

# HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, March 2, 2024

(USPS-6)

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## Broadband expansion set to begin in March

A representative from RiverStreet Networks provided an update to the Henry County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday regarding the county's broadband expansion efforts.

Robert Taylor, the Director of Business Development and Government Affairs for RiverStreet Networks, informed the Board that construction is slated to begin within the next month and some potential customers can expect service within the year.

A grant provided through the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative supplemented RiverStreet's construction costs to expand broadband to parts of the county with no access to internet. In turn, RiverStreet will serve as the primary contractor and will perform,

supervise and manage the construction and installation of a fiber-to-the-home network to consist of up to 428.74 miles of fiber optic cable in Henry County.

The project had previously been delayed until the State Corporation Commission could approve the use of Appalachian Power's infrastructure to hang the fiber optic lines. Once the initial buildout to communities with no internet access has been completed, the second phase of the project will begin. This phase will include providing broadband access to communities who currently only have access to lower-speed internet. In other matters, the Board:

- Approved a resolution accepting a conditional \$50,000 grant from the Na-

(See Broadband p. 5)



Scenes from a Feb. 21 community meeting.

## Company continues efforts to address issues

By Tyler D. Shively

The Carver Ruritan Club was the site of a community meeting on Feb. 21 to discuss ongoing issues that the neighborhood is experiencing due to the Teal-Jones wood processing plant.

Harrison Wicks, the general manager of the plant, as well as other staff members attended the meeting to hear their concerns and work to address them.

Residents met last year to discuss grievances with the facility. Since then, the company has worked to alleviate some of the issues, including addressing persistent loud noises coming from the plant during all hours of the night.

Wicks and his staff explained that the noise was coming from the barker, a piece of machinery that removes loose bark from timber. Since the last discussion, the plant decided to halt use of the

barker at 10 p.m. However, the plant has been turning off the barker at 7 p.m. every evening. One resident suggested a brick sound barrier around the loud machinery to further dull the noise.

An issue that several residents noted is the debris on the road coming to and from the plant. This debris includes bark, wood chips, and mud. Management explained that they now have a truck that sweeps up the debris. They acknowledged that this method has been somewhat ineffective, as it just stirs dust into the air. They assured the public that they will begin spraying water on the asphalt before the truck sweeps to prevent any further spreading of debris. They also are looking for a liquid solution to maintain the dust.

The staff at Teal-Jones and the com-

(See Company p. 2)

## Council approved amendment to Land Bank Authority

By Taylor Boyd

Martinsville City Council approved an amendment to the ordinance for the Martinsville Land Bank Authority at its February 27 meeting.

Community Development Director Keith Holland said the amendment request on the ordinance is being done on an emergency basis "because it is an urgent matter."

The Land Bank Authority was originally established by the council in 2018. At that time, the council appointed its members to the Land Bank Authority.

"In the opinion of our city attorney, that was not the proper, council cannot serve on a body like that," Holland said.

There are five people who have been recommended for appointment to the authority.

"We're hoping to try to get the Land

(See Council p. 2)



Barry Nelson, president of Autos by Nelson, was recognized as the 2024 TIME Dealer of the Year for Virginia.

## Performing Arts Academy to host weekend showings



Performances of "The Little Mermaid Jr.," will get underway this weekend in Martinsville High School Auditorium, located at 351 Commonwealth Blvd E, Martinsville. Show times are March 1 and March 2 at 7 p.m., and March 3 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$12 at the door, and can be purchased online at <https://our.show/mcpstlmj>.

(See related story p. 10)

## Funeral director earns Excellence Award for dedication to families

By Debbie Hall

A local funeral director is among 100 in the U.S. to earn the J.D. Power Circle of Excellence Award for Commitment to Service Excellence.

Don Robertson, of Collins-McKee-Stone Funeral Homes, earned the award for the service he provided to families in 2022. He explained the 2023 awards will not be presented until later this year.

Awards are based on the results of surveys completed by families that are served between January and December, Robertson said.

Power conducts the surveys for the funeral homes, Robertson said. "They give us feedback from the families we serve. If it's anything negative, I get that too."

He added that in those rare cases,



Ed Stephens (far right), General Manager of Collins-McKee-Stone Funeral Homes, presents an award to Don Robertson. Robertson's wife, Gloria, is pictured by his side.

"if there is something negative, I can address that with the family after seeing the survey, and get that corrected.

(See Excellence Award p. 2)

## Bassett High School Band Booster Spring Craft Show set for April 20

By Jeff Reid

The Bassett High School Band Boosters will be hosting its annual Spring Craft Show on Saturday, April 20. Sixty to eighty vendors are expected to showcase homemade crafts and foods for visitors.

"There will be everything from dog collars, T-shirts, and food items, to cookbooks, and birdhouses," said Trey Harris, Bassett High School's band director. "There will be almost anything you want that is made by hand."

Harris said the fundraisers are held twice a year, the first on the third weekend in November and again in March or April. He said the fall show usually generates about \$8,000-12,000 and the spring show, \$6,000-8000.

"The proceeds from the sale will help buy equipment for the brass, woodwinds, percussion and color guard members,"

Harris said. "It also allows us to help families who have financial needs for dues so that all kids can participate in band."

A portion of the money will also be used to help with expenses for the concert band, winter guard, and percussion ensemble programs.

Bassett won its 11th Group 4A State Championship in 2023 and competed in the US Bands National Championship at Met Life Stadium in East Rutherford, NJ in November.

"These fundraisers allow us to give kids from a small area, great experiences at local, regional, state and national events," he said. "We are very passionate about showing these kids how to act, succeed, and thrive at a high level, and it not only goes for competitions but life."

The show will be held at Bassett High School from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is a \$5 admission fee to enter.



Bassett Marching Band

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## Excellence Award

(cont. from page 1)

It's been very few times I get anything negative. Most of the surveys I get are perfect scores, which is 1,000s."

Considering there are thousands of funeral directors in the United States vying for the distinction, "this was quite an honor for me. I'm a senior so any pat on the back is well taken," Robertson, 77, said.

He added that in addition to the certificate, he received a plaque and a "class ring with diamonds in it."

But he was quick to add that the award signals that he is providing the best service possible to the families he serves – and the satisfaction of those families is paramount.

"Over the years, I have waited on thousands of families during the worst times in their lives," Robertson said. In addition, the process is "as smoothly as possible," Robertson also provides a sympathetic shoulder, "a listening ear, and I'll do anything I can to help them get through a tough time. It's the satisfaction to me to make sure it I do everything I can to make sure a family is satisfied with every area of a funeral experience."

Robertson serves families in Henry County as well as families in some areas of Patrick County that "are not too far from where we're located in Bassett.

"The eastern part of Patrick County, Patrick Springs and" other areas, are often served by the Bassett location, he said, and explained that other Patrick communities may be served by the Martinsville location.

"Then of course, there's my experience of being a funeral director. Next month, I will celebrate 51 years of being a licensed funeral director," Robertson said, and explained that he started his career



Don & Gloria Robertson.

in Danville. He lost his first wife in 2014, and retired from his career in Danville at the age of 66.

"I was then contacted by McKee looking for a part-time funeral director," he said, adding the post quickly became full-time, and in 2015, "I moved here to Collinsville from Pittsylvania County. Since then, I met my wife, Gloria. I married a Henry County girl."

While he appreciates the recent award, "my reward is from the people that I serve," Robertson said. "It's not a monetary reward" that he seeks, but the knowledge and satisfaction "that I'm doing my job, going above and beyond for the families I serve."

Recently ordained as a deacon at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Horsepasture, Robertson said that after "all these years of working, I guess this came to me at a good time in my life. Of course, I love for



A close up of the certificate Don Robertson received for his dedication to customer excellence.

families to tell me they were pleased with things, but this survey comes within a month" after the funeral, "so the family has time to chance to sit and think about situations. It's after the fact" and not in the immediate throes of an emotional upheaval.

Receiving the award "is nice. It lets us know what we're doing right and lets us know what we're doing wrong," Robertson said. "And we're graded not only on the director; this is about the whole funeral home, including support staff. But I was the funeral director that waited on family, the funeral director with them throughout, and the funeral director with them through burial or cremation."

Serving as a funeral director "is my ministry. I've enjoyed my occupation. I've enjoyed every minute of it, and my dedication is to the families," Robertson said. "If its anything I can do for them, anything possible, I'm going to do it. End of story."

## Company

(cont. from page 1)



munity both acknowledged that a good deal of the bark and mud on the road is the result of trucks leaving the plant. These truckers are not employed by Teal-Jones. Many are independent or work for a trucking company, so managing them poses a challenge. They are instructed to sweep the bed of their trucks prior to exiting the facility, but with no way to enforce the policy many truckers neglect to clean, leading to debris on the road.

Teal-Jones, a company based in Canada expanded to the United States in 2004. It has two production plants in Virginia, the other is located in Kinsale. Wicks said the company expanded to Virginia because of an ample supply of fiber and the local workforce. At the Martinsville location, the company processes 100% yellow pine. Because the company is conscious of the environment, it tries not to waste any of the

## Council

(cont. from page 1)

Bank together in early March as soon as we can get confirmation from everyone. We're going to have some lead time to publish the public meeting notice at least three days in advance," he said. "So, we're hoping to accomplish this by the end of next week."

Holland said the purpose of reestablishing the Land Bank is because the city has a few properties, including 201 Aaron Street, which is the property intended for the Aaron Mills Senior Housing project, "that is deeded in the name of the Land Bank Authority."

Holland said the Lank Bank would have to be established and then vote to transfer those properties to the Martinsville Redevelopment Housing Authority, which then would transfer it to the project developer.

Typically, the council requires two readings to approve an ordinance. However, it can be approved on one reading as an emergency basis.

City Attorney Paul Jacobson, of Sands Anderson, said the city charter states an ordinance is not to be passed the same day it is introduced unless all members present vote that an emergency exists, and the ordinance as written makes that finding.

Additionally, "it's not to take effect for 10 days after the day of passage unless the majority of those voting pass it as an emergency to take effect immediately. And again, that language is in there," he said.



byproducts of the lumber and repurposes it for fuel. It also has reforestation programs for properties that have been cleared of timber.

Teal-Jones put in an environmental permit request for a Title V, "a federal program designed to standardize air quality permits and the permitting process for major sources of emissions across the country."

Van Drewery, who was among the residents attending the meeting, reviewed the results of this and found the company is not creating a concerning level of air pollution. He noted that under Title V, the Environmental Protection Agency will inspect the sawmill more frequently. The results of one inspection cited the company for dust emissions. Since then, that problem was alleviated, and emissions are within regulations.

Many residents were concerned about the bil-



lowing steam emitting from the factory, but the Teal-Jones staff and Title V results show that the steam was simply water vapor from drying wood chips.

There are still ongoing issues in regard to traffic on Carver Road, which the team at Teal-Jones are working to address. The company is working on a drawing that would involve a new entrance, moving scales, and paving more roads.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) also is looking into ways to make transit on Carver Road more efficient by widening the road or adding a spot for a U-turn.

The ongoing issues on Carver Road will take some time to fix, but Wicks said it would be done as soon as possible.

Drewery reminded residents that "they are not going anywhere, and you are not going anywhere, so we have to find a way to get along."

Vice mayor Aaron Rawls said he thinks this is a very old issue that is being dug back up to solve.

"We've kind of run into this since" City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides "has been here. A 1950s era charter, literally, is when most of our charter language was adopted. So, these things are painful. I'm not an expert at this and we only have to do it once in our lives," he said.

Vice Mayor Aaron Rawls said all this will do is change the folks who are going to be making decisions about properties in the city.

"But it will still be within the city," he said.

Ferrell-Benavides said the goal for the Land Bank is not long range.

In other matters, the council:

\*Approved a resolution for the Aaron Street property donation as the Martinsville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (MHRA), and authorized a letter committing \$500,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds as a low interest three percent loan to support the project.

The council also authorized the transfer of the property to Mid-Atlantic Foundation, which then would donate the property back to Aaron Street Lofts, LLC, as a capital contribution. All actions will be effective upon the transfer of the property from the Martinsville Land Bank Authority to the MHRA.

\*Approved an extension of sales agreement for

90 days with Kayak Hotel Group, who is developing the Holiday Inn Express on Commonwealth Street. Holland said the group had some delays in submitting its erosion and sediment control plan to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

"Their sales contract expires on the 28th of this month, and it could be 60 days before they hear back from DEQ. So, they've asked to extend the due diligence period in the sales contract for 90 days to May 28," he said.

An amendment to the agreement will also need to be approved by the Martinsville Industrial Development Authority.

\*Recognized Barry Nelson, president of Autos by Nelson, as the 2024 TIME Dealer of the Year for Virginia.

\*Approved the state grant appropriation, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Commitment and Signatory resolution, and the budget calendar as part of the consent agenda.

\*Heard an update on ARPA funding.

\*Approved the Wheat and Grass Ordinance after the second reading.

\*Heard from Leroy Spencer Hairston Jr. about light bills.

\*Heard comments from the council.

\*Heard comments from the city manager.

\*Heard a monthly finance update from Director of Finance Mandy McGhee.



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# 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](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net).)

## Meetings

### Thursday, March 7

The Henry County School Board holds its monthly meeting at 5:30 p.m., followed by a closed session. Meetings are held in the Summerlin Room of the Henry County Administration Building in Collinsville.

## Events

### Friday & Saturday, March 1 - 2

TheatreWorks Community Players will present the first ever One-Act Play Festival, featuring three original, never-before-staged shows by three aspiring playwrights, at 7 p.m., 44 Franklin Street, Uptown Martinsville. Tickets are \$12 each and available at [www.TWCP.net](http://www.TWCP.net).

### Sunday, March 3

TheatreWorks Community Players will present the first ever One-Act Play Festival, featuring three original, never-before-staged shows by three aspiring playwrights at 2 p.m., 44 Franklin Street, Uptown Martinsville. Tickets are \$12 each and available at [www.TWCP.net](http://www.TWCP.net).

### Monday, March 4

Women's History Month Blood Drive, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the New College Institute (NCI), Lecture Hall A, 191 Fayette St., Martinsville. Hosted by the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum.

### Friday, March 8

Music Night at the Spencer-Penn Centre, with the renowned Franklin County dance band, Twin Creeks Stringband. Gate opens at 5 p.m., 5:30 is open mic, and the band starts at 6:30 p.m. Admission is a \$5 cash donation. Concessions, including the ever popular Spencer Penn hot dogs and BBQ, will be sold.

### Saturday, March 9

Dancing for the Arts, 4 p.m. at Martinsville High School Auditorium. Piedmont Arts' fundraiser with a slate of local celebrities dancing in support of the arts. The contest features eight teams competing to win the most votes, the highest score from the judges and a set of gorgeous mirror ball trophies handcrafted by local artist Terry Mitchell. Tickets, voting, and memberships are available at the museum and at [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org). Tickets are \$30 for reserved seating, \$20 for general admission, and \$5 for K-12 students.

### Monday, March 11

MHC Democratic Committee will meet at 7 p.m. at the New College Institute, Baldwin Building, Room 107.

### Saturday, March 16

Beers of Ireland with the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society and Scuffle Hill Brewing Company, 2-4 p.m. in the Historic Henry County Courthouse, 1 East Main St., Uptown Martinsville. The cost is \$10 per person. Reservations must be made by March 10, and fee paid at the door. Make your reservation at <https://jbphillips.wufoo.com/forms/beers-of-ireland/>.

### Saturday, April 20

Spring Craft Show, 9-5 at Bassett High School, 85 Riverside Drive, Bassett. Tickets are \$5. Children 5 and under are admitted 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](http://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.

## P&HCC Convenes with SME, College Presidents on Manufacturing Imperative – Workforce Pipeline Challenge

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) recently met with SME, the national nonprofit committed to accelerating new manufacturing technology adoption and building North America's manufacturing talent and capabilities, and other Presidents from each of the educational institutions participating in the Manufacturing Imperative – Workforce Pipeline Challenge (MI-WPC) to discuss strengths and challenges in addressing the industry's workforce shortage and skills gap crisis.

The MI-WPC is a three-year pilot program with a goal to attract 1,000 individuals at each of the initial participating community and technical colleges annually, resulting in 75,000 or more qualified workers in pursuit of manufacturing careers. The estimated economic impact of grow-

ing the industry's workforce is an estimated \$6 billion.

Launched in Fall 2023, the program combines the industry and workforce expertise of SME with the educational programs and innovations of a select group of U.S. community and technical colleges, including Patrick & Henry Community College. "Through this collaboration, the initiative is building awareness of careers in manufacturing, optimizing workforce systems, and accelerating the education and skill development needed to place individuals in jobs making family-sustaining wages", said Jeannine Kunz, chief workforce development officer, SME.

"We are thrilled to host a series of both President's Advisory Council and Manufacturing Association Advisory Council meetings to progress

this public and private sector initiative and keep the momentum moving forward," said Dr. Deb Volzer, government and workforce partnerships director for SME, who is leading the MI-WPC initiative. "Additionally, we regularly bring together those implementing the initiative at each institution in our "Champion" meetings where best practices are identified and shared."

Innovative solutions for attracting students in STEM related programs, developing and deploying curriculum aligned to the needs of local industry, changing the narrative around manufacturing, and deploying strategies to build stronger relationships with school districts will be shared nationally to grow local economies, reduce barriers to employment, and fill vacant manufacturing jobs.

## Week set aside week to honor Virginia's women military veterans

The contributions of women who have served and continue to serve in the U.S. military will be highlighted March 17-23 during Virginia Women Veterans Week.

This marks the seventh consecutive year that the Commonwealth has officially set aside the third week of March during Women's History Month to honor and recognize the more than 108,000 women veterans who call Virginia home – the largest percentage of women veterans per population size of any state.

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) will host a Women Veterans Week 2024 Ceremony featuring the unveiling of Virginia's new "Support Women Veterans" License Plate and presentation of a special lapel pin to women veterans at 9 a.m., Thursday, March 21 at the Virginia War Memorial, 621 S. Belvidere Street, Richmond, VA 23220. The event is free

and open to the public.

"I am proud that Virginia was one of the first states to recognize the unique challenges often faced by our women veterans and that our Virginia Department of Veterans Services established a variety of special programs and services specifically to meet their needs," said DVS Commissioner Chuck Zingler. "During my military career, I had the privilege to serve with women in every branch. They have been and remain a major component of our military in protecting our Nation. Let's thank all of them who have served and continue to serve. I encourage all who support women veterans to attend."

In addition to the Women Veterans Week 2024 Ceremony there will be additional events in observance of Virginia Women's Veterans Week 2024. These include:

• March 19, 7-8 p.m. – Virtual presentation by the Military Women's Memorial in Arlington, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86295073217> Passcode: 995495

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services invites you to join us as we host a virtual event in partnership with the Military Women's Memorial. The Military Women's Memorial honors and tells the stories of women, past and present, who serve our nation. As the only historical repository documenting all military women's service, they educate and inspire through innovative and interactive exhibitions, world-class collections, and engaging programs and events for all generations. During the month of March, the Military Women's Memorial is running a "March with Me" campaign in celebration of Women's History Month. Please visit <https://womensmemorial.org/> to preserve your service story with the Military Women's Memorial.

• March 20, 6-7 p.m. – Virtual presentation by the U.S. Army Women's Museum, Fort Gregg-Adams, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81725268832> Passcode: 497429

The Virginia Department of Veterans Services invites you to our virtual presentation with the U.S. Army Women's Museum. The U.S. Army Women's Museum is the only museum in the world dedicated to Army women. The museum originated in 1955 as the Women's Army Corps Museum which was located at Fort McClellan, AL until it was moved to Fort Lee (now Fort Gregg-Adams) and reopened in May 2001. The U.S. Army Women's Museum serves as an educational institution, providing military history, training and instruction to soldiers, veterans, and the civilian community. Join us as we celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of Virginia's Women Veterans.

For questions, or more information on these events or the Virginia Women Veterans Program, please email [womenvet@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:womenvet@dvs.virginia.gov) or call (804) 786-0571.

## Adams emerges as contest winner

Jenna Adams is the newly crowned Miss Martinsville-Henry County.

A Miss Virginia preliminary pageant was held at the Spencer-Penn Center on February 24. It was the first on-stage Miss Martinsville-Henry County pageant in eight years.

"I am a local business owner and a proud 2023 graduate of Longwood University with a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education," Adams said. "I own and operate Little Angels Early Learning Center in Bassett."

Her Community Service Initiative is called "Tiny Tummies," and was started due to food insecurity among children in my own Learning Center, Adams said, and added that she is meeting with legislators to propose a new way to feed daycare children all across Virginia via a system that will allow for meals to be prepared within the public school system, but delivered to licensed childcare providers. This program already exists during the summer, for school-aged children.

"I am proud to represent our area and I am ready to serve my community," Adams said, and added that she will compete in Roanoke on June 29 for the Miss Virginia title.



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[www.henrycountyenterprise.com](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)



# OPINION

## Chambers Submit two-year budgets for the Commonwealth

Del. Eric Phillips

Last week was one of the busiest weeks this session when each chamber submitted its version of the two-year budget for the Commonwealth. Working on the budget is one of the most important items we do while in Richmond since it determines how \$175 billion of your tax dollars is spent on everything from education to public safety.

With Democrats leading the House, the bill that passed out of the House made significant changes to Governor Youngkin's bill from December that offered balanced tax cuts. Now, the budget contains a new tax on digital services which results in more than \$1.5 billion in higher taxes. It also makes cuts of \$11 million to our grant funding for hiring school resource officers and \$17 million from the program, Ceasefire Virginia, which is a collaborative approach to address violent criminal activity.

There are positive measures in the House's budget version as well. There is significant new funding for our local public schools. In addition, funding for the New College Institute and the Pittsylvania County Library-Gretna Branch is still included and hopefully stays in the final budget.

As the process moves forward, both Chambers will vote to put each budget in conference for negotiations

and they hope to bring a final bill to the floor for a vote by March 9th when the General Assembly Session is scheduled to adjourn. I am hopeful that the final budget will have our shared priorities and eliminate higher taxes for our hard-working families in the district and the Commonwealth.

On President's Day, I had the pleasure of hosting the members of the Tau Omicron Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and its QUE School Mentoring Program. The group was able to sit in the House gallery and listen to bills being presented and voted on by legislators. I was honored to introduce them from the House floor and to highlight the important work Omega Psi Phi does by empowering the youth in our community through the QUE School. I was impressed by the young men who attended and their sincere interest in learning about the General Assembly. They asked very pertinent questions about the process of how a bill becomes a law.

As always, our door is open in Richmond for visits and to share your positions on legislation coming before the Virginia General Assembly. You can reach us by telephone at (804)698-1048 and by email at delephillips@house.virginia.gov. You can also track legislation and watch session and committee meetings at <https://virginiageneralassembly.gov/>.

## St. David's Day

Soon it will be March and for many people, that means looking forward to celebrating St. Patrick's Day on March 17th, the holiday honoring the patron saint of Ireland. However, a lesser-known holiday, St. David's Day, celebrating the patron saint of Wales, is celebrated on March 1st.



**Morgan Griffith**

Representative

St. David was born circa 500 AD in Ceredigion, Wales, into an aristocratic Welsh family. He became a well-known teacher and preacher, founding churches and monastic settlements across Wales and parts of modern-day England and France. He died on March 1st (the date for which the holiday is celebrated) in 589 AD and was canonized as a Saint in the 12th century by Pope Callixtus II.

Today, to symbolize the holiday, many people of Welsh descent will wear one or both of the national symbols of Wales: the daffodil and the leek. The flag of St. David (a yellow cross on a black background) is also flown on the holiday.

As some may know, the Welsh have had a long and storied history in our country.

Since the early 1600s, Welsh people have emigrated to different parts of the United States searching for a new life. Amongst those were a large group of Welsh Quakers who emigrated to America with William Penn (namesake of the state of Pennsylvania) in the late 1600s. Other Welsh immigrants included the Morgans, whose descendant Daniel Morgan was the Revolutionary War hero who won the Battle of Cowpens.

Later, another large-scale Welsh immigration occurred in the mid- to late-1800s.

Since then, thousands of farmers, slate workers, iron workers, coal miners, lead miners, silver miners, gold miners, tinplate workers and steelworkers from Wales have settled all across the United States and made valuable contributions to American life.

In fact, eleven of our presidents have been of Welsh descent: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, John Quincy Adams, William Harrison, Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, Calvin Coolidge, and Richard Nixon.

States with mining heritage, such as Virginia, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio, have a proud Welsh American tradition. States with a particularly high proportion of Welsh Americans today include Utah, Idaho, Vermont, Oregon, and Wyoming.

The 9th District is no exception; Welsh influence can be seen across Southwest Virginia.

Welsh settlers felt drawn to Southwest Virginia due to the similarity in landscape (Appalachian Mountains as compared to the Cambrian Mountains in Wales). Welsh settlers also had a long history of raising sheep and coal mining, two things that could be done in Southwest Virginia.

Perhaps the most visible sign of the Welsh's imprint on Southwest Virginia are the communities with Welsh names, such as Jonesville in Lee County and Pembroke in Giles County.

If you know of others, feel free to inform us!

Also, common Welsh surnames include Davis, Evans, Griffin, Griffith, Jenkins, Jones, Lloyd, Morgan, Powell, Thomas, and Williams. According to the Welsh government, today more than 10 million people in the United States have a Welsh surname.

As you can probably tell, based on the common Welsh surnames, I am of Welsh heritage and am proud of my Celtic ancestry. I hope all of my fellow Americans take pride in their family lineage, whatever that might be.

Since being elected to Congress, I started the Friends of Wales Caucus as a way for lawmakers of Welsh backgrounds to honor their heritage and for Members of Congress to build direct relations with government and business figures in Wales, especially in light of the hundreds of American-owned companies that are based in Wales.

Our two countries share a long history of strong economic links. The U.S. is Wales largest export destination, with nearly £3.4 billion in goods sent to the U.S. in 2022. Additionally, Welsh semiconductor fabricators have developed close ties to the U.S. tech industry.

I've had the privilege of meeting with members of the Welsh Parliament here in Washington and in Wales.

So, I hope this March 1st you all will join me in celebrating St. David's Day and recognize the positive impact Wales as had on our country.

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

## Elgin named Officer of the Quarter



Martinsville Police Officer Trish Elgin was named the Police Officer of the Quarter for the 1st quarter of 2024. Her hard work and dedication to serving this community are something we all hold in high regard, Chief Robert Fincher said. Elgin is pictured with Fincher.

### Super Crossword

INTERPRETING ALL THE SIGNS

1 Friendly and cheerful	46 Sailors, informally	89 Leaned back	3 Court divider	39 — do-well	81 Light snack
7 Custard	47 "The Villain" actor Jack	93 Negev's land	4 Chants	40 Bill of tennis	82 Small rodents, jocularly
12 Peevish state	50 Gain's offset	98 "Fatal Attraction" Oscar nominee	5 Actor Baldwin	41 "Hurry it up!"	83 Sore feeling
16 Air gun	51 Ignited	100 Feta, for one	6 Vega's constellation	42 Actress Ward	84 Slumber
19 With no secrecy	53 "If I Only Had the Nerve" singer	103 Official order	7 Grill-marked sandwiches	49 Chatty birds	86 Star of "I'm No Angel"
20 Caribbean resort island	59 "Ka-POW!"	104 Prevarication	8 French forest region	52 Apple buy	87 Slower than allegretto
21 Physiques, for short	60 Me, in Lyon	105 Spiral-shelled mollusk	9 Brand of faucet filters	53 Went spelunking	88 Like booties
22 Suffix with east	63 On — with (equal to)	106 Rep on the street	10 Cry like —	54 Think aloud	90 Cream-filled pastries
23 Door-bashing device	64 One of the Kennedys	107 Luxury writing implement	11 Bank bought by Chase, for short	55 Prison units	91 Big head
25 Working hard	65 Org. with merit badges	110 Eye ring	12 Govt. advances for mom-and-pops	56 2012 Ben Affleck thriller	92 Contributor
26 Grazing field	67 Leaning	113 Rhinoplasty	13 Opposite of destined	57 Turkish money unit	94 Covered anew, as a book
27 Politician	69 Mother of Jesus	114 Nastase of tennis fame	14 "And When —" (1969 hit)	58 Bitterly cold	95 — Lingus
Alexandria — Cortez	71 Things to step on in washrooms	115 Halibut, sole and flounder	15 Certain high-heel feature	59 Adherents of an Iranian religion	96 Suffix with Senegal
28 Bud Light mascot	73 Moon that's home to the Ewoks	120 Beattified	16 Go-Go's singer Carlisle	60 Thousand: Prefix	97 Guided
Spuds MacKenzie, for one	74 Top-secret U.S. org.	121 Madams' counterparts	17 Offspring	61 — acid (fat product)	99 In harm's way
31 A verb often follows it	75 Dialect of Aramaic	122 Eldest of the Musketeers	18 Ones	62 "There, there"	101 Transversely
34 Vex	76 Ad biz award	123 1998 Masters champ Mark	entrapment	65 Georgia politician Bob	102 Those people
36 Winning tic-tac-toe row	77 French article	124 One of the Kennedys	24 "Vidi," in English	66 Michael of the band R.E.M.	105 100-buck bill
37 "Hoarders" channel	78 CEO's deg.	125 Hug's partner	29 "Slow" primate	68 Small nail	108 Roman 1,052
38 "Full House" acting pair	80 Flashy, diving soccer move	126 Century's 100	30 Bonnie of blues rock	70 — la Douce	109 Auction website
41 Sideways-moving arachnid	82 Put a flaw in	127 All 12 of its symbols are featured in this puzzle	31 Antis' votes	71 Drink-related party abbr.	111 "The Wizard —"
43 Judo teacher	83 Dog in "The Thin Man"		32 Corrida cry	72 Suffix with micro- or kaleido-	112 Celeb's ride
	85 Hockey's Phil, to fans		33 Sailor's org.	75 Read quickly	116 Radio host Charlamagne — God
	86 Manufacture		35 It runs on a 52-Down	79 "I'm c-c-cold!"	117 "Ball —"
				80 Start to wake	118 Epoch
					119 Small pouch

## Clark presented February award



Henry County Sheriff's Investigator Ed Clark Jr. was the recipient of the Certificate of Appreciation for February, presented by Jarrett Marketing LLC and Papa's Pizzeria. Clark, (center), is pictured with Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis (left), and Michael Jarrett. Papa's Pizzeria provided two free meals and Hollywood Cinema provided four movie passes to Clark, along with the Certificate of Appreciation.



# OPINION

## First impressions and second thoughts

I was in the bathroom at some faraway airport putting on a fresh face of makeup and fixing my hair after an all-night journey when I heard a woman in the center of the stalls area ask another, "Is she alright?"

That's when I heard the wailing sounds coming from inside a stall. A young black lady in jeans and a grey shirt told a young white lady in yoga pants and a T-shirt, "I asked her if there was anything I could do for her, and she said no."

The women turned together to look back at the closed stall door, and the cries from its other side continued, rising in gulps of despair.

Several other women gathered around the stall and looked at each other, and then back at the first woman, who seemed to be the one in charge.

That first lady remained hanging around outside that door. I put on a coat of mascara but kept watch out of the corner of my eye.

"Can I get you anything?" asked that first lady, arms laden with purse and coat and travel bag and with a roller-bag leaning on her legs, but still vigilant outside the stall door.

"No," came a wavery sound from inside the stall.

In front of me, stuck to the mirror, was a sticker that instructed women to be on the lookout for sex trafficking. It gave the warning signs to look out for. It gave supportive comments for women who themselves might be in that situation, and it gave a phone number to call for help.

I looked back toward the bathroom stalls.

A Japanese tourist now stood beside the first lady, looking worried, joining in on the vigil.

Other women of all ages and races came up to them. They looked at the bathroom door and consulted in whispers.

The first lady gave a final look toward the stall, then sadly walked out. She probably had a flight to catch. An older lady took her primary position outside the door, watching quietly.

The atmosphere in the restroom was tense. Women's faces were drawn tight.

I looked again at the sticker with instructions on sex trafficking, then picked up my curling iron. I was back in the far corner, trying to keep out of everyone's way, trying to keep my big slippery coat from falling to the floor. One of its sleeves slid into the sink and got wet.

I juggled everything quickly, trying to get the coat in order without bumping the hot curling iron into anything.

When I looked back up, the seas had parted, so to speak. The women who moments before all had seemed united with a single goal had separated to dif-



Holly Kozelsky

ferent sinks and mirrors, looking away.

In the corner by the paper towels was a woman with a red face, wiping her eyes with paper towels. Her most recent self-appointed bodyguard or caretaker, as the case may be, stood a distance behind her, watching, then quietly walked away.

The crying woman looked to be in her fifties. She had a fluffy hairdo, a top covered in a garish orange, red and pink floral design, loose khaki-colored crop pants and white sneakers with little anklet socks.

This didn't seem to be a case of sex trafficking. Perhaps she was on her way to or from a funeral, like I was. Given the intensity of her sobs, it had to have been her mother's funeral.

One by one, the women who had been so drawn to the outside of the crying woman's bathroom stall finished their ablutions and walked out. I went back to making myself presentable.

About half an hour later, after I had been sitting at the gate for a while, I got up to look for a coffee shop. About two gates down, I passed the crying woman.

She was by then pulled together, face clear, no signs of tears. She was standing with three men, one or two of them about her age. The immediate impression of them was that they looked like they were ready to play golf. Or perhaps they were all tourists on a fun little vacation. They had matching luggage and some shopping bags from the duty-free shops.

It didn't look like a mourning crowd, though who's to say? The scene made my mind shift to a third theory. Perhaps she was having troubles with her husband. He was having an affair, or he abuses her, or she wanted to leave him but didn't know how she'd support herself, or some such thing.

The men looked jovial and without a care in the world. They looked confident and in control. Did her family take her for granted? Were they totally unaware of her needs, her worries, her problems? Or were they the cause of them and they didn't care?

If I had passed them without ever having encountered that woman crying with such despair in the bathroom, I wouldn't have looked twice, other than to think they looked like the kinds of people who probably went on more and better vacations than I do.

It was an eye-opening experience. We just never know what secret troubles plague others.

## On cognitive dissonance

Earlier this month, Alabama's Supreme Court ruled on two lawsuits involving three families. The lawsuits allege that the families were receiving in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments at a hospital in Mobile when their frozen embryos were dropped on the floor and destroyed. The parents sued for damages, but a trial court dismissed their lawsuits on the grounds that embryos are not people.

These parents then appealed their decision to the state's Supreme Court, which reversed the decision and ruled that the destruction of an embryo falls under Alabama's Wrongful Death of a Minor law.

Far be it from me to question a state Supreme Court, but this seems like the kind of decision that would fall apart under the slightest amount of scrutiny, or perhaps a third grader's critical thinking skills.

I have a few questions.

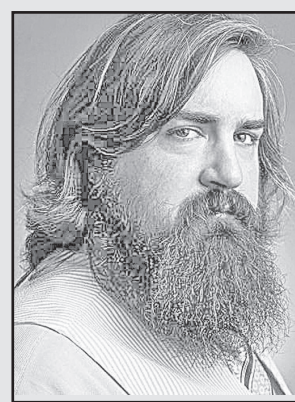
It's been reported that between ten percent and 25 percent of pregnancies end in miscarriage; sometimes, the mother never even realizes she had been pregnant. Does that mean that every mother who miscarries should be charged with Wrongful Death of a Minor? If so, how will we determine who these mothers are? Would we rely on these mothers to report themselves for committing these crimes, or would we institute a regulatory body that checks in occasionally to make sure that pregnant women haven't suffered a tragedy which they should be punished for under state law?

If a fertility clinic has a freezer full of embryos and the power goes out, are they charged with one count of Wrongful Death of a Minor or thousands? Also, is the facility legally liable for failing to have a backup generator, or is the power company liable for failing to provide power?

According to a scientific publication from last year, a sample of expectant mothers who tested positive for COVID-19 had a miscarriage rate of 2.5 percent. If a woman suffers a miscarriage after contracting COVID, is she liable for the wrongful death, or can she sue the person who gave her COVID? In order to prevent this terrible loss of life, should we institute a mandatory mask mandate, at least in Alabama?

These are just a few questions I came up with off the top of my head. Unfortunately, the Alabama Supreme Court didn't also take the burdensome five minutes to extrapolate the consequences of their decision.

One of those consequences is that IVF facilities across Alabama are suspending their operations. After all, if something goes wrong, they could be held civilly liable; you could even argue that if an otherwise normal IVF treatment fails to result in a viable pregnancy, which is some-



By Ben R. Williams

thing that happens frequently, the facility could be liable for a wrongful death charge. Why take the risk?

A single round of IVF treatment costs anywhere from \$15,000 to more than \$30,000. Imagine having scrimped and saved for these treatments, desperate to have a child to shower with love, only to learn that your treatments are being suspended because your state Supreme Court decided to make a political statement.

And make no mistake, this is a political statement, yet another volley in the culture war nonsense that has followed the repeal of Roe v. Wade. However, it's a political statement that's causing a lot of problems for a lot of politicians.

On Feb. 21, Republican Presidential hopeful Nikki Haley told NBC that she supported the Supreme Court decision and agreed that embryos are "babies." A couple of hours later, she clarified that she never said she agreed with the ruling, but she did still believe an embryo is a baby.

Those statements may seem contradictory; this is because they are. But Haley is trying to navigate an impossible tightrope: she must signal to her base that she is against anything that even resembles abortion while also attempting to appease the massive number of people who believe the overturn of Roe v. Wade was a runaway disaster for women's rights and bodily autonomy.

Ultimately, this entire situation boils down to one central question: is an embryo equivalent to a human life?

I will share a thought experiment I read a couple years ago.

Imagine that you're in a fertility clinic. Suddenly, a fire breaks out. In one room, there is a freezer containing 10,000 human embryos. In another room, there is a perfectly healthy six year old child. The fire is burning fast, and you can only save one. Do you choose to save the 10,000 embryos or the six year old?

I know my answer. I just hope I never find myself in that situation, especially in Alabama.

## General Assembly passes bipartisan Prescription Drug Affordability Board legislation

A bill to help rein in the cost of prescription drugs for Virginians is headed to Governor Glenn Youngkin's desk after passing the House and Senate with bipartisan support.

Senate Bill 274, which would establish a Prescription Drug Affordability Board, passed 50-47 on the House floor this afternoon with support from both parties. The bill's chief patron is Sen. Creigh Deeds (D-Charlottesville) and has a number of copatrons, including Republican Sen. Bill Stanley (R-Galax). The House version is sponsored by Delegate Karrie Delaney (D-Centreville).

"The General Assembly took a huge bipartisan step forward to lower the cost of medicine for millions of Virginians," Deeds said. "Thank you to Senator Stanley and Delegate Delaney for leading on

this legislation. Virginians strongly support a Prescription Drug Affordability Board, across party lines. Now, it's time for Governor Youngkin to take action on this bipartisan legislation to make medicine more affordable for Virginians."

A Prescription Drug Affordability Board would have the authority to set upper payment limits on certain high-cost prescription medications and is supported by a strong majority of Virginians of all political leanings.

"Governor Youngkin has expressed his desire to address the cost of living. For Virginians struggling to pay for the medicine they need, this is about the cost of staying alive," said AARP Virginia State Director Jim Dau. "We are very pleased that the General Assembly has responded to the clear message from Virginians and

passed this legislation with bipartisan support, and we hope the governor will do the right thing and sign it into law."

The price of prescription drugs are increasing well above the rate of inflation. Americans pay more for their medicine than any country on earth, and Virginians pay 36% more than the national average.

In 2023, AARP Virginia polled voters of all ages and found that:

35% of Virginians chose not to fill a prescription in 2023.

three out of four (75%) Virginia voters support creating a Prescription Drug Affordability Board.

two-thirds (67%) of voters take prescription drugs, and half of them spend more than \$600 annually on their medication.

63% of voters are concerned about the cost of medication.

across party lines, voters strongly support the creation of a Prescription Drug Affordability Board (Democrats - 85%, Republicans - 71%, Independents - 70%).

A Prescription Drug Affordability Board would:

be an independent state board with the authority to set an upper payment limit on a few of the highest-cost medications for Virginians.

save taxpayers money by reducing state and local government spending on prescription drugs.

help ensure affordable access to life-saving medicine for illnesses like cancer and diabetes.

mitigate out-of-control prices set by the big drug companies.

## Broadband

(cont. from page 1)

tional Fitness Campaign to construct an outdoor fitness court and support a community wellness initiative.

- Approved an additional appropriation of \$41,033 from Federal Asset Forfeiture funds and approved a contract in the same amount to purchase a TruNarc solution kit from ThermoFisher Scientific. The kit will be used by the Sheriff's Office to reduce the exposure of deputies to deadly narcotics.

- Awarded a contract to Timmons Group in the amount of \$224,810 for engineering services related to the development of Lot #2 at Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre.

- Awarded a contract to TK Elevator in the amount of \$213,662 for electrical and mechanical updates to elevators in the Administration building.

- Awarded a contract to Hurt & Proffitt, Inc., in the amount of \$125,000 for inspection services and testing related to Phase 6-A2 of the Dick and Willie Trail.

- Approved an additional appropriation of \$132,000 received from the Harvest Foundation to assist with gap financing provided to the School Drive Apartments project.

- Approved an additional appropriation of \$121,275 received through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to purchase a generator at the Rangeley Sewer

Lift Station.

- Conducted a joint meeting with the Henry County School Board to prepare for the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget.

- Approved a request to rezone 3-acres of the Reed Creek District to Neighborhood Commercial District. The applicant wishes to move her existing business to the property to provide wellness-based spa services.

- Authorized a new full-time position for the Registrar's Office and appropriated \$15,000 to cover the cost.

- Scheduled a public hearing for March 26 at 6 p.m., to consider a siting agreement with Sunny Rock Solar, LLC.



# CLASSIFIED

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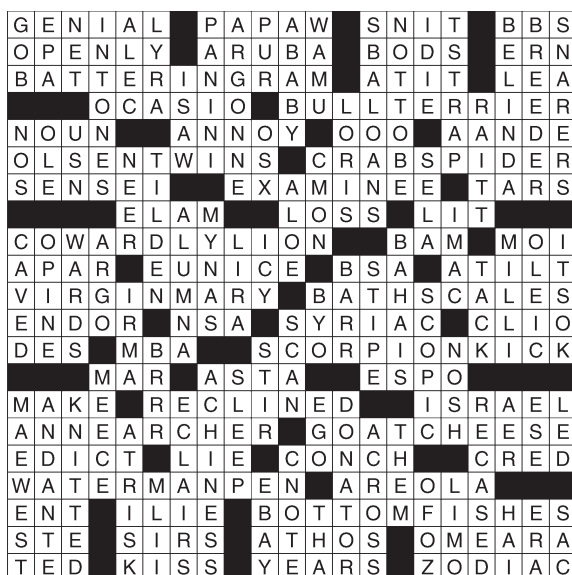
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**ADVERTISE!**

## MHC 911 upgrades communications system



The Martinsville-Henry County (MHC) 911 Center has successfully converted its emergency communications system to Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911), an internet protocol (IP)-based emergency communications system that is designed to replace the analog 911 infrastructure that's been in place for decades.

The primary benefit to the upgrade is that it improves location data accuracy which enables 911 dispatchers to locate callers more quickly and with greater precision than ever before.

"This project has spanned over the course of several years and we are excited that we were able to implement the new system without any issues," said Tierra Dillard, Director of the MHC 911 Center. "NG911 will provide our dispatchers with better data and it will allow our emergency response team to better serve our community."

Along with improved location data, the system also enables future enhancements that are not possible with traditional phone circuits. Those in need of emergency assistance will eventually

be able to send videos, photos, and other forms of broadband information to 911 professionals.

"Once NG911 implements these upgrades, citizens will be able to send text messages regarding medical information, send photos of a fleeing suspect or accident damage, or they can even stream videos of an emergency," Dillard said. "Having this information will aid our dispatchers as they prepare other first responders to assist with the incident. Even though citizens will have the capability of communicating via text messages, we ask that citizens call whenever possible because it will allow our dispatchers to gather more information quickly."

The upgrade also will increase capacity for interoperability of 911 communication systems when dealing with multi-jurisdictional emergencies, such as terror-related incidents and natural disasters. In addition, it will reduce the impact to 911 service caused by weather or damage to phone lines.

For more information on NG911, visit <https://nga911.com/>.

## LEGAL

**COUNTY OF HENRY REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **March 13, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following these public hearings, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the applications to the Board of Supervisors.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct public hearings on the following applications on **March 26, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia.

The purpose of these public hearings is to receive input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearings.

**Case R-24-02 Patrick Henry Farms Corp.**

The property is located on the southwest end of St. John's Cir., just beyond the end of State maintenance, in the Iriswood District. The Tax Map number is part of 44.7/13. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 22-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant intends to use the property for agricultural purposes.

**Case R-24-03 Patrick Henry Farms Corp.**

The property is located on the north side of the west bound US58 on-ramp to 220/58 By-pass, in the Iriswood District. The Tax Map number is 44.7/14. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 3.88-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Commercial District B-1. The applicant intends to market this, in conjunction with the adjoining commercial property, for proposed business purposes.

**Case R-24-04 Richard Cecil**

The property is located at 39 Enslow Dr., in the Blackberry District. The Tax Map number is 13.7(12)/17. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 0.63-acres from Commercial District B-1 to Limited Industrial District I-2. The applicant intends to use the existing garage building as a beverage mixing and bottling company. The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.  
Lee H. Clark, AICP  
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

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## Nature Connects Us campaign launched

The National Forest Foundation (NFF), the congressionally chartered nonprofit working to improve and restore the health of the 193-million-acre National Forest System, and USDA Forest Service recently announced the "Nature Connects Us" outreach campaign which sparks awakening and strengthening of all peoples' connection to national forests and grasslands.

This campaign is grounded in honoring ancestral tribal homelands through respectful and mindful visitor experiences and was born out of the need to grow and understand the respect that public lands require on a deeper level. The NFF and Forest Service personnel worked with multiple external Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging consultants, organizations, the public, and the Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations to cultivate an outreach campaign designed to help all peoples and communities experience the physical, spiritual, mental, emotional, and economic benefits provided by the National Forest System whilst feeling safe and welcome.

"We recognize how important it is to encourage a connection to stunning public lands to the greater public, especially in a way that feels all-encompassing, which is ultimately why the Nature Connects Us campaign came to life," said Mary Mistos, president and CEO of the NFF. "Through holding space for respectful, inclusive, and responsive conversations, we aim to welcome all peoples to enjoy the outdoors in a manner that amplifies who they are as an individual and members of a larger community."

Through listening, learning, and taking action, the NFF has collaborated with the Forest Service to enhance the truth behind the phrase "Nature Connects Us," to bring this campaign to life.

"The Forest Service has an important responsibility for managing millions of acres of lands and waters that are the ancestral homelands of American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Nations," said Forest Service Chief Randy Moore. "This campaign is an opportunity to honor these tribes and their connection to these landscapes, and to help all peoples and communities realize the benefits provided by national forests and grasslands."

"Mitákuye Oyás'īŋ is a Lakota concept meaning "we are all related." This lifeway lies at the core of the values of the Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations: Compassion; Courage; Gratitude; Honesty; Humility; Wisdom; Respect. Nature and people are not different, but in the same and equal, living in a relationship of reciprocity," said Reed Robinson, director of the Forest Service Office of Tribal Relations. "By realizing deep gratitude for everything nature does for us, respecting our living and non-living relatives, asking how we can care for nature, and honoring national forests and grasslands as tribal homelands, can we begin to understand that nature connects us."

This outreach campaign is the largest and most comprehensive outreach campaign that the Forest Service has collaborated on with the NFF throughout their partnership over the past several decades.

To learn more about the campaign, visit [www.natureconnectsus.org](http://www.natureconnectsus.org).



# Final bands added to Rooster Walk 14 lineup



Pigeons Playing Ping Pong (Gina Proulx)

The North Mississippi Allstars, Big Something, Jim Lauderdale & The Game Changers, The Seldom Scene, The Rooster Walk House Band, Myron Elkins, The Collection, Kaira Ba, Holler Choir, Lillie Mae, Kind Hearted Strangers, Florencia & The Feeling, The Shoaldiggers, Sela Campbell, Raffi Kids' Set, Sugarbush.

The North Mississippi Allstars, an internationally touring blues band known for its rollicking energetic shows, top the third and final list of bands that are among the new bands added to the 14th annual Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival lineup.

The festival will take place Thursday-Sunday of Memorial Day weekend in the rolling foothills surrounding Martinsville, Va. Rooster Walk is a 4-day festival celebrating music, art, and the great outdoors at the idyllic Pop's Farm venue. With 40+ bands performing on 6 different stages, an amazing roster of stellar music steers the Rooster Walk experience.

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

NMAs, which will be making its RW debut, have been nominated for four Grammys over a 25-year career that has produced 12 albums and countless sold out shows.

Big Something will also join the RW14 lineup. The North Carolina-based jamband has played nearly a half-dozen Rooster Walks over the years. The six-piece band is known for its big sound of soaring guitar solos, synth, horns and soulful vocals. They will bring their much-loved sound to Pop's Farm in Martinsville, Va., which will host RW14 from May 23-26, 2024.

Other bands getting added to the lineup include Jim Lauderdale & The Game Changers (Roots rock,

iconic songwriter from Nashville, TN); The Seldom Scene (internationally celebrated pioneers of progressive bluegrass); The Rooster Walk House Band (all-star collective featuring Ron Holloway, Jeff Sipe, Josh Shilling, Wallace Mullinax, Florencia Rusinol, Jake Dempsey and friends); Myron Elkins (swamp rock, Otsego, MI); The Collection (Indi Rock, Saxapahaw, NC); Kaira Ba (world music, North Carolina); Holler Choir (old-time, Asheville, NC); Lillie Mae (Singer/songwriter, Nashville, TN); Kind Hearted Strangers (rock, Colorado); Florencia & The Feeling (R&B/soul, Johnson City, TN); The Shoaldiggers (Horny swampgrass, North Carolina); Sela Campbell (country, Northern Virginia); Raffi Kids' Set (Raffi Tribute by Miles Andrews and full band; Saxapahaw, NC); Sugarbush (rock/blues, Virginia).

Bands that had been previously announced to the RW14 lineup include Emmylou Harris (Country Music Hall of Fame inductee with five No. 1 singles on the Billboard country music charts, Nashville, TN); Cory Wong (funk/rock/pop, Minneapolis, MN); Broke Mountain Bluegrass Band (Colorado supergroup featuring members of Greensky Bluegrass, Leftover Salmon, the Infamous Stringdusters, Jon Stickley Trio and more); two nights of Daniel Donato's Cosmic Country (Nashville, Tenn., jam twang); TAUKE Moore (funk collaboration between Doom Flamingo's Kanika Moore and TAUKE); Dogs in a Pile (a New Jersey-based funk/jazz/rock jamband); Couch (Boston, Mass. - funk/rock/soul); Caitlin Krisko & The Broadcast (Asheville, N.C. - rock); Yarn (NC/NY roots rockers who will once again perform an original set and a festival-finishing tribute set); Arkansasauce (progressive bluegrass from northwest Arkansas); Sneezzy (high-energy party music from Chicago, Ill.); The Mountain Grass Unit (up-and-coming bluegrass shredders from Alabama); Isaac Hadden Organ Trio (masterful musicianship from a North Caro-



Scenes from Rooster Walk 13 (Bob Adamek)



Pine Grove (Jody Carbone)

lina power trio); Sol Driven Train (upbeat, horn-driven rock'n'roll beach vibes from Charleston, SC); J & The Causeways (New Orleans-based soul powerhouse reminiscent of St. Paul & The Broken Bones); Sticks N Thorns (bluegrass duo featuring Andy Thorn of Leftover Salmon and Jon Stickley); Travis Book & Friends (Asheville, N.C., Americana/rock band led by The Infamous Stringdusters' Travis Book); Colby T. Helms & The Virginia Creepers (bluegrass from nearby Franklin County, Va.); Clay Street Unit (Colorado-based honky tonk/roots rock); The Jared Stout Band (New River Valley, VA, southern rock); and Mighty Joshua (authentic reggae from central Virginia); TC Carter Band (blues, Martinsville, Va.); Lua Flora (Asheville, N.C. - beach folk); Big Fat Gap (Chapel Hill, N.C. - bluegrass); Jules & The Agreeables (Key West, Fla. - rock); DJ What (Martinsville, Va. - DJ); Pirates of the Piedmont (Martinsville, Va. - pirate shanties).

Many ticket types have sold out or are in low inventory, but admission tickets remain available for purchase at [www.roosterwalk.com](http://www.roosterwalk.com), which also features all the information needed to plan for an amazing experience. Primitive fes-

tival camping is included with all admission tickets. Children aged 12 and under are admitted for free.

Rooster Walk has been named one of the Top 5 festivals in the state by the Richmond-Times Dispatch and listed as one of the Best Family Friendly Festivals by Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine. It also was voted the region's Most Creative Charitable Event by readers of Virginia Living Magazine for three consecutive years. The festival was created in memory of late Martinsville natives Edwin "The Rooster" Penn and Walker Shank, who graduated from Martinsville High School in 2000.

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

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

## Historical Society to host 'Beers of Ireland'

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society and Scuffle Hill Brewing Company will host "Beers of Ireland" on Saturday, March 16, 2-4 p.m., at the Historic Henry County Courthouse, 1 East Main Street, Uptown Martinsville.

During the first hour, participants will learn the history, ingredients, and production of beer as well as different beer styles, hops, yeast, and beer presentation. During the second hour, attendees will taste Irish Reds and Irish Stouts, totaling approximately two pints. Irish snacks will be served. Wear your greenest attire - prizes will be awarded.

The event will be taught and led by Jake Abell, owner of Scuffle Hill Brewing Company. He earned a Beer Brewer Professional Certificate from Virginia Tech and the University of Richmond. A veteran of the U. S. Marine Corps, he graduated from Patrick & Henry Community College and Liberty University. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society.

Tickets are \$10 per person. Reservations must be made in advance by March 10, 2024, at <https://jbphillips.wufoo.com/forms/beers-of-ireland/> and paid at the door. You must be 18 years



Jake Abell

of age to attend and 21 years of age to participate. John Phillips, Historical Society President, stated, "History and beer - what a perfect combination! Kick off your St. Patrick's weekend with us as we learn and taste Irish beers. Let the shenanigans begin!" The Historic Henry County Courthouse is fully handicapped accessible.

The Martinsville Henry County Heritage Center & Museum will be open following the presentation.

## Couple from Knoxville sentenced for roles in heroin and meth conspiracies

A Knoxville, Tennessee couple, who conspired with others to traffic heroin and methamphetamine into Lee County, Virginia, were sentenced today to lengthy prison terms.

Billie Jo McGuire, 30, and her husband, Billy Justin King, 30, both pled guilty in October 2022 to one count of conspiring to possess with the intent to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine, one count of conspiring to possess with the intent to distribute 100 grams or more of heroin, and one count of possession with the intent to distribute five grams or more of methamphetamine. Billy King also pled guilty to possessing a firearm in possession of a drug trafficking crime.

Today, King was sentenced to 15 years in prison and McGuire was sentenced to 24 months.

McGuire and King conspired with Robert Earl Warr, Robert Lee Jenkins, and others, including John Joel Foster, Ray Anthony McSwain, Garrett Lee Teffeteller, Darin Thomas, and David Edward Farmer, to sell heroin and methamphetamine in and around Lee County, Virginia, and the Knoxville, Tennessee area.

According to court docu-

ments, as part of the broader conspiracy, King and McGuire trafficked methamphetamine and heroin from Eastern Tennessee into Lee County, Virginia for redistribution. While King was the 'leader' between the pair, McGuire assisted her husband's drug activities by weighing the drugs, counting money, answering King's cell phone, and coordinating drug customers.

United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh and Craig B. Kailimai, Special Agent in Charge of the Washington Field Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, made the announcement.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the Lee County Sheriff's Office, the Wise County Sheriff's Office, the Southwest Virginia Drug Task Force, the Knoxville, Tennessee Police Department, the Knox County, Tennessee Sheriff's Office, the Sevier County, Tennessee Sheriff's Office, and the Lee County Commonwealth Attorney's Office investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Lena L. Busscher prosecuted the case for the United States.







# Lawmakers signal more support for electric vehicles, charging network

By Sam Bradley  
Capital News Service

Lawmakers advanced legislation to expand electric vehicle infrastructure throughout the state, which could help meet a looming mandate that sales of new gas-powered vehicles be phased out by 2035.

More infrastructure, such as electric chargers, is needed to meet the deadline and growing EV demand.

Del. Richard "Rip" Sullivan, D-Fairfax, introduced House Bill 107, which creates the Electric Vehicle Rural Infrastructure Program and Fund. The measure financially assists developers in bringing EV chargers to rural areas that meet established conditions. Areas qualify based on population density, annual unemployment and poverty rates.

Funds would be used to offset nonutility costs, which include construction and some needed parts like breakers, conduits and cables. Developer grants would be capped at 70% of the cost to construct public charging stations.

The bill passed the House with bipartisan support, on a 71-27 vote. Sullivan requested \$50 million over the next two years for the fund. An employee would need to help manage the fund, on an estimated \$50,000 annual salary.

The House budget presented earlier this week reduced the amount

to \$2 million in the current fiscal year.

"I look at it very positively, and I am hopeful about the bill's chances," Sullivan said about the budget. "Virginia is a very big place. We need a lot of EV charging stations around it, so I view this as a good start."

The number of public EV chargers in Virginia increased by approximately 75% since 2020, per a study recently released by the Southern Environmental Law Center. Senior attorney Trip Pollard is the land and community program leader with the nonprofit advocacy group.

There are still big gaps in EV charger coverage. The state's transition to modern, more sustainable transportation will not happen overnight and the public needs to be prepared for it, according to Pollard.

A fund to help rural development is important to bridge the gap between EV ownership and its practicality in rural or lower-income communities. Legislation can help ensure no communities are left behind in the transition, Pollard said.

There has been a federal push to increase the spread of publicly available chargers through the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Pollard said. The federal funding appropriates \$106 million over five years to support

the expansion of an EV charging network. Virginia can also apply for the \$2.5 billion dedicated to grants for EV charging.

There is a gap in rural coverage, since most charging infrastructure is centered around major interstates and highways. Many rural areas in Virginia are without the type of public ports needed to charge EVs quickly, according to a study from the Southern Environmental Law Center.

Private charging is the dominant option for EV owners. Roughly 90% of EV owners can install private chargers at their home, according to the study.

"That's one of the biggest areas that we need to address," Pollard said. "The majority of EV owners charge at home, but if you're in a multi-family that can often be very difficult to do."

EV charging standards for new development

Del. Adele McClure, D-Arlington, introduced HB 405, which tasks the Commission on Electric Utility Regulation to oversee the design standards and requirements to safely bring charging capabilities into new housing developments.

The commission would determine what type of electrical distribution infrastructure is needed to support EV charging facilities in new single-family and multifamily residential units.

When McClure canvassed during campaign season, she heard from constituents who said they wanted to see more EV infrastructure.

"I started thinking about ways where we can ensure that there are more charging stations, especially when it comes to new builds," McClure said.

The bill stems from conversations between home builders and environmentalists on the best way to remove barriers and lower the costs to build "easy-ready and EV-capable residential communities," McClure said.

All new vehicles sold must be electric models, starting in 2035. The mandate stems from the state's Clean Car law passed in 2021, which adopts California's standard. But 35% of all new cars and trucks sold in Virginia with a 2026 model year must be electric. Lawmakers have attempted to overturn the law, questioning if the state's infrastructure will be ready and if the vehicles are affordable enough.

Both of the bills are now waiting to be heard in committees, after crossing over to the Senate.

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

## 9 marriage-related measures in the state known for its lovers

By Parker Barnes  
Capital News Service

Only a few bills out of the thousands introduced this General Assembly session tackle love.

Lawmakers resumed the long-standing effort to codify same-sex marriage protection, but there are a handful of other bills that address marriage in the commonwealth.

### Marriage for the "mature"

Del. Karen Keys-Gamarra, D-Fairfax, introduced House Bill 994, which passed the House 55-42. The bill reaffirms the legal age of marriage to be 18 years old. It will remove an exception that allows minors to become emancipated if they intend to get married.

"I believe that marriage ... it should be a lifetime commitment," Keys-Gamarra said. "It is a decision that should be made by people who are mature."

The delegate cited higher divorce and poverty rates among those who marry young, as well as an increase in pregnancy complications, as reasons the bill was introduced.

"It increases dropout rates and things of that nature that really suggests that marrying young is not the healthiest thing for most people," Keys-Gamarra said.

The bill was amended to include a reenactment clause, which means it needs to pass this session and next.

"Essentially this is what we call a speedbump," said Del. Marcus Simon, D-Fairfax, in committee, but it helped the bill advance.

Simon voiced concerns about a potential loophole in which minors could seek emancipation for an unrelated reason, but then still marry.

The bill was placed in the Senate

Committee for Courts of Justice.

### Advance directive null with divorce or custody dispute

Del. Jed Arnold, R-Marion, introduced HB 436.

The bill allows a person to revoke an advance directive upon the filing for divorce or annulment of their marriage. An advance directive, or a living will, is a written document that determines a patient's medical care in the case that they are unable to speak for themselves.

The bill also amends the Health Care Decisions Act to include divorce actions and custody visitation disputes as grounds for revocation.

"You could get a petition for custody of visitation prior to a divorce being entered," Simon said. "Under this bill that sort of is the red flag that says 'hey, they're fighting over the kids, they probably don't want to have each other making each other's medical decisions.'"

Arnold encountered this issue in his legal practice. Someone without an advance directive can be their partner's medical representative unless there is a divorce action pending between them.

"I thought that if it's good enough for somebody that doesn't have an advance directive or hasn't executed one, it should be grounds for revocation if somebody has executed an advance directive," Arnold said.

The bill passed both chambers of the General Assembly unanimously.

### Marriage rites performed by people other than ministers

Del. Betsy Carr, D-Richmond, introduced HB 1126, which adds Virginia congressional representatives to the list of those who can perform rites of marriage without court authorization. Also on the list

are current legislators, the governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general -- and of course, a minister.

Others not included in this list can officiate a marriage if they pay fees and sign paperwork.

The bill saw bipartisan engagement in both chambers.

A similar measure introduced by Sen. Bill DeSteph, R-Virginia Beach, Senate Bill 175, would add court clerks and former state legislators to this list, but not congressional members. The bill will have its final vote soon.

### Licensure portability for couples therapists

Del. Mark Sickles, D-Fairfax, introduced HB 329, to increase patient access to individuals qualified for therapy. It eases the process of licensure by endorsement for marriage and family therapists.

"It's not a secret that we have a dearth of mental health professionals," said Arnold Woodruff, executive director of the Virginia Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy also spoke in support of the measure and said it is part of an effort they are spearheading across nine states, including Virginia.

An applicant must show specific documentation from another jurisdiction, have no unresolved action against their license or certificate, and submit a written statement that says they understand Virginia regulations and laws.

The bill passed both chambers unanimously.

### Virginia for all lovers

Sen. Adam Ebbin, D-Alexandria, introduced Senate Joint Resolution 11, a constitutional amendment to

repeal the current state definition of marriage as only between one man and one woman. It was continued to 2025. A House measure was also continued.

The Virginia constitution was amended in 2006 to define marriage, and legislative efforts have been ongoing for at least a decade to include protections for same-sex couples.

A continued Democratic majority is necessary to codify the right to marry regardless of sex, gender or race, according to Ebbin.

"Republican legislators have dragged their feet in the past and very few of them have been supportive," Ebbin said. "I'm appreciative of those who have."

Same-sex marriage became federally recognized through the U.S. Supreme Court Obergefell v. Hodges ruling. Advocates and couples have voiced concern that there are no state protections if the ruling is overturned, other than limited protections in the Respect for Marriage Act passed in 2022.

Two bills that recently passed both chambers and head to the governor's desk would ensure marriage licenses for same-sex couples. HB 174 and SB 101 make up for the state constitutional gap.

"In the short term, we just want to make clear that clerks issue licenses to people regardless of whether it's a same-sex marriage or opposite-sex marriage," Ebbin said.

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## Hike Farris Memorial Park with DRBA

The Dan River Basin Association (DRBA), will host a full day of business and fun on March 2, starting at 9:30 a.m. with a virtual business meeting.

Following a mid-day break to allow for travel to an afternoon hike venue, the public is invited to meet at 1:30 p.m. at Farris Memorial Park, 2878 Park Road, near Mayodan, N.C. for an invigorating 3-mile loop hike.

Farris Memorial Park is over 270 acres of open land, forests, and athletic fields that offer a variety of recreational activities. The park has numerous amenities including walking trails and the only public Mountain Bike Trail in western Rockingham County, host to the annual NICA Bike Races "Mayhem at Mayodan" on April 20-21 and "Season Showdown" May 18-19.

The trail takes you through switchbacks, over rock gardens,

and small streams. Most of the trail runs through hardwood and mixed pine forest.

Before the walk will be a brief history of Farris Park by Cesar Chavez, Parks and Streets Director for the Town of Mayodan.

After the walk participants are welcome to stay and enjoy the other park amenities such as the Disc Golf Course, driving range, and fishing lake.

Participants are asked to dress for the weather, wear sturdy, comfortable hiking shoes, bring water/snacks, hiking sticks are a plus, and leashed pets are welcome. All participants will be required to sign a waiver.

For more information, contact the outings coordinator Keith Elliott; Eden, NC; 336-613-2966; keithmale1@gmail.com.

If for any reason the event needs to be cancelled, visit [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org) by Friday, March 1, to determine whether the outing will be held.



**DRBA will host a three-mile hike on the Farris Memorial Park Mountain Biking Trail for its First Saturday Outing on March 2, at 1:30 p.m. This hike is suitable for most ages and abilities. Outings and meetings of the Dan River Basin Association are open to the public without charge.**



# “The Little Mermaid Jr.” sails to the stage this weekend

By Tyler D. Shively

An exciting event will be taking place this weekend that is sure to delight theatre enthusiasts as well as Disney fans. Martinsville Public Schools Performing Arts Academy will present a production of “The Little Mermaid Jr.” The cast and crew have been diligently preparing to bring this beloved story to life.

Inspired by the classic animated film, “The Little Mermaid Jr.” follows the journey of Ariel, a curious mermaid princess with an interest in the world above. Determined to explore beyond the confines of her ocean home, Ariel embarks on a transformative adventure that challenges her to

defy expectations and embrace her true self.

With rehearsals in full swing, the cast is diligently honing their performances to capture the essence of each beloved character.

Jyshir Plunkett (Sebastian) said that his favorite part about this role was “growing into a character that (he) relates to.” On the contrary, Monica Watkins (Ursula) enjoys shifting her persona and playing more villainous characters. Whether they relate to the character they are portraying or not, Ava Grant (Scuttle) believes that “playing a character helps you learn more about yourself.”

Behind the scenes, the production team has been hard at work

crafting an immersive experience. Construction of the props and scenery started in November, nearly a month before rehearsals began. Anne Agee has been working as a technician for this production from the beginning. She values the experience because she was able to “learn new skills that can be transferred to a trade.” Elaborate set designs, dazzling costumes, enchanting music, and brilliant lighting effects are guaranteed to transport theatergoers “under the sea.”

For the cast and crew of Martinsville High School, “The Little Mermaid Jr.” represents not only an opportunity to showcase their talents but also a chance to forge

lasting memories and friendships. Kamori Dillard (Ariel) said what she enjoys the most about performing is “the people.”

Bridgette Brent (Flounder) also said the best part about theatre is “being a part of a community where (she) is able to express (herself).”

Youth theatre is an incredible opportunity for children to learn and make connections with others where they may otherwise never have had the chance.

The performance will take place on March 1 and March 2 at 7 p.m., and March 3 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$12 at the door, and can be purchased online at <https://our.show/mcpstlmj>.



Members of the Martinsville City Schools Performing Arts Academy were honing their craft at a recent rehearsal of “The Little Mermaid Jr.” Showing will be presented Friday-Sunday, March 1-3.

## Sports Schedule

Following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games, all scrimmages, for the week of March 5-10:		
3/4	5pm	Baseball Martinsville vs Gretna (at Hooker Field)
3/5	4pm	Baseball Dan River at Magna Vista
	4pm	Softball Dan River at Magna Vista
	4:30p	Boys Tennis Heritage at Bassett
	4:30p	Boys Tennis Carroll County at Magna Vista
	4:30p	Girls Tennis Magna Vista at Carroll County
	5pm	Baseball Bassett at William Byrd
	5pm	Baseball Martinsville at Nelson County
	5pm	Softball Bassett at William Byrd
	5:30p	Girls Soccer Chatham at Bassett
	5:30p	Girls Soccer Martinsville at Nelson County
	5:30p	Girls Soccer Magna Vista vs Dan River (at Smith River Sports Complex)
	6:30p	Boys Soccer Martinsville vs Nelson County (at Smith River Sports Complex)
	7pm	Boys Soccer Magna Vista vs Dan River (at Smith River Sports Complex)
	4pm	Baseball Magna Vista at Patrick County
	4pm	Softball Magna Vista at Patrick County
	5:30p	Girls Soccer Magna Vista vs Carroll County (at Smith River Sports Complex)
	7:30p	Boys Soccer Magna Vista vs Carroll County (at Smith River Sports Complex)
	7pm	Boys Soccer Bassett at Dan River
	6:30p	Boys Soccer Martinsville vs Liberty (at Smith River Sports Complex)