

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, January 20, 2024

(USPS-6)

www.henrycountyenterprise.com • \$1.00

Veterans group wants to change IRS designation, increase grant opportunities

By Debbie Hall

A group of veterans works year-round to give back to their community and now, they need the community to step up for them.

Curtis R. Millner, Sr., adjutant with American Legion Homer Dillard Post #78, said recent flooding washed out portions of the post home's parking lot. It is not an uncommon occurrence and has happened at least on four other occasions over the past several years.

The flooding situation along Jordan Creek (between Carver Road and Creekside Drive in the Fieldale community "has been a problem for years and doesn't seem correctable," Millner said.

"The only feasible solution seems to be for us to pave the parking lot. Therein lies the problem" he said. "We don't have the money since we are a small, tax-exempt, veterans' organization."

Although he was unable to quickly find the correspondence, Millner said "We have attempted to apply for a grant from the Harvest Foundation but were turned down because we are a 501(c) 19 organization, and our membership is restricted to veterans only."

While the foundation "does not comment publicly on its grant decisions unless it's announcing a grant

(See Veterans p. 2)



The parking lot at the American Legion Homer Dillard Post #78 is prone to flooding, as shown in photos that were taken after a recent spate of rain. Post members are seeking a grant or funds from other sources to help pay for paving the parking lot. The post also wants to change its current IRS designation so it will be easier to obtain grant funds for needed projects.



ActivWall celebrated the opening of its showroom with a ribbon cutting on January 16. The company is located at 302 Franklin Street. For more information, visit www.activwall.com.



ActivWall President and co-founder Duke Ferrell spoke about the company's history and success.

ActivWall celebrates showroom opening with a ribbon cutting

By Taylor Boyd

ActivWall Systems, LLC, a Martinsville-based company that designs and manufactures high-quality moving wall, window, and door systems for commercial and residential settings, celebrated the official opening of its showroom with a ribbon cutting on Tuesday, January 16.

President and co-founder Duke Ferrell said the openings of the showroom and design center mark a significant milestone in the company's history.

"Starting today, this is going to be a place where architects, engineers, builders, and property owners can come and work with our sales and engineering team while designing their projects," he said.

Ferrell said the idea for the company first came to life on his screen porch during a conversation with his family. "Then later my home office and my garage. A far cry from the showroom,

the offices, the manufacturing facility that we have here today."

In February 2011, Ferrell's son and co-founder, Carter Ferrell, filed the company's articles of incorporation with Virginia.

"We started with nothing but two men, an idea, and two potential orders," Ferrell said. "Our first confirmed order in early 2011 set everything in motion. In those early years, we had very little, but support came from a lot of directions, first from family and friends who believed in our vision."

Before the company had a real office, Ferrell said the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. (EDC) allowed ActivWall to use its boardroom and video equipment for organizational meetings.

Another of Ferrell's favorite examples of unexpected support came from friend Mike Hailey, who attended one of the

(See ActivWall p. 2)

NAMI Martinsville & Henry County offers a Family Support Group program starting in February

By Jeff Reid

NAMI Martinsville & Henry County, the local organization of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, will offer a Family Support Group Program beginning in February. The first meeting will be held on Feb. 6 at NCI-The Baldwin Building at 191 Fayette St. in Martinsville at 7 p.m., and the first Tuesday of every month.

Michael Ward and his wife Melinda applied back in the spring to start a Martinsville-Henry County NAMI affiliate program after meeting informally with other parents of adult children with mental illness.

"We saw a large need here locally and folks did not want to have to drive all the way up to Roanoke for support and classes," he said. "We want to try and help people and families that have had similar struggles as we have."

The Ward's oldest son was diagnosed with schizophrenia about 9 years ago. "We didn't understand, know what to do or how to deal with it. We felt alone. NAMI Family Support helped tremendously," Ward said. "We also attended the NAMI Family-to-Family 12-week course that dove a little deeper into what was going on, why, and

how to react and empathize with our loved ones experiencing mental illness."

The couple was certified recently to facilitate their own Family Support Group. The local NAMI affiliate has been approved on the state level and is awaiting national approval. They are also certified to facilitate Family-to-Family and Homefront, an educational program designed to help people who have a veteran loved one with mental illness. Ward said that they would start with the Family Support group first.

Ward said that his family is living proof that the programs work.

"The idea is to help families realize that they are not alone, and support them and their loved ones," he added. "When the families helping to care for loved ones with mental illness are cared for and supported, they in turn can take better care for their loved ones."

For information about the National Alliance on Mental Illness, check out their websites at nami.org or namivirginia.org.

If you would like more information about the upcoming Martinsville and Henry County Family Support Program, the email address is nami4mhc@gmail.com.

Jack Dalton Award winner to be named at Tuesday's meeting

By Debbie Hall

The 2023 Jack Dalton Community Service Award will be presented at the Henry County Board of Supervisors 6 p.m. meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 23.

The board established the award in 2001, in honor of Jack Dalton, who served as a board member for more than 24 years. Dalton was serving as its chairman at the time of his death on May 24, 2000.

The award is presented annually to the Henry County resident who best exemplifies the standards for community service set by Dalton. This year's recipient is expected to attend the meeting.

The board will begin its regular monthly

meeting at 3 p.m., in the Summerlin Room of the Henry County Administration Building on Kings Mountain Road. In other matters at its 6 p.m. meeting, the board will:

*Hold a public hearing on a proposed abandonment of 50 feet of right of way off Oak Level Road. Adjoining property owners are requesting the board consider approving the abandonment. The right-of-way was never developed and VDOT has advised that they have no objection to the action. The sections of the right of way will become a permanent part of the adjoining properties, and a new survey is being prepared to facilitate this action.

*Hold a public hearing on the proposed

(See Award p. 2)

VISIT 

[HTTP://WWW.HENRYCOUNTYENTERPRISE.COM](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)

FOR MORE UPDATES



Storage center



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

Veterans

(cont. from page 1)

or funding to benefit the Martinsville-Henry County community," Latala Payne Hodges, director of communications, said it "does everything possible to abide by IRS (Internal Revenue Service) rules because" doing otherwise would hinder its ability to make grants.

Additionally, "Harvest does everything possible to mitigate conflict of interest among its staff and board of directors, although that can be difficult in a close-knit community," Hodges said. "It's common practice for applicants to work directly with staff so trustees and/or members of the board of directors are able to make the best decisions to benefit the communities they serve."

"This is an IRS rule," Millner said. "We feel that if this is true, then the rule needs to be changed since it is discriminatory against veterans," what veterans have done in the past and are presently doing.

The designation mirrors those of "fraternities, sororities, and stuff like that. Whoever wrote this up or figured this out, evidently don't understand what we do as an American Legion organization," he added.

The American Legion was organized

in 1919 in Paris, France, at the end of WWII. It is the world's largest veteran organization, Millner said. The local Homer Dillard Post was organized in 1931.

Currently, the post has 182 members, "but we have been up to a high of 241," Millner said. "Since we're not involved in war, membership has fallen off. The average age of our members is 70. Young guys don't see a need until they start having health issues later in life and realize it's possibly connected to" their military service.

The post was founded on 4 Pillars: Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation; National Security; Americanism, and Children & Youth, Millner said. "Each of these pillars encompasses a variety of programs that benefit our nation's veterans, its service members, their families, the youth of America, and ordinary citizens."

"Our Number 1 obligation is to take care of our own, and the second is we realize the youth are our future, so we do extensive work with the youth," he said.

Specifically, post members work to provide a decent and honorable burial for veterans. Millner estimated post

members account for 70 percent of the Martinsville Henry County Honor Guard members.

"We feel that the last thing you can do for a veteran is give them a proper burial," Millner said, and the post members participate in 250 burials a year, whether playing "Taps," presenting the 21-Gun Salute, or both.

Members also provide in church/chapel funeral services for members and pallbearers, if requested; assist veterans with transportation to medical appointments & the VA clinics/hospitals; provide flag etiquette classes to area elementary schools, with 10 this year; provide flag retirement ceremonies, (in conjunction with the JROTC); and send area students to Boys State, Girls State, and the Junior Law Cadet Program.

"We provide scholarships for local area high school students, we conduct four Fish Fry events annually to raise funds to support our programs and as a way of giving back to our community," Millner said, and added the post also conducts an annual Veterans Day Banquet, and it supports the Henry County Schools Army JROTC Program.

In fact, Millner said he believes "the contributions that our organization is making to the community and youth more than qualify us for a grant."

He said the group has received several estimates for the paving work, and \$45,000 is the lowest estimate so far.

"We have appealed to the Harvest Board with no response, and" as well as to now former Del. Les Adams, and 9th District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffin "with no response. We have also solicited an attorney but have not heard back," Millner said.

"We know that there are other grants available, but it requires us finding and hiring a grant writer," another cost the post cannot afford, Millner said. "We wanted to appeal to the public for help in this situation."

Ideally, the organization would be eligible for help from an individual or a local entity, Millner said.

"We have grant money available locally, so we shouldn't have to go through all this to get somebody to give us a grant," he said. "The rules need to be changed to allow us the same access as every other organization in Martinsville and Henry County."

ActivWall

(cont. from page 1)



ActivWall President and co-founder Duke Ferrell spoke about the company's history and success.



Duke Ferrell, president and co-founder of Martinsville-based ActivWall, and Aaron Rawls, vice mayor of the City of Martinsville, chat after a ribbon-cutting ceremony Tuesday.

organizational meetings.

"As luck would have it, I ran into him several weeks later at the historic Dixie Pig Restaurant, now closed. Mike stopped by my table and asked me how things were going, and I was able to tell him that we had just received our first order," he said.

Ferrell said he also told Hailey he was looking for a place to make the order.

"Mike paused for a minute, and he said, 'You know, I have some space. It's not being used right now, that you might be able to use rent-free,'" Ferrell recalled.

He also remembered Hailey saying the last thing a person needs when starting a new business is to have to pay rent.

Ferrell said the company secured the two potential orders and manufactured them both in the space Hailey and his partners made available.

"Our journey led us through another location before we landed here, where I'd hoped to have a showroom one day. Today that vision becomes a reality," he said.

In 2018, Ferrell said he visited the current space with Andrew Palmer, of Lester Properties, and knew it would be perfect, although there were several issues to address.

A tenant was already using some of the space in the back where the manufacturing operation is today, and the office space also was a little more than was needed at the time, "but I felt like we could eventually grow into it," he said.

While he envisioned a showroom out front, Ferrell said he also "knew it would likely be years down the road. So, I proposed to Andrew that we rent the office

space and part of the manufacturing space alongside their existing tenant. And luckily for a couple of years, a small church ended up renting the space out front, holding services on Sunday mornings."

Ferrell said Palmer took the proposal to his associates and did a walkthrough before making a decision about having ActivWall as a tenant.

Palmer "said George Lester was with him that day and was supportive of having ActivWall as a tenant, saying we would probably outgrow the space before we knew it," Ferrell said.

It appears that Lester was correct because the company is already in discussions of adding more space to support its future growth, Ferrell said.

Looking back, Ferrell said the company's growth has been constant, and it now boasts a workforce of about 27 employees.

"The last quarter was a record quarter. The last month was a record month, both in orders shipped and new orders received. And last year was a record year," he said.

The company's innovative products are made in the USA, and shipped nationwide, Ferrell said, adding ActivWall products can be found everywhere in the continental United States, Hawaii, Canada, and other countries.

"Believe it or not, there's even an ActivWall in a top-secret military base in Africa. The DOD (Department of Defense) contractor that we worked with would only tell me it was located somewhere near the equator, and if he told me more, he'd have to kill me," he said to laughter from the audience.

Showroom Ribbon Cutting

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16TH
2:00-3:00 PM
 302 Franklin Street, Martinsville, VA

Please RSVP: contact@ActivWall.com
 For tour: Closed-toe shoes required. No photos permitted.

Visit us Online!

ActivWall

Our new Martinsville, Virginia, showroom is complete, and you are invited to join us at a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate this exciting new space. Factory tours to follow.

Add Style, Function, and *WOW* Factor with ActivWall!

Locally, Ferrell said ActivWall products can be found at the First Methodist Church, the new press box at the Mustangs Baseball Field, a new covered patio at the Piedmont Arts Association, and the Bee Hotel in Danville.

Ashley Miller, who works in the Inspection Control department, said everything ActivWall produces is made to order.

"The only exception is we recently started what we call the builder series, and they're just some standard sizes that have a four-to-six-week turnaround time, but it is still built to order," she said.

Miller believes orders for residential and commercial are almost equal. She said many of the residential orders also are for homes being renovated.

Marketing Director Jennifer Doss said the company's largest installment to date is a 40-foot-wide door-window combination in Louisiana.

"All of our products are impact tested for safety and hurricane zones, so they are coastal friendly. We have actually had units that survived a hurricane and came back," she said, adding the company plans to refurbish the door as part of its customer warranty, which is 10 years for residential and two years for commercial properties.

Award

(cont. from page 1)

abandonment of State Route 9199 in the Ridgeway District, as requested by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The property located at 1425 Greensboro Road was a former bus loop when the facility operated as a public school. VDOT has determined that there is no public necessity for the continued existence of this section of the roadway and requested the abandonment so it can be removed from the Secondary System of State Highways.

* Hold a public hearing on a budget amendment to appropriate funds for the "All In Virginia" initiative, as requested by the school board. The school division was recently awarded \$4,175,201 as part of the initiative, which provides recommendations for school divisions in responding to the dramatic number of students with unfinished learning. The state recommends that the school division direct 70 percent of the funding to high intensity tutoring for grades three through eight, 20 percent toward the Virginia Literacy Act, and 10 percent to address chronic absenteeism. Since the total amount exceeds one percent (1 percent) of the county budget, a public hearing is required before the board can appropriate the funds.

* Hold a public hearing on a proposed siting agreement with Shifting Sands Solar, LLC. The company intends to construct an approximately 18.8-megawatt photovoltaic solar facility.

* Hear a report on general highway matters from Lisa Hughes, resident engineer for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

At its 3 p.m. meeting, the board will:

* Consider approving documents related to grant funding for the interior renovations of the Fieldale Recreation Center.

* Consider awarding a \$1,230,470 contract to Haymes Brothers, Inc., of Chatham, for the construction of phase 6-A2 of the Dick & Willie Passage Trail. Haymes Brothers was the low bidder for the project. Funding is provided by grants.

* Consider an additional appropriation of carryover funds as requested by the school division. If approved, \$51,732 of unexpended school funds from FY'23 will be moved to the facilities category of the current year's budget.

* Consider an additional appropriation and awarding a contract for patrol rifles, as requested by the sheriff's office.

Sheriff Wayne Davis is asking the board to approve an additional appropriation of \$107,679 from the State Asset Forfeiture funds to purchase 94 patrol rifles and related components from Town Gun Supply. Davis said the majority of the current patrol rifles have been in service for two decades, with tens of thousands of rounds fired. Due to the accumulated wear and tear over the years, these rifles are now showing signs of malfunction, raising concerns about the safety of both the officers and the public.

* Consider an additional appropriation regarding an insurance settlement. Roger Adams, director of Parks and Recreation, asked the board to approve an additional appropriation of \$28,975 received from an insurance settlement. Recently, a tractor was damaged when a tree fell on it during a storm. The tractor was a total loss, and the insurance company has provided the funds as a settlement of the claim. The funds will be used towards the purchase of a replacement tractor for the department.

* Hear a report on a Local Energy Efficiency Action

Plan. In anticipation of future grant opportunities, county staff partnered with George Mason University (GMU) to develop a local energy efficiency action plan that quantifies the county's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and offers recommendations for improving energy efficiency and sustainability. The county is one of the first rural localities to be involved in this type of planning. Public Information Officer Brandon Martin is leading the effort locally and will provide an update on the efforts.

* Hear a presentation on a Housing Assessment study undertaken to better understand housing needs in the county and develop a prioritized list of projects needed to increase the quality and availability of affordable housing. Summit Designs, from Richmond, was selected to conduct the study, with representatives Anne Darby and Michael Stapor to provide a brief overview of the completed study.

* Consider meeting in closed session to discuss appointees to the Industrial Development Authority and the Planning Commission; pending legal matters; the acquisition/disposal of real estate; and as-yet-unannounced industries

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Monday, January 22

The Henry County Public Service Authority Board of Directors meets at 6 p.m., in the 4th Floor Conference Room of the Henry County Administration Building.

Tuesday, January 23

The Henry County Board of Supervisors meets at 3 and 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Room of the Henry County Administration Building.

Thursday, February 1

Henry County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the Summerlin Room, located on the 1st Floor of the Henry County Administration Building. The meeting will be followed by closed session.

Events

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.

Saturday, February 3

Brunswick Stew, Figsboro Ruritan Club, 599 Hidden Valley Dr., Martinsville, 8 – 10 a.m. or until sold out, \$10 per quart, preorders accepted by contacting club member. Proceeds to benefit the club's community service and scholarship programs.

Free Estate Planning 101 with Sarah Bridwell, 10

a.m., at the Spencer Penn Centre. Call (276) 957-5757 to pre-register.

Storytime! at the Spencer Penn Centre. This monthly program will include special readers, crafts, and other fun activities related to I love my Smile! Come out and join us for this free program, fit for all ages! No registration needed.

Thursday, February 8

Make Some Noise: After Hours Open-Mic Series, 7 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. Grab the mic and express yourself through music, poetry, comedy or spoken word. October's event will be hosted by Monique Holland, a prolific writer from Martinsville. Performers should sign up for a five-minute (max) spot upon arrival. Free to performers and audience. Cash bar.

Friday, February 9

Music Night at the Spencer Penn Centre. Hard driving old-time string band, Nobody's Business, 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. Concessions, including the ever-popular Spencer Penn hotdogs, will be sold.

Saturday, February 10

African American Read-In and Family Day, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. The museum's annual celebration of African American artists, performers and writers with story time, a musical act, crafts, and a public read-aloud. In addition, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' Artmobile will be set up for the public in the Piedmont Arts parking lot. Participation in Family Day and the Artmobile are both free.

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.

Congressional staff to visit

Congressman Morgan Griffith's Ninth District staff will be in Henry and Patrick counties on Jan. 24.

Staff will be in Henry County, 10 – 11:30 a.m., Henry County Administration Building, Summerlin Room - Board of Supervisors Meeting Chambers, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

Staff will visit Patrick County 12:30 – 2 p.m., Patrick County Administration Building, Conference Room, 106 Rucker

Street, Stuart.

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



Keatts receives inaugural monthly award

Allie Keatts, a Henry County Sheriff's deputy, was the first to receive a Certificate of Appreciation and a dinner for two at Chopstix Martinsville-Va. The program, spearheaded by Jarrett Marketing, will be a monthly recognition with two restaurants - Chopstix or Papa's Pizza – taking turns providing the meals. We thank our police officers and how they serve our community. Pictured (left to right), are Sheriff Wayne Davis, Keatts and Michael Jarrett.

Consumers seek locally raised beef as farmers and processors try to keep pace with demand

The good news is: There's enough capacity statewide to process the 14,000 head of beef cattle finished in Virginia annually.

The bad news is: Long travel distances and labor shortages, plus an ongoing processing backlog exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, have created industry challenges as consumers increasingly clamor for locally sourced foods.

Nationwide, rising market prices are driven by sustained demand and a dip in inventory.

"Cattle prices are at or around record highs, so revenue is up for producers," said Tony Banks, senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation at Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. "But their inputs are more expensive with market-wide inflation, so profit is not increasing proportionally."

When grocery meat cases emptied during COVID-19, a swell of interest in locally raised beef was curbed by processing backlogs.

Caroline County cow-calf operators Peggy and David Spicer of Willow Hill Farms & Beef went from a three-week turnaround to booking their trusted area processor a year in advance.

"And a cancellation throws everything in a kink with a domino effect," Peggy said. "You have cattle trailers lined up, people taking off work, and then there are customers we promised beef to, which is now not ready. You lose sales that way. It's a huge ripple effect."

Following restaurant shutdowns, Kroger corporate requested 50,000 pounds of fresh beef per week from the state's largest processor, Seven Hills Food Co. in Lynchburg. The town's laid-off restaurant staff was hired to process 150 head a week of cattle, said president Dalton Mosser.

Now, The Virginia Beef Co. retail brand is sold in 100 Kroger stores, and Seven Hills' diamond logo is listed on restaurant menus from Roanoke to D.C. With more capital investment, Seven Hills has the capacity to process 500 head weekly.

While there's space for 60 workers, they hover around 40. During the pandemic, "we lost scores of hardworking guys," Mosser lamented.

Government meat inspectors also are understaffed, he noted. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Strategic Plan says it will continue to address frontline staffing shortages.

As market forces play out, new legislative initiatives address the need to study processing expansion at home.

HB 830, introduced by Del. Tony Wilt, R-Harrisonburg, was approved by the governor in April 2022 to expand and develop slaughter and meat-processing facilities through strategic planning and financial incentive programs.

"But it doesn't do you any good to expand if you can't find the people to work," Wilt acknowledged. "The need for more processing is there, but we must connect the dots."

Visit shorturl.at/ewDIW to read the full story.

Henry County
DUAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL
PRIMARY ELECTION
Tuesday, March 5, 2024

THIS IS A PRIMARY ELECTION FOR:
U. S. President – Republican Party
U. S. President – Democratic Party
CHOOSE ONLY ONE

§ 24.2-530 No person shall vote for the candidates of more than one party.

You must choose which Primary ballot you would like to vote

SAMPLE BALLOTS ARE AVAILABLE

AN APPROPRIATE ID IS REQUIRED TO VOTE AT THE POLLS

Please verify your voter registration, polling place, and VALID ID before voting!
vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation

POLLS OPEN 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Tuesday February 13, 2024: Last day to register to vote or change your voter registration information for this election.
Mailed voter registration applications must be sent to the Henry County Voter Registration and Elections Office postmarked on or before the deadline.

IN-PERSON ABSENTEE (EARLY) VOTING

Henry County Registrar's Office
located at the Henry County Administration Building
3300 Kings Mountain Road Martinsville, Virginia 24112
Monday – Friday, January 19-March 1, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Saturday, February 24 and March 2, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 2, 2024: Last day to vote an In-Person (early) Absentee Ballot at the Henry County Registrar's Office

MAIL ABSENTEE VOTING

Request an Absentee ballot application: vote@henrycountyva.gov
Absentee ballots ARE counted

Friday, February 23, 2024: Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail.
Applications must be received in the Registrar's Office by 5 p.m.

Tuesday, March 5, 2024: Election Day ALL DROPPED OFF Absentee voted ballots must be returned to the Registrar's Office by 7 p.m. (Virginia/Eastern Standard Time) to be counted.

Friday March 8, 2024: ALL Absentee voted ballots that are **returned via mail** must be post marked on or before election day and received in the Registrar's Office by NOON (Virginia time) to be counted.

BALLOT DROP OFF STATIONS

Monday – Friday, January 19-March 1, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Saturday, February 24 & March 2, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Henry County Registrar & Elections Office
Henry County Administration Building
3300 Kings Mountain Road #103 Martinsville, Virginia 24112
On Election Day Only: All polling places and the Henry County Registrar's Office

Dawn Stultz-Vaughn, Director of Elections & General Registrar
3300 KINGS MOUNTAIN ROAD #103 MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA 24112
TELEPHONE: 276-634-4698 FAX: 276-632-8278

Email: vote@henrycountyva.gov
www.henrycountyva.gov/178/Elections-Registrar

OPINION

Deposition with Fauci

On January 8th and 9th, I participated in a two-day Congressional transcribed interview (what normal people would call a deposition) with Dr. Anthony Fauci to learn more about his role in the COVID-19 outbreak and response.

These are my key take-aways from my preparation for the deposition and the deposition itself:

We need better protocols and oversight of biosafety laboratories. Fauci, who was the Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), claims he did not know much about the grants awarded to EcoHealth Alliance and nothing about the subsequent subgrants to the Wuhan Institute of Virology. This is unacceptable. He was the head of the agency that awarded the grants, and the buck should stop with him. At the very least, before his agency got the U.S. involved with the Wuhan Institute of Virology, he should have had a working knowledge of their operations. He disavowed all knowledge of the Institute, even saying if someone said Wuhan before COVID-19, he wouldn't know if they were referring to Wuhan University, the Wuhan Institute of Virology, or another entity in Wuhan.

And when EcoHealth Alliance did not forward required reports for more than a year, someone at NIAID should have been aware and raised Cain.

We need a generally accepted definition of gain-of-function (GoF) research for U.S. grant purposes. According to Fauci, NIAID was not funding any GoF research. Under the definition he was using, that may be so. But NIAID is a division of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and on the NIH website at the time the research was being done, they used a different definition of GoF. Under that definition, NIAID was funding GoF research. Both definitions are acceptable in various settings, but this type of research is too serious to not have a generally accepted definition.

At a structural level, some scientists referenced in an email to Fauci found aspects of the virus perplexing. They queried how it could happen in nature. When looking at the makeup of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, researcher Mike Farzan took issue with how the furin cleavage site was in the virus. He believed it was difficult to explain how this could happen outside of a lab. While possible, it is highly unlikely to occur in nature. Additionally, Dr. Bob Garry observed the virus had a perfect 12-nucleotide insertion as part of the furin cleavage site and didn't know how this could happen in nature. The furin cleav-



Morgan Griffith

Representative

age site is a large part of what made the virus so contagious. And, interestingly, prior coronaviruses did not contain a furin cleavage site.

Fauci said he had an open mind when it came to how the COVID-19 outbreak could have started, whether it was spread via animal transmission at a wet market or a lab leak, but he believes it was due to animal transmission. However, he gave no indication of his open-mindedness to the American people in public statements.

Those who believed COVID-19 started due to a lab leak were universally shunned and their opinions were taken down and/or barred from many social media sites.

Some conclusions: Based on the evidence I have seen, I believe COVID-19 started due to an accidental lab leak. This is in part because no animal source has ever been found (in the past we've been able to find one). Further, the Chinese government did not look at a large sample of animals in their search, nor was the virus found in animals near the time of the outbreak. If the Chinese thought the virus started in animals, they would have scoured the region looking for the animal source. Their lack of strenuous effort indicates to me the Chinese know the source was a lab leak.

Fauci said we needed to continue to look for the animal source, but also admitted that without Chinese cooperation, we may never be able to determine with scientific certainty which theory is correct.

As a long-time practicing attorney, I only need proof that eliminates reasonable doubt, not proof to a scientific certainty. For example, circumstantial evidence and little else was sufficient to put the murderer of Gina Renee Hall (a student at Radford University) in prison. As you will recall, she disappeared and later in 1980, her murderer was convicted in Pulaski County and given a life sentence based substantially on circumstantial evidence.

That being said, the evidence of an accidental lab leak, in my opinion, also eliminates reasonable doubt.

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 <https://morgangriffith.house.gov/>.

"The Plinko Bounce" brings our little hometown into the big league

Bestselling author Martin Clark's latest book is set in Patrick and Henry counties and Martinsville.

It even opens with a woman you may feel you recognize, with a slightly different name.

Judge Christina Leventis is tough and stands her ground with a quiet yet firm authority. I would certainly not be up to any monkey business around her. In fact, I was a slight bit afraid of her even as I read the book.

And that was a funny – and fun – experience.

Because I've never encountered her (or should we say, the local woman this character reminds me of) in the courtroom. I've only ever known her from our time together in Charity League, and running into her here and there in the community, where she's been friendly and helpful and cheerful.

Later on in the book I came across attorney Janine Jacob, who was advocating for a character in a case. I've known the real Janine through Charity League and garden club, and from how I've seen the real Janine tackle charity and garden club matters it was no surprise to me that not only did the book's Janine win another character's case, but it was with a grand slam victory.

As well as the hometown feel, the book moves along with a strong and exciting plot. It starts with Andy, a public defender who is "forty-three years old, stuck and stymied." There's his son, who goes to the Martinsville YMCA, and his son's mother, who works at Patrick & Henry Community College, who are not together but do a great job in co-parenting, and a love interest. The characters shop at Food Lion, have meals at Old Bay and Wild Magnolia and Leonardo's Pizzeria and Checkered Pig, and don't tell Joe Keiper this, but Andy and his date also sneak into the Virginia Museum of Natural History after it's closed by bypassing the security system (the security guard, a friend, had given his lady friend the secret code), just to have a special time.

There's a whole slew of "the Reliables" – Dancin' Ben, General Gene, Zeb, Porter – called that because "they've been to every rehab, every shelter, every program, every church and halfway home, and they weren't fixable, weren't ever going to stop drinking and raising Cain, and they lived on the court dockets, with almost daily charges of drunk in public, curse and abuse, disorderly conduct, indecent exposure, larceny and battery." While I can't say I recognize any of them specifically, I certainly know the type, and folks who would fall into that category, and I bet you do, too. The Reliables spring to life on the page.

It seems each Martin Clark book has a



Holly Kozelsky

dog, some cur who needed a home and ended up being the fine companion of a main character. I love Martin Clark's dog characters. They remind me of my own fine dog, who came to me from the Patrick County Animal Shelter, after having been picked up roaming, skin and bones, along the roads of Ararat. When Andy's new dog Patches gets lost, he puts an announcement on WHEO radio's "Pet Patrol."

There are the out-for-themselves law enforcement officers and aspiring politicians – I didn't recognize who they were based off of, of course – and the good guys, such as Sheriff Dan Smith and Judge Jimmy McGarry, whom I both know in real life to be trustworthy and dependable.

There are plenty more characters that make me wonder if they're based off real people. Certainly the names are familiar – Ballard, Baliles, Hubbard, Craddock, Pruitt, McAlexander – and if I don't know them, maybe you do.

The book has our local atmosphere, and a background explanation of the closing of the textile mills that led to 20% unemployment and Trade Act classes and desperate people whose houses were foreclosed on.

A woman is murdered, and Andy is assigned to defend Damian, the suspect. Even though Andy finally had decided to quit his job, he hangs on to see the case through (and maybe he'll stay on after all?). It's a case full of legal intrigue and twists and turns which have you convinced of one thing at one moment then doubting yourself the next.

In fact, that's where the name "The Plinko Bounce" comes in, from a game on the TV show "The Price Is Right." A disc drops down randomly through pegs: "On rare occasions in our cut-and-dried, predictable, turn-the-crank justice system," Andy tells Commonwealth's Attorney Vikram Kapil, "we catch a Plinko case ... and the bounces start and the whole infallible process goes haywire, becomes a chaotic spectacle, and there's no telling what the payoff will be."

The book would be excellent in any setting. Here, on our home turf, it springs to life vividly. We matter. We are a place where things happen, even if we're small. It's not like reading other books set in small towns, which are described in saccharine sentimentality, or as cultural and economic wastelands. It's just – it's just right.

Super Crossword MONEY-CHANGING

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Combination spear and battle-ax	1 Use an ax on
8 Provo native	2 One "A" of NCAA: Abbr.
13 Dawn deity	3 Chou En- —
16 Some fast autos	4 Nest dweller
19 Virtual merchant	5 "If I Can't Have You" singer
20 Strong cordage fiber	6 Sings again
21 Performs a charade of	7 Rive — (Paris' Right Bank)
23 Thai money used to buy a Jacuzzi?	8 E-address
25 Height when upright	9 Bistro TV's — Geo
26 Protest at which people lie on the ground	10 Unpaid player
27 Bright red Indian money?	11 Classic cracker brand
29 "Madam" counterpart	12 Tennis-playing guy
32 "The Dance" painter Henri	13 Kodak founder
35 Biceps locale	14 Prefix with -genarian
36 Powerful auto engine	15 Pentagon
37 "You missed your chance for folding over that Korean money?"	16 Reach as high as
42 Already-included tips, e.g.	17 Large, deep serving dish
	18 Painter Jan
	22 R-X fillers
	24 Attending to the matter
	28 Certain Wall St. trader
	29 Said
	30 Antiseptic element
	31 Bucking bovines
	33 Jr., last year
	34 Spirited horse (1986 hit for Run-D.M.C.)
	38 Eye coverer
	39 Takeoff strip
	40 Often-pickled veggie
	41 Pirate "Captain"
	46 From scratch
	47 Compelled
	49 In the lead
	50 Squelched
	52 Cat that roars
	53 "The Piano" Oscar winner
	54 Cold TV's — Geo
	55 Miracle- —
	57 Here, in Lyon
	58 Election mo.
	60 Elected (to)
	61 Virginia Tech team name
	64 Cold — (frigid)
	68 Court plea, for short
	69 Very angry
	70 Rule, in brief
	71 More than loads up (on)
	72 Assoc.
	73 Great Lakes' — Canals
	77 Like a single-guy band
	78 Traditional Irish brew
	80 Make laugh uproariously
	81 Hoopla
	82 "You Be —" (1986 hit for Run-D.M.C.)
	88 Jargon
	89 Women's patriotic gp.
	91 Secondary field of study
	93 George who played Danny Ocean
	94 Mosaic tile
	95 Long rodent feature
	96 Most suitable
	97 Assess again
	98 Skip over in speech
	99 Chalice, e.g.
	100 Nailed the test
	101 Desert of Mongolia
	102 Some purple shades
	103 Milo of films
	108 Piper's wear
	109 Twisty fish
	110 Average
	112 Comic Johnson
	115 Uno plus due
	116 H.S. proficiency test
	117 Gallery work
	118 Teachers' gp.
	119 Ham-marsjököld once of the U.N.

Jeff Bezos destitute after trip to grocery store

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — Amazon founder and multibillionaire Jeff Bezos has dropped from his position as the third richest man in the world following a trip to the grocery store last Monday.

Bezos, who now has a net worth of zero, offered an interview from a soiled piece of cardboard down by the docks. He currently makes a meager living by dancing sprightly jigs for sailors in exchange for drinking money.

"It all happened so fast," Bezos said. "My head is still spinning."

It all began, Bezos said, when he decided to take a trip to the grocery store.

"I fired up my Lamborghini Veneno Roadster and headed down to Ralph's," Bezos said. "It had been years since I'd done my own shopping. I thought it might be a fun lark. What a fool I was."

Once inside the store, Bezos said, he was overcome with the options presented to him.

"They had four different kinds of apples," he said. "Can you imagine it? Well, I had to get one of each. How could you pass on something like that?"

As he delved deeper into the store, Bezos couldn't believe his eyes.

"They had Italian sausage, Greek salad, German chocolate cake, and even French fries!" Bezos said. "I felt like I was traveling the world, all from the comfort of my local supermarket. I just kept adding food to my shopping cart."

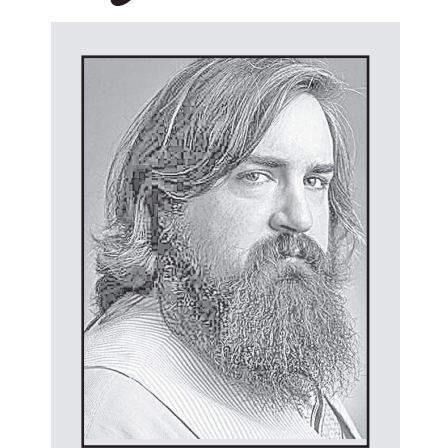
When Bezos finally approached the check-out, he said, his shopping cart was almost full.

"It was at least 3/4 full," he said. "I had no idea at the time how reckless I was being."

After ringing up his groceries, the shocked store employee took Bezos' credit card, charged it, and then handed him his receipt.

Bezos said that he was halfway home when his accountant called him.

"He said to me, 'My God, Jeff, what have you done? You didn't go to the grocery store did you?' I told him I had, and he began to weep. He told me to pull over and look at my receipt. There it was in black and white: \$180 billion."



By Ben R. Williams

"I shouldn't have gotten the chips," Bezos said, shaking his head. "But they were sour cream and cheddar! And they were ruffled! I'm not made of stone!"

Bezos immediately made plans to sell one of his many homes to put his accounts back in the black, but then tragedy struck.

"A block from home, my car got a flat tire," Bezos said. "I knew then it was all over. I would never financially recover."

Bezos isn't the only multibillionaire to recently suffer a major financial hit. Berkshire Hathaway magnate Warren Buffett is now on government assistance after purchasing a 2017 Honda Accord, while Elon Musk has begun mowing lawns in his neighborhood after purchasing Twitter and a new sectional sofa.

"It's hard out there," Bezos said. "Someone needs to do something about this rampant greedflation. We just need to figure out who that someone is."

In one last desperate attempt to make ends meet, Bezos recently took a job at an Amazon warehouse.

"It's abominable," Bezos said, wiping away tears. "It's no way to treat an animal, much less a man."

OPINION

Richmond Report

By Sen. Bill Stanley

As the dust settles from the first week of the 2024 Virginia General Assembly session, I wanted to provide a quick update on what has been happening here at the Capitol, and let you know about all the work we are doing and the issues that matter most to you. There are a lot of new faces in the Senate. Following the 2023 election, 19 of the 40 senators are Republicans, putting the GOP in the minority. However, we look forward to working in a bipartisan manner with our counterparts across the aisle on areas where we can agree. But nearly half of the Virginia Senate are new members, so many in the chamber are learning as they go on procedure, decorum and the process of bill consideration. Another change is that we are all working out of a new General Assembly building. If you have visited your legislators in previous years, be ready for a whole experience as everyone, me included, finds our way around this new facility. Some new building kinks are still being worked out, which always happens with a large project, but the new building is citizen friendly for Virginians to participate in the process of state Government.

On Wednesday, we gavelled in the start of session, forming up in each chamber, establishing rules of order between the House and Senate, and welcomed our new Senate pages who assist us in doing our work. Later, on the first day, Governor Glenn Youngkin addressed a joint Session of the Senate and House and delivered his annual State of the Commonwealth speech. In it, the Governor discussed his administration's accomplishments and laid out his vision for Virginia in the coming years.

The Governor laid out an ambitious agenda. This includes legislation to keep Virginians safer from violent crime and destructive street drugs, a proposal to allow students to earn career credentials while completing their high school diplomas, and improvements to our mental health care system, to name a few. In the coming weeks, He also put forth his reasoning for realigning our state tax code in order to be more competitive with other states in bringing industry and jobs to the Commonwealth, while at the same time providing needed tax relief to Virginians through his proposal to eliminate the car tax. I will closely review the Governor's proposals as they go through the legislative process. I look forward to working with the Governor to improve our schools, make our neighborhoods safer, and ensure every Virginian has the skills and the opportunity to obtain a good job.

Hitting the Ground Running:

The pace in Richmond is fast, and our team has been busy attending committee meetings, engaging with colleagues,



and advocating for your priorities. We've met with constituents, community leaders, and stakeholders to gather feedback and ensure our work is reflective of your needs.

Senate Bill 5 Moves Forward:

I'm pleased to announce that one of our top legislative priorities, Senate Bill 5, has cleared its first hurdle! This critical bill, which focuses on allowing the Virginia Department of Education, will provide grants to public schools in the Commonwealth to help them start or support STEM+C competition robotics teams. This is an effort to encourage interest in STEM+C-related subjects and provide students with opportunities to participate in extracurricular STEM+C activities. It received a warm reception in the Senate Committee on Education and Health and is now on its way to the powerful Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee for further review. We're confident that this bill will make a significant difference in providing students across our great Commonwealth with tremendous opportunities to seek advancements in a field they are passionate about, and we'll keep you updated on its progress every step of the way.

The Session is off and running and should be in full swing next week. Committees will all be meeting, and legislation should begin to come to the floor for consideration by the full Senate. Please let me know where you stand on legislation. And, if you are in Richmond, please come by my office at the General Assembly building. I am in Room 514, and while my schedule is often hectic and subject to change, I would love to say hello to you. We want to keep you informed and engaged throughout the legislative session. Please visit our website, www.senatorstanley.com, and follow us on social media for updates, resources, and opportunities to get involved. You can also reach out to our office directly at (804) 698-7507, or email us at senatorstanley@senate.virginia.gov with your questions and concerns.

County receives funds for Fieldale center

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) awarded \$80,000 to Henry County for the continued rehabilitation of the Historic Fieldale Recreation Center. Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, said "Renovating

the Fieldale Recreation Center is a key project for Henry County. This award of \$80,000 will build off of ARC's previous investment in September 2021 to help complete the renovation of the Recreation Center."

Information sought for Moonshine Heritage Trail

Patrick County Tourism is seeking local history and information on the heritage of Moonshine in the county. The agency is asking businesses and our local residences, who support the Heritage experience of Moonshining to fill out

the survey located at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MoonshineHeritage>.

This will help the county's endeavors with Floyd and Franklin County to establish a trail linking all three counties.

Upgrade to historical website announced

The website of the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society has been recently upgraded, with a new feature, "Through the Years," that is updated daily. Read it every day to learn what happened locally over the past century. For example, a recent blog highlights:

*1924, factory advertises for entire families of workers – including children;

*1949, to starch or not to starch?

* 1974, 27-year-old Va. Sen. Virgil Goode Jr. named to committees;

* 1999, car prices at Jim Mills; 2024, any reversion attempt in future must go through the voters first.

You may also donate and join or renew your membership on the website, www.mhchistoricalociety.org/ and subscribe on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@martinsvillehenrycountyhs.

Virginia Producers Encouraged to Apply for USDA's Continuous Conservation Reserve Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now accepting applications for the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (Continuous CRP). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages agricultural producers and landowners in Virginia who are interested in conservation opportunities for their land in exchange for yearly rental payments to consider the enrollment options available through Continuous CRP, which also includes the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) offered by FSA partners. Additionally, producers participating in CRP can now apply to re-enroll if their contracts expire this year.

To submit an offer, producers should contact the FSA at their local USDA Service Center by July 31, to have an offer effective by Oct. 1. To ensure enrollment

acres do not exceed the statutory cap, FSA will accept offers from producers on a first-come, first-served basis and will return offers for approval in batches throughout the year.

Additionally, producers with acres enrolled in Continuous CRP set to expire Sept. 30 can now offer acres for re-enrollment. A producer can both enroll new acres into Continuous CRP and re-enroll any acres expiring Sept.30.

FSA water quality practices, such as riparian buffers, prairie strips, grassed waterways, and wetlands, will receive an additional 20% incentive. Buffer practices have a positive impact on water quality. Additionally, the Climate-Smart Practice Incentive launched in 2021 is also available in the Continuous signup.



SECTION 3 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Henry County is preparing to carry out the Historical Fieldale Recreation Center Interior Renovations through the use of Virginia Community Development Block Grant Funds. In the implementation of this project the following job types, contracts or procurements may be available:

- **Construction contractors/subcontractors for interior renovations** •
- electricians • painters • plumbers • carpenters •**
- laborers: skilled & unskilled**

In carrying out this project, Henry County, its contractors and subcontractors will, to the greatest extent feasible, utilize qualified persons who permanently reside within Henry County for employment and training positions.

Any job openings will be advertised either in the local newspaper or through any general contractors working for Henry County who will solicit from all contact information provided to the County.

Henry County will, to the greatest extent feasible, use businesses located in or owned by persons residing in Henry County.

Any person residing or firm located in the above named locality may request to participate in procurement opportunities associated with this project by contacting the following person with ten (10) days of this notice.

Cindy Adams, Grant Administrator
PO Box 7, Collinsville, VA 24078
Telephone: 276-634-4620
(Voice: 1-800-828-1140; TDD: 1-800-828-1120)

Written requests should include the name, address, product or service and phone number. All above-referenced procurements will be made on a competitive basis. The names of businesses who respond to this notice will be included on applicable procurement lists for this project. Names of job seekers will be given to contractors.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Know Your Seller When Shopping Online

One key to shopping online is reading the fine print, including who you're actually buying from. While we often think of giant online retailers like Amazon, Walmart and Target as a store they can be more like a mall or flea market where you are buying products from a variety of sellers. However, some of those sellers are more reputable than others.

Criminals use these websites to resell stolen products or items that either don't work or contain dangerous chemicals. One easy way to protect yourself is to make sure you are buying directly from the retailer that runs the website. You can usually find the seller's name on the product page near the button for buying the item. Shipping times and return policies are another sign of who you are buying from as products from the branded retailer will often ship faster and have a clear return policy.

As of the third quarter of 2023, online shopping scams were the second highest category of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission, and 51% of those reporting lost a combined \$308 million. The actual losses are likely far higher since fraud is significantly under-reported.

Visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork or call the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline at 1-877-908-3360 to report a scam or get help if you've fallen victim.

Donations of gently used prom dresses sought

Henry County Schools are collecting donations of gently used prom dresses and accessories to a student. Accessories, such as jewelry, purses (clutch and evening bag), and shoes, also are sought.

Organizers hope to surpass their goal of 300 dresses. Donations can be dropped off Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Center for Community Learning, located at 15 Primary Road, Collinsville, or at Maurice's in Martinsville during normal business hours.

The deadline for donations is March 15.

Donated services from barbers, manicurist, hairdresser, etc., also are needed.

For more information, contact Garrett Dillard at (276) 647-8932 or gdillard@henry.k12.va.us.

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

Call 276-229-9410 or Facebook Thomas Land Solutions LLC

HELP WANTED

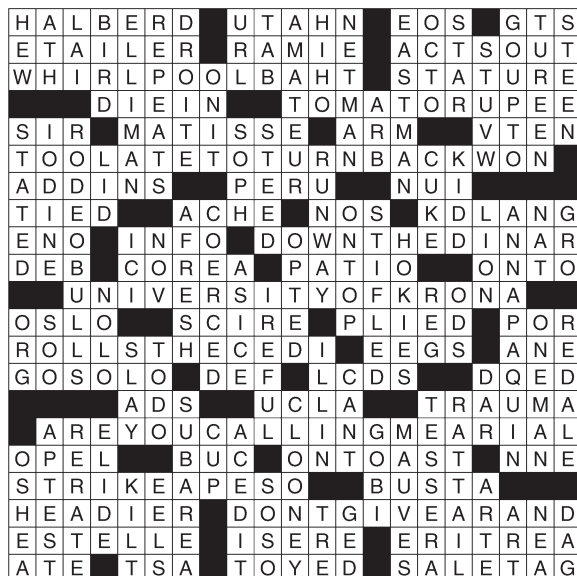
Sawmill Help
Serious workers only need to apply \$500 sign on bonus with stipulations. Previous employees need not apply. Apply in person at Wilderness 14747 Job Stuart Hwy Stuart VA 24171

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.

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.

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



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

ADVERTISE!

Founders Day Film set for Sunday

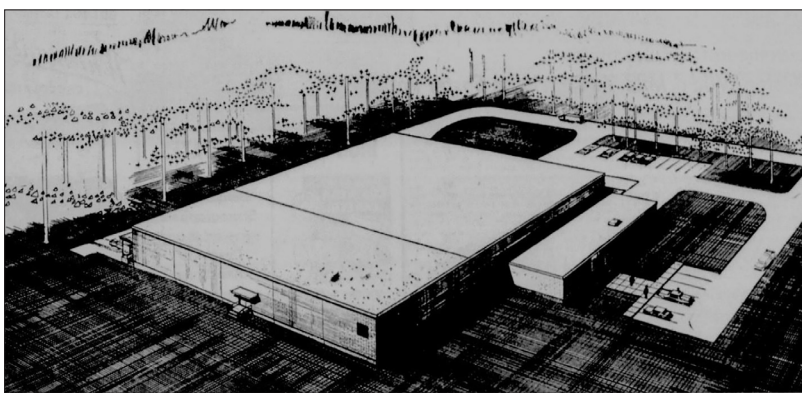
Join the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society as it celebrates its film heritage during "Founders Day: Film" at 3 p.m. on Sunday, January 21, at the Historic Henry County Courthouse.

Distinguished Speakers will be Tracy Tate, granddaughter of Julius Hermes, and representatives of Eastman Performance Films - Ricky Nelson, Operations Manager, and Kristoff Lievens, Site Manager. Former employees of Martin Processing, Courtaulds, and CP Films and current and former employees of Eastman Performance Films are especially invited to attend to be recognized.

Attendees are encouraged to wear or bring company products and other mementos. For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/725963766113359>.

Hermes came to Martinsville from Patterson, New Jersey, in 1935, and managed Fontaine Converting Works for many years. He disassociated himself from the firm and started Martin Processing in Collinsville in 1956. Once a major player in the textile and carpet yarn-dyeing business, the company was hard hit during the late 1970s. A chemist, engineer, and entrepreneur, he redirected the company's energies into plastic film products.

Four generations of the Hermes family plan to attend



Original Martin Processing



Founders Day speakers

Founders Day. "The Historical Society honors an industry at Founders Day each year which helped to create and develop our community," John Phillips, president of the Historical Society, said. "Previously recognized are furniture, textile, and lumber. We are excited to celebrate film this year and encourage everyone to join us. Film may be a global industry, but its roots are local

and continue to flourish." Admission to Founders Day is free, made possible by corporate sponsors, Carter Bank & Trust and The Lester Group. The Historic Henry County Courthouse is fully handicapped accessible. Following the presentation, refreshments will be served, and the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum will be open.

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

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

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.

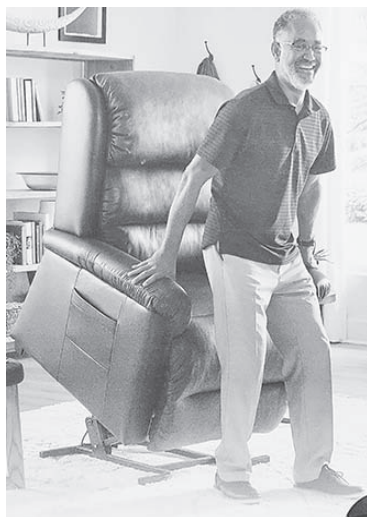
The purpose of this public hearing is to receive citizen input on the proposed abandonment of a 50' street space off Oak Level Rd., in the Reed Creek District. The 50' street space is shown on a map entitled "Map 1 of Stoneleigh Farms" in Map Book 43, Page 39, in the HCCCO. A new preliminary map has 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

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

HUGE SELECTION OF LIFT CHAIRS



Small, Medium and Large size chairs available

Starting at Only **\$795**

Riverside Furniture
1580 Greensboro Road
Martinsville VA
276-632-1286
Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm • Saturday 9am - 2pm



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

Movie Town 276-638-4040

NOW PLAYING:
The Beekeeper(R),
Mean Girls(PG-13),
Night Swim(PG-13),
The Color Purple(PG-13),
Migration(PG), and
Wonka(PG)

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

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

Sports Schedule

Following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of Jan. 22-27:

1/22	TBA Girls Basketball Carlisle at Forsyth Home Educators	1/24	7pm Boys Basketball Martinsville vs George Washington (at Bonner M.S.)	6pm Boys Basketball Covenant at Carlisle
	8:30p Boys Basketball Carlisle at Forsyth Home Educators	1/25	5pm Wrestling Bassett at Liberty (Bedford)	7pm Girls Basketball Bassett at Martinsville (at Martinsville M.S.)
1/23	6:45p Boys Basketball Hargrave Military Acad. at Carlisle		5pm Swim & Dive Martinsville vs TBA (at Hargrave Military Acad.)	7pm Boys Basketball Magna Vista at Tunstall
	7pm Girls Basketball Magna Vista at Bassett	1/26	6pm Girls Basketball Carlisle at Virginia Episcopal School	7pm Boys Basketball Martinsville at Bassett
	7pm Girls Basketball George Washington at Martinsville		7pm Boys Basketball Morehead at Magna Vista	TBA Indoor Track Magna Vista - Invitational at Liberty Univ.
	7pm Boys Basketball Bassett at Magna Vista		5pm Swim & Dive Bassett vs Martinsville (at Hargrave Military Acad.)	9am Wrestling Martinsville vs TBA (at Martinsville M.S.)
			5pm Swim & Dive Magna Vista vs Martinsville (at Hargrave Military Acad.)	3:30p Boys Basketball Martinsville at Graham (at Graham M.S.)
			6pm Girls Basketball Chatham Hall at Carlisle	5:30p Girls Basketball Carlisle at Dudley
				7pm Boys Basketball Carlisle at Dudley

Nearly 21 million children expected to receive new benefit this summer

Virginia is among the 35 states to be the first to launch the new, permanent summer grocery benefits program for children – known as Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer – in summer 2024.

The USDA estimates that, in total, the states, U.S. territories, and Tribes that have committed to launching the Summer EBT program in summer 2024 will serve close to 21 million children, providing a total of nearly \$2.5 billion in grocery benefits. This is around 70% of the total population of children eligible for Summer EBT. USDA expects additional states and Tribes will provide Summer EBT in 2025.

Through this new program, states will provide families with \$120 per eligible child for the summer to buy food at grocery stores, farmers markets or other authorized retailers – similar to how SNAP benefits are used. Participating Tribes will provide a benefit of the same amount that can be used to buy food at WIC-authorized retailers.

“Summer grocery benefits are becoming a reality for many communities across the nation and for tens of millions of children who will receive the nutrition they need to grow, learn, and thrive,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “We applaud all

the leaders and partners who are stepping up to make the program’s inaugural year a success. Together we’re making progress in closing the summer hunger gap and ensuring children are nourished and healthy year-round.”

Rigorous evaluations of a multi-year demonstration project showed that providing Summer EBT reduced child hunger and improved diet quality. Summer grocery benefits decreased the number of kids with very low food security by about one-third and supported healthier diets featuring more fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

The new, permanent Summer EBT program advances the goals of the Biden-Harris Administration’s White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health to enhance food and nutrition security and improve food access and affordability. It was enacted on a bipartisan basis by Congress just over one year ago.

This is the inaugural year of the program, meaning states and Tribes that do not launch the program this summer will have future opportunities to opt-in. USDA’s goal is for Summer EBT to be available nationwide as soon as possible. The Department is

providing extensive assistance, trainings, tools and more to the states, U.S. territories and Tribes targeting a 2024 roll-out as well as to those planning for 2025 and beyond. Working with future implementers is a top priority.

Later this month, USDA Deputy Secretary Xochitl Torres Small will join state, U.S. territory and Tribal leaders, and partners from across the country in Baltimore to celebrate the positive difference this program will make for millions of children.

“No kid should have to spend their summer hungry, or without nutritious food,” said Agriculture Deputy Secretary Torres Small. “Summer EBT is a giant step forward in meeting the needs of our nation’s children and families throughout the year, and especially in the summer months.”

Summer EBT is one of three key mechanisms that USDA is now using to tackle child hunger during the summer months. Families are encouraged to participate in all summer nutrition programs available to them. Summer meal sites provide free meals to families across the country, and many rural communities now offer to-go or home-delivered summer meals to increase access to this vital nutrition support.

Nominations now open for P&HCC Distinguished Alumni

The Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation is seeking nominations for P&HCC graduates to be named “Distinguished Alumni” during its annual awards dinner to be held on Friday, June 7 at Chatmoss Country Club. The deadline to make a nomination is February 23.

To be considered, nominees must have graduated with a degree or certificate or taken a minimum of 24 credit hours from P&HCC. They must have demonstrated success within their chosen career or field of expertise, given significant community-based services, and be able to attend the awards ceremony.

“This award is a great honor for P&HCC alums,” said Tiffani Underwood, Executive Director of the P&HCC Foundation. “It recognizes the

achievements of our students, and honors those who found Patrick & Henry Community College to be a significant stepping stone to their overall success.”

Last year’s recipients were Elizabeth Ashby ('05, '08), Dayna Bobbitt ('10), Angie Brown ('88), Brad Draper ('82), Jan Harrison ('03, '06), Sandra Heath ('88, '92), Dylan Jones ('14), Bethany Lackey ('08), Rick Love ('80), Rodney Mills ('05), and Frances Wade ('82).

Alumni nomination forms can be accessed online at www.patrickhenry-foundation.com, under the “Helpful Links” section. Forms are also available from the foundation office at Patrick & Henry Community College, 645 Patriot Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112. Contact Letitia Pulliam at 276-656-0250 or lpulliam@patrickhenry.edu.



Deadly home fires across U.S. underscore increased risks during winter months

In response to the deadly home fires that have occurred in the past week, the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) is reminding the public about the increased risk of home fires during the winter months, along with simple but critical ways to prevent them and stay safe.

According to NFPA, heating equipment is the leading cause of U.S. home fires between December and January, while cooking equipment is the leading cause of home fires year-round. The third-leading cause of home fires is electrical equipment, with three in 10 electrical fires occurring between November and February. Also, more than a third (34 percent) of Christmas tree home fires occur in January.

“As the new year has unfolded, several home fires, including ones that have been reported in California, Connecticut, and Minnesota, have underscored the deadly impact that these fires can have,” said Lorraine Carli, vice president of NFPA Outreach and Advocacy. She noted that with colder temperatures across much of the country and fewer hours of sunlight, people are spending more time indoors. That means home heating systems are in greater use, electricity is used more hours of the day, and, in many cases, households are doing more cooking.

“On top of these risk factors, many homes may still have holiday decorations up, which pose potential fire risks as well, particularly dry Christmas trees,” said Carli.

NFPA offers the following guidelines and recommendations to reduce the risk of home fires during the winter months:

Heating safety:

*Make sure all heating equipment is in good working order. Heating systems and chimneys should be cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional.

*Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from all heating equipment, including furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves, and space

heaters.

*Always use the right kind of fuel, as specified by the manufacturer, for fuel-burning space heaters.

*Make sure space heaters are in good working order and used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

*Turn portable heaters off when leaving the room or going to sleep.

*Keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.

Electrical safety:

*Only use one heat-producing appliance (such as a coffeemaker, toaster, space heater, etc.) plugged into a receptacle outlet at a time.

*Check electrical cords to make sure they are not running across doorways or under carpets.

*Extension cords are intended for temporary use. Have a qualified electrician add more receptacle outlets so you don’t have to use extension cords.

*Call a qualified electrician or your landlord if you have frequent problems with blowing fuses or tripping circuit breakers; a tingling feeling when you touch an electrical appliance; a discolored or warm wall outlet; a burning or rubbery smell coming from an appliance; flickering or dimming lights; or sparks from an outlet.

Cooking safety:

*Keep a close eye on what you’re cooking; never leave cooking food unattended. For foods with longer cook times, such as those that are simmering or baking, set a timer to help monitor them carefully.

*Clear the cooking area of combustible items, keeping anything that can burn - such as dish towels, oven mitts, food packaging, and paper towels - at least three feet away from cooking equipment.

*Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. Keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.

*Create a “kid and pet free zone”

of at least three feet around the cooking area and anywhere else hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

Smoke alarms, which reduce the risk of dying in a fire by more than half (54 percent), must be installed in all required locations and working properly. Home escape planning is another critical element of home fire safety, as people may have as little as two minutes to escape a home fire from the time the smoke alarm sounds. Knowing what to do when the smoke alarm sounds and using that time wisely is critical to safety.

“Our goal is to make sure people

know what the main causes of winter home fires are and how to prevent them,” said Carli. “A little added awareness, effort, and planning can go a long way toward minimizing those risks.”

The NFPA offers a wealth of home heating safety tips, information, and resources to help better educate the public about ways to safely heat their homes. In addition, NFPA’s “Put a Freeze on Winter Fires” campaign with the U.S. Fire Administration works to promote a host of winter safety issues, including home heating.

Construction is leading industry for initial claims

It was announced today that The number of initial unemployment insurance claims rose in the latest filing week to 2,782, according to the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA), with construction the leading industry for claims.

While there was an increase in the number of filings, the total remains slightly below typical pre-pandemic volumes experienced in 2019, the DWDA reported.

For the filing week ending January 6, seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia were 2,782, which was an increase of 712 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 12,827, which was an increase from the previous week and an increase of 27 percent from the 10,089 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 (1,849), professional, scientific, and technical services (1,687), manufacturing (1,213), construction (1,116), and health care and social assis-

tance (1,077). 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 January 6, the advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 202,000, a decrease of 1,000 from the previous week’s revised level. The previous week’s level was revised up by 1,000 from 202,000 to 203,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 317,048 in the week ending January 6, an increase of 47,632 (or 17.7 percent) from the previous week. There were 339,883 initial claims in the comparable week in 2023.

Looking at preliminary data, most U.S. states reported increases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. New York’s preliminary weekly change (+20,755) was the largest increase. California’s preliminary weekly change (+9,990) was the second largest increase. Texas’s preliminary weekly change (+8,915) was the third largest increase. Georgia’s preliminary weekly change (+6,024) was the fourth largest increase. Virginia had the 17th largest increase (+558).

Early voting for March 5 primary is now underway

Early voting for the Virginia Presidential Primary on March 5 began Friday, January 19. Virginia will have a dual presidential primary election, which means both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party will have primaries on the same day.

In a dual primary, officers of election will ask voters if they want to cast their ballot in the Democratic Party Primary or the Republican Party Primary. All qualified voters may vote in either primary, but voters may not vote in both primaries.

The choice to vote in a party's primary does not mean that the voter will be "registered" with that party. Virginia does not have party registration. Six candidates will appear on the Republican primary ballot: Chris Christie, Ryan L. Binkley, Vivek Ramaswamy, Donald J. Trump, Ron D. DeSantis, and Nikki R. Haley. Three candidates will appear on the Democratic primary ballot: Marianne Williamson, Joseph R. Biden Jr and Dean Benson Phillips.

In-person early voting for the March 5, 2024, presidential primary election begins Friday, Jan. 19 and will continue through Saturday, March 2. To vote early in-person, registered voters should go to the general registrar's office for the jurisdiction in which they are registered, present their ID, and cast their ballot. The location of the general registrar's office for all jurisdictions can be found on the Virginia Department of Elections' website (<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/PublicContactLookup>) as well as a list of acceptable forms of identification at (<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/voterid/index.html>).

Some jurisdictions may offer

early in-person voting at both the general registrar's office and satellite locations. Curbside voting is also available for those with disabilities and anyone over 65. Contact your general registrar's office for more information regarding voting hours and additional locations.

Requested absentee ballots will be mailed beginning Jan. 19, including ballots to registered military and overseas voters. Any registered voter can request an absentee ballot either in-person, by mail, online (<https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation/Lookup/absentee>) or by contacting your general registrar's office. Registered voters do not need a reason to request an absentee ballot.

In order to return a voted ballot, voters can drop off their absentee ballot at the general registrar's office or polling location on Election Day. Absentee ballots returned by mail must be postmarked on or before March 5 and received by the general registrar before noon Friday, March 8.

Anyone with visual or manual dexterity impairment has the option to vote an absentee ballot using an electronic marking tool. The deadline to register to vote and cast a regular ballot is Feb. 12. After that date, voters will have to use same-day registration and vote a provisional ballot. The deadline to apply for a mailed ballot is Feb. 23.

Voters with questions about absentee and early in-person voting should contact their general registrar's office or the Virginia Department of Elections by phone at 1-800-552-9745 or by email at info@elections.virginia.gov. For more information, voters are encouraged to visit the Virginia Department of Elections website at www.elections.virginia.gov.

Fix private farm roads in Apple and Google maps

A savvy GPS to map the way is an invaluable tool for modern motorists, but it can be a nuisance for landowners when drivers make a wrong turn down a private road.

Despite posting "No Thru Traffic" signs to dissuade interstate travelers from barreling down her private farm road, Prince William County farmer Stephanie Cornell said her family and employees fear being struck while wandering the property.

"They will fly through here going 50 miles an hour," she said. "They've almost hit our employees. We all have young kids, and we all live on this farm."

Cornell said she has often heard the phrase from disoriented travelers: "But my GPS told us to go this way."

A recent national survey conducted by United Tires reported an over-reliance on GPS among more than 1,200 surveyed drivers, with 93% of respondents admitting they were GPS-dependent.

The study also indicated an increase in distracted and dangerous driving that arises from confusing GPS directions. Two in five drivers surveyed admitted to driving dangerously to beat their estimated arrival time, and 46% admitted to experiencing road rage while using their GPS.

"We'll tell them to turn around, that this is a private road, and we've been cussed at," Cornell said.

Apple Maps removed Cornell's private road within a week of her submitting a request, and her Google Maps request was eventually addressed after over two years and an "overflow" of community support. Prohibited traffic has since improved considerably, but she's working to resolve the same issue with Amazon.

Currently, Google Maps displays Cornell's private road with the warning, "This route has restricted usage or private roads," which still causes some confusion among users, she said.

"If we can figure out a way to get these farm access roads not listed as private but completely removed from the maps, I think that would be the most beneficial situation for everybody," she added.

To fix a road in Google Maps on a computer, open Google Maps and click "Menu" in the top left corner. Click "Edit the map" then "Add or fix a road." Select the road you want to fix on the map and verify the road segment selected. Under "Edit information," select the type of information you want to fix and enter the correction. Click "Done" then "Submit."

To fix a road in Google Maps on an Android, open the Google Maps mobile app and tap the "Contribute" tab on the bottom. Tap "Edit map" then "Add or fix a road." Select the type of information you want to fix and the affected road. From the bottom tiles, select the road segment you want to fix and tap "Next." Enter the correct information, and tap "Send."

To fix a road in Google Maps on an iPhone or iPad, open the Google Maps mobile app and tap the "Contribute" tab on the bottom. Tap "Edit map," then "Add or fix a road," and then "Fix a road." Tap the road you want to fix and then "Next." Select the type of information you want to fix, enter the correct information and tap "Send."

To fix a road in Apple Maps, open the Apple Maps mobile app, type in an address in the "Search Maps" bar, click on the three dots and then "Report an issue."

Hearing set on suit against city

A lawsuit filed last year against the City of Martinsville hearing is advancing, according to information online.

A hearing is scheduled to be held January 25 in the filing that alleges the City of Martinsville breached a 2010 settlement agreement to pay employees health insurance premiums.

Filed Aug. 18 in Martinsville Circuit Court by attorney James W. Haskins, of the Martinsville-based Young, Haskins, Mann, Gregory & Wall, P.C., the lawsuit alleges that as an inducement to employment, the city promised to pay health insurance premiums while those listed in the filing were actively employed.

Skill Games Spin Past Virginia Senate Hurdle

The Virginia Senate Commerce and Labor Committee voted this week to advance the Virginia Small Business Economic Development Act, a landmark bill that will provide a much-needed boost to the Commonwealth's small businesses while establishing a responsible regulatory framework for skill game machines. This legislation represents a win-win for Virginia, offering economic opportunities for entrepreneurs and a safe, enjoyable entertainment option for residents.

"This bill is a game-changer for Virginia's small businesses," said Sen. Bill Stanley, R-Moneta. "Skill games are already generating significant revenue across the nation, and it's time Virginia tapped into this potential to create jobs, revitalize local economies, and generate vital tax revenue."

Key Provisions of the Virginia Small Business Economic Development Act:

*Establishes a regulatory and registration scheme for skill game machines: This ensures responsible operation of skill games and protects consumers.

*Empowers the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (ABC) to adopt emergency regulations: This allows for quick implementation of the legislation and ensures smooth operation of the industry.

*Directs the Department of Taxation to collect a 15% monthly tax on gross revenue from skill

game machines: This generates vital tax revenue for the Commonwealth to invest in critical priorities like education and infrastructure.

Benefits of the Bill:
*Creates jobs: Skill game businesses generate significant employment opportunities, particularly within the service and hospitality sectors.

*Boosts local economies: Skill game establishments attract customers, drive foot traffic, and revitalize local businesses.

*Generates tax revenue: The 15% tax on gross revenue provides a new and sustainable source of funding for the Commonwealth.

*Offers safe entertainment: Skill games provide a fun and engaging activity for adults, similar to other forms of entertainment like arcades or bowling alleys.

Moving Forward:
The Virginia Small Business Economic Development Act now heads to the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee for consideration. With strong bipartisan support and the clear benefits, it offers, the bill is expected to pass and become law.

"This is a common-sense bill that supports small businesses, protects consumers, and generates revenue for the Commonwealth," Stanley added. "We urge the full Senate to act swiftly and pass this legislation to unlock the potential of skill games for Virginia."

Nine indicted in federal health care fraud probe

A November 2023 indictment, returned under seal by a federal grand jury in Roanoke, Virginia charging nine people with healthcare fraud conspiracy, money laundering, and obstruction of justice, has been unsealed following the arrest and initial court appearances of all nine defendants.

An indictment is merely an allegation, and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

According to court documents, Carolyn Bryant-Taylor, 59, of Clinton, Maryland; Kafomdi "Josephine" Okocha, 48, of Upper Marlboro, Maryland; Samuel Okocha, 50, of Upper Marlboro, Maryland; Shekita Gore, a.k.a. Shekita Steele, 38, of Clinton, Maryland; Berthe Feuzeu, a.k.a. Berthe Djuni, 48, of Manassas Park, Virginia; Anthony Kanu, 57, of Bladensburg, Maryland; Elizabeth Ilome, 41, of Stafford, Virginia; Eno Utuk, 47, of Stafford, Virginia; and Rhabiatu Kamara, 45, of Fort Washington, Maryland, are all charged with conspiracy to commit health care fraud.

Bryant-Taylor, Josephine Okocha, Samuel Okocha, and Gore also are charged with one count of health care fraud. Additionally, Bryant-Taylor is charged with two counts of obstruction of justice and one count of money laundering. Josephine Okocha is charged with three counts of money laundering.

According to the indictment, Bryant-

Taylor, Josephine Okocha, Samuel Okocha, and Gore are owners and operators of 1st Adult N Pediatric Healthcare Service, a Medicaid-enrolled home health agency providing private duty nursing, personal care, and respite care services throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia, including in the Western District of Virginia. Feuzeu, Kanu, Utuk and Kamara were employed by 1st Adult as nurses and Ilome as a medication technician. The defendants are alleged to have conspired to submit false claims to Medicaid for services that were not provided to patients, including falsifying records and documentation in support of the fraudulent claims submitted for reimbursement.

First Assistant United States Attorney Zachary T. Lee, Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares, and Special Agent in Charge Stanley M. Meador of the FBI's Richmond Division made the announcement following the indictment's unsealing.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Virginia Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit are investigating the case, with assistance from the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Kristin B. Johnson and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicole Terry, a Senior Assistant Attorney General with the Virginia Attorney General's Office, are prosecuting the case.

Authorities seek information in recent larcenies



The Henry County Sheriff's is currently investigating several recent larcenies from motor vehicles in the Chatmoss and Laurel Park communities. Authorities have received several reports from residents stating that items were stolen out of their unlocked vehicles parked in the driveway of their residence. Surveillance videos from residences in the neighborhood have caught images of potential suspects, who are seen wearing dark-colored clothing with head and face coverings.

A video from the sheriff's office is available at henrycountyenterprise.com.

Anyone with information about these

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

Authorities also reminded residents to lock their vehicles when not in use and to store all valuable items inside homes for safekeeping.

THANK YOU FOR READING
HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Coelho to let the good times roll at Piedmont Arts

Join Piedmont Arts on Thursday, Feb. 15 to learn about the arts in style. This Art Talk in the galleries features speaker Suellen DaCosta Coelho, a Brazilian fashion and costume designer. There will be a reception at 6:30 p.m. and the lecture will begin at 7 p.m. This event is free with a suggested donation of \$20. Coelho will discuss her history, fashion, culture, and her experience in the jazz and parade scene in New Orleans. She holds a degree in clothing production from her

home country of Brazil, with an emphasis on fashion and costume design. Coelho was costume designer in various Brazilian music and audiovisual performances and recently graduated with her M.F.A. in costume design at Louisiana State University where she was also the costume shop teaching assistant. Her graduate research was on second line parades in New Orleans. Second line parades are cultural descendants of jazz funerals, and have been described as a block

party in motion featuring jubilant dancing and brass bands. By conducting interviews and participating in these with the Undeclared Divas, Gents, and Kids, Coelho explored the way that identity and cultures are defined by style and the way people dress. Coelho was named the Undeclared Diva Queen for 2022 and participated in a year's worth of parade events with this title. Reservations can be made by calling Piedmont Arts at 276-632-3221.



A candid shot of Suellen Coelho in action with her sewing machine.



Suellen Coelho poses with a scaled-down ball gown she created.



Suellen Coelho in full royal attire as the Undeclared Divas Queen in 2022.

Farmers prepare to discuss agricultural priorities with lawmakers Jan. 29 during annual Legislative Day

With a 40% turnover of seats in the General Assembly, leaders within Virginia Farm Bureau Federation are embracing new opportunities to brief lawmakers on agricultural policy priorities at the organization's annual Legislative Day, Jan. 29 at the Virginia Capitol. Farm Bureau policy is originally developed at the county level and then debated and approved by a statewide body of voting delegates. For Legislative Day, members choose issues most relevant to agricultural activities in their regions of the state and share their perspectives with lawmakers who hold positions on related committees, like Appropriations or Agriculture Chesapeake and Natural Resources. With dozens of timely agricultural issues farmers can choose to discuss with their representatives, farmers

are focusing on a few top priorities: a budget amendment enhancing conservation funding to hire more nutrient management planners and engineers to help meet Chesapeake Bay cleanup goals; and a bill limiting the proliferation of solar arrays on prime farm- and forestland. Martha Moore, senior vice president of VFBF governmental relations, said farmers also will request that the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's Office of Farmland Preservation be combined into a single entity within Virginia Department of Forestry's Forestland Conservation department. While efforts to promote land conservation easements through state agencies have been effective, Farm Bureau members believe they can be further streamlined to include working farmland.

"There's been lots of focus on conservation easements for open spaces and scenic vistas, but not so much for working lands," Moore said. "We've got to have lands in the future that produce food and goods we rely on, and make sure easement restrictions allow farming to continue. So why not put all of that into one entity within the Department of Forestry? All we're trying to do is consolidate it and reignite the focus." VFBF state board member and cattleman Justin Pence of Shenandoah County said Legislative Day has

proven to be a useful tool for farmers to interact with legislators during a pivotal time of the General Assembly session. His family participates every year. "It's imperative for legislators to put a face with a name and relate real-life agriculture stories they heard directly from farmers," Pence said, lauding Farm Bureau's efforts to include urban legislators in agricultural discussions. "Remember—they're all voting on the same issues whether they're rural or living in a metropolis."

POWER LINE WORKER PROGRAM

Held at the P&HCC Patrick County Site

Starting February 5th!

Using curriculum from the National Center for Construction Education and Research, the Power Line Worker curriculum addresses the fundamental aspects of power line work to ensure workers maintain safety for both the public and electrical crews.

Training topics include:

- Truck Driving
- Safety
- Electrical Theory
- Climbing Techniques
- Aerial Framing
- Rigging
- Operating Utility Service Equipment




HS diploma or GED not required.

Offered in partnership with Wytheville Community College.



INFORMATION: 276-656-0260

P&HCC has funding to pay up to 100% of your tuition!

P&HCC is an EEO institution.

Fugitive apprehended after high-speed chase

The Martinsville Police Department was advised by the United States Marshals Service on Jan. 10 of the possible location of a fugitive with outstanding warrants. Joseph Lamont Ott, 34, had outstanding warrants for bank robbery and battery in Palm Beach County, Florida, along with felony assault with a firearm, discharging a firearm in an occupied dwelling, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, and possession of a firearm while in possession of narcotics out of Henry County, and multiple capias for fail to appear in court and probation violation in Martinsville. Surveillance was put into place for the location while additional resources were responding. Before those resources could arrive, Ott allegedly left the residence in a silver Mitsubishi SUV. Martinsville Police officers attempted to stop the vehicle, but it allegedly would not stop, and a chase ensued. The chase allegedly left the city limits, traveling south on Greensboro Road, but then turned onto Rives Road and entered back into the city. When the chase proceeded down Circle Court, the vehicle allegedly did not stop for the stop sign and struck a silver Chevrolet pickup. The driver allegedly fled on foot, and was captured not far from the collision.



Joseph Lamont Ott

The driver of the pickup truck was examined and treated by the Martinsville Fire & EMS. Ott was taken to the local hospital to examine injuries received in the crash. In addition to the outstanding charges, Ott also will be charged with the felony charges of attempting to elude police and hit and run. Further investigation also recovered an AR-style rifle, a handgun, and a quantity of narcotics. Assisting in the apprehension and investigation are the U.S. Marshals Service, the Virginia State Police, and the Henry County Sheriff's Office.



JAN 26 & 27
MARTINSVILLE, VA
FRI 12PM-5PM SAT 9AM-3PM
6611 A.L. PHILPOTT HWY

OPEN HOUSE

COME JOIN US! 2024

 CREWS
 ROBERTSON
 AREY
 JOHNSTON
 STONE










See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Piedmont Arts to celebrate Black History Month with VMFA Artmobile, African American Read-In and Family Day

The African American Read-In and Family Day, hosted annually by Piedmont Arts, is growing this year. In addition to the beloved tradition of the Read-In, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' Artmobile will be set up at the museum. Sponsored by Sovah Health and Carter Bank and Trust, this Family Day will also feature crafts, music, food, and face painting. The event will be held on Saturday, Feb. 10 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. Admission to the event and to the Artmobile will be free for all participants.

Piedmont Arts' African American Read-In and Family Day is held in conjunction with the National African American Read-In established in 1990 by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English to make literacy a significant part of Black History Month. This initiative has reached more than 6 million participants around the world. The National African American Read-In is a groundbreaking effort to encourage communities to read together, centering African American books and authors.

VMFA on the Road is the museum's 21st-century Artmobile, coming to you from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. VMFA on the Road will showcase the

exhibition Love, Laughter, Tears: An Artist's Guide to Emotions. This compilation of works from the VMFA collection examines the relationship between art and emotion across various cultures and time periods to explore human emotion as a unifying and universal factor. The Artmobile will be available for the duration of the event.

Musical entertainment will be provided by Dionte Hall, or "Taye the Truth." Hall is a lyricist native to Roanoke, Virginia. His music is hailed as uplifting, relatable and accessible to a variety of audiences, paving the way for building an established brand in Southwest Virginia. Taye the Truth ceaselessly continues to use his music as inspiration for his community to both believe in and express themselves. He was featured in The Roanoker's 40 Under 40 list for 2023 and his contributions to the community are vast.

In addition to these major elements of the day's programming, families can expect face painting and crafts hosted by the Teen Arts Council. Food trucks will be set up for more substantial meal offerings in addition to an assortment of free snacks. The full schedule of events can be found at www.PiedmontArts.org.



Youngsters and their trusted adults participate in a music program at last year's African American Read-In and Family Day.



Roanoke-based lyricist Taye the Truth will be performing at Piedmont Arts for this year's Read-In and Family Day.



The VMFA Artmobile will be set up in the Piedmont Arts parking lot for Family Day.

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

SPECTRUM MEDICAL

Meet Our Providers

DR. RAMON RUBERTE THIELE
Total Joint Surgeon Specializing In
Hips & Knees

The full **SPECTRUM** of Musculoskeletal services in an integrated system... offering the **FUTURE** of Healthcare today.

- ORTHOPEDICS
- RHEUMATOLOGY
- PAIN MANAGEMENT
- FAMILY MEDICINE
- SPINE CARE
- CLINICAL RESEARCH
- SPORTS MEDICINE OUTREACH
- PHYSICAL THERAPY

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.

SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!!!!!!

SAME DAY X-RAYS

- ORTHOPEDIC WALK-INS ACCEPTED
- SHORTER WAIT TIMES
- CASH PAY OPTION AVAILABLE

NO REFERRAL NEEDED
UNLESS REQUIRED BY INSURANCE

2 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

DANVILLE
109 Bridge Street • 4th Floor
434-793-4711

MARTINSVILLE
1075 Spruce Street
276-790-3233

MONDAY - FRIDAY 08:00 AM - 4:30 PM