

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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Henry County School Board in session on March 8.

Insurance, budget among items discussed by board

By Jessica Dillon

The Henry County School Board went over changes to employee insurance, an update on the projected yearly budget and proposals for school improvements at the March 7 meeting. The board is currently meeting at a new location on the 3rd floor of the Henry County administration building.

Dr. Benjamin Boone, assistant superintendent for operations and administrative services, presented three proposed budgets for the FY25

year. Gov. Glenn Youngkin proposed a state share of \$72,670,916 with a local share of \$18,276,29. The Virginia Senate proposed a state share of \$81,685,946 with a local share of \$20,440,928. The Virginia House of Delegates proposed a state share of \$77,544,705 with a local share of \$18,627,570.

The current FY24 budget has a state share of \$70,449,501 with a local share of \$19,351,186.

“Both houses are proposing a
(See Insurance p. 2)

Six-year plan topped discussions at recent meeting

By Jessica Dillon

The main focus of the March 11 meeting of the Martinsville School Board was the Comprehensive Six-Year Plan for the 2024-30 school years. The plan outlines the goals the board will be working towards for the next six years, along with various topics such as funding for special education and school bus safety.

Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebbedee Talley reviewed several sections of the plan that he highlighted as significant goals for the board such as increasing family engagement while reducing the number of suspensions and absent students each year, with a goal to reduce them by an additional 10 percent.

Student businesses Stitchify and The Kennel also were discussed.

“I don’t know anyone who has started student businesses like we have,” Talley said, adding that both businesses have been profitable, and the students take a lot of pride

in them. The board also strives to educate students so that they are world ready.

Talley said he had visited classrooms with school principals the week before to gauge how many students were keeping track of their grades as a step towards being more involved in classrooms.

The board plans to implement systems and assessments through digital portfolios that the students are making.

“We want to make sure that each student leaves with some type of computer skills, ready for the work world, and also have some type of certificate in some area that they can work in,” Talley said. “We want to make sure that all of them have an industry credential in something when they leave school so they can enter into the work world if necessary.”

The Comprehensive Plan also states that this is being done by
(See Six-Year Plan p. 3)

Heritage center, museum to become a point of pride



The Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum's new executive director, Holly Kozelsky, took on the challenging new role last fall.



Holly Kozelsky hangs the 'Open' sign outside the museum at 1 East Main Street in Martinsville.



Some of the contents of three future exhibits at the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum may be housed in these display cases. Holly Kozelsky said the new exhibits will focus on the area's nightlife, media, and home sewing.

By Taylor Boyd

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society's new executive director Holly Kozelsky hopes to make the heritage center and museum a point of pride for the area.

“The hope is that we have strong

community support to keep it going. We are definitely going to draw in tourism dollars, and it's going to be a huge point of pride for this community,” she said.

While she believes the museum will definitely be on the state and

regional level, Kozelsky said it will also have a national attraction “for the real die-hards on the subjects in which we specialize.”

Kozelsky became the executive director in early October last year. She applied for the role after leav-

ing the Martinsville Bulletin in June.

The museum board of directors “told me they were looking for an executive director, and they encouraged me to consider it,” she

(See Heritage p. 7)



NCI's FIRST Robotics Team, STAGS Team 1262, kicked off their 2024 season at Blacksburg High School in Blacksburg, Va.

STEM activities at NCI 'March' forward

The New College Institute kicked off March in full force with STEM activities for K-12 students.

On Friday, March 1, 5th-grade students from Patrick Henry Elementary School visited NCI to participate in the third annual Grow the Planet Code-a-Thon. Students across the Commonwealth became mission specialists for the Virginia AFCEA Space Alliance (VASA) for the day.

Participating students were tasked with completing a series of coding challenges to ensure a ship

filled with astronaut colonists could safely land on Planet X and set up the first sustainable off-world colony. As the students completed each challenge, they were able to share and discuss their findings with other students from around the Commonwealth via Zoom.

“It was impressive to see these fifth graders compute and work through these challenges,” said NCI Chief Academic Officer Dr. Sushela Shanta. “Our students confidently presented their completed

(See STEM p. 7)

Dancing For The Arts Raises Over \$70,000



Anna Hatchett and Louis Cambell wearing Martinsville High School sports uniforms.

By Jessica Dillon

A roster of local talent performed on the Martinsville High School stage last week, as Dancing For The Arts got underway on March 9. Hosted by

Piedmont Arts, the event was split into two parts: assigned dances and freestyle dances, with an intermission between.

By the end of the night, Heidi Pinkston, executive director of Piedmont Arts, announced that more than \$70,000 was raised for Piedmont Arts. Tekela Redd, service center director at the Salvation Army, and Pres Garrett, owner of Starling Avenue Cards & Comics won the grand prize, which is awarded to the team that both raised the most money and got the highest number of points from the judges.

Anna Wheeler, program coordinator at the Dan River Basin Association (DRBA), and Jacob Frith, who

is part of the Lester Group management program, won the judges award for scoring the most points. The impact award for the most money raised

(See Dancing p. 6)

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Insurance

(cont. from page 1)

three percent increase for next year and the year after that," said Boone. Henry County Public Schools is also proposing a 5% increase in pay to teachers, administration, and bus drivers, contingent upon local funding.

Updates to several school systems and programs also were proposed to the board. Michael Minter, Jr., director of career and technical education and career academy, proposed an allotment of \$117,631 for FY25 for Go TEC equipment. The approved GO TEC updates will allow students at Fieldale-Collinsville Middle School to participate in career training modules. "This will complete our two labs at our two middle schools," said Minter. Career training departments will benefit from this budget.

The RobotLAB and Amtek - Virtual Welding Unit will both receive additional funding. Part of the funding will also benefit equipment for the Health Care Lab, Precision Machining, and Mechanical Engineering.

Bassett High School and Magna Vista High School also will receive various GO TECH upgrades to their classrooms.

Elizabeth Fulcher, director of technology and innovation, presented an action agenda to purchase interactive boards for the classroom, which was approved by the board. \$78,000 has already been spent out of the Y24 technology budget towards replacements and repairs of interactive boards. The board approved the purchase of additional technology with a budget of \$154,000 for FY24. The boards allow teachers to have a more interactive approach to teaching in classrooms.

Fulcher presented another action agenda for purchasing new Apple Technology. That too was unanimously approved and will give students in grades first, fifth, and ninth new iPads, along with cases for protection. Students in ninth grade will be provided keyboard cases to give the iPads a similar feel to laptops. Additionally, a protection plan will be provided that covers one repair.

High school teachers also will receive new iPads, while middle school teachers will be presented with new MacBooks.

"Instructional apps will be used to enhance instruction. Most, if not all, textbooks will be available on iPads," she said. These devices will all come with Jamf MDM protection. With the

addition of a budget for additional accessories, these changes have an estimated cost of just under \$1 million to be purchased in FY24 and FY25.

Keith Scott, director of facilities maintenance, read a proposal for Bassett High School Phase 7 updates. This update was approved by the board and will cost \$4,542,000 of the FY24 budget with a one percent sales tax. Blair Construction Company of Gretna, Virginia, will be updating the HVAC and water chillers. The lighting and ceiling of the school's lobby, front office, and locker rooms will also receive an upgrade. The upgrades will start in May 2024 with a goal of completing before the start of the next school year.

"This will complete our original plan for renovations to this facility," said Scott, who also read a proposal for an update to the roof of Laurel Park Middle School for \$144,900, to be paid with proceeds from the 1-percent sales tax. Cornett & Cundiff, Inc. of Roanoke, Virginia, will carry out this repair.

Scott also proposed new playground equipment that would increase the safety of students with disabilities and cost an estimated \$1 million. Playground Specialists Inc., from Thurmont, Maryland, will provide the equipment with a total cost not to exceed \$1,200,000 to continue improvements to all elementary schools.

"We've already approved some playground equipment, so we want to continue this process so that by the end of 2024, carrying into maybe early spring, that we have a lot of nice equipment for all students in elementary," said Scott.

This was also approved by the board. A final budget for this change will be presented later in the year.

Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis proposed a change to employees' insurance policies, with a 10 percent reduction in the cost of employees' premiums. This would help with insuring spouses and children of employees.

Blake-Lewis said the division will provide polarized sunglasses to students and faculty for the upcoming solar eclipse on April 8. The maximum eclipse will happen at 2:17 p.m., close to the dismissal window for students. She also said the division would move forward with a \$200 monthly stipend for the teacher of record of reading and math. This will not cover



School Board Chairman Teddy Martin II is pictured with Tamei Easley, who was presented with the Kindness Ambassador Award.

teachers who tutor during contracted hours. A \$1,000 retention bonus for employees who have an appointment letter, are full-time, or are under contract, also was announced, and will be paid out on March 21.

In other matters, the board:

Presented awards to students participating in All District Swim, Track, All District Wrestling, Basketball all district, Bassett Indoor Track Team for All Region, Bassett Scholastic Bowl All Region, and Beta Convention participants.

- Recognized Tameia Easley as the Kindness Ambassador.
- Recognized March as Women's History Month.
- Recognized March as Mental Health Awareness Month.
- Approved the consent agenda.
- Heard the Superintendent's report

Citizen Science Program needs your help observing the weather

Do you ever wonder how much rainfall you received from a recent thunderstorm? How about snowfall during a winter storm? An important volunteer weather observing program needs your help. The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow network, or CoCoRaHS, is looking for new volunteers. The grassroots effort is part of a growing national network of home-based and amateur rain spotters with a

goal of providing a high density precipitation network that will supplement existing observations.

CoCoRaHS came about as a result of a devastating flash flood that hit Fort Collins, Colorado, in July 1997. A local severe thunderstorm dumped over a foot of rain in several hours while other portions of the city had only modest rainfall. The ensuing flood caught many by surprise and caused \$200 million in

damage.

CoCoRaHS was born in 1998 with the intent of doing a better job of mapping and reporting intense storms. As more volunteers participated, rain, hail, and snow maps were produced for every storm showing fascinating local patterns that were of great interest to scientists and the public. Recently, drought reporting has also become an important observation within the CoCoRaHS program across the nation. In fact, drought observations from CoCoRaHS are now being included in the National Integrated Drought Information System.

By 2010, the CoCoRaHS network had reached all 50 states with nearly ten thousand observations reported each day. Through CoCoRaHS, thousands of volunteers, young and old, document the size, intensity, duration and patterns of rain, hail, and snow by taking simple measurements in their own backyards.

Volunteers may obtain an official rain gauge through the CoCoRaHS website, www.cocorahs.org, for about \$33, plus shipping and handling. Besides the need for an official 4 inch plastic rain gauge, volunteers are required to take a simple training module online and use the CoCoRaHS website or app to submit their reports. Observations are immediately available on

maps and reports for the public to view. The process takes less than five minutes a day, but the impact to the community is tenfold: By providing high quality, accurate measurements, the observers are able to supplement existing networks and provide useful results to scientists, resource managers, decision makers and other users.

"An additional benefit of the program to the National Weather Service is the ability to receive timely reports of significant weather (hail, intense rainfall, localized flooding) from CoCoRaHS observers that can assist forecasters in issuing and verifying warnings for severe thunderstorms," said Anita Silverman, CoCoRaHS State Co-coordinator and meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Blacksburg, VA.

How does one become a CoCoRaHS observer? Go to the CoCoRaHS website and click on the "Join CoCoRaHS" emblem on the upper right side of the main website. After registering, take the simple online training, order your 4 inch rain gauge and start reporting.

"We are in need of new observers across the entire region. We would like to emphasize rural locations and areas of higher terrain" added Silverman.

CoCoRaHS can also be reached on Facebook, X (Twitter), and YouTube.

ONLINE AUCTION

Recreational Tracts for Sale in City of Danville VA
Online Auction Ends Wednesday, April 24th, at 3 PM
Offering #1 - 356 Mimosa St., Danville, VA 24541
Offering #2 - TBD Hunter St., Danville, VA 24541

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Searching for land for sale in Pittsylvania County, VA? Check out these 2 offerings which total just under +/- 43 acres located in the City of Danville VA. The City of Danville is in Southside VA near the North Carolina and Virginia State lines. Danville is located along the Highway 58 corridor between Martinsville VA and Clarksville VA. Properties adjoin the Danville Golf Club, and the convenience of public water and sewer connections ensures accessibility for prospective residents or developers. Property is being offered in 2 tracts, so purchase one or both to get the acreage you desire! Both properties are zoned SR-Suburban Residential.

PREVIEW DATE: Friday, April 5th at 4 PM

Offering #1 - This offering includes +/-38.279 acres of mostly wooded recreational land.

Offering #2 - This offering features +/-4.655 acres of mostly open land.

Terms: 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$10,000 per tract is required on the day of sale. Close on or before June 7th, 2024. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence before placing a bid. Auction starts ending at 3 PM on April 24th, 2024. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps at VAAuctionPro.com.

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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.)

Meetings

Monday, March 18

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board Academic & Student Affairs Committee will meet at 11:30 a.m. in Room 145 in the Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the committee will not receive public comment.

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board will meet at 12:30 p.m. in the Hooker Exhibit Hall, Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the Board will not receive public comment.

Wednesday, March 20

Martinsville Planning Commission Meeting is from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Council Chambers, 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville

Events

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://jb-phillips.wufoo.com/forms/beers-of-ireland/>.

Horsepasture Volunteer Fire Department Pancake Breakfast, 7 a.m. until. Plates are \$7 and include pancakes, syrups and bacon.

Spring Plant Swap With Holly is from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum located at 1 E Main St, Martinsville.

2nd Annual Patrick Stanley Memorial Car Show is from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. located at 50 Clovehill Dr, Bassett.

Sunday, March 17

Sunday Lecture hosted by Martinsville Henry County Heritage Center & Museum, "The Blue Ridge Regional Library: Enriching Our Communities for 110 Years" starts at 3 p.m. at the museum, located at 1 E Main St, Martinsville.

Thursday, March 21

Silent Book Club starts at 6 p.m. at the Ground Floor located at 1 Church St E, Martinsville.

Six-Year Plan

(cont. from page 1)

maintaining AVID certifications at all K-12 schools. The three and four-year-old preschool program will continue to be supported.

The board is implementing system data protocols to help with decision-making and improve teaching and learning in schools, as well as a system for monitoring and providing feedback on classroom and special education plans. The Comprehensive Plan states that this will help integrate professional development and alignment on both the content and cognitive levels.

The topic of recruiting and retaining staff also was discussed.

"I'm glad to report at this point that it looks like we are going to retain well over 90 percent of our staff this year," said Talley. He added that the number of retained staff has been growing each year.

City schools also will focus on WIDA, which is a language proficiency standard that helps students whose first language isn't English. The program is designed to enhance the education of multilingual students in the school system.

Continuing to focus on maintaining a safe and orderly environment also is in the plan. The administrators are having parent conferences and talking to teachers to ensure a safe learning environment. The board has been meeting with the Harvest Foundation to provide more mental support for students, teachers, and staff both via telehealth and in-person sessions.

The schools have hired resource officers for all but one of their schools, Clearbrook Elementary, and are in the process of acquiring an officer for that location.

Friday, March 22

Water Easter Egg Hunt + Bounce House is from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Martinsville-Henry County YMCA located at 3 Starling Ave, Martinsville.

Books and Bunnies 2024 starts at 11 a.m. at the Smith River Sports Complex located at 1000 Irisburg Rd, Axton, VA 24054

Saturday, March 23

Caturday, featuring cats from the SPCA, starts at 11 a.m. at the Blue Ridge Regional Library located at 310 Church St E, Martinsville, VA 24112

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.

Friday, March 29

Exhibit Opening Reception – Salvador Dali, Citizens and Soldiers, and Works by Meritha Alderman at Piedmont Arts. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Chief Curator and Deputy Director for Art and Education Michael R. Taylor, PhD will present a gallery talk at 6:15 p.m. Free and open to the public. Complimentary wine and light refreshments. Live music.

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.

The Bassett Ruritan Club hosts breakfast on the 2nd Saturday of each month from 6 - 10 a.m. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children under 12. All you can eat sausage, fried bologna, eggs, cooked apples, sausage gravy, made from scratch biscuits, made to order pancakes, coffee and juice. Dine in or carry out.

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.

Neighbors in the Know. Join staff and volunteers in the Hylton Library at the Spencer Penn Centre for activities and socializing on the first and third Monday of each month. A different presentation and activity weekly, followed by a way to get you moving. The program is an hour long and activities for children will be provided. Every third Monday, 10-11 a.m., a music program will be provided. This free program is perfect for all ages. No registration is required.

Mondays - March 11, March 25, and April 11, at 11 a.m., Holly Kozelsky, executive director of MHC Historical Society, will teach others how to use microfilm to read old newspaper articles at the Martinsville branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library.

Talley also discussed potential safety protocols for games and using more metal detectors to keep after-school activities safe. Wellness plans and nutrition are also a priority. Talley said the food program is booming, and students have been taking advantage of school food.

He noted how passionate parents are about their children's education, and discussed a community gymnasium to hold events at Martinsville High School.

An amendment to the board's policy under JHCD was approved to allow training for school nurses and local health department employees who are assigned to work at city schools. They, along with designated staff members, would administer lifesaving medicines that are used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. The medicine will be used to save the lives of students and staff who are suffering or are about to suffer the life-threatening effects of an opioid overdose. Only those who have completed training in accordance with the Martinsville City Police Department will be able to administer the medications.

School bus safety was discussed, along with the option of installing four outside cameras on select buses to capture traffic infractions that could endanger students' safety. The buses are also equipped with GPS and panic alarms that send out their location to the police to further protect students in case of an emergency.

The board also approved the school year calendar for the 2024 - 2025 school year. Talley said the calendar mirrors those used in county schools and the Governor's School as closely as

possible. Testing for students will take place after spring break with enough time to give students the ability to go over testing materials.

In other matters:

*Kaneshia Coles, family resource center coordinator, gave a brief overview of the United Way Growth & Opportunity Center, highlighting the benefits of the center. The center's aim is to help support families in the community and reduce cases of child abuse.

*Dr. Cynthia Tarpley, executive director of special education/student services, presented the special education plan to the board, asking for their approval to submit an application to the Virginia Department of Education to fund the special education teachers and special education paraprofessionals.

There are currently about 240 special education students in grades K - 12 and around 31 special education students ages 3-5; money will also be set aside for children not enrolled in city schools. For the 611 funds, \$598,799.94 are being requested, and for the 619 funds \$8,064 was requested from the state. The board unanimously approved the request.

*Recognized The Martinsville High School Basketball Team for reaching a state game.

*Recognized students in indoor track, wrestling, swimming, and diving.

*Recognized Louis Campbell for participating in Dancing For The Arts.

*Recognized participants in "The Little Mermaid Jr."

*Asked for donations to Martinsville High School After Prom.

Veteran Laptop Project provides laptops to P&HCC

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) has received laptops to provide to veteran and veteran spouse students thanks to Virginia Department of Veterans Services' (VDS) Military Education & Workforce Initiative (MEWI).

Following the success of the Military Student Technology Initiative and through a partnership with the Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) and Tech for Troops (T4T), Military Education & Workforce Initiative (MEWI) has been able to establish the Virginia Veteran Laptop Project (VVLTP). Through this effort, laptop computers are made available to veterans and their spouses at no cost to the family. Veterans and military spouses who are currently enrolled at a Virginia Community College and taking classes can participate. This program is open to any veteran or military spouse regardless of discharge status.

MEWI program manager John Hall and Tech For Troops (T4T) business development lead Jack Raymondson visited P&HCC to present the laptops to Rosemary Bowers, P&HCC veterans



In the photo: Jack Raymondson (T4T), Rosemary Bowers (P&HCC), John Hall (MEWI), Jack Hanbury (P&HCC), and Morgan Hyde (VDS) celebrate the start of the Virginia Veteran Laptop Project at P&HCC.

coordinator, and Jack Hanbury, P&HCC vice president for financial & administrative services.

"This project is not just to bring computers to students, but also to provide them with all the

other knowledge that DVS has to offer them about services - from care services to benefits and claims, DVS offers all that benefit free of charge," said Hall.

In 2023-2024 school year, P&HCC had 22 veteran/veteran spouses/reserve veterans participating in GI Bill student services.

"It's exciting to be able to bring this opportunity to our veterans and spouses that are attending here at Patrick & Henry Community College," said Bowers.

MEWI assists veterans and service members with their transition from active duty to civilian life and enhances employment opportunities for Virginians who have served in the United States Armed Forces, and their spouses, by providing a pathway to education, training, certifications, and technology.

T4T recycles and distributes computers with the support of corporate, state and federal partners to distribute laptops to veterans and their families.

Letter To The Editor

SB280/HB858: Death With Dignity

My aunt had this weird disease that filled her lungs with scar tissue. When she was moved from the seventh floor to the “hospice floor” we were all called in to say good-bye. I had not seen my aunt since Christmas, nine months prior, and as my dad and sister walked me to “Krittys” room I asked, “Wait a minute: what’s this going to be like?” I did not know how poorly she was doing. When I got in the room I held her hand and talked because she could not talk. I cried and she whispered, “It’s ok.” She was also unable to breath on her own. Nurses had to come in and move her so she would not get even worse bed sores than she already had. That was two years ago.

I walked out of the room and told my dad and sister, “I don’t believe in this. This is not ‘treatment’”. What I saw was a hospital keeping my aunt alive as long as they could in order to bill her insurance one last time. When an animal sustains an unrecoverable injury, we “put them out of their misery” and call it an act of compassion. Does man not deserve greater compassion than a beast of burden (Proverbs 12:10)?

Of course, I am writing all of this regarding Senator Hashmi’s bill, SB280/HB858: “Death with Dignity.” This bill would allow those declared “terminal” by a physician to request the aid of said physician in humanely ending their life. It is not the same, at least I don’t think it is, as “assisted euthanasia” that is offered in other countries in in-

stances of depression rather than terminal illness.

When I was about eight years old, I remember going with my dad to an elderly couple’s home where the husband was dying with cancer. The man had cancer once before, and when it returned he refused treatment. He did however receive regular doses of morphine till he died. What’s the difference in dosages that induces a vegetable state and a dosage that kills peacefully?

“Caleb, aren’t you pro-life?” This is not the same as killing a baby in the womb. In an abortion a baby is, commonly, killed because it is simply unwanted. In many cases the baby is punished for the sin (fornication) of his parents. I am pro-life, but I also support capital punishment (Romans 13:4). So, clearly, there are realms where a life is ended and it’s not called “murder.”

Samson, after being tortured by the Philistines, pulled the pillars of the Philistine temple down on himself. He killed many Philistines, but also himself. King Saul was mortally wounded in battle and rather than be tortured by the Philistines he hastened his death by falling on his own sword (1Samuel 31:3-4). Were these moments “sinful”? I don’t think so. Especially not considering Samson is listed in Hebrews 11.

This idea failed two years ago, and I imagine it will again. However, I think it’s something to consider.

Caleb Robertson,
Martinsville

OPINION

TikTok



Morgan Griffith
Representative

Everyone knows TikTok is the video sharing application (“app”) that people of all ages use, especially younger people. In fact, according to TikTok, 170 million Americans use the social media app.

Unlike other popular social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.), TikTok is linked to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). In China, the Communist Party runs the government.

TikTok is currently owned by its Chinese parent company ByteDance.

The CCP requires companies like ByteDance to cooperate with their government, share information, etc.

According to Axios, former ByteDance executive Yintao Yu claimed that ByteDance “has served as a useful propaganda tool for the Chinese Communist Party.”

The Energy and Commerce (E&C) Committee, on which I serve, has done a lot of work this Congress to investigate this issue and figure out legislative solutions.

Last March, TikTok’s CEO Shou Chew came in to testify before the Committee. It was clear throughout the hearing that despite claims to the contrary, TikTok, through ByteDance, is closely connected to the CCP.

As a long-standing member of the legal community, I was particularly appalled that Mr. Chew on the one hand said TikTok was completely separate from ByteDance, and on the other, was totally unabashed that TikTok and ByteDance have the same lawyers.

The Committee recently considered H.R. 7521, the Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act, designed to tackle national security threats like the one posed by TikTok.

The legislation is aimed at protecting the United States of America by preventing foreign adversaries, specifically, China, Iran, North Korea, or Russia, from targeting and surveilling U.S. citizens and manipulating American public opinion and policy through their apps, like TikTok.

Make no mistake, TikTok can be informative and a lot of fun, but it can also be used nefariously by the Chinese Communist Party.

In the bill, if an app is determined to be owned by a company controlled by a foreign adversary, the app must be divested (i.e. sold off) by the foreign adversary’s company or the app will be prohibited in the United States. But, once sold, the app would be allowed for use in the United States.

I attended security briefings on the legislation. Also, at a previous public hearing before a different committee, former U.S. National Security Agency Director Paul Nakasone testified about TikTok. He stated the app “... provides a foreign nation a platform for information operations, a platform for surveillance...”

Before the bill was introduced, I

was asked to review the draft language and helped to craft the final product.

We wanted to make it clear we do not want to ban TikTok, we just want its ties to the CCP severed permanently and irrevocably.

Immediately prior to the bill being brought up in Committee, E&C Members were part of a 4-hour executive session/classified hearing.

Because it was a classified hearing, I cannot discuss the details. But even without the classified hearing, it is clear that many in our intelligence community believe TikTok is a national security threat.

The information we learned was alarming enough to bring Republicans and Democrats together in the defense of the United States.

The legislation passed Committee unanimously (50-0!) and will next be considered by the full House.

When TikTok caught wind that the Committee was considering this legislation, their online disinformation campaign against the legislation was robust, and quite astonishing.

Targeted American users who tried to access TikTok were compelled to call their Congressman before they could even access the app’s features.

TikTok also released a false statement on social media stating that the bill was “an outright ban of TikTok.”

As explained above, if TikTok is sold by ByteDance, it is free to operate in the United States. But clearly, the CCP does not want to give up their ability to spy and manipulate.

Further, they stated that the bill “tramples the First Amendment rights” of Americans (like China really cares about free speech).

I believe saying this bill would violate the First Amendment is incorrect. The Supreme Court makes a distinction between laws based on the content of speech vs. conduct. Laws based on conduct, which threatens national security, particularly when likely orchestrated by a foreign power, are not “per se” violations of the First Amendment.

Content placed on TikTok by American citizens is not the issue. Conduct is.

America is at risk!

While I cannot share everything I know, I am convinced TikTok, while owned by ByteDance, a Beijing Company, and directed by the CCP, can be used to damage American security.

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/>.

Spring Break Travel Scams

It’s that time of year again – the holidays are long past, and summer is still a long way off. It’s time for a spring getaway. But beware, for everyone looking for a great spring break deal there is a criminal out there offering an amazing deal. These three tips will help you spot a potential travel scam.

First, be wary of any deal where the price tag is dramatically lower than what else is available at your destination. Next, verify the legitimacy of online travel sites

by looking closely at the web address – scammers often “spoof” legitimate hotels and third-party booking sites. Finally, don’t trust anyone who requests a wire transfer, cryptocurrency or gift card to pay for your getaway – these are the payment forms preferred by today’s fraud criminals.

Don’t get left out in the cold this spring. Visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork or call the AARP Fraud Watch Helpline at 1-877-908-3360.

See more at

www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Super Crossword

WELL-DEFINED

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| ACROSS | 48 Stray calf | 113 120-Across #8 | 8 Burial vaults | 49 The Beatles' “— Work It Out” | 86 The “E” of UAE |
| 1 Ran after | 49 120-Across #4 | 116 Male sweetie | 9 Poet Percy — Shelley | 50 Tequila plant | 87 Overturns |
| 8 — oil (trendy marijuana extract, for short) | 55 Plead | 117 Day, to Juanita | 10 — Moines, Iowa | 51 Sacred image | 88 Singer Sumac |
| 11 Old TV ET | 56 Cabinet chief: Abbr. | 118 Totally lost | 11 One-off, as a committee | 52 Big Apple address abbr. | 89 Word before goblin |
| 14 Feudal peons | 57 Muse of poetry | 119 Bruins’ Bobby | 12 Lerner’s songwriting partner | 53 Sch. near the Rio Grande | 90 Employed |
| 19 More ill-bred | 58 Mimosa tree, e.g. | 120 What this puzzle literally provides eight times | 13 Skillet | 54 Axes, e.g. | 91 — bad example |
| 20 Loaf in a deli | 62 “Put — Happy Face” | 124 Wee | 14 Ilk | 55 Scrooge’s outbursts | 92 Split |
| 21 Palme — (Cannes award) | 64 DiCaprio of “Titanic” | 125 Hitter’s stat | 15 Grand-scale | 59 U.S. spy org. | 93 Ritalin treats it, for short |
| 22 “La Traviata,” e.g. | 70 120-Across #5 | 126 Single-named R&B singer | 16 Give new energy to | 60 Fluid in a pen | 98 Science writer Willy or ESPN anchor |
| 23 120-Across #1 | 75 More furtive | 127 Erase | 17 Region prohibiting slavery prior to the Civil War | 61 Anxiousness | 99 Urge strongly |
| 25 “Over here!” | 76 Possess | 128 Some Canadian gas stations | 18 Made unhappy | 63 In times past | 101 Kind of steak |
| 26 Sieved, as potatoes | 77 Gets the impression | 129 Tot’s “piggy” | 24 — -Puf (facial sponge) | 65 Soot’s denial | 102 Like some headsets |
| 27 Folk rocker DiFranco | 81 Light tan | 130 Bible translation, e.g.: Abbr. | 29 Really hate | 66 Novelist Rand | 104 Chemist’s “I” |
| 28 Drink holders | 84 Groom’s vow | 131 Lobby sofas | 30 Suffix with serpent | 67 Varnish stuff | 105 Brief pang |
| 29 120-Across #12 | 85 120-Across #6 | DOWN | 32 Resist boldly | 68 “Judge —” (Stallone film) | 106 For a really long time |
| 31 120-Across #3 | 94 “Take —” (“Jot this note”) | 1 The Sims or Minecraft, say | 33 Singer Lisa | 69 — buco | 109 Muscle car booster |
| 36 Suffix of enzymes | 95 Water spigots | 2 Muse of astronomy | 34 City in Sicily | 71 Artist Jan van der — | 110 Macabre |
| 37 Don effortlessly, as shoes | 96 Extort money from | 3 Fast part of a river ride | 35 Once, once | 72 “Nola” composer | 111 Interval |
| 38 Toxin-fighting fluids | 97 Fit to reside in | 4 Govt. stipend | 40 Word file alternative | 73 Actor Wilson | 112 Is really angry |
| 39 Functional unit of a kidney | 100 Architect Saarinen | 5 Adm.’s org. | 41 — polloi | 74 How much ‘90s music was recorded | 114 Lotto variant |
| 42 Wield a saber or foil | 103 Island near Bora Bora | 6 Brain wave test: Abbr. | 43 Syringe amts. | 79 LAX info | 115 Deposits, as eggs |
| 45 Sky twinkler | 107 Rage | 7 Harry Potter bully Malfoy | 44 Stretch (out) | 80 High-quality CSA soldier | 120 License-issuing agcy. |
| | 108 120-Across #7 | | 46 — Lingsu (Irish carrier) | 83 Web address | 121 Palindromic file suffix |
| | | | 47 Writer Dahl | 85 Certify | 122 Fitting |
| | | | | | 123 Cashew, e.g. |

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Faster, secure login option offered for VEC benefits

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) announced a faster and easier way for customers to access unemployment benefits. VEC has partnered with ID.me, a trusted digital identity verification tool, to help claimants quickly connect to Virginia’s unemployment benefits system. Now, it’s E-Z with ID.me for customers to apply for benefits, file weekly claims and access other important documents.

“This new login option solves the main challenge we’ve been dealing with for some time, providing our customers with easy access while keeping out fraud. By partnering with ID.me, we are able to do just that,” said VEC Commissioner Demetrios Melis.

Customers can simply go to VEC’s website, click on “Claimant Login” and select the green button to sign up or sign in using ID.me. ID.me is secure, simple to use, and the process takes just minutes to complete. To verify their identity, they’ll need their government photo ID (driver’s license or passport) and their social security number.

Claimants can choose one of three convenient options, including using the camera on their cell phone or computer, a video call with an ID.me agent, or an in-person verification at select retail locations.

“We are currently seeing over 80% of our customers successfully access the benefits system when using ID.me,” said Melis. “The Virginia Employment Commission remains dedicated to enhancing the overall customer experience and serving the critical needs of Virginians during challenging times.”

ID.me is a federally certified identity provider with over 115 million users, 1.2 million in Virginia alone. ID.me partners with 31 states and multiple federal agencies, including Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

ID.me will never share personal information with third parties, ensuring that claimants’ sensitive data remains confidential and secure. To learn more about ID.me’s privacy policy visit: www.id.me/privacy.

OPINION

Nellie Minter could get away with things most of us couldn't

She would tell you like it is. She went out dancing on Friday nights until just a few years ago. She always looked beautiful, in well put-together outfits she usually either had made herself or gotten at Belk.

She had a magical way of making everyone around her feel light-hearted and joyous.

She also lived to be 100, living in her own home on her own terms.

A big part of her terms was mowing her lawn so that it would look just so. She loved to mow so much, she'd tell you, that the night before a mowing day she just couldn't hardly sleep because she was so excited.

A few years ago, her doctor told her that she shouldn't be on that riding mower anymore. Her solution: She'd hurry up and mow before her daughter LuAnn came over and could stop her. She'd tell me with a conspiratorial grin that LuAnn said she'd be coming in the afternoon, so she got out there in the morning.

My solution: I'd sit by the window or in the outdoor sitting area in full view of most of her yard, just to be around in case anything happened. Fortunately, this was during the pandemic when I could work from home. Once we were back to the office, when I knew or suspected she was planning to mow, I'd just call in to work and say, "My neighbor's mowing again," and stay home until she was finished and safely back in the house.

In the beginning I used to tell on her: I'd text LuAnn, tell her that her mother was mowing, but that I was watching. As time went on it just became routine, and I stopped snitching. She was always fine.

Nellie Hundley married Bob Minter after he returned from World War II. They built a sturdy one-story brick house right next to the two-story farmhouse where Bob grew up, and there she remained.

Nellie Minter was a lot of things to a lot of people – mother, granny, church volunteer, dancer, seamstress, friend.

To us, she was a neighbor – a neighbor who was more like a grandmother and a beloved friend.

We were allies, side by side. If one of us needed something, she'd go to the other for help. My daughter went over to Mrs. Minter's if I wasn't home and she had forgotten her key after school, or it was storming and she was scared. I changed Mrs. Minter's light bulbs and hung her new curtains.

When I had electricity disconnected from our home for a few days – which meant no water, because we are on a well – I took my showers at her house, and there I filled 5-gallon buckets of water to haul to my house for other uses. I went in and out of her house to use water as comfortably and genially as if she were my own mother.

She was unendingly generous and friendly.

Every evening in good weather, she'd be sitting in a rocking chair on her front porch, with another chair or two beside her. If there wasn't someone sitting beside her to visit, she'd be on the phone chatting with a friend or relative.



Holly Kozelsky



Nellie Minter celebrating her 100th birthday.

Her pleasant life showed the value and enjoyment of older ways that are being forgotten – porch visits, pinto beans with chow-chow accompanied by cornbread cooked stovetop in an iron skillet (usually with some to send home to us, or invite us in to share), going to church on Sunday and back again Monday to count the money, getting her hair done at 10 a.m. each Friday.

She also delved into the new. Her grandkids got her a smartphone and she had one heck of a time getting used to it. In the beginning, she'd call my daughter or me over (using the house phone, of course, or hollering from the porch) to ask for help. The craziest things would happen: The colors would be inverted (what should be green was orange; what should be orange was green); the volume was off; the buttons wouldn't work; some sort of voice control was on, and the phone was constantly talking to her. "That woman worries the shit out of me!" Mrs. Minter exclaimed, gesturing angrily at her phone.

Even though she was 100 years old, it does not seem possible she is gone. She left this world peacefully on Tuesday, surrounded by her loving family.

Later Tuesday, B.L. Ratcliff, who lived on the other side of her, stopped by.

They had been neighbors since he was born. He had never known life without her. In recent years he's been bringing his grandchildren over to see her.

Quietly and mournfully, we looked at her house.

How can the world continue to go on without Mrs. Minter? How can that wide expanse of grass between our houses continue to be getting greener and greener and taller and taller every day?

Yet, somehow, oblivious to how the world has been turned upside down, it does.

If it's Boeing, I'm not going

In 2022, writer Cory Doctorow coined a term that was later chosen as the American Dialect Society's 2023 Word of the Year. It is a term that, in my opinion, may represent the perfect encapsulation of the unique experience of living in the early 21st century.

That term is "ensh*tification."

Doctorow's term was originally coined in a November 2022 blog post discussing how online services die — think Facebook, Amazon, Twitter, and so forth. Here's what Doctorow wrote:

"First, they are good to their users; then they abuse their users to make things better for their business customers; finally, they abuse those business customers to claw back all the value for themselves. Then, they die."

As an example, Doctorow points out that Facebook used to offer a fine service up until it reached a "critical mass" of users; at that point, it was difficult for people to leave Facebook for another social media platform because all their friends were also on Facebook. Facebook then let corporations join the platform, and once these companies became dependent on traffic from Facebook, Facebook changed their algorithm to prioritize paid or "boosted" content. The end result is a social media experience where you're much more likely to see a series of ads instead of posts from your friends.

The closest thing I have to a criticism of Doctorow's blog post is that it doesn't go far enough. A very similar process is affecting virtually every aspect of our day-to-day lives.

How many food products can you think of that used to be a great value, but now have gone up in price while also getting smaller? If you've bought an appliance recently, you'll be thrilled to get ten years of use out of it before it falls apart; meanwhile, 50+ year old appliances are still chugging along without issue. Products that have been sold on the basis of their reliability for decades aren't being manufactured to the same standards anymore; it's cheaper that way and a larger profit margin keeps the shareholders happy.

Frankly, it's a struggle to name a corporation that is not currently offering a worse service or product than they used to for a higher price.

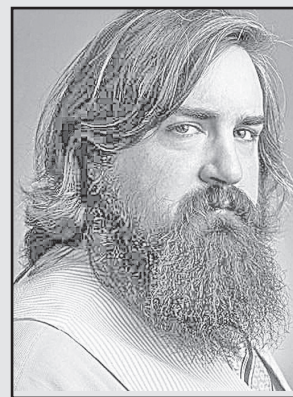
If you want to see the most public example of this phenomenon, look to Boeing.

Boeing is a company with a long and proud history. During World War II, Boeing manufactured about a third of the planes used in the war effort, including the mighty B-17 Flying Fortress, objectively our nation's coolest plane. After the war, Boeing focused on manufacturing civil aircraft.

In 1997, Boeing merged with McDonnell Douglas. This was a disastrous move. Boeing was a company where the engineers called the shots, where safety and reliability were of paramount importance. The bean-counters at McDonnell Douglas, on the other hand, wanted to focus on profit and growth and cost efficiency.

As usually happens, the bean-counters won. But what's the worst that could happen?

In 2018 and 2019, two Boeing 737 MAX planes crashed, killing 346



By Ben R. Williams

people and leaving no survivors. In 2021, the company ended up paying a settlement of more than \$2.5 billion after being charged with fraud for failing to disclose information regarding the crashes to safety regulators.

On Jan. 5 of this year, Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 — a Boeing 737 MAX — had a door plug blow out at 16,000 feet, leaving a huge hole in the side of the plane and forcing an emergency landing. The FAA determined that the four bolts used to secure the door plug had been removed at the factory and apparently had not been replaced.

On Monday, March 11, a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner flying out of New Zealand suddenly took a nosedive for reasons that still aren't clear; the pilot told passengers that the instrument gauge went black for a couple of seconds and then turned back on. 50 people were treated for injuries after being thrown around the plane during the nosedive, with a couple of passengers hitting the ceiling of the plane so hard that they broke through it, revealing the plane's wiring.

A few days earlier, John Barnett, a Boeing engineer turned whistleblower, was found dead at 62 from an apparent self-inflicted wound. He had been offering evidence in a lawsuit against Boeing literally days before his passing. Prior to his death, Barnett alleged that at the Boeing plant where he had worked as a quality manager, workers were under such pressure from management that they were knowingly fitting sub-standard parts onto production aircraft. He also discovered a serious problem with Boeing's oxygen mask system that could result in 25% of breathing masks not working in an emergency.

Overall, Barnett painted a picture of Boeing as a company that recklessly rushed the assembly of new planes and compromised safety, all in the name of bigger profits.

Boeing has an official merchandise store online where you can buy a T-shirt with their long-time unofficial motto, "If it's not Boeing, I'm not going." Their website also features their official safety slogan: "Safety is our North Star."

The days of the public associating this storied company with safety and quality engineering are fading fast, and it's all because of toxic capitalism sucking every last dime out of their product even if it endangers peoples' lives.

At least the next time a door plug fails and someone gets sucked from a plane, they can take comfort in the fact that a whole lot of shareholders had a really solid Q1.

Schools, youth groups kick off safe teen driving initiative

More teen drivers in Virginia will be involved in traffic crashes between the months of May and August than any other time of the year, statistics show. To help save lives and prevent crashes during the high-risk warm weather months, Virginia schools are kicking off a statewide teen safety campaign this week to develop driver and passenger safety behaviors among youth and teens. The peer-to-peer campaign, Arrive Alive – It's a Whole Vibe, focuses on the increased risk of teen driver crashes during the spring and summer months and during prom and graduation.

According to data for 2023, 6,186 crashes involved a teen driver during the spring/summer months from May through August. Additionally, 12 teens aged 15-19 were killed in motor vehicle crashes, 1,620 were injured, and 191 were seriously injured in crashes between the months of May and August.

Forty-seven high schools, middle schools, and youth groups are participating in Arrive Alive, which is sponsored by Youth of Virginia Speak Out About Traffic Safety (YOVASO) and the Virginia State Police.

Participating schools and youth groups will take part from March through May by completing activities that educate and remind teens to buckle up, drive safely, and to celebrate prom, graduation, and other fun events without drugs and alcohol. Middle school students will focus their messaging

on being a safe passenger, bicyclist, and pedestrian.

There are two options for participating: non-competing and competing. Schools and youth groups that elect to compete will be required to complete pre and post seat belt checks to measure the campaign's impact, a creative project that reaches a majority of the students at their school or in their youth group, and a variety of other activities to promote safe and responsible driving; or for middle schools, one or more of the three middle school topics. Non-competing schools may register to receive materials and complete any activities of their choice.

"We encourage all schools, youth groups, parents, and teens to join the free Arrive Alive campaign and help keep our youth safe during these upcoming high-risk months," said Mary King, YOVASO program manager. "No teen wants to ruin a fun vibe, whether it be a party, a day at the lake, or a night out with close friends, by experiencing a crash. Through Arrive Alive, we can all work together as parents, schools and communities to do our part in making sure our teens buckle up, drive the speed limit, put away distractions, and avoid alcohol and drugs every time they get in a motor vehicle."

Arrive Alive is funded by a grant from the Virginia DMV. In addition, grants from State Farm support educational incentives and materials.

"At State Farm, we want to keep drivers and

passengers safe on the roadways," said State Farm spokesperson Dwayne Redd. "This campaign is a creative reminder to young drivers to always make good choices, slow down, and buckle up. With these actions, the number of accidents, serious injuries and deaths will be reduced."

Each school and youth group that competes in Arrive Alive will submit their campaign entry at the conclusion of the campaign to be evaluated based on activities completed, the effectiveness and creativity of its creative traffic safety project, the percentage of students reached, and the percentage increase in the school's seat belt usage rate by the end of the campaign.

Prizes funded by the Rapids Forever 3 on 3 Tournament will be awarded to the top three participants in the high school and middle school division as follows: first place, \$500; second place, \$250; and third place, \$100. The winners will be announced on June 14. YOVASO extends a special "thank you" for the campaign this year to the Rapids Forever 3 on 3 Tournament, for sponsoring the prizes, wristbands, and puzzle pens in memory of Nick Booth and Will Hammitt of James River High School (Chesterfield Co.).

For more information or to register your school or youth group for the Arrive Alive campaign or to request parent resources, contact Casey Taylor, Program Development Coordinator at (540) 739-4392.

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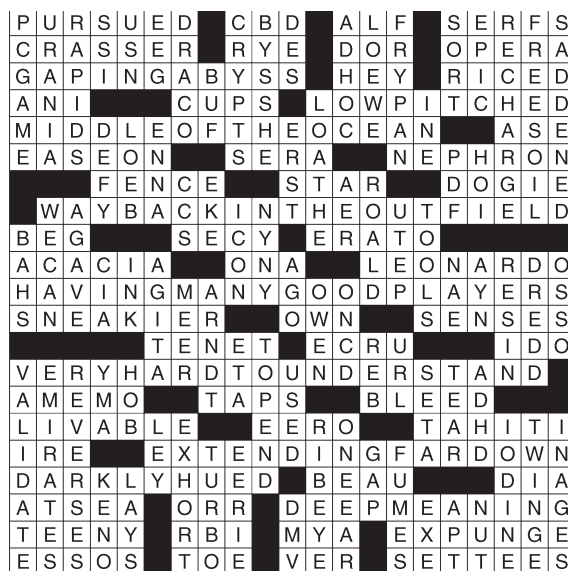
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Dancing

(cont. from page 1)

went to Jewell Dewery, a realtor at Rives S. Brown and the vice chairman of Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Board of Directors, and Ouss Sahar, SSC unit director for custodial services at Henry County Schools.

Along with the winners, other contestants included Bonnie Favero, preventative program manager at Piedmont Community Services, and Damian Wainwright, Magna Vista JROTC Army Instructor.

Jamie Turner, marketing director at King's Grant, and Justin Kline, theater teacher at Bassett High School. Anna Hatchett, an art teacher at Henry County Schools, and Louis Campbell, a basketball coach at Martinsville City Schools. Jennie Rabon, office manager at Rabon Law Firm, PLLC, and Bobby LaPrade, Stone Dynamics and owns Extreme Martial Arts in Eden. Claudia Graham, office manager for Martinsville Surgical Associates, and Spencer Koger, executive director of the Uptown Partnership.

The 2022 champions, Joyce Staples and Josh Bires-Grodensky, also returned for a 'Give it Up Dance' before the awards.

The teams were each instructed by one of four dancing coaches,

Stacey Davis, Janeka Hairston, Marlana Lackey, Jane Leizer, and Catherine Rodenbough. Three judges commented on the event. They were Sarah Hodges, director of Tourism; Devin Pendleton, Patriot Players program director at P&HCC; and Pedro Szalay, Artistic Director at Southwest Virginia Ballet. Natalie Hodge, the owner and founder of Rudy's Girl Media, was the host for the night, and Terry Mitchell from Studio 107 designed the mirror ball trophies presented to contestants.

Votes were placed when members of the community donated a dollar to their favorite team's name. Every dollar donated counted for one vote, with the exception of Piedmont Arts members, who received two votes per dollar. Voting took place online leading up to the event, and attendees could vote for their favorite team up to the program's intermission completed. The judges observed each team through both rounds and gave scores at the end of each dance. At the end of the night, the scores were tallied to select the winners.

Snacks and drinks were being sold at the event to benefit Martinsville High School's Prom.

Some of the dances seen at the event included the Foxtrot, Waltz, and Quick-Step. During each round, the contestants dressed up in costumes designed to draw more attention to their performance. While these costumes were more traditional in the first half, the second half let the team's creativity flow. The

teams dressed up in a variety of styles that paid homage to different time periods and trends.

Hatchett and Campbell dressed up in Martinsville High School sports uniforms to pay homage to the school, while Redd and Garrett dawned hip-hop costumes.

Well-known music, such as Gloria Estefan's "Conga," was used as

the dancing tracks. The audience often cheered loudly for the teams and laughed at the commentary from the judge's table.

If you missed the opportunity to attend this year's event, organizers said it will return in 2025.



Winners of Dancing For The Arts 2024 were Jewell Dewery, Ouss Sahar, Anna Wheeler, Tekela Redd, coach Catherine Rodenbough, Pres Garrett, and Jacob Frith.



Dancing For The Arts judges Pedro Szalay, Sarah Hodges, and Devin Pendleton.

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. JJ017800-12-00
Commonwealth of Virginia VA. CODE § 8.01-316
HENRY COUNTY J & DR - JUVENILE
Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* HERNANDEZ, MARQUS NOE
HMDSS v. UNKNOWN FATHER
The object of this suit is to:
TERMINATE THE RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS OF THE
UNKNOWN FATHER OF MARQUS NOE HERNANDEZ, BORN
1/30/2023 TO ANGEL MICHELLE HALL.
It is ORDERED that the defendant appear at the above-named
Court and protect his interests on or before 04/16/2024 at 10:00 a.m.
03/05/2024

LEGAL

**COUNTY OF HENRY
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**
Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **March 27, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of a Variance and a Special Use Permit for the following cases.
Case S-24-01 Demi Chapman
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-602 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a Class B Home Occupation. The specific business will be a hair salon. The property is located at 3540 Old Chatham Rd., in the Reed Creek District, and is zoned Suburban Residential District S-R, as shown on Tax Map 31.8(16)/3.4.
Case V-24-01 Ronak Thoria
A request for a Variance was received under Section 21-304 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a gas pump canopy to be located 1.5' from the edge of the right-of-way instead of the required 35'. The property is located at 10128 Virginia Avenue in the Reed Creek District. The property is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 5.5/103.
Case V-24-02 James M. Lyons
A request for a Variance was received under Section 21-401 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a free-standing garage that will be located closer to the road (approx. 10' closer) than the main structure on the property. The property is located at 1358 Blue Ridge Yacht Club Rd in the Blackberry District and is zoned Rural Residential District R-R, as shown on Tax Map 13.6/134F. 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

LEGAL

Notice of Public Hearing
The City of Martinsville Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on March 20, 2024, beginning at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the City of Martinsville Municipal Building located at 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville, VA, 24112. The purpose of the public hearing will be to consider amendments to the Zoning Ordinance relating to building height restrictions and handicap space requirements. Questions or comments regarding this matter can be directed to Hannah Powell at hpowell@ci.martinsville.va.us or (276) 403-5156.
Notice Submitted By:
Hannah L. Powell, CZA
Community Development Specialist

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, March 26, 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 3300 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 Sunny Rock 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 on Kings Mountain Road, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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

Sports Schedule

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

3/18	4:30p	Girls Tennis Bassett at Staunton River	7pm	Boys Soccer Bassett at Staunton River				
	4:30p	Girls Tennis Magna Vista at William Byrd	3/20	4:30p	Girls Tennis Bassett at Floyd County	3/22	4pm	Baseball The Covenant at Carlisle
	4:30p	Boys Tennis Staunton River at Bassett		4:30p	Girls Tennis Franklin County at Magna Vista		4:30p	Girls Tennis Lord Botetourt at Bassett
	4:30p	Boys Tennis William Byrd at Magna Vista		4:30p	Boys Tennis Floyd County at Bassett		5pm	Boys Track Magna Vista at George Washington
	5pm	Baseball Martinsville at Radford		4:30p	Boys Tennis Magna Vista at Franklin County		5pm	Baseball Carroll County at Bassett
	6pm	Baseball Magna Vista at Staunton River		5pm	Softball Bassett at Franklin County		5pm	Baseball Martinsville at Patrick County
	6pm	Softball Magna Vista at Staunton River		5pm	Softball Chatham at Magna Vista		5pm	Track Bassett at George Washington
	7pm	Boys Soccer Glenvar at Magna Vista (Smith River Complex)		5pm	Baseball Chatham at Magna Vista		5pm	Softball Carroll County at Bassett
3/19	4:30p	Baseball Carlisle at Eastern Mennonite		5pm	Baseball Martinsville at William Fleming		5:30p	Baseball Magna Vista at Gretna
	4:30p	Girls Soccer Salem Academy at Carlisle		6pm	Baseball Bassett at Heritage (Lynchburg)		5:30p	Softball Magna Vista at Gretna
	7pm	Girls Soccer Staunton River at Bassett		6pm	Baseball Carlisle at George Washington		5:30p	Girls Soccer George Washington at Carlisle
	7pm	Girls Soccer William Byrd at Magna Vista (Smith River Complex)	3/21	5pm	Boys Soccer Magna Vista at William Byrd		7pm	Girls Soccer Patrick County at Martinsville
				7pm	Girls Track Magna Vista at George Washington			Boys Soccer Martinsville at Patrick County
				7pm	Girls Soccer Magna Vista at			

Heritage

(cont. from page 1)

said.

In this role, Kozelsky said her duties “are a little bit of everything.” She is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the museum, administrative business, creating exhibits, and public education.

“There’s a research aspect to it in that any museum or any cultural institution, apart from what it has at the moment, is always doing research or getting more information to expand the base of knowledge. In this case, its local history,” she said.

On a regular basis, Kozelsky said she researches local history to glean information for present and future dissemination and to help those who contact the museum with questions and inquiries.

Kozelsky also is responsible for fundraising for the museum.

“We have a major expansion going on. We have a national-level museum opening in addition to our present local history museum,” she said. “So, a big part of what I will be doing is fundraising, not only to help with the aspects of the new museum and this one, but to garner community support for ongoing operations.”

While she’s yet to officially open a new exhibit, Kozelsky said the museum has three new ones in the works. One focuses on local media like newspaper, television, radio and another is about home sewing “just like grandma used to do.”

Kozelsky said the third exhibit is about the nightlife in Martinsville and Henry County.

“That kind of started” when she worked to swap out some items in another exhibit, Kozelsky said.

“We have an exhibit of historical garments, and as I was changing out the historical garments, we got some neat, nice, goodlooking clothes from the ‘50s, ‘60s, ‘70s,” she said. To help put that in context, there will be information on Club Martinique and on the Paradise Inn in the exhibit.

“Two big nightlife spots in the area,” she said.

Kozelsky said the most surprising aspect of the executive director role is how long everything takes.

“In that ‘I am busy, busy, busy, constantly doing something,’ and at the end of the day I look back and I’m like, what did I do? I don’t have something to show.

“You know, it doesn’t immediately show the results of what I did. Whereas when I was at a newspaper, I was busting my butt all day long, but then you always see exactly what you did,” she said.

One of the most challenging parts of the position for Kozelsky was the creation of the museum’s new website.

“I thought I knew all about websites because I used and maintained different websites throughout the years, but those were websites that were already made for me, and I just maintained them,” she said.

For a long time, Kozelsky found creating a new website difficult and a major impediment. It wasn’t until Thanksgiving break with her sisters that “we all sat down, and they showed me a few things, and it was like the floodgates opened, ‘boom,’” she said.

Not only did she learn how to make a website, Kozelsky now enjoys doing it and adds new materials to the website daily.

She also finds a challenge in figuring out the design and lettering of the exhibits.

“Because we’re going to put up big boards with information for the exhibits. I know how to lay things out on my computer, and I know what the size will look like on page, but I don’t know how to lay it out on my computer and get the size I want for a huge, wall-sized board,” she said.

Kozelsky’s favorite part of the position is that she does things she likes to do all the time.

“I love working with people, and whether it’s the board of directors or we do social events, putting those together, being at them, the patrons that come in to see the museum, it’s a very social job, which I enjoy,” she said.

Kozelsky also enjoys the history-research aspect of the position as it allows her to continue to learn about the area.

“I love the creativity involved in things even such as the website or the exhibits,” she said.

While she had a huge learning curve tran-

sitioning into this role from a widely different field like journalism, Kozelsky said “I have to learn not only how to operate the museum, but I have to learn about the stuff inside our museum.

“For example, we’ve got one of the most significant gun collections, firearm collections, on the East Coast, and it’s going to be on display in the museum,” she said.

While this will be a tremendous tourism draw to the area, and the community’s already excited about it, Kozelsky, who’s never given a thought to guns in her life, said she now has to become an East Coast expert on 500 years of the evolution of firearms.

“I’ve been studying that a great deal,” she said.

It’s exciting to work in a significant and gorgeous building, Kozelsky said. Built in 1824, she believes the museum and former courthouse are a solid and permanent part of local history and heritage.

“It’s nice walking on hardwood floors. It’s good on the feet after years of cement and linoleum,” she added.

Kozelsky formerly worked for newspapers for 18 years where she filled all the roles in the newsroom, except for sports. Despite the career change she has not completely given up journalism as she still writes a weekly column for the Henry County Enterprise.

Kozelsky has a 14-year-old daughter who she lives with in the Dyers Store area in an over 100-year-old home.

“We have renovated it. I just got the roof put on, the porch was burned down in the ‘70s, and we just put a porch back on. It’s been 10 years in that house. We have our chickens, our vegetable garden, we enjoy life out there in the county,” she said.

Kozelsky attends Mount Vernon Baptist Church and is a member of Garden Study Club.

Those wishing to donate to the museum can either come in and put money in the donation box or mail a check to 1 East Main Street Martinsville, VA, 24112.

There is also a donation portal on the museum’s website at mhhistoricalsociety.org.

STEM

(cont. from page 1)

challenge multiple times throughout the day.”

That same weekend, NCI’s FIRST Robotics Team, STAGS Team 1262, kicked off their 2024 season at Blacksburg High School on March 1-3 for the Chesapeake District Blacksburg VA Event.

The STAGS walked away from their first competition with awards for Team Spirit, Safety, Safety All-Star, and Best Cart. Their drive team fought hard and they advanced to Match

12 of the semifinals before being eliminated. The STAGS ranked 13 out of 25 with a record of 10-10-0.

“We are incredibly proud of our STAGS students,” said NCI Executive Director Joe Sumner, “They put in countless hours perfecting this robot for the competition in Blacksburg, and they haven’t slowed down since then in preparation for the next competition.”

Because of their performance in Blacksburg,

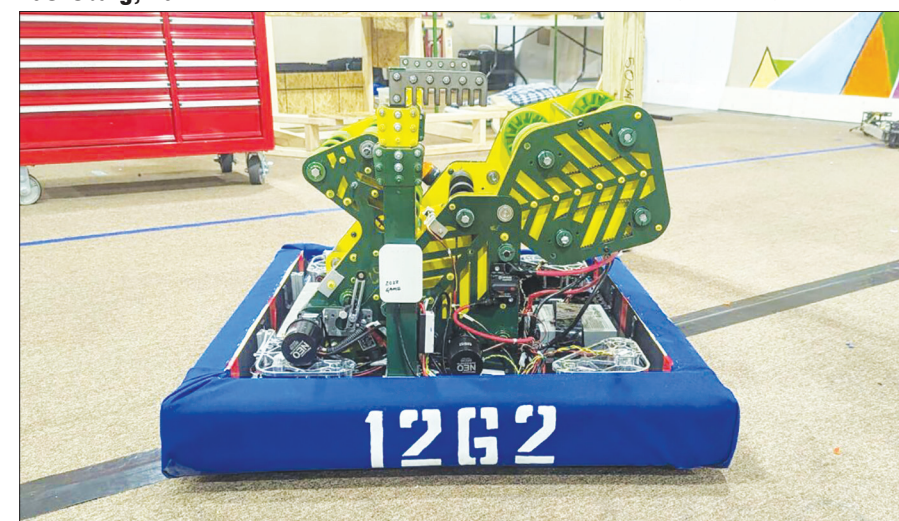
the STAGS have advanced on to the Chesapeake District Glen Allen VA Event at Deep Run High School on March 15-17. The STAGS are one of 30 teams who will be competing in Glen Allen. Spectators can view the competition live in person or on Twitch: <https://www.twitch.tv/firstchesapeake1>. All FIRST Chesapeake events are free and open to the public.



NCI’s FIRST Robotics Team, STAGS Team 1262, kicked off their 2024 season at Blacksburg High School in Blacksburg, Va.



NCI hosted fifth graders from Patrick Henry Elementary School. Students became ‘mission specialists’ for a day during the Virginia AFCEA Space Alliance (VASA).



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UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



2023 winning entry entitled "Highland Ponies"

CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION 2024

THEME:
"LANDMARKS OF VIRGINIA'S NINTH DISTRICT"

Congressman Morgan Griffith invites interested Ninth District high school students to participate in the 2024 Congressional Art Competition. Please submit a photograph of your original artwork to either the Christiansburg or Abingdon office by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 15, 2024. For specific guidelines, please contact Josh Hess at josh.hess@mail.house.gov or by calling one of the district offices.

Congressman Morgan Griffith's District Offices

323 West Main Street
Abingdon, VA 24210
(276) 525-1405

17 West Main Street
Christiansburg, VA 24073
(540) 381-5671

Griffith Announces Start of 2024 Congressional Art Competition

Congressman Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, announced the beginning of the 2024 Congressional Art Competition in the Ninth District.

"Each year, the U.S. House of Representatives sponsors the Congressional Art Competition for high school students. It's a great opportunity to see the artistic talents of Southwest Virginia students, one of whom will have the chance to have his or her work displayed in the Capitol. Last year, Katelyn Wheatley of Carroll County High School won the Congressional Art Competition in Virginia's Ninth Congressional District. Her artwork is entitled 'Highland Ponies,'" Griffith said.

"The theme for this year's contest is 'Landmarks of Virginia's Ninth District.' I look forward to seeing how the young artists of the Ninth District will use their talents in exploration of this theme," he added.

Interested students must

submit a photograph of their original artwork to either the Christiansburg or Abingdon district office by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 15 for consideration. Each entry must be accompanied by a completed student information release form, which is available by contacting a Ninth District office or visiting <https://morgan-griffith.house.gov>.

The winning artwork will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol complex for one year. In addition, the second and third place selections will be on display in one of the Ninth District offices.

To read the complete listing of rules and guidelines or download the Student Release Form for the Congressional Art Competition, please visit <https://morgangriffith.house.gov>. Faculty or students with any additional questions about the competition may contact Josh Hess at (540) 381-5671 or by email at josh.hess@mail.house.gov.

RW14 Preview Show set for May 4

A Preview Show for Rooster Walk 14 will be held at Pop's Farm on Saturday, May 4, featuring The Rooster Walk House Band w/ The Jared Stout Band + Lua Flora. Camping options available. Tickets are on sale now.

The Rooster Walk House Band is curated each year for Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival. The group of artists that are part of the House Band are all phenomenal musicians. The

House Band perform as artists-at-large throughout the Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival weekend (Memorial Day weekend each year). The Rooster Walk House Band preview show will feature Ron Holloway, Jeff Sipe, Josh Shilling, Slate Lacy, Jake Dempsey & Wallace Mullinax.

2024 Rives on the Road Season Passes Accepted.

Camping must be purchased separately.

Featured pets available at the SPCA



Flick has been with the Martinsville Henry County SPCA since December. He's a 4-year-old terrier pit-bull mix who's good with kids and calm dogs. Flick isn't great with cats and just wants a quiet home where he can laze around all day long.

Hoagie and Flick are both up to date on vaccines, including rabies, and are heartworm negative. Both dogs come with a microchip and have an adoption fee of \$100. To



Hoagie has been with the Martinsville Henry County SPCA since December. He's a 1-year-old rottweiler mix. Hoagie is best suited to a family with older children and no cats. Hoagie is a dominant dog who is picky about his canine friends and loves to play fetch.

adopt, visit the Martinsville Henry County SPCA at 132 Joseph Martin Hwy. in Martinsville, or visit their website to fill out an application.

Kiwanis Club invests in community

The Kiwanis Club of Bassett recently made some donations to community organizations.



In March, the club made a donation to Bassett High School Future Farmers of America. Pictured are (left to right), FFA Advisor, Alysha Lawless; FFA Secretary, Garry Hagwood; FFA Treasurer, Phaedra Keith; FFA President, Jasmine Bowers; Bassett Kiwanis Club Representative, Jim Franklin; FFA Reporter, Claire Howe; FFA Sentinel, Javion Saunders and FFA Advisor, Caitlin Tatum.



In February, the club gave a donation to the Bassett High School After Prom Committee. Pictured are Jim Franklin, representing the Kiwanis Club of Bassett, and Shannon Janney, representing the BHS After Prom Committee. (Contributed)

Debunking Motorcycle Myths

DMV Reminds Motorcyclists of the Importance of Training

Spring is just around the corner, and as the weather gets warmer, we will see more motorcyclists enjoying the ride. The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) Highway Safety Office is reminding riders to ensure they have a motorcycle endorsement and proper training before they put their bike on the road.

"As a fellow rider I know that the thrill of riding a motorcycle is unmatched, but I also know the importance of proper training," said DMV Commissioner Gerald Lackey, the Governor's Highway Safety Representative. "Whether you are just taking up riding or you've been riding for years, a certified training course will make you a better rider and it could save your life."

In 2023, there were 2,127 crashes involving motorcyclists on Virginia's roadways and 127 motorcyclists lost their lives. But this isn't all because drivers aren't paying attention. In Virginia, one-in-four motorcyclists are riding without a motorcycle endorsement and 76% of riders involved in a motorcycle crash had not completed a training course. To encourage riders to get the necessary training and prevent crashes, DMV is debunking some common motorcycle myths.

Motorcycle Myths:

I don't need a special endorsement on my license to ride a

motorcycle.

In Virginia operating a motorcycle without the proper license or endorsement could result in penalties that may include fines or even jail time.

I've been riding for years. I don't need a training course.

Training courses are about so much more than learning to ride. Certified training courses can help correct unsafe habits, remind you how to safely react when faced with an unexpected danger and brush up on your skills. Best of all, a Virginia Rider Training Program makes getting your motorcycle endorsement from DMV even easier.

I wear all my gear when I ride so training is just unnecessary.

While safety gear such as helmets, eye protection, proper clothing and gloves can save your life in the event of a crash, proper training can help prevent you from getting into that crash. Gear and training are a team that helps ensure you arrive alive.

I don't ride on interstates, so I'm way less likely to crash.

In 2023 87% of motorcycle crashes occurred on non-interstate roads. Where you drive doesn't matter if you aren't driving safely and aren't properly prepared for the unexpected.

Learn more about the facts of motorcycle safety and about Virginia Rider Training Programs at <https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/>.

Auction

2076 Reed Creek Drive, Bassett, VA 24055

Saturday, March 23, 2024 - 10:00 AM

****Pictures on Web Site/AuctionZip.com**

Directions: From Martinsville, Virginia take US 220 Business North, Continue on US 220 Business through Collinsville, VA, turn right onto Reed Creek Drive just past Nelson Auto. Go to House 2076.

Real Estate: 3 Bedroom Brick Split Level, Foyer, Large Covered Deck, 2-1/2 Baths, 2 Kitchens, Fire Place, Back Open Deck, Several Storage Buildings, Large Workshop, 2 Parcels, Security System, Central Heat/Air.

Personal Property Partial Listing: 5 Snap-On Tool Chest/Tools • Living Room Suite • 3 Bedroom Suites • Dining Room Suite • Corner What-not Cabinet • Roll-Top Desk • Large Gun Cabinet • Blanket Chest • Rotary Dial Wall Phone • Deck Furniture • 45 RPM Records • Old Farm Tractor • Band Saw • Radial Arm Saw • Table Saw • Welder • Air Compressor • Riding Lawn Mower • Many Hand Tools • Dollies • Drill Press • Antique Wood Cook Stove • Propane Patio Heater • Battery Charger • Fishing Rods/Reels • Meat Smoker • Router • Riding Mower Lift • Gas Post Hole Digger • Wire Welder • DeWalt Planer • Generator • Air Tools • Chainsaws • Fireplace Fry Pan • Mason Jars • Sewing Machine/Table • Chop Saw • Shovels/Picks/etc. • Stick Welder • Refrigerant Gauges • Golf Clubs • Car Jacks • Pipe Cutters • Walking Cane Duck Head/Eagle Head • Collection Bourbon Canister • Wall Pictures • Earth Globe • Homemade Quilts • 22 HP Riding Mower • Lawn Trailer • Extension Ladder • Mantel Clock • Roker Flat TV • Cut Glass Serving Pieces/Decanters • Assorted Glassware • Mr. Coffee Machine • Toaster Oven • Wine Glasses • Stoneware, Assorted Dishware • Microwave • Kitchen Utensils/Flatware/Cookware • Sanyo TV • Stone Crock • Linen/Towels/Blankets/Pillows • Oil Lamps • Corner Curio Cabinet • Vacuum Cleaner • Ceramic Figurines • Roll-out Bed • Secretary • Washstand/Bowl/Pitcher • Porch Glider • and many more items.

Terms/Conditions - Real Estate to be sold at 10 am. Inspections as a requirement of sale to be done prior to Auction. Selling "AS IS" NO Guarantees / No Warranties of any kind 10% Earnest Money Deposit, 5% Buyers Premium. Personal Property: Selling "AS IS" No Guarantees, No Warranties" Selling to Highest Bidder. 10% Buyers Premium. Announcements made day of Auction supersede all prior advertisement information. Estate Sale of A. Rea, Contact Auction Office for details.

ANOTHER PROFESSIONAL AUCTION CONDUCTED BY:

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Email: EvansAuctionCo@gmail.com • VAAR 433/028

Community Storehouse celebrates 23 years of service, surpasses 3 million meals served to the community



Community Storehouse is seeking concerned community members to join in its mission to provide nourishment, preserve dignity, and empower individuals and families to take an active role in their own well-being by donating at hungerfreemhc.org or at 128 E. Church St., Martinsville, VA 24112. The agency is currently behind in its essential services budget and needs monetary donations to continue to expand its reach. Individuals may also support the nonprofit by shopping its retail store Uptown in the former Leggett building. Proceeds from the store help cover overhead costs for the nonprofit services provided to the community, free of charge.

The Community Storehouse, a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting hunger in Martinsville and Henry County, announced its 23rd anniversary milestone, alongside the incredible achievement of surpassing 3 million meals served to residents of Martinsville and Henry County.

Since its inception in 2001, Community Storehouse has been committed to addressing food insecurity and providing vital assistance to individuals and families in need throughout the community. Through its unwavering dedication and collaborative efforts with volunteers, donors, and community partners, Community Storehouse has made a significant impact on alleviating hunger and improving the lives of countless individuals.

Community Storehouse is dedicated to serving seniors and individuals with disabilities by providing ongoing, essential food services.

We understand the unique challenges faced by these valued members of our community and believe that everyone deserves access to nourishing meals and the ability to live with dignity.

Through our comprehensive and compassion-

ate programs, we offer a lifeline of support, ensuring that no one is left to face hunger alone. From nutritious meal preparation to doorstep delivery, our team of dedicated volunteers and staff work tirelessly to meet the specific dietary needs and preferences of everyone we serve.

We go beyond the provision of food; we strive to foster independence, promote well-being, and create a sense of belonging. Our services not only nourish the body but also provide a vital connection to the community, reducing isolation and enhancing quality of life.

With a deep commitment to compassion and respect, we stand beside seniors and individuals with disabilities, empowering them to maintain their independence and live with dignity. Join us in our mission to make a lasting impact, one meal at a time. Together, we can ensure that no one in our community goes hungry or feels forgotten.

Over the past 23 years, Community Storehouse has continuously expanded its programs and services to meet the evolving needs of the community. From emergency food assistance and nutrition education to advocacy and com-

munity outreach initiatives, the organization remains steadfast in its mission to create a hunger-free community where all individuals have access to nutritious food and essential resources.

"We are incredibly grateful to our volunteers, donors, partners, and supporters who have been instrumental in helping us reach this milestone," said Travis Adkins, executive director of Community Storehouse. "This achievement underscores the collective impact we can make when we come together to support our neighbors."

As Community Storehouse celebrates its 23rd anniversary, the organization remains dedicated to its mission of fighting hunger and improving food security for individuals and families across Southside.

With ongoing support from the community, Community Storehouse looks forward to continuing its efforts to create a hunger-free future for all.

For more information about Community Storehouse and how you can get involved, please visit www.hungerfreemhc.org.

Harvest Youth Board hosts 3rd annual Books and Bunnies event



Youngsters aged 12 and under are invited to the Harvest Youth Board's annual Books and Bunnies event. It will be held on Saturday, March 23, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Monogram Smith River Sports Complex Amphitheater.

The third annual Books and Bunnies event will take place at the Monogram Smith River Sports Complex Amphitheater on Saturday, March 23, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. In case of inclement weather, the rain date is scheduled for March 30.

When announcing the event, the Harvest Youth Board noted it will be building on the success of last year's event, which attracted more than 700 people and more than 400 books distributed. The Harvest Youth Board eagerly anticipates welcoming community members once again for this free event.

Youngsters aged 12 and younger are invited to the event that not

only celebrates the joy of reading but also provides an opportunity for families to engage with various local youth-serving organizations and resources. Every child attending receives a free age-appropriate book. Face painting, inflatables, pictures with the Easter Bunny, and balloon animals are a few of the fun activities planned for the day. Food trucks will also be on-site.

"The (Harvest Youth) Board wanted to create an initiative that would combine literacy and fun. Books and Bunnies is an opportunity to show that reading is fun by providing free books coupled with other engaging activities like egg

hunts and face painting," said Nayati Patel, chairman of the Harvest Youth Board.

Two egg hunts are scheduled, one commencing at 11:30 a.m. and the other at 1 p.m., during which 26,000 eggs will be distributed. Magic "Harvest Eggs" will be hidden during each race. The children who discover these green sparkly eggs will be awarded a special basket filled with a book and other goodies.

This event can only be made possible with exceptional volunteers. Each year, approximately 45 individuals, mostly under the age of 18, volunteer with the Harvest Youth Board to make the event happen.

Volunteer tasks include setting up the egg hunts, distributing books, and monitoring event activities.

"The Harvest Youth Board organizes Books and Bunnies to shed light on youth-serving organizations within the community and to spread awareness about the importance of reading and early learning," said Ava Grant, Harvest Youth Board vice-chair and special events committee chairman. "Books and Bunnies continues to grow every year. We cannot wait to see the smiling faces of local children during the event!"

To find out more about the Harvest Youth Board, visit <https://www.harvestyouthboard.org>.

UP to host Shamrock Scramble event

Uptown Partnership (UP) will kick off its inaugural "Shamrock Scramble" event on March 17 to promote several businesses in Uptown Martinsville.

The multi-day promotional event will reward shoppers with a prize if they collect five "clovers" from the participating businesses.

To qualify for the prize, shoppers must visit one of the participating businesses and retrieve a "Clover Pouch." Each business will have its own clover-themed stamp. To receive a stamp, the shopper must purchase one item or service from the business. Once the item or service has been purchased, the business will place a stamp on the shopper's Clover Pouch. If the shopper collects five clover stamps, then they can return the Clover Pouch to Uptown Partnership and receive a coupon for a special deal at any of the participating businesses.

The participating businesses and their respective prizes are:

- The Ground Floor – Free any size drink
- Sweet Heaven Candy Shop – Free ice cream
- Walsh's Chicken – 20% off the price of your next meal

- Uptown Pinball – Free admission

- Blu Tattoo – 10% off the price of a tattoo

- Gill's Fitness – Free week of training for new clients

- The Wellness Bar – 20% off the price of your first drip

- Uptown Bellas – Free gift bag

There is no limit on how many stamps can be collected from any one business; however, only one stamp will be given per purchase.

"It pays off to shop Uptown and I hope this promotional event really drives that message home," said Spencer Koger, Executive Director of UP. "There are a number of wonderful businesses who agreed to participate in this first-time event and our organization truly appreciates their support. I'm really excited for this event and I can't wait to see everyone walking around Uptown with their Clover Pouch."

The promotional event will run until March 31. Once shoppers have received five stamps, they can either call (276) 226-3008 or email spencer@uptownpartnership.com to schedule a time to exchange their Clover Pouch for their redeemable coupon.

CLOVER POUCH



Obtain a stamp from any of the following businesses upon purchase of any of their items or services: The Ground Floor, Sweet Heaven Candy Shop, Walsh's Chicken, Uptown Pinball, Blu Tattoo, Gill's Fitness, The Wellness Bar, Uptown Bellas

One stamp per purchase.



Collect 5 clovers between March 17-31 and return your pouch to Uptown Partnership to redeem your coupon. Call (276) 226-3008 to schedule an appointment for return.



Clover Pouch can be exchanged for any of the following coupon prizes:

- The Ground Floor -- Free any size drink
- Sweet Heaven Candy Shop -- Free ice cream
- Walsh's Chicken -- 20% off the price of your meal
- Uptown Pinball -- Free admission
- Blu Tattoo -- 10% off the price of a tattoo
- Gill's Fitness -- TBD
- Wellness Bar -- 20% off the price of your first drip
- Uptown Bellas -- 20% off the price of your haircut

Clover Pouch

Five dead in Sunday plane crash

Five people died in a plane crash Sunday, according to a release from the Virginia State Police and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

A twin-engine IAI Astra 1125 crashed near Ingalls Field Airport in Hot Springs, Virginia, around 3 p.m. local time on Sunday, March 10. Five people were on board. The FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) will investigate. The NTSB will be in charge of the investigation and will provide further updates.

The state police reported that the flight originated in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and was scheduled to land at Ingalls Field. According to the plane owner's attorney and family friend, the occupants

were attending an event at the Homestead Resort in Hot Springs, Va. The occupants of the aircraft were the pilot and the co-pilot, (both men) and three passengers, (a man, a woman and a male juvenile). There were no survivors in the crash.

The plane was short on its approach to the runway, struck the trees and then the hillside, the VSP reported.

The remains have been sent to the Virginia Office of the Medical Examiner, Western District for positive identification. There will be no further updates from the Virginia State Police until such a time when the remains have been identified and family notification has been made.

Freedom Libraries open in Va. correctional centers

Freedom Reads, a national non-profit, opened 32 "Freedom Libraries" at the Virginia Department of Corrections' (VADOC) Dillwyn and Buckingham correctional centers.

Eighteen libraries will be placed in housing units at Buckingham and 14 libraries will be installed at Dillwyn, providing inmates access to the 500-book collections.

This donation follows the 2023 opening of 12 "Freedom Libraries" at St. Brides and Indian Creek correctional centers, respectively, bringing the total number of donated "Freedom Libraries" to 56 in VADOC facilities.

Freedom Reads founder Reginald Dwayne Betts, a 2021 MacArthur Fellow and Yale Law School graduate who was sentenced in Virginia to nine years in prison at age 16, established "Freedom Libraries" to create spaces to encourage community in correctional facilities.

These library openings also mark the 19th anniversary of Betts' own release date. To commemorate the anniversary, Betts is performing his one-man show "FELON: An American Washi Tale," in which he explores the lingering consequences of having a criminal record, fatherhood, the power of literature, and love, at both Dillwyn and Buckingham correctional centers today. The show is based on Betts' 2019 poetry collection "FELON," winner of the NAACP Image Award.

Each bookcase is handcrafted out of maple, walnut, or cherry and is curved to contrast the straight lines and bars of prisons.

"These donations are so greatly

appreciated by the Virginia Department of Corrections," said VADOC Director Chad Dotson. "We all know the true inspiration books can bring to our lives, and I hope these libraries will bring messages of hope, inspiration, knowledge, and wisdom to the inmates at Buckingham and Dillwyn. Thank you to Mr. Betts and the Freedom Reads team for their donation, which will help to prepare inmates for successful re-entry. That successful re-entry in turn leads to long-term public safety in the Commonwealth."

"I grew up in Virginia prisons and it was in those cellblocks that I discovered a love for all that a good book can do for you," said Freedom Reads Founder and CEO Reginald Dwayne Betts. "Bringing Freedom Libraries here, sharing my artistry with men I served time with, and hoping to be a part of this beacon of possibility we all need is a real honor. It was men in Virginia prisons that reminded me I mattered when I didn't believe it to be true and this is something of a thank you."

Books in the "Freedom Libraries" have been carefully curated through consultations with hundreds of poets, novelists, philosophers, teachers, friends, and voracious readers, and include works by contemporary poets, novelists, and essayists alongside classic works from Homer's "The Odyssey" to the "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass."

For more information, visit <https://freedomreads.org>.

Professional among sectors to lead initial filings

The number of initial unemployment insurance claims increased in the latest filing week to 2,174 and was at typical pre-pandemic volumes, data from Virginia Works (the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement) suggests.

Professional, scientific, and technical Services led the number of initial filings for unemployment insurance.

For the filing week ending March 2, seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia totaled 2,174, which was an increase of 178 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 15,827, which was an increase of 91 claimants from the previous week

but an increase of 36 percent from the 11,615 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of continued claims. Of those, over half (57 percent) of continued claims were from administrative and support and waste management (2,157), professional, scientific, and technical services (2,090), construction (1,509), manufacturing (1,342), and health care and social assistance (1,284). 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.

Speedway announces new entitlement partner

DUDE Wipes will be the entitlement partner for the NASCAR Xfinity Series race on Saturday, April 6, according to a release from the Martinsville Speedway. Drivers will take on the historic half-mile in the DUDE Wipes 250 as part of the triple header NASCAR race weekend.

"Whenever we welcome a new partner to the Martinsville Speedway family, we always search for someone whose values reflect our own," said Speedway President Clay Campbell. "DUDE Wipes is an innovative organization filled with risk-takers and passionate people. For those reasons, we know they'll mesh perfectly with our one-of-a-kind fans and venue."

Though this isn't the first NASCAR rodeo for DUDE Wipes, who have partnered with drivers like Anthony Alfredo in the past, this will be the first time the flushable wipes company will be the entitlement partner for a NASCAR race.

DUDE Wipes was an idea that sprung from the heads of childhood friends living in Chicago back in 2010. The group, consisting of Sean Riley, Brian Wilkin, Ryan Meegan and Jeff Klimkowski, appeared on the ABC reality TV program Shark Tank in 2015 to promote their product, securing both interest and investment from "shark" Mark Cuban. From there, the company skyrocketed to success, becoming available in 20,000+ stores nationwide.

"We are thrilled to be the title

sponsor for the DUDE Wipes 250 at such a prestigious track like Martinsville Speedway," said Co-Founder and Chief Marketing Officer of DUDE Wipes Ryan Meegan. "Over the last five years or so we've been able to build up a great amount of brand affinity with the NASCAR community through our partnership with Anthony Alfredo and in 2024 we wanted to engrain the brand even more into NASCAR. This is a huge opportunity to accomplish that & when the opportunity presented itself with Martinsville, we jumped at the chance. DUDE Wipes will be bringing a clean, skid-mark free weekend to Martinsville Speedway!"

The DUDE Wipes 250 is part of a triple-header race weekend at Martinsville Speedway. The weekend kicks off on Friday evening with the NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series Long John Silver's 200 on April 5.

Then, on Saturday, April 6, drivers in the NASCAR Xfinity Series will compete in the DUDE Wipes 250, followed by Sunday's NASCAR Cup Series Cook Out 400.

Tickets for the upcoming race weekend at Martinsville Speedway, and the DUDE Wipes 250, are available for purchase via phone at 877-RACE-TIX or online at www.martinsvillespeedway.com.

Stay connected to Martinsville Speedway on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and the NASCAR Tracks App.

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HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Baby Cakes offers sweets and more



Baby Cakes celebrates their grand opening with a ribbon cutting.



Baby cakes on display at the store's counter.



Mushrooms and flowers decorate Baby Cake's interior.

By Jessica Dillon

Baby Cakes is officially open, after a March 9 ribbon cutting was held at the shop, located at 2468 Kings Mountain Road. The shop is owned by Mackenzie Carter, who has been baking since the age of 13 and worked at Sweet Revenge in Eden for 5 years. The store had a softer opening the day before Valentine's Day.

Carter's mother, Kerri Carter, said that the store had already made more than 500 sales since opening, and sold more than 600 baby cakes during its grand opening celebration as customers formed a line at the opening. Sales so far have been a mix of specialty orders and baby cakes, the store's flagship item.

Baby cakes are small three-layer cakes held inside a cylinder. The shop has three main flavors. Baby Cakes regularly offers chocolate cake with chocolate icing, chocolate cake with vanilla icing, vanilla cake with chocolate icing, vanilla cake with vanilla icing, and a red velvet option. Specialty flavors will be announced at the start of

each week and rotate out. Customers can check on the store's social media accounts to find out what flavors are available. A menu board is also available inside listing the changing flavors for those who prefer to drop in.

Coffee, tea, and other beverages are also available for purchase at the location. Custom-order cakes can also be purchased in advance. Carter offers sculpted cakes. She said that she enjoys making hyper-realistic designs and enjoys sculpting. Sculpted versions of the baby cakes can be seen on the bakery's website along with the sculpted versions of regular-sized cakes. Some designs include Highland Cows, a stump with mushrooms, and a graduation cake.

"I like doing Is It Cake? designs, realistic looking cakes, and sculpting, that's my favorite thing to do," said Carter, who's been professionally baking for six years and studied culinary arts at Patrick & Henry Community College.

"I'm an artist as well, so even when I go home, I'm still sculpting stuff out of play and painting,"

she said. Carter hopes to eventually offer some of her other pieces of work for sale at the shop.

The store itself is themed after "Alice in Wonderland," a book originally written by Lewis Carroll and an English Garden. The inside is decorated with mushrooms and large flowers to give the bakery a fantasy aesthetic.

Many of the store's unique decorations were created by her mother, Carter said, and added that "art ran in the family."

Seating is available inside for customers who are looking for a unique spot to relax.

The bakery is currently set to be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mon. – Fri. and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, with its signature line of baby cakes for sale along with a smaller selection of full cakes.

Baby Cakes is currently taking special orders for events and weddings. Those interested in purchasing a cake can stop by the shop or call Baby Cakes for a quote on a custom design. Rush-order cakes are available for a fee.

Transmission upgrades needed to keep U.S. climate goals on track

Edwin J. Viera

Virginia News Connection

Environmental groups in Virginia are among those looking at how to improve and modernize electrical grid transmission.

Experts said the grid's age and current state aren't conducive to the boom in renewable energy projects being developed. The lack of preparation is being felt all over the country but particularly in Virginia, where the latest report card gives the state's grid operator the lowest score.

Quentin Scott, federal policy director for the Chesapeake Climate Action Network, said grid operators' long-term planning needs to consider increasing renewable energy.

"They don't really account for high usage of renewables," Scott pointed out. "They're not ac-

counting for the popularity of the Inflation Reduction Act. They're not accounting for state policies that require states to be 100% clean energy by 2050 or 2040."

Other experts feel grid operators like Virginia's PJM Interconnections need to hire more people to deal with interconnection requests. But increased demand for those jobs makes it harder to address the problem. Virginia's General Assembly passed House Bill 862 to make the process more efficient.

If grid operators cannot make the changes in time, around 80% of the emissions reductions outlined in the Inflation Reduction Act might not happen. Scott and other environmental advocates are worried about losing ground. Along with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

being a backstop authority for such projects, he noted microgrids can help improve the grid's efficiency.

"Solar panels that are on your roof or community solar projects; small businesses that erect you know, a wind turbine near their business," Scott explained. "Microgrids allow those sort of localized communities to have more planning, more control over their local resources."

Microgrids are also known to be weather resilient. Given the strong effects climate change is having on states' electrical infrastructure, it can be prudent to prevent blackouts. Research has shown if Texas had more connections with the Southeastern U.S., there would not have been as many power outages during the deadly 2021 winter storm.



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Spend an evening with Sotheby's Lucian Simmons at Piedmont Arts

Piedmont Arts will host Lucian Simmons of Sotheby's for a fascinating Art Talk in the galleries on Thursday, April 11. A reception will be held at 6:30 p.m. and the talk will begin at 7 p.m. This event is free but reservations are required. Reservations can be made by calling Piedmont Arts or online at PiedmontArts.org by Monday, April 8. This event is sponsored by Diversified Trust.

Lucian Simmons is vice chairman and worldwide head of Sotheby's Restitution Department and Senior Specialist, Global Fine Arts, Sotheby's New York. Simmons works extensively with art collectors and their advisors throughout North America and Europe and has been involved in the sale of some of the most significant artworks to come to auction in recent years including the 'Scream' by Edvard Munch (sold for \$119m in 2012), Bronzino's newly discovered self-portrait (sold for \$10.5m in January 2023) and Kandinsky's 'Murnau mit Kirche II' (sold for \$44.7m in March 2023). Simmons has worked on restitution and provenance issues since 1997 and has been involved in the resolution of claims to art works worth in

excess of \$1 billion. Simmons has spoken widely on art market issues and in particular on the displacement of art during WWII. He has been interviewed on the subject on television and radio and has appeared in a number of film documentaries. He gives regular seminars at universities and law schools across North America and has given evidence to the Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport of the House of Commons, London, to the European Parliament, Brussels, and to the Prague Conference on Holocaust Era Assets.

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Lucian Simmons, vice chairman and worldwide head of Sotheby's Restitution Department and Senior Specialist, will be at Piedmont Arts in April to discuss his work.

Sunday Afternoon Lecture to celebrate the Blue Ridge Regional Library



Sunday Afternoon Lecture Series

"The Blue Ridge Regional Library: Enriching Our Communities for 110 Years"
with Margaret Caldwell

March 17, 2024
3:00 P.M.

Historic Henry County Courthouse
1 East Main Street
Martinsville

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society will host its monthly Sunday Afternoon Lecture, "The Blue Ridge Regional Library: Enriching Our Communities for 110 Years" with Margaret Caldwell, on Sunday, March 17, 3 p.m., at the Historic Henry County Courthouse.

Caldwell, Chair of the BRRL Board of Trustees, will touch on each of the library branches' histo-

ries over the years. The BRRL has continuously adapted to changing times, and she will describe the resources, programs, and services available today which enable its staff to fulfill its mission. She will also share a model and plans for their Bassett Expansion project.

The history of the library system can be traced back to 1913 when a group of Martinsville Woman's Club members conceived the idea

to buy books to be circulated during the year and then donated them to form a library. The Martinsville, Patrick County, and Collinsville libraries joined forces in 1974 to create the Blue Ridge Regional Library. The Ridgeway and Bassett locations joined in the 1990s. The system's mission is to provide free, friendly service and access to timely materials that educate, enrich, and entertain the entire community.

John Phillips, president of the Historical Society, said, "At least five generations of my family have used our local library system. I re-

call fondly many afternoons at the Martinsville branch after school under the watchful eyes of Carl Dehart and the hamster in the activity ball. What a treasure our library system has been and continues to be."

Admission to the Sunday Afternoon Lecture series is free, made possible by corporate sponsors, Carter Bank & Trust and The Lester Group. The Historic Henry County Courthouse is fully handicapped accessible. The Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum will be open following the presentation.

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