestock facility designer is attributed to her recollection of details—a characteristic of her visual memory.

She signed copies of her new book, which explores the hidden gifts of those who think in pictures, patterns and abstractions.

“When I was in my 20s, people thought I was dumb because I couldn’t do higher math,” Grandin recalled. “But there’s different kinds of thinking—object-visualizers like me, and other people good at art and mechanics.”

“The mathematical mind thinks in patterns. But everything I think about is a picture. Being autistic, we tend to be extreme visualizers. And you need us! You want infrastructure,

water and electrical systems to work.”

Large animal veterinarian Dr. Amanda Weakley-Scott, a Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers Committee member, has long admired Grandin’s passion for livestock movement and welfare, and supports her call for inclusion of visual learners on farms and beyond.

“Recognizing the need for visual thinkers in every trade is going to be vital in years to come,” Weakley-Scott said. “So, take the shop class, work on small engines, get out in the field with animals, because then you have job security in a profession artificial intelligence can’t replicate!”

To learn more about Virginia WISE, visit shorturl.at/inYOY.

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Dr. Ruberte Thiele initially pursued a career as a biomedical engineer in the medical device industry and academia. Interested in directly impacting patients’ quality of life, he applied to medical school with the singular goal of becoming an orthopedic surgeon. After completing additional training in robotics and navigation for partial and total joint replacement as well as revision arthroplasty, returns to the area eager to help patients get back to doing what makes them happy. When not attending one of his kid’s swim meets or soccer games, he enjoys outdoor activities like biking and hiking as well as recreational basketball.

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