

# HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, April 20, 2024

(USPS-6)

www.henrycountyenterprise.com • \$1.00

## Budget hearing focuses on local schools

**By Jessica Dillon**  
The Henry County Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on the proposed fiscal 2024-25 county budget, with the first half nearly exclusively focused on the school division's proposed budget. The second half of the hearing covered the overall budget.

Several community members signed up to speak, as one speaker after another supported the school division's proposed budget of \$109,370,899 million, which includes a request of \$23,987,617 million in local funds.

The current proposed county budget has \$21.6 million earmarked for the school division.

During the hearing, several residents said that granting the

school board's proposed budget is important.

Noting the importance of paying teachers well, Duane Whittaker, Magna Vista High School principal, said, "We had vacancies throughout the year at Magna Vista High School. Our most recent one was a math position, and I feel that the salaries that aren't on the proposed teacher salary scale have something to do with the number of applicants I received for that."

"I'm here to ask you to support the school budget that has been submitted because it's fair," said Mary Martin. "I can't find any reason we can't do it."

Jennifer Powell and Michael Palmer also voiced support for funding the school's full budget.

(See Budget p. 11)



Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis discussed the current arrangement for providing School Resource Officers at Carlisle School.



Duane Whittaker encourages the Henry County Board of Supervisors to fully fund the school division's budget request.

## Large-scale ground search suspended, as effort to find missing Fieldale man continues

The Henry County Sheriff's Office suspended the ground search in the effort to locate Kenneth Wayne Turner, 79, of Fieldale.

Turner was last seen by family members at his home, 76 Massie Dr., on Friday, April 12.

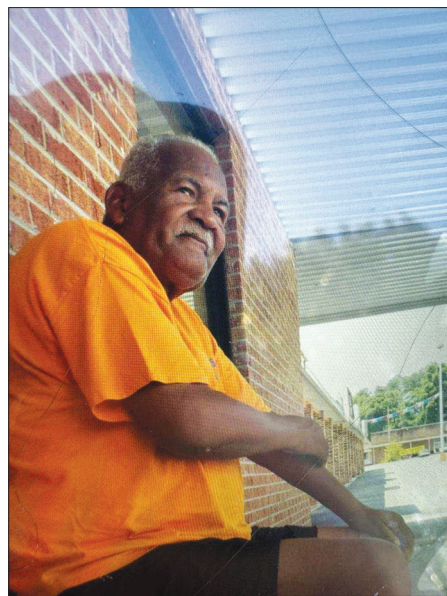
He was reported missing on Saturday, April 13.

The Sheriff's Office, along with the Henry County Department of Public Safety, Virginia State Police and Virginia D.W.R. Conservation Police conducted a four-day ground search for Turner in the Fieldale area. Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis said at the conclusion of the search on Tuesday, April 16, the Sheriff's Office consulted with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, Commonwealth Search and Rescue, and other search and rescue experts.

"Looking at the graphs and charts of the areas we've searched, we believe we had searched nearly every area of probability that he may have been, and that reached out to over a mile from his home," Davis said.

At this point, Davis said the large-scale ground search has been suspended.

"However, deputies from the Henry County Sheriff's Office will continue to search more specific ar-



Kenneth "Kenny" Wayne Turner, 79, of Fieldale, was last seen wearing navy blue sweatpants on Friday, April 12. Turner weighs 240 pounds and is 6-feet, 4-inches tall. He is believed to be on foot.

ea, and we'll focus our efforts on investigating the tips and leads that have come in from the community," Davis said.

Anyone who may have seen Turner or has information about his whereabouts is asked to call 9-1-1 or the Martinsville-Henry County Communications Center at (276) 638-8751.

## Parker remains pessimistic as pressure to remove video increases

**By Taylor Boyd**

Pressure to remove the video depicting the tragic murders of WDBJ employees Alison Parker and Adam Ward is increasing, with Sen. Tim Kaine sending a letter to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Kaine, D-Richmond, called for an investigation into Facebook and Meta's failure to remove content depicting the event.

Parker and Ward were murdered on August 26, 2015, by a former WDBJ employee during a live broadcast at Smith Mountain Lake.

Kaine said Andy Parker, Alison's father, has asked Google and Meta repeatedly, since March 2020 and October 2021, respectively, to take the content down. However, the videos remain accessible.

In the letter, Kaine urged the FTC to promptly respond to Parker's complaints and to work closely with him to address his concerns.

"I also encouraged the FTC to explore all possible avenues to ensure that companies like Google and Meta provide consumers with an experience free from violent and harmful content as claimed by their Terms of Service," Kaine said, and noted that Parker "continues to

suffer because companies like Google and Meta are still hosting content depicting this tragic incident on their platforms.

"I am concerned by the approach taken by these platforms, which shifts the burden of finding and removing content in violation of the platform's Terms of Services onto murder victim's families," Kaine said.

Parker remains pessimistic, although he believes the more pressure put on these social media platforms, the better.

Noting that Kaine's letter marked the second letter from a Virginia senator calling on the FTC to address the video's removal, Parker recalled the lackluster response to Warner's attempt in October.

"Four months later, they finally got back to the senator's office with some vague essentially, 'well we're studying it.' You know, like really? It's almost four and a half years later, and you're still studying it? So, they basically gave a non-answer," he said.

Parker said he believes the FTC will probably ghost Kaine as well. He said it's good to have allies and keep the pressure up, but he's not sure about the FTC.

"I don't know who they answer (See Parker p. 11)

## Phillips ends first session with three bills passed

**By Taylor Boyd**

Del. Eric Phillips, R-Martinsville, finished his first session with the Virginia General Assembly on Saturday, March 9, after winning a special election for the 48th District House seat in January when Del. Les Adams, of Chatham, stepped down.

Phillips said his first session "overall, was pretty much what I expected. I mean, being in the minority wasn't a lot of fun of course, but" the session met his expectations.

"I expected there to be some heated floor debates, I expected there to be some big issues that were discussed that may or may not pass and some of them that would pass that the governor would ultimately veto," he said.

Phillips said that while he didn't have a lot of time to prepare for this session, his Re-

publican colleagues were helpful.

Phillips was elected on a Tuesday night and had to be in Richmond Wednesday morning for the start of the session.

"So, we had a deadline to enter our bills and budget amendments. It was certainly a blur the first few days because we were trying to get our legislation" filed, he said.

Many other delegates had been crafting their proposals



Del. Eric Phillips discussed his freshman session as a legislator. (Photo by Ray Reynolds)

since November, while Phillips only had two days.

Still, during his first session, three of his four bills passed through the House and the Senate, and two of his three budget amendments were included in the budget.

"All of my senior colleagues tell me that's really good for anybody, but particularly for a freshman. You know, excited to do a few good things," he said.

His first bill to pass (See Phillips p. 11)

was HB1451, which focuses on the Standards of Learning (SOL) eligibility for expedited retakes.

"The bill basically, all the public-school kids have to take the Standards of Learning test. What this does is it requires the Board of Education to allow any student grades 3-12 who

VISIT  
HTTP://WWW.  
HENRYCOUNTY  
ENTERPRISE.COM  
FOR MORE  
UPDATES



**SPECTRUM  
MEDICAL**

2 Convenient Locations

**Danville**

109 Bridge Street  
4th Floor

434-793-4711

**Martinsville**

1075 Spruce Street  
276-790-3233

**NO REFERRAL NEEDED  
UNLESS REQUIRED BY INSURANCE**

# Specialty Packaging Manufacturer to Expand Operation in Virginia

EPL America, LLC, a global specialty packaging manufacturer, is investing \$37.4 million to expand its manufacturing facility in the City of Danville. The company intends to invest in building upgrades at its current 200,000-square-foot facility and add new machinery that will allow it to grow into the beauty and cosmetic markets and serve customers interested in replacing existing plastic products with laminate tubes. The project will create 24 new jobs.

"EPL America's decision to expand its operations in the City of Danville shows that Virginia is a steadfast business partner for global companies and has a fertile ecosystem for advanced materials manufacturing," said Gov. Glenn Youngkin. "Virginia and EPL have worked together for more than 20 years, and I am proud that their leadership decided to reinvest in the Commonwealth of Virginia's comprehensive talent pool and growing manufacturing sector through this expansion."

"We are proud to have EPL expand in Virginia and the City of Danville," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Caren Merrick. "The Commonwealth offers the location, infrastructure, and robust workforce that attract companies like EPL, and I congratulate all the partners involved in securing this project that will create new jobs and contribute to a prosperous economy for local citizens."

"We at EPL are grateful to Governor Glenn Youngkin and the incentives provided from the state of Virginia," said Mauro Catopodis, President, EPL Limited Americas Region. "This

will strengthen our long-term commitment to the City of Danville and the Commonwealth of Virginia and help us become a bigger economic benefactor in the community. Thank you on behalf of our 315 employees in Danville and 3,700 worldwide."

"I want to thank EPL America for the investments it has made in Danville over the years, and I am thankful for the hard work of everyone who made this latest investment a reality," said Danville Mayor Alonzo Jones. "This expansion not only reinforces Danville's position as a great place to do business but also creates 24 new jobs in our community. We welcome EPL America's continued commitment to our city and look forward to the positive impact this expansion will bring to our region."

"The members of the IDA of Danville are excited by this most recent expansion by EPL America," said T. Neal Morris, chairman of the Danville Industrial Development Authority. "The 37.4-million-dollar expansion with the creation of 24 new jobs is a testimony to the success of this well managed and operated manufacturing operation. We are fortunate to have EPL America in Danville with its continued contribution to economic stability in Danville and the Commonwealth of Virginia."

"EPL has been an integral part of Danville's thriving manufacturing sector for over two decades, continually innovating through modernization of technology, processes, and equipment to ensure ongoing success for their workforce in the years ahead," said Linda Green, executive director of the Southern Virginia Regional

Alliance. "Their contributions to excellence in packaging keeps them at the forefront of the industry, guaranteeing their continued contributions to both the region and the Commonwealth."

"We applaud the success of EPL America LLC, which first located in the Danville area in 2002," said Del. Danny Marshall. "It is great that they are expanding locally and adding 24 more jobs. Every job is a story of support for our community and our families. We wish them continued prosperity in our region."

EPL America, LLC is part of EPL Group (www.eplglobal.com), a global leader in specialty packaging. EPL produces plastic laminated tubes for industries such as oral care, beauty and cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals. Since the business started in India in 1984, EPL has partnered with the world's top fast moving consumer goods companies to produce the most innovative, sustainable, and attractive packaging solutions for their products. EPL Limited currently operates 21 factories across five continents. EPL began operations of its U.S. site in Danville, Va. in 2002.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership worked with the City of Danville and the Southern Virginia Regional Alliance to secure the project for Virginia. Governor Youngkin approved a \$90,000 grant from the Commonwealth's Opportunity Fund to assist the City of Danville with the project. Funding and services to support the company's employee training activities will be provided through the Virginia Jobs Investment Program.

## Williams offers review of General Assembly session

By Taylor Boyd

Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, spoke about his experiences in the 2024 General Assembly session at a recent meeting in Stuart.

With more than 30 new members of the House of Delegates, Williams said he was promoted in rank.

"We only had six or seven, but we lost a lot of people that were above. So, I went from 85 to 54. Then divide that basically in two, and now I'm sitting in the high 20s," he said.

With this, Williams said he was able to get a better position on the Transportation Committee, which will help with roads and air travel.

"There's a lot of stuff happening in" the aviation "field with Boeing coming to Virginia and also Dulles and Reagan (airports). There's a lot going on in transportation," he said.

Williams was also put on the Commerce and Labor Committee, specifically the Energy Committee, where Williams said he poked holes in bills sponsored by legislators on the other side.

"One of the things was \$15 an hour for farm labor, and so you can't imagine what \$15 an hour would do to our food prices. I explained that, and they still don't care. Truly, they don't care," he said.

Williams said there was once a conversation about Jiff Peanut Butter and the price increase.

"The Democrats came in and said, 'well, you can buy Food Lion peanut butter and it's cheaper.' As if they were going to say the generic is cheaper. So, I told them, 'we used to have a Food Lion, and now we don't. We have a food desert,'" he said.

Williams said he worked on public safety issues as a member of the Criminal sub-committee, and added that he's the only lawyer to ever practice criminal law that sits on the criminal sub-committee, "which is insane, but it is what it is. So, I was very regularly showing them the error in their ways," he said.

Williams said one bill he remembers is when some sub-committee members wanted to make trace evidence of drug use anything under an ounce.

"That's not trace, that's felony distribution. I pointed that out, I said, 'look you're telling me under an ounce you can do cocaine, heroin, and fentanyl.' And they were just like, 'well, yeah,'" he said.

Williams said the Northern Virginia (NOVA) Democrats also had a lot of control this year, and believed they were vengeful in intentionally trying to kill every single Republican's bills.

"They said no wins for Republicans," he said.

One bill he brought up and was happy with involved Appalachian Power. In this bill, instead of an



Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, discussed the recent 2024 General Assembly Session.

increase on December 1, it would change the date to March 1, which meant it would avoid Christmas, winter, "and a number of things," he said.

That bill did not pass, Williams said, and added that one Democrat from Herndon, "which is about as far north as you can get from here, has not a single Appalachian Power rate payer in the district. She killed it along with like four or five other Democrats."

Williams said he approached them to ask what he should tell his constituents when he returned home after session, and "she said, 'well, you know, maybe next year,'" he said.

One bill that did pass was brought to him by Clint Weidhaas, the chief of Patrick Springs Volunteer Fire Department. Williams said Weidhaas notified him that volunteer fire departments could not bill insurance companies for the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) they provided.

"Which is striking. I didn't even realize" it, he said, and added that he believes the bill will be signed by the governor soon.

In total, seven of Williams' 22 proposed bills passed the Senate and the House of Delegates. He also proposed eight commending resolutions including those commending the Patrick County High School Baseball Team, Howell's Grocery Store and Restaurant, commending the Galax High School football team, and others.

Solar farms and solar energy have been a battle at the state level, Williams said.

"Some of the bills they brought this year, for instance, take all the local authority over approval of these and send it back to Richmond, which is crazy. There's been some controversy about how much solar could be brought into a county, there were some bills about that," he said.

However, Williams said many so-called solar bills died.

"There were just too far, a lot of them very expensive, just sort of ramming it down your throat legislation. That's where it ended up, still at the local level," he said.



Fertilizing in spring can help a lawn recover from the previous summer and winter, ensuring it's lush and green when the summer entertaining season arrives.

## The basics of fertilizing a lawn

Spring marks the return of lawn and garden season. Lawns often bear the brunt of winter's wrath, so spring is a great time to nurse them back to health, and fertilizing can be an essential component of that process.

Fertilizing a lawn can be intimidating. An array of fertilizers, with each seemingly designed to address a different issue, can make homeowners' heads spin when visiting their local lawn and garden center. However, fertilizing is a very simple task that any homeowner can tackle. In fact, fears about fertilizing are often unfounded and can be overcome with some basic knowledge of the process.

· Identify which type of grass is in the yard. The home improvement experts at HGTV note that turfgrass is divided into two categories: cool-season grass and warm-season grass. A local lawn and garden center can help homeowners identify which type of grass is in the yard, and this often depends on location. Fescue, bluegrass and perennial ryegrass are some examples of cool-season grasses, while Bermuda, Bahia, St. Augustine, and zoysia are considered warm-season grasses. Identifying which type of grass

is in the lawn is important because that will indicate when to fertilize. Cool-season grasses are typically best fertilized in early spring, while warm-season lawns can benefit from an application just before especially warm temperatures arrive.

· Survey the lawn to identify which spreader to use. A small yard or a thriving lawn with only a few bald or unsightly patches may not need a full application of fertilizer. In such instances, a hand spreader can

suffice. For larger lawns and areas, a broadcast spreader is the ideal option. Spreaders have multiple settings, and the fertilizer package will indicate which setting to utilize when using the product.

· Test the soil prior to purchasing fertilizer. The lawn experts at Pennington® note that a simple soil test can reveal soil pH and phosphorus and potassium levels. Soil tests can be purchased at most home improvement stores and lawn and garden centers, and they can help homeowners determine which fertilizer will most benefit their lawns.

· Water the lawn prior to fertilizing. The experts at Scotts® recommend a good watering a few days prior to fertilizing a lawn. Such an approach ensures the soil is ready to accept the fertilizer once it's applied.

· Follow the instructions carefully. Detailed instructions are typically provided on fertilizer product packaging. Once homeowners have identified and purchased the product they need, they can simply follow the instructions on the packaging, including how and when to water after application, which can make fertilizing less intimidating.

## Teaching of the Gospel

April 24-27 • 7 PM

April 28 • 9:30 and 10:30 AM

All are invited to hear a guest preacher teaching the gospel, on the theme of "Forgiveness of Sin", at the Chatham Heights church of Christ 2229 Old Chatham Rd, Martinsville

**This is a FREE event**

Please call Eric at 540-835-8061 for more information, or visit our website at <http://www.chathamheightscoc.com>

**Hope to see you there!**

Norris  
Memorial Services

Visit our website for pricing:  
[www.norrismemorialservices.com](http://www.norrismemorialservices.com)



1500 Kings Mtn Rd.  
Martinsville, VA,  
276-638-2778

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

## Meetings

### Tuesday, April 23

Board of Supervisors meeting, 3 p.m., Henry County Administration Building, Summerlin Room, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

Martinsville City Council Work Session, 5 p.m., City Municipal Building, 55 W. Church Street Martinsville.

Martinsville City Council Regular Session, 5 p.m., Council Chambers City Municipal Building, 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville.

### Wednesday, April 24

Community Advisory Board Meeting, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., City Municipal Building, 55 W. Church Street Martinsville.

### Thursday, May 2

Henry County School Board meets, 5:30 p.m., 1st Floor, Summerlin Room, Henry County Administration Building. Closed Session to follow.

## Events

### Friday, April 19

Bee Flight Festival, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Ave, Martinsville The inaugural Bee Flight Festival includes the YMCA Fun Run, Beegins With You Tea Party, Virginia, and the Piedmont Arts Earth Day Family Day that are taking place on April 20. The Reptile Festival is also part of the Bee Flight Festival and will run on both April 19 and April 20. The United Way will be present at the Museum of Natural History to educate the public on bees and give out educational resources. They will host a scavenger hunt at the museum, Lester Art Park, and Piedmont Art and YMCA. A logo contest will be present at the art garden and the United Way will have a few giveaways.

Reptile Festival, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Ave, Martinsville

### Saturday, April 20

Altrusa of Martinsville and Henry County will meet at 10 a.m. at First United Methodist Church in Martinsville.

Spring Craft Show, 9 to 5 at Bassett High School, 85 Riverside Drive, Bassett. Tickets are \$5. Children 5 and under are admitted free.

Bee Flight Festival, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Ave, Martinsville

The inaugural Bee Flight Festival includes the YMCA Fun Run, Beegins With You High Tea Party, Virginia, and the Piedmont Arts Earth Day Family Day that are taking place on April 20. The Reptile Festival is also part of the Bee Flight Festival and will run on both April 19 and April 20. The United Way will be present at the Museum of Natural History to educate the public on bees and give out educational resources. They will host a scavenger hunt at the museum, Lester Art Park, Piedmont Arts, and YMCA. A logo contest will be present at the art garden and the United Way will have a few giveaways.

Reptile Festival, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Ave, Martinsville

Healthy Kids Day, 8:30 a.m., Martinsville Henry County YMCA, 3 Starling Ave, Martinsville

High Tea, 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m., Beegins With You, 209 B Starling Avenue, Martinsville, VA

Spencer-Penn 13th Annual Pig Cooking, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Spencer-Penn Center, 475 Spencer Penn Rd, Spencer

Earth Day Family Day, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Piedmont Arts, 215 Starling Ave, Martinsville

Hometown Hero Night, 6 p.m., Hooker Field, 450 Commonwealth Blvd E, Martinsville

Victory Baptist Academy Charity Warehouse Liquidation Absolute Auction, 11 a.m., Victory Baptist Church, 90 Featherstone Dr, Collinsville

Altrusa of Martinsville Henry County Meeting, 10 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 146 East Main Street in Martinsville

### Sunday, April 21

Martinsville Police Department Mario Kart Tournament, 3 p.m., Tequilas Sports Bar and Grill, 1051 Spruce St, Martinsville

### Tuesday, April 23

Kindergarten Registration, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., MCPS Central Office, 746 Indian Trail Martinsville

MHC Longwood College/University Alumni Meet-Up 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., New College Institute, 191 Fayette St, Martinsville

### Wednesday, April 24

Kindergarten Registration, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., MCPS Central Office, 746 Indian Trail Martinsville

### Thursday, April 25

Kindergarten Registration, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., MCPS Central Office, 746 Indian Trail Martinsville

### Saturday, April 27

Local Authors' Book Signing, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., Imagination Lavender Farm, 3590 Green Hill Dr, Martinsville

Free Shred Day, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Martinsville Speedway, 340 Speedway Rd., Ridgeway

Auditions for House Band Music Revue, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., TheatreWorks, 44 Franklin Street, Martinsville

Bingo Fundraiser, 4 p.m., Heritage Event Center (former Bassett Country Club), 1230 Oak Level Road, Bassett. Proceeds to benefit the expansion of the Bassett Library. Door prizes; Silent Auction items; & concessions.

### Sunday, April 28

Woodland Plants of the Area: History, Ecology, and Uses, Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum, 1 E Main St, Martinsville

Auditions for House Band Music Revue, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., TheatreWorks, 44 Franklin Street, Martinsville

### Saturday, May 4

Memoir Writing Workshop, 10 a.m. to noon, , Imagination Lavender Farm, 3590 Green Hill Dr, Martinsville

Infinity 5k Ranch Run, 10 a.m., Infinity Acres Ranch, 136 Joppa Rd #4242, Ridgeway

### Monday, May 27

Henry County Memorial Day Ruck 22, 10 a.m., 1094 Virginia Ave, Martinsville

### Saturday, June 1

Infinity Acres Ranch 6th Annual Spring Carnival, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Infinity Acres Ranch, 136 Joppa Rd #4242, Ridgeway

## ONGOING

Bassett Train Station Farmers' market will be open from April 30 through September 24 on Tuesday's 5-7 p.m.

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 [brll.lib.va.us](http://brll.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.

### April 30 - September 24

Farmers Market, Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m., Bassett Train Station.

## Proposed PSA budget holds the line on rates

Henry County Public Service Authority (PSA) General Manager Dale Wagoner presented his proposed budget for fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025 to the PSA Board of Directors on April 15 in the fourth-floor conference room of the Henry County Administration Building.

The proposed budget holds water and sewer rates flat for the eleventh straight year. "Eleven years without a rate increase is quite the accomplishment and I applaud our staff for being able to continue to provide quality services in the absence of increased revenue," Wagoner said. "However, sustaining this approach indefinitely is becoming increasingly burdensome. The ongoing escalation in costs related to labor, electricity, chemicals, and materials presents a challenge to our organization moving forward."

Currently, the PSA charges residential users \$30 a month and non-residential users \$45 a month, both based on 4,000 gallons/month. Funds are included in the proposed budget to study the need for rate

increases in the future.

The overall budget came in at approximately \$14 million this year, which is a five percent reduction from FY24. The reduction in the budget is attributable to fewer capital expenditures and less debt service due to a completed loan repayment during FY24.

A three percent salary increase is included in the proposed budget for all PSA employees which will take effect on July 1. In addition, it contains a merit-based step increase for many employees that will take effect on September 1.

While PSA employees already receive full health insurance coverage, the proposed budget includes a 10 percent reduction in spouse and family coverage. This will not only ease the burden on employees with families, but also enhance the PSA's ability to recruit and retain dedicated staff members.

View copies of the full budget document or presentation: <https://www.henrycountyva.gov/182/Finance>.

## Bingo fundraiser to benefit Bassett Library Expansion Project

### By Jessica Dillon

A 31 BINGO Fundraiser will take place at the Heritage Event Center on April 27 at 1230 Oak Level Road., Bassett. Doors open at 4 p.m., and the event starts at 5 p.m. The event will benefit the expansion of the Bassett Library.

A silent auction, with items donated by several local vendors, and door prizes will be available.

The cost to play is \$20 per packet, which is 20 plays per packet/3 games per play and \$10 per extra. There will be a few special games that will have a separate ticket purchase option. Hot dogs will be sold along with other concessions on-site, and this is the first bingo game that the library has held.

The expansion project will allow the library to provide additional services to the community.

"It's going to be so beneficial for single mothers and elderly people who need to just drive up to a drive-in window and not have to even get out of a car," said Sherry Vestal,

Blue Ridge Public Library Board of Trustee member.

The expansion also will include a larger space for meetings and events, according to Vestal, who explained how essential the library currently is to the community.

"Everything pretty much is online now, and if you don't have internet access or you don't know how to use it, then your library is where you need to be," she said.

Vestal hopes for a large turnout so that more of the community can learn about the library and its mission.

"I hope that they can have a great time with their family that evening and go away happy," said Vestal. Vestal said, "I've heard a lot of people say they want to come, and we can accommodate it."

The board is considering additional events to fund the expansion, and if the inaugural bingo fundraiser is a success, then the library will look at hosting another one in the fall.

# OPINION

## Parenting in a cell phone era

We older generations have to protect ourselves from the younger generation.

Or — protect ourselves from their phones, to be more specific.

I first learned that when my daughter was a pre-teen. Like all the other girls her age at the time, she had opened a Tik Tok account (without my approval, of course) and she and her little friends were posting videos of themselves dancing.

Poor thing. I'm sure she expected compliments and support when she showed me one of her videos, but that didn't go the way she had planned.

I was appalled, and instead of applause, she was showered in lectures and warnings about the internet.

After the initial outburst slowed down, something else caught my attention: The background. She had taken this video in my bedroom, which I like to think of as my own private little place in the world. She had taken that video in the living room where a pile of laundry was on the couch, waiting to be folded, and papers and coffee cups were scattered about in a mess on the coffee table. The whole world would see our messes!

Thank goodness Tik Tok no longer remains a problem, but worrying about what the pictures show always will be. We have a strict rule now that pictures for whatever purpose can only be taken in a tidy area of the house.

But ...



**Holly Kozelsky**

But one day I was doing something silly — singing along to the radio and dancing around as I was sweeping, and out of the corner of my eye I caught a quick movement and heard a giggle.

I swerved and lunged. She ducked away laughing. I stretched around for her phone, and she held it away from me.

I gave her The Look, and she handed it over. She had snuck a video of me singing and dancing.

The heavens opened up and great flames of fury accompanied the Wrath of Mother: There will be no secret videos, ever, and no making fun of anyone, especially not a parent, done online or in any other manner electronically. (I can take it face to face, no problem, but I've always felt sorry for those poor mothers and grandmothers and fathers and grandfathers who are the brunt of jokes running rampant over the internet.)

There was no question left that if any secret video or photo were taken, and certainly if anything unauthorized would be shared, that phone would end up in the bottom of the ocean, never to be replaced.

You've gotta hit 'em where it hurts.

## Courage

One of my favorite movies has always been The Wizard of Oz.

When my children were younger, I would often, in trying to teach them, recite the famous lines of the Cowardly Lion.

"What makes the flag on the mast to wave?"

"Courage!"

"What makes a King out of a slave?"

"Courage!"

One day as I was driving, a little voice piped up from the car seat in the back.

"Daddy, has that ever happened? Has the flag on the mast ever waved because of courage?"

I thought for a minute, and several examples came to mind, including the United States War of Independence against Great Britain, which makes our beloved stars and stripes on the mast to wave.

But on that occasion, I responded with the 1948 Israeli War of Independence, and the movie Cast a Giant Shadow.

The movie follows U.S. Army Colonel David Marcus, who is played by actor Kirk Douglas. Colonel Marcus, who is of Jewish faith, feels the call to return to duty in order to help the nascent Israel form an army.

The Jewish people had never completely left the Holy Land. And after (a) promises by the British government in 1917, (b) the Holocaust during WWII and (c) a United Nations resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in 1947, many Jewish refugees returned to the Holy Land. They came to form a Jewish State in British-held territory as they were promised.

Many of the Arab nations were opposed. The British left! And the Jewish people fought for independence.

They had so much determination and courage, that as the film depicts, in one of their battles, some of the Jewish charged forward without knowing how to click off the rifle's safety. Even though they couldn't fire their weapons, courage spurred them into charging against daunting odds.

Courage made the flag of Israel on the mast to wave.

And that is what I told my son.

I recalled that incident recently as I traveled to Israel.

On the trip, I talked to one of the former residents of the Nir-Oz Kibbutz. Nir-Oz is one of many villages that were ambushed by Hamas during their October 7 attack. We were shown where civilians died and where houses were burned and bombed.

After that we went to the outdoor music festival site where more than 250 attendees were murdered. Hamas videos of the attacks were circulated online and on social media.



**Morgan Griffith**

Representative

Visiting the site, we spoke to a twenty-year-old survivor, who is alive today only because she is a tiny girl. In a frightened state, she hid in the back of a small bomb shelter. She was shielded from gunfire by the bodies of the dead on top of her.

She told us she could hear Hamas soldiers laughing as they fired into the shelter.

Her boyfriend was killed in the attack.

Nonetheless, she affirmed that life has to go on, and that Israel must continue.

I am asked about stopping Israeli efforts to eliminate Hamas. Hamas supporters often cite the loss of innocent Palestinian life.

War is always a horrible thing!

Even in war, minimizing death is important.

But since Hamas took control of Gaza in 2007, they have consistently shelled Israel, particularly in Israel's Gaza envelope.

Hamas adheres to their "from the river to the sea" concept, threatening the very existence of Israel and the Jewish people.

Further, Hamas has no problem using Palestinian civilians as shields from gunfire and it takes refuge in hospitals and homes.

Hamas started the current war when 3,000 Hamas soldiers crossed the border into Israel and targeted civilians, men, women, and children, and brutally murdered the defenseless.

In the attack, it is estimated that Hamas killed approximately 1,200 people. Over two hundred were kidnapped, and some are still hostages as of this writing, including the son of the man who gave us the tour of Nir-Oz.

As the young lady at the festival testified, they must have the courage to go on.

Israel has come to recognize they have no choice but to eliminate the terrorist organization Hamas, because Hamas is determined to spend all of their time, efforts and money to eliminate the State of Israel.

While I continue to pray for peace, without the courage of the Israelis to live on and defend themselves, Israel would not have a flag on the mast to wave.

What makes the flag on the mast to wave? Courage.

Call my offices with questions, concerns, or comments: Abingdon, (276) 525-1405; Christiansburg, (540) 381-5671, or via email at <https://morgangriffith.house.gov/>.

## Congressional staff to hold local hours

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith's staff will hold office hours in the City of Martinsville and Patrick County on April 24.

Hours in Martinsville are 10 – 11:30 a.m., City Hall, Council Chambers, Second Floor, 55 W. Church Street.

Staff will be in Patrick County from 12:30 – 2 p.m. in the Patrick County Administration Building, Conference Room, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart.

Call the Christiansburg Office at (540) 381-5671 or the Abingdon Office at (276) 525-1405 with any questions.

### Super Crossword

#### APPLICATION PROCESS

- |                                      |                                       |                                   |   |  |                                |   |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>ACROSS</b>                        | 1 Big trucks                          | 62 Primer for a wall, e.g.        | 115 Writer Calvino  | 3 Pertaining to an opening of the larynx | 52 Slippery road condition     | 95 Ugly foe of Popeye   |
| 5 "Serial" podcast host Koenig       | 70 Outdoor enclosure for a tabby      | 72 Abundant                       | 117 Ethiopia's — Selassie   | 4 Former jet to JFK                      | 54 "The Hunger Games" — escort | 96 Neverending  |
| 10 Brothers Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan | 74 Despot Amin                        | 73 Cow sound                      | 118 Ovid's lang.  | 5 Mix, as batter                         | 55 Blueprint data, in brief    | 97 Not deserting  |
| 15 Like GI garb, often               | 75 It's often played during a massage | 77 Cur's warning                  | 119 Tubers often candied  | 9 Furry feet in back                     | 56 From Dublin or Cork         | 98 Frightful flies  |
| 19 Woeful things                     | 78 "Let us spray," e.g.               | 81 Honking birds                  | 120 Engine speed meas.  | 8 King topper                            | 57 Jason's wife, in myth       | 100 Like always   |
| 20 Bingham of "Baywatch"             | 79 Recognize                          | 82 Old Jewish ascetic             | 121 By way of   | 9 Furry feet in back                     | 58 "Ta-tal," in Tours          | 102 "Ode — Grecian Urn"   |
| 21 Slobber                           | 80 Central Asia's — Sea               | 84 Snootiness                     | 122 Tattooist's supply  | 10 Biblical utopia                       | 60 Central Florida city        | 103 Costa — Sol   |
| 22 Nivea rival                       | 81 Hornking birds                     | 87 Cur's warning                  | 123 Tatooist's supply   | 11 Shirt part                            | 61 Crayon stuff                | 104 Use as a skating surface                                      |
| 23 Outfit                            | 82 Old Jewish ascetic                 | 89 Snake's warning                | 124 Otherwise   | 12 Clemente of baseball                  | 63 Less of a lie               | 105 Mount — College (Elaine Chao's alma mater)                    |
| 26 Lassies                           | 83 Snootiness                         | 90 Not bogus                      | 126 What eight answers in this puzzle might say if they could talk? | 13 Oompah band genre                     | 64 Louvre architect            | 106 12-year-old kid, say  |
| 27 All upset, with "up"              | 84 Snootiness                         | 91 Small plateau                  | 131 Increase, with "up"   | 14 Tooth on a gearwheel                  | 65 Adjectives modify them      | 108 Set in place  |
| 28 "... flaw — feature?"             | 85 Snootiness                         | 92 Fly without a co-pilot, e.g.   | 132 Internet sales  | 16 A Gulf state                          | 66 Message-leavers' cues       | 109 Gave the nod  |
| 29 Actor Knotts                      | 86 Snootiness                         | 93 Give relief to                 | 133 Increase, with "up"   | 17 Patroler around a food court          | 68 Astronomer Tycho — brand    | 111 — City (Ohio town named for William Henry Harrison's moniker) |
| 30 Wrung (out)                       | 87 Cur's warning                      | 94 Choir female                   | 134 Villain in "The Avengers"                                       | 18 Bivalve mollusks                      | 69 Mattress brand              | 114 Theatricalize   |
| 32 Deli classic                      | 88 Snake's warning                    | 95 Responses to massages          | 135 609-homer   | 24 Sweltering summer day                 | 71 Fierce female feline        | 116 Like sheep  |
| 33 Bother a lot                      | 89 Snake's warning                    | 96 Responses to massages          | 136 AC — (big name in auto parts)                                   | 25 Ivory, e.g.                           | 76 1972 Eric Clapton hit       | 120 Move, to a Realtor  |
| 35 Frank of rock                     | 90 Not bogus                          | 97 Responses to massages          | 137 Promotes heavily  | 31 Lion's hideout                        | 77 Chinese menu letters        | 122 Tattooist's supplies  |
| 38 Outward display of courage        | 91 Small plateau                      | 98 Responses to massages          | 138 Leg joint   | 34 Fast glance                           | 83 Aussie girl                 | 125 Green org.  |
| 40 Attachable with a click           | 92 Fly without a co-pilot, e.g.       | 99 Responses to massages          | <b>DOWN</b>   | 36 Burnt residue                         | 85 Newlywed man                | 127 Ocasek of The Cars  |
| 42 Hits, as a fly                    | 93 Give relief to                     | 101 Something revealed by a scale | 1 Most wealthy  | 37 Gp. once led by Arafat                | 86 "Got it, man"               | 128 Endeavor  |
| 44 Fill with love                    | 94 Choir female                       | 102 Something revealed by a scale | 2 Actress Douglas who starred in "Grace of My Heart"                | 38 Raft wood                             | 88 San Luis —                  | 129 Spying setup  |
| 45 "The X Factor," e.g.              | 95 Responses to massages              | 103 Something revealed by a scale | 41 Utmost   | 39 Soda brand                            | 92 Slightly excessive          | 130 Big name in civ. rights                                       |
| 47 Congeal                           | 96 Responses to massages              | 104 Something revealed by a scale | 43 Dickens' miser   | 41 Utmost                                | 94 "How cute!"                 |   |
| 49 Short sleeps                      | 97 Responses to massages              | 105 Something revealed by a scale | 46 Opposite of lge.   | 43 Dickens' miser                        |                                |   |
| 50 Diane once of NPR                 | 98 Responses to massages              | 106 Something revealed by a scale | 48 Three, to Fifi   | 46 Opposite of lge.                      |                                |   |
| 51 Gentlemen                         | 99 Responses to massages              | 107 Fly without a co-pilot, e.g.  |   | 48 Three, to Fifi                        |                                |   |
| 53 Breather                          | 100 Something revealed by a scale     | 108 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
| 56 Apple option                      | 101 Something revealed by a scale     | 109 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
| 59 Cow sound                         | 102 Something revealed by a scale     | 110 Like a famed Vatican chapel   |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 103 Something revealed by a scale     | 111 Like a famed Vatican chapel   |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 104 Something revealed by a scale     | 112 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 105 Something revealed by a scale     | 113 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 106 Something revealed by a scale     | 114 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 107 Something revealed by a scale     | 115 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 108 Something revealed by a scale     | 116 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 109 Something revealed by a scale     | 117 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 110 Something revealed by a scale     | 118 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 111 Something revealed by a scale     | 119 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 112 Something revealed by a scale     | 120 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 113 Something revealed by a scale     | 121 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 114 Something revealed by a scale     | 122 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 115 Something revealed by a scale     | 123 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 116 Something revealed by a scale     | 124 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 117 Something revealed by a scale     | 125 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 118 Something revealed by a scale     | 126 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 119 Something revealed by a scale     | 127 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 120 Something revealed by a scale     | 128 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 121 Something revealed by a scale     | 129 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 122 Something revealed by a scale     | 130 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 123 Something revealed by a scale     | 131 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 124 Something revealed by a scale     | 132 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 125 Something revealed by a scale     | 133 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 126 Something revealed by a scale     | 134 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 127 Something revealed by a scale     | 135 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 128 Something revealed by a scale     | 136 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 129 Something revealed by a scale     | 137 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |
|                                      | 130 Something revealed by a scale     | 138 Roll around in mud or dust    |   |  |                                |   |



Robbie Wade is pictured with Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis.



Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis and sheriff's deputy Brooke Mason

## Mason, Wade join HCSO team

Recently, Brooke Mason and Robbie Wade joined the team at the Henry County Sheriff's Office.

"We're excited to have them on board," Sheriff Wayne Davis said of

Mason, a deputy, and Wade, an investigator. "Their skills and experience will contribute to the collective efforts of keeping our community safe."

See more at [www.henrycountyenterprise.com](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)



# CLASSIFIED

## PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

All real estate advertised in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitations or discrimination based on race, color, sex or national origin," or an intention to make any such preferences, limitation or discrimination. Our readers are informed that all dwellings advertised in this paper are available on an equal opportunity basis. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate or employment which is in violation of the law.

**CLASSIFIED AD DEADLINE: MONDAY AT NOON**

Call (276) 694-3101

### SERVICES

### HELP WANTED

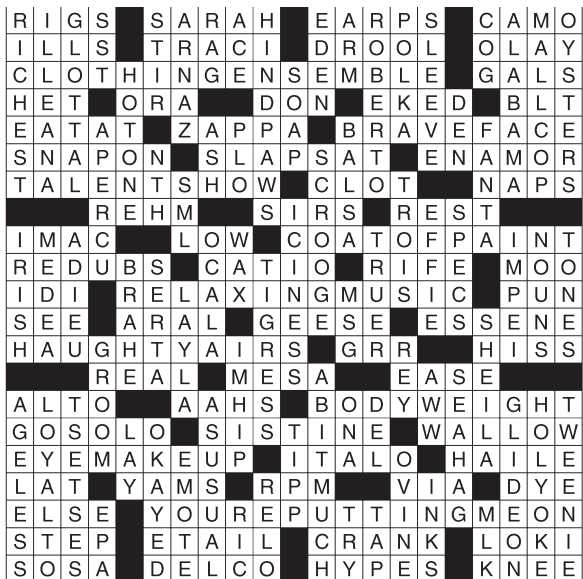
**Woodwrx, Inc.**  
Est. since 1988  
Carpentry/Cabinetry  
- fine woodworking,  
design, tile, closet & garage organizers, repairs, etc.  
Originally based in Palm Beach County- References. Bob Morehouse  
Phone: 276-930-1703  
Cell: 561-881-8292 E-Mail: Bob@Woodwrx.net  
Website: Woodwrx.net.

**Thomas Land Solutions LLC**  
Forestry mulching, overgrown property cleanup, bush-hogging, pasture & field reclamation, ATV & walking trails, hunting lanes, skid-steer, tractor and mini-excavator work. Free estimates. Call 276-229-9410 or Facebook Thomas Land Solutions LLC

**Fairy Stone State Park**  
Now Hiring Multiple Seasonal Positions! Beach Maintenance Ranger  
Beach Ranger (Lifeguard)  
Contact Ranger  
Food Service Ranger  
Maintenance Ranger  
www.dcr.virginia.gov/jobs  
DCR is EEO Apply online or at the park office:  
967 Fairystone Lake Drive  
Stuart, VA 24171  
276-930-2424  
Positions open until filled.

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

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



## ADVERTISE!

## P&HCC announces banquet partnership

Patrick & Henry Community College is partnering with ValleyStar Credit Union, a leading financial institution dedicated to community support and engagement, as the presenting sponsor of the upcoming 11th annual P&HCC Athletics Banquet to be held on April 18 at Patrick & Henry Community College's Stone Hall Gymnasium in Martinsville.

The P&HCC banquet is an annual event that celebrates the outstanding achievements of the student-athletes. It serves as a platform to recognize their hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence in the classroom, courts, and fields.

"As the presenting sponsor, ValleyStar Credit Union is honored to align with this important event that highlights the values of teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship," said Susan Chapman, Chief Marketing Officer. "This sponsorship underscores our ongoing commitment to supporting local initiatives that promote health, wellness, and

community development."  
"We are delighted to partner with ValleyStar Credit Union as the presenting sponsor of the 11th annual P&HCC Athletics Banquet," said Brian Henderson, P&HCC Assistant Vice-President for Student Engagement and Athletic Director. "At P&HCC, we believe in the power of sports to inspire and unite communities. This sponsorship allows us to continue to empower student-athletes and foster a culture of achievement."

The banquet will feature the guest speaker Lucas Jones, former P&HCC Baseball head coach, who led Lynchburg University to the 2023 NCAA DIII National Champions, and 2023 NCAA DIII National Coach of the Year. The evening will conclude with the awarding of the ValleyStar Credit Union Patriot and Lady Patriot of the Year awards.

The community is invited to join in celebrating the talent and dedication of our athletes. For more information about the event and sponsorship opportunities, please contact Brian Henderson at bhenderson@patrickhenry.edu.

## LEGAL

TOWN OF RIDGEWAY  
FY 2024-2025  
Proposed Budget

Pursuant to Code 15-2506 of the 1950 Code of Virginia as amended, and Federal Regulation 31 CFR51.14, a public hearing will be held by the Ridgeway Town Council on the 2024-2025 proposed budget to receive citizen comments and suggestions on Tuesday May 7, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Ridgeway Mayors Office, Ridgeway, Virginia. Town Council will consider any public input received prior to taking final action on the budget. Copies of the proposed budget are on file in the Office of the Mayor at 806 Main Street, Ridgeway, VA.  
Craig A. O'Der, Jr.  
Mayor

## LEGAL

HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC NOTICE  
INTENT TO REMOVE AN UNSAFE STRUCTURE  
RECORD OWNER:

Joe L. Perkins

Pursuant to Section 6-300 of the Henry County Code, NOTICE is hereby given that the owner shall remove the structure which might endanger the public health or safety of other residents of the County on or before thirty (30) days following this publication and failure to do so will result in the County having to remove the structure and the cost or expense shall be charged to an paid by the owner and collected as taxes are collected.

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION - Unsafe structure  
OWNER - Landowner: Joe L. Perkins  
PROPERTY LOCATION AND TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER -  
7741 Axton Rd. - Iriswood District  
Henry County, Virginia  
Tax Map: 75.5(000)000/087J  
Account Number - 171690000

County of Henry  
Charles Campbell  
Chief Building Inspector  
Telephone (276) 634-4615

## LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing has been scheduled for April 24, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. in the Sumnerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of a Special Use Permit for the following case:

Case S-24-02 Randy Allen Smith

A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a campground facility to accommodate up to 15 RV sites, 9 "glamping domes," and 6 primitive tent sites. The property is approximately 54-acres, located in the south west side of Lee Ford Camp Rd, approximately 1 mile west of Greensboro Rd, and across from the address of 1094 Lee Ford Camp Rd, in the Ridgeway District. The frontage along Lee Ford Camp Rd is zoned Suburban Residential District S-R with a rezoning application pending before the Board of Supervisors on April 23, 2024 at 6 p.m. to rezone to Agricultural District A-1. The land behind this frontage is already zoned as Agricultural District A-1. The Special Use request can only apply to Agricultural A-1 zoned property. The Tax Parcels involved in the request are 71.3(1)38-48,49A,50A,80A and 71.6/28.

The application for this request 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

### All Positions Available, SALE REP, ACCOUNTANT and MANY MORE

- Bookkeeper • Cashier • Payroll
- Customer Service
- Account Coordinator
- Finance • Business • Marketing
- Admissions Representative
- Office Clerk • Help Desk Assistant

As part of our expansion program, our company is looking for part time Work from home Account Manager and sales representatives, it pays \$1700 monthly plus benefits and takes only little of your time. Please contact us for more details. Requirements - Should be computer literate. 2-3 hours access to the internet weekly. Must be over 24yrs of age. Must be Efficient and Dedicated. If you are interested and need more information, contact: Kenneth.bbraun.com@outlook.com for more details.

## BEDDING SALE!

Hugh Selection To Choose From



We Have What You Are Looking For!!

**BEST PRICES AROUND!!**

**RIVERSIDE FURNITURE**

**1580 GREENSBORO ROAD  
MARTINSVILLE, VA**

**276-632-1286**

MONDAY-FRIDAY 9AM - 5PM • SATURDAY 9AM - 2PM

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

### Weekly Publication

Published Each Saturday

**Michael Showell, Publisher**  
**Debbie Hall, Editor**

dhall@theenterprise.net  
(276) 694-3101

**Wendi Craig, Advertising Manager**

advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com  
(276) 340-2445

### Give us your view:

The Henry County Enterprise encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publication. The Henry County Enterprise reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

If you have news about or an upcoming event for your organization, company or church, email dhall@theenterprise.net and/or call (276) 694-3101

## Advertise With Us!

What we offer: .....

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

What we have: .....

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

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

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

## HUGE SELECTION OF LIFT CHAIRS



Small, Medium and Large size chairs available

Starting at Only **\$795**

## Riverside Furniture

1580 Greensboro Road  
Martinsville VA

276-632-1286

Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm • Saturday 9am - 2pm

## Acorn Stairlifts & Liftkar Lifts



### ADL-Advances For

### Daily Living

Sales, Service, Install  
New or Used Rentals  
Will Service Other Brands

540-353-5869 <https://www.stairliftsadi.com/>



## 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](http://www.springlakeauctions.com).

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

We appreciate your business!

1069 SICKLE COURT, MONETA, VA 24121

## History of local libraries

Margaret Caldwell presented "Enriching Our Community for 110 Years," about the Blue Ridge Regional Library and its predecessors, for the March lecture.

Before public libraries started, reading groups and reading rooms were common ways for people to share books, Caldwell said; the Patrick County city hall had a reading room, for men only. In Martinsville, Clarence Kearfott set up a lending library in front of his pharmacy on Main and Bridge Streets.

In 1913, the Women's Club started a library in Martinsville's city hall. The Martinsville Library Association was formed in 1931, partly funded by the Works Progress Administration and Community Chest; the cost to join was the equivalent of today's \$20.24.

The Martinsville Library Association was formed after World War II. In 1946, T.D. Burch donated his house for a library. Bertha Bowles Shackelford and T.D. Burch donated their houses; the Andes house was purchased for \$25,000 and used as a temporary library.

The Bassett Library opened in 1939 in the Stone Block, with \$70,000 raised by the Bassett Garden Club and War Memorial Association.

In Patrick County, a library was established in the David K.E. Bruce House from 1941-1952. It was one of 10 area libraries Bruce created. Patrick County's Bookmobile started in 1946 to serve one-room schools.

In 1956 and 1960 the federal government passed the Li-



Concluding a talk on the history of the Blue Ridge Regional Library, Margaret Caldwell talks about the proposed expansion of the Bassett Branch. (Screenshot)

brary Services Act which provided funding for construction and the purchase of books.

The Martinsville Memorial Library, in the building that is still in use, was dedicated in 1963, with 9,000 volumes. Area organizations raised \$150,000 for it. Its present form is due to a \$1.5 million expansion in 1986.

The joint Martinsville-Henry County Public Library formed in 1972, adding its first branch, Collinsville, in 1974. The Patrick County Library, which for years had been joined with the Franklin County Library, separated from Franklin in 1974 and the next year asked to join the MHC library system.

The three-jurisdictional system, which still exists, formed in May 1975 when the City of Martinsville and the counties of Henry and Patrick signed an agreement. The Ridgeway branch was started in 1987 and opened in 1990, and the addition at the Bassett Historical Center & Library joined the system in the same year. The Great Expectations fundraiser in 1987 led to the Patrick Branch

expansion, and the JEB Stuart Historical Center was added to it in 1991.

The Bassett Library moved out of the building on Fairystone Park Highway it shared with the Historical Center into a storefront directly across it in 1998. The Bassett Historical Center left the BRRL system in 2012 and continues operation as an independent entity, specializing in genealogical research. Presently the Bassett Branch is undergoing a \$2.224 million expansion.

The Martinsville Branch offered the first public internet workstation in 1996 and the Family Place Library in 2008.

Today, the Blue Ridge Regional Library has 312,794 system catalogued collections, valued at \$6,840,074 and 43,373 cardholders. Patrons checked out 174,473 items, with another 22,953 digital check-outs.

The BRRL's website is [www.brll.lib.va.us](http://www.brll.lib.va.us).

A video of Caldwell's program can be seen on the Historical Society's YouTube page @martinsvillehenrycountyhs and its website, [www.mhchistorysociety.org](http://www.mhchistorysociety.org).



Dressed in Colonial garb, Gail Vogler describes how children played in the early days of settlement of America. (Photo by Holly Kozelsky)

## Toys of Colonial Times

Wearing a full pink skirt, ruffled white shirt, blue striped bodice, blue jacket and white bonnet, Gail Vogler showed attendees of the February Afternoon Lecture how children played during Colonial Days.

That was the time period from when European settlers came to North America, at the start of the 17th century, until the colonies became incorporated into the United States almost 200 years later. Children did not get many toys during those days, she said, and those they had were intended to teach as well as to pass time.

Toys were made with available materials such as cloth, wood, clay and string. Some, still popular today, included Bilboquet (tossing a ball into a cup), jacks, marbles (of clay), dominoes, cat's cradle and dice.

Dolls were made with corn

husks or scraps of cloth. A "church doll" was fashioned simply from a handkerchief and served to entertain children while in church; it would not make any distraction-causing noise when dropped or bumped about.

Some games then have been largely forgotten - Hoops, in which children are guided along a tall hoop from behind with a stick; peg top, which spins when it hits the ground; and buzz saw, in which twisted strings cause an attached disc to move and buzz.

Vogler called up Anne Moore to help demonstrate Graces, in which two players use sticks to toss a ribbon-wrapped hoop back and forth.

A video of her program can be seen on the Historical Society's YouTube page @martinsvillehenrycountyhs and its website, [www.mhchistorysociety.org](http://www.mhchistorysociety.org).

## Lodge venue hosts historical board



The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society Board of Directors recently met at the Marshall Field & Company Clubhouse, currently known as the Fieldcrest Lodge. Built in 1917, the lodge has 8,500 square feet of floor space and is an example of English Tudor Revival architecture. The building materials included native Henry County fieldstone, box beams, pebble dash stucco, and terra cotta tile. The property is currently owned by Joey Arrington.

The board has also visited Stoneleigh, Hordsville, Beaver Creek, Ithaca, and the BB&T rooftop as part of its local history ambassador program.

Pictured, left to right, are President John Phillips, Secretary Joyce Staples, Hunter Haskins, Jake Abell, Andy Doss, Josh Duncan, Treasurer W. C. Fowlkes, Davis Scott, Virginia King, Owner/Host Joey Arrington, Ann Martin, Executive Director Holly Kozelsky, Graves Anthony.

## Lecture series continues Sunday

This Sunday's Afternoon Lecture by the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society will be "Woodland Plants of the Area: History, Ecology, and Uses" with Neal Bowman, at 3 p.m. in the Historic Henry County Courthouse. Admission is free.

Bowman will talk about plants from the region that were or still are used by people and the plants' role in ecology. Some plants covered may not have had a significant use but may be ones that draw attention on the local hiking trails, from ginseng to trillium.

A native of Ridgeway, Bowman works at Old Salem Museums & Gardens in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He has completed courses in Forest Ecology, Wildlife Management, Horticulture, and Agriculture and also has worked at Riverbend Nursery in Floyd.



Neal Bowman, who will present "Woodland Plants of the Area: History, Ecology, and Uses" Sunday, stands next to a native azalea. The free program will be held at 3 p.m. at the Historic Henry County Courthouse, hosted by the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society. (Photo submitted)

## Center to host author, book discussion

The Bassett Historical Center will host author Joseph Lovell at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 21. Lovell will discuss his second book entitled, "Reflections of Sandy Creek."

"In Reflections of Sandy Creek, I share more of my stories about life. The simplicity of farm life during the 1950's and 60's are explored in this book, but also the struggles that accompany all of our journeys," Lovell said. "There is

something to be learned from reading these stories, something about love of family, about faith and integrity. Something about seeing the Father's hand in all we do and realizing it was He that carried us through."

This free program is open to the public. It will be held in the Susan L. Adkins Memorial Meeting Room. Lovell is donating all proceeds from book sales after the program to the Bassett Historical Center.

## Weaver to lead finance department

Roy "Richie" Weaver was appointed to director of finance by the Henry County School Board at its monthly meeting on April 11.

The appointment was recommended by Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis.

Weaver succeeds Dr. Benjamin Boone, who was promoted to assistant superintendent for operations and administrative services in the fall of 2023 and who has continued to perform responsibilities for both positions since that time.

Weaver has served students as a secondary math teacher, an assistant principal, and a principal. He joined Henry County Schools as an assistant principal at Bassett High School in 2019 after serving more than two decades as an administrator in the North Carolina public school system.

"I am very excited and grateful to begin this new opportunity as the Director of Finance for Henry County Schools," he said. "I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the students, staff and parents of Bassett High School and seeing their many successes. I am looking forward to working with the HCPS finance department and all stakeholders to ensure we manage the financial resources effectively and efficiently to support the



Roy "Richie" Weaver

goals and priorities of our students and staff."

"Our director of finance plays a critical role in ensuring we're able to fund the programs and staffing required for students to achieve at the highest levels," said Blake-Lewis. "As a veteran educator and administrator, Mr. Weaver brings a keen understanding of student and staff needs, and I look forward to his contributions in this new role."

Weaver holds a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics education, as well as a Masters in School Administration, both from North Carolina State University. He will transition into his position as Director of Finance effective July 1.

See more at

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

# Celebrate all things nature at Piedmont Arts' Earth Day Family Day



Learn to plant native pollinators with C.D. Prillaman from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Pollinator Path.

There's no better way to celebrate Earth Day than getting outside and nowhere more beautiful than uptown Martinsville. Piedmont Arts will be hosting their annual Earth Day Family Day in the Gravely-Lester Art Garden on Saturday, April 20 starting at 10 a.m. Arts and crafts, face painting, snacks, flower planting, and activities will be happening all day. This event is in partnership with Bee City's Bee Flight Festival and is being sponsored by Carter Bank and Trust. In case of inclement weather, the event will move indoors to Piedmont Arts.

The garden will be abuzz with activities including:

\*The Lynwood Artists and Bull Mountain



Pollinator-themed arts and crafts will be available in the Art Garden.

Arts will set up plein air painting in the garden. They will have kits available for anyone interested in trying their hand at nature illustration.

\*The Blue Ridge Regional Library will be present with pollinator-themed puzzles and activities.

\*Snacks and juice boxes will be provided by Food Lion.

\*Join C.D. Prillaman planting pollinator-friendly flowers on the Pollinator Path from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

\*Teen Arts Council will provide arts and crafts for kids as well as painting faces.

\*Local art vendors and crafters will have tables set up displaying and selling their wares.



Earth Day Family Day, hosted by Piedmont Arts, will be held on Saturday, April 20.

This event is held in partnership with the Bee Flight Festival and Bee City will lead a logo designing contest in the Art Garden. Bring your best ideas for a bee-centric logo, spend some time illustrating it at the table, and enter it for a chance to win prizes and possibly have your design used by future Bee Flight Festivals.

Piedmont Arts will also be participating in the Starling Scavenger Hunt. Grab your clue card from any participating organization (the YMCA, the Virginia Museum of Natural History, or Piedmont Arts) and explore Starling Avenue to collect all nine stamps. Once you have collected all nine stamps, drop off your card in the lobby of Piedmont Arts for a chance to win fun prizes.

## Connecting services, community were goals of Summer Resource Fest



Robin Humlan serves food at the Summer Resource Fest.

By Jessica Dillon

Just Call Granny Ministry, a non-profit group that supports families in the area, recently was among those featured in a Summer Resource Fair that was held at New College Institute (NCI), along with many of the area's community resource groups.

Other agencies, including the United Way, which was promoting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, the Virginia Museum of Natural History, which was showing off a corn snake ahead of the Reptile Fest on April 19 - 20, and the Piedmont Autism Action Group.

Representatives from the Tackfully Teamed Riding Academy, Fieldale Pool and others offered families a list of ways to get youngsters out of the house for the summer.

Just Call Granny organized the event in hopes of raising awareness of the area's many resources, according to Robin Humlan, a volunteer.

"In my heart, I feel that people are getting together for positive action, and they are looking for solutions for their community," Humlan



Angela Mckissick provides information on autism support and awareness.

said, and distributed food to those who stopped by her booth.

Each organization offered informational pamphlets, and representatives who provided information about the services offered.

"I never knew how many organizations were already established and ready" to help, said Humlan, who expressed her wish to connect families with resources that can provide support.

The fest also won the support of Ben Gravely, vice chairman of the Henry County School Board.

"During the summertime, there are activities that go on, we'd love to get the kids involved in activities other than sitting at home in front of a computer or game, to get them more active," said Gravely.

In the case of Just Call Granny program, which has been working to get the word out that it supports gran families or other alternative families, Gravely said that throughout his career in education, he has witnessed many examples of children who live with alternative



Teresa Setliff (left to right), Cindy Edwards, and Shirley Jones greet visitors to the Summer Resource Fair.

family members.

"They're raising their grandchild (because) mom, dad, for whatever reason chose to make poor decisions and are no longer in the household," Gravely said.

The Just Call Granny group presented information to city officials at the March 26 Martinsville City Council meeting. The agency also hosts monthly Conversations and Coffee events at NCI, and presents a variety of topics such as children's mental health, autism awareness, and mentorship programs.

Those events are held from 1 to 2 p.m. on the second Monday of each month. The group's next event will be held on May 13 and feature the Virginia Harm Reduction Coalition. A translator is on hand to ensure that Spanish speakers get fair access to the information being covered at each session. The organization also provides brochures and flyers in English and Spanish.

The program is available to help families of any type and can help to connect families to resources needed. Speak to a trained volunteer by calling (276) 734-3331.

## Healthy Families West Piedmont Accredited for Quality Service

Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America) recently announced that Healthy Families West Piedmont, a program of Piedmont Community Services and affiliate of Healthy Families America, has received accreditation as a provider of high quality home visiting services to pregnant families and families with infants and young children.

Expectant and new parents often face new stressors and have questions about their child's development. Healthy Families America connects with families through community partners like hospitals and pediatricians to support parents, meeting within the familiarity and convenience of the family's own home. Healthy Families America is an accessible, voluntary and well-received service.

"HFA sites utilize evidence-based best practices to provide individualized support to families when needed most, and linkages to community services," said Melissa Merrick, President and CEO of PCA America. "We congratulate Healthy Families West Piedmont, and we commend the staff for their leadership and commitment that has contributed to this most notable and highly regarded achievement."

The accreditation process is based upon a stringent

set of 12 critical elements grounded in more than 30 years of research. The process involves an in-depth examination of the site's operation, as well as the quality of the visits made by HFA home visitors.

"We commend Healthy Families West Piedmont for opening itself up to such an intensive review process," said Kathleen Strader, National Director of HFA. "We believe that all families and all communities deserve access to quality home visiting services."

The HFA site in Martinsville is located at 3 Dudley Street.

"It makes me proud to be working in a program that is accredited," stated Rhonda Fulp, Family Support Specialist for Healthy Families West Piedmont. "This shows that our team takes seriously the role in making sure families thrive. I see families progressing as they meet goals, using resources in the community."

One of the mothers served by Healthy Families West Piedmont said, "I am so thankful for the home visiting program. It has helped me to feel more confident in being a mom. I want to be the best mom to my kids and Healthy Families has been a good thing for my family. We love Ms. Ginger."

One of the primary goals of HFA home visiting is to promote nurturing, responsive parent-child relationships. Home visitors in each community receive extensive training on a wide range of topics important to just about every new parent. These topics can include caring for a new baby, ensuring the baby is receiving the nutrition needed, promoting healthy child development, and coping with a myriad of other potential stresses that may become heightened with an addition to the family.

PCA America implemented the Healthy Families America (HFA) initiative in 1992. HFA serves families of all ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, meeting the needs of close to 600 communities including Martinsville and the Counties of Henry, Patrick and Franklin.

Healthy Families America is an effective and proven evidence-based home visiting program according to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

Representatives of Piedmont Community Services said the agency is proud of the accreditation received by Healthy Families West Piedmont, and proud to be part of a national movement dedicated to improving the lives of families and children.



# Gravely tapped to serve as preschool's first School Resource Officer



Officer Gravely with preschool students at Clearview Early Learning Center

Retired Martinsville Police Officer Coretha Gravely has been selected as Clearview Early Learning Center's first ever School Resource Officer (SRO). Gravely's appointment marks a significant milestone for the Martinsville City Public Schools district, completing its goal of having an SRO present in every school.

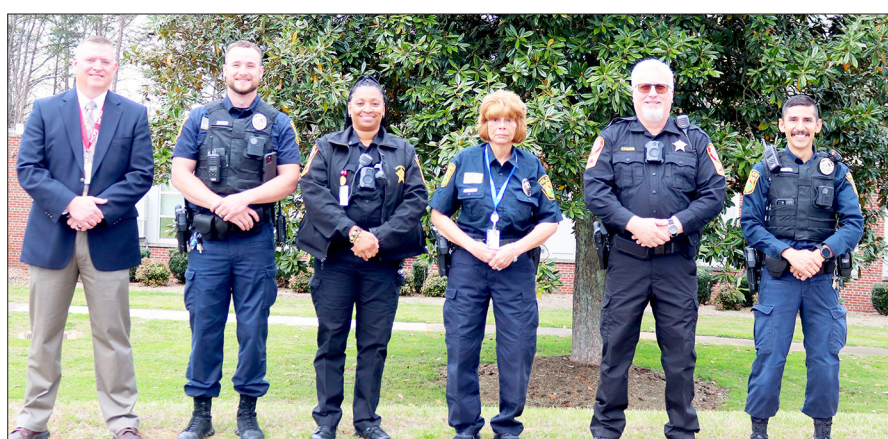
A true trailblazer, Gravely was the first Black woman to join the Martinsville Police Department when she was hired in 1991. She retired from full-time duty in 2023 and is returning part-time to take on her new role as Clearview's first SRO.

"Officer Gravely is already a very familiar face at Clearview through her extensive community involvement over the years," said T.J. Slaughter,

the school division's director of School Safety and Emergency Management. "She has participated in countless family events and other activities at Clearview and other schools in our district. We couldn't be happier to have her on board, completing our team of district SROs."

An active member of the Martinsville community, Gravely has dedicated her career to connecting with residents and working to make the city a better, safer place. In her new role as Clearview's SRO, she will help create a secure environment for the preschool's students, faculty, and staff as part of the district's multi-layered safety system.

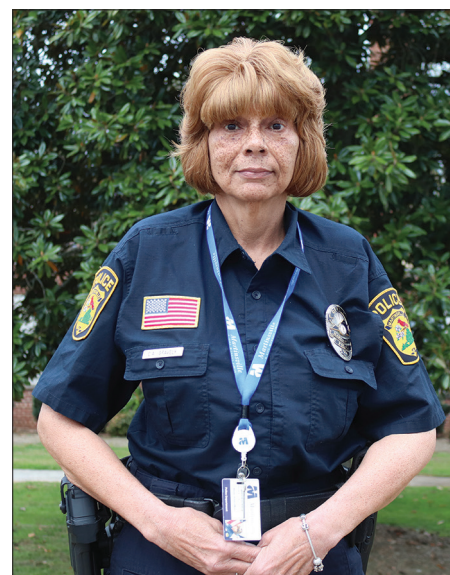
"School resource officers are a critical and highly visible part of the comprehensive security measures we have



The Martinsville City Public Schools safety team includes (from left): Director of School Safety and Emergency Management T.J. Slaughter, Martinsville Middle School SRO Officer David Koger, Patrick Henry Elementary SRO Sergeant Anitra Huff, Clearview Early Learning Center SRO Officer Coretha Gravely, Albert Harris Elementary SRO Master Deputy Dean Comer, and Martinsville High SRO Officer Alfredo Huerta.

implemented to ensure students and staff can learn and work in a safe environment," Slaughter added. "While many of our safety enhancements operate behind the scenes to avoid detracting from the learning environment, our SROs are on the front lines, building relationships with staff and students while keeping everyone safe."

Thanks to the district's partnership with the Martinsville City Police Department and the Martinsville Sheriff's Office, resource officers have been in place in every K-12 building in Martinsville for nearly a decade. With the addition of Officer Gravely, Martinsville City Public Schools has successfully placed a dedicated SRO in every school in the district, a major security achievement.



Officer Coretha Gravely

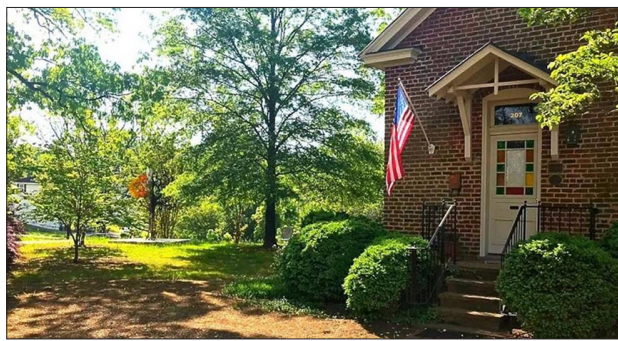
## Mental Health Awareness Month celebrated with garden event



An event to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month will take place in the Gravely-Lester Art Garden on Thursday, May 9.

Piedmont Arts will host Virginia Stage Company's highly celebrated touring production of "Every Brilliant Thing" in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month. This event will be held in the Gravely-Lester Art Garden on Thursday, May 9. In addition to this beautiful and life-affirming production, Piedmont Arts will also be hosting a community resource fair and a special edition of their Make Some Noise: Open Mic Night. The community resource fair begins at 5:30 p.m., the open mic begins at 6:30 p.m., and the performance by Virginia Stage begins at 7:30 p.m. A cash bar will be available. Tickets are pay-what-you-can to ensure that the arts and mental health resources are accessible to all. Tickets may be reserved by calling Piedmont Arts or by going online to PiedmontArts.org. In case of inclement weather, this event will be held indoors at Piedmont Arts.

The community resource fair will begin at 5:30 p.m. Booths will be set up by numerous mental health organizations, food pantries,



The Gravely-Lester Art Garden will be the site of this community-centric event in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month.

drug and alcohol awareness groups, and various other organizations that promote the health and well-being of the citizens of Martinsville and Henry County. By gathering these groups together, Piedmont Arts hopes to make connections and raise awareness for the many people who are working tirelessly for the care of our community.

At 6:30 p.m., a special edition of their Make Some Noise: Open Mic Night will take place. Hosted by local teacher and musician Greg Hackenberg, these events seek to amplify and celebrate the unique voices and perspectives held by our community. Participants will need to sign-up early for a five-minute slot where they can share their original poetry, music, spoken word, comedy, or any other art form. These events are always exciting and expressive.

Finally, at 7:30 p.m., Virginia Stage Company will take the stage for their performance of "Every Brilliant Thing" by Duncan Macmillan and Jonny Donahoe. This powerful story is told



Virginia Stage Company's production of "Every Brilliant Thing," tells the story through comedy, improvisation, and audience interaction. (Contributed photos)

from the perspective of a single performer. An immersive storytelling experience performed in the round that blends comedy, improv, and audience interaction to tell the story of someone growing up in the shadow of their mother's struggle with suicidal depression while learning to grapple with their own journey. "Every Brilliant Thing" provides a life-affirming jolt of humanism, reminding us that hope comes from the miracles of life's minutiae. A talk back will be held after the performance for the audience, community partners, and performers.

"This event was created to celebrate and honor every individual in Martinsville and Henry County by providing access to the arts and to organizations that champion mental health and well-being," said Lauren Ellis, programs coordinator at Piedmont Arts. She added, "The root of a healthy community is by creating opportunities to gather, celebrate all of the things that make us unique, and address where we need help, love, and support."

## Work on annex project progresses



Entrance to the 13,000-square-foot annex to the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum will be through an enclosed walkway from the Historic Henry County Courthouse, being built now. The annex will showcase Native American artifacts; antique tools, steam engines, electronics and toy trains; 500 years of firearms; and a gambling parlor. (Contributed)



Electric lines were being installed Wednesday at the annex. Construction should be completed in May, and then it will take several months to get the displays established, under the direction of experts from the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

## Crash investigation is ongoing

The investigation of a two-vehicle crash which resulted in a fatality is ongoing, according to a release from the Virginia State Police.

The crash occurred on Friday, April 12, at 3:48 p.m. on Original Henry Road, near Bellwood Road in Henry County.

A 1996 Honda Civic was traveling east on Original Henry Road when the vehicle crossed

the center-line and allegedly struck a Chevrolet 2500 head-on, the release stated.

The driver of the Honda was identified as Jonathan Lee Adkins, 46, of Ferrum, Va. Mr. Adkins was not wearing his seat-belt and died at the scene.

The Virginia State Police Crash Reconstruction Team was called to assist with the crash.

Submit your community news and photos to [dhall@theenterprise.net](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net)



Recipients of the Grow Award. (Contributed by the City of Martinsville/ Kendall Davis)

## Council previews budget at recent meeting

By Jessica Dillon

Martinsville City Manager Aretha Ferrell-Benavides presented the first draft of the FY 2024 - '25 annual operating and capital budget proposal to the members of the Martinsville City Council on April 9.

The theme of this year's budget is "Moving Martinsville towards infinite opportunities, and soaring for excellence," Ferrell-Benavides said.

The proposed general fund revenue amounts to \$37,913,281. The overall expected revenue for the city is \$78,111,656. This proposal does not include any grants, which would be considered as they are received.

In the proposal, Martinsville City Schools would receive \$5,542,637, with Operations/infrastructure proposed at \$2,379,520, and \$8,445,052 for Public Safety.

"As we started our school funding, we realized that several years we may not have transferred the full amount," said Ferrell-Benavides. To combat this, the school system would be placed on a quarterly system of transfers.

Keith Holland, director of Community Development, discussed the re-adoption of amendments to the Nuisance Code Ordinance. The amendment was proposed on February 13 and adopted at the February 27 meeting. Due to an internal error, an earlier version of the document from November 2022 was attached. Holland advised the board to consider a second reading of the current version to place the document in the consent agenda, and approve it once again to clear up the mistake.

This amendment covers the excessive growth of grass and weeds on vacated property. Grass that has grown more than ten inches when eighty feet of the street line. The amendment also gives guidelines for standing water on property that may attract insects, proper garbage disposal, and the placement of indoor furniture and appliances outside the home.

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission requested an option agreement for seven properties with Martinsville Housing and Redevelopment Authority: 744 Lot W. Fayette St Lot 1 & 2, 740 Lot W. Fayette St A, B, C, D, 732 Lot

W. Fayette St E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, 730 Lot W. Fayette St, 115 Lot Beaver St, 113 Lot Beaver St, and 111 lot Beaver St. The land would be used to build between five and seven homes to increase the amount of affordable housing in the city. Multiple funding sources would be used to complete the project. These houses will be exclusively offered to homebuyers at or below 80 percent of the area's median income.

No funds for the project have been requested from the city.

Sean Campbell, housing programs director for the WPPDC, explained the main target for affordable housing would be seniors., because "there is a lack of senior housing in Martinsville."

The council also heard from the Arts & Cultural Committee which asked members to consider adopting a mural and public art policy that allows the committee to be responsible for proposed art in the city and make recommendations for placements.

The issue of the stoplight being removed was discussed by the council.

Aaron Rawls, vice mayor, said he has driven through the city since the change.

"I think there are two lights that have to come back," he said of Church and Bridge streets and Main and Bridge streets. Those are two intersections where it's difficult to see oncoming traffic if vehicles are parked along the side of the road.

Rawls explained that he believes tweaks are needed, but Uptown has become safer to walk already. The traffic control change is still ongoing, and data is being gathered to determine the best solution.

Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce also presented the Grow MHC Awards to five local businesses that completed the entrepreneurial boot camp. Infinite Memories and Décor received an award of \$3,000, What's Your Sign received \$4,995, Meek's Recycling received \$7,000, Oakstone Health and Nutrition received \$7,366.25, and Access Therapy received \$10,000.

In other matters, the council:

- \*Honored retirees from the first quarter.
- \*Recognized employees who are eligible for Service Awards.

## Initial unemployment claims near double digit increase

For the week ending April 6, 2,288 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims were filed, which is 9.9 percent higher than last week's 2,081 claims and 46.9 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (1,558), according to Virginia Works. Nearly 78 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (61 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (2,242); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (260); Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (260); Retail Trade (207); Manufacturing (176); and Health Care and Social Assis-

tance (166).

Continued weeks claims (15,351) were 0.3 percent higher than last week (15,302) and were 31.4 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (11,681). Nearly 93 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (57 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (2,242); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,078); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,354); Manufacturing (1,293); and Retail Trade (1,169).

## Proposal seeks to expand access to diabetes prevention programming

Last week, Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-VA) and Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) along with U.S. Reps Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) and Diana DeGette (D-CO) introduced the PREVENT DIABETES Act, bipartisan, bicameral legislation that would make diabetes prevention care for those on Medicare permanent and more accessible online in order to help address widespread disparities in access to diabetes care in medically underserved communities, including Black and Latino communities and rural areas.

"As the father of a Type 1 diabetic, I know how important consistent and reliable care is for patients' health, but too many Virginians still struggle to get the care they deserve. This legislation will save lives by expanding access to diabetes prevention programs virtually," said Warner.

"Too many South Carolinians in vulnerable communities are struggling to manage diabetes," said Sen. Scott. "Our bill aims to expand access to life-saving healthcare options by opening the door to virtual suppliers. We can and must ensure everyone in the Palmetto State—regardless of race, background, or zip code—has the support they deserve to manage their healthcare needs."

"Tens of millions of Americans live with either diabetes or pre-diabetes," said Rep. DeGette, Co-Chair of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus. "Taking on diabetes requires a comprehensive approach to stopping type 2 diabetes before its onset. Our bill makes CDC-recognized diabetes prevention programs more accessible to Medicare beneficiaries at risk of diabetes, particularly those in rural areas and others who may not be able to attend an in-person diabetes prevention program."

With a growing number of patients opting for virtual care, our PREVENT DIABETES Act will help more Americans learn about how they can avoid this disease."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is a higher prevalence of diabetes within minority populations. Diabetes affects 16.4% of Black adults, 14.9% percent of Asian adults, and 14.7% of Latino adults, compared to 11.9% of white adults. To expand access to diabetes prevention programs, the PREVENT DIABETES Act would make permanent the Medicare Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP), which is currently a demonstration program. The MDPP leverages evidence-based interventions to prevent the full onset of Type 2 diabetes in at-risk Medicare beneficiaries. The legislation would also make the program more accessible by allowing virtual suppliers to participate.

In October 2019, Warner and Scott wrote to then-U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar urging him to expand the program by administrative action. The senators wrote another letter in April of 2020, requesting that beneficiaries be allowed to access the program via a virtual platform during the COVID-19 pandemic. HHS temporarily allowed individuals to access the program via a virtual platform, but this administrative change still excludes a number of providers and does not ensure long-term access to a virtual benefit.

As part of their efforts to craft a framework of solutions, Warner and Scott introduced the PREVENT DIABETES Act in 2020 and again in 2021. Companion legislation in the House of Representatives is led by Reps. Bilirakis and DeGette.

## Smith discussed election bid

By Taylor Boyd

Senate candidate Chuck Smith recently attended a local GOP event to meet potential voters in his bid to oust incumbent Sen. Tim Kaine in the November election.

Smith, of Virginia Beach, said the Republican Party is facing critical mass.

"It's no longer the games that candidates like to play. It's no longer the games that the workers of the campaigns like to play. We got to get this one right," he said.

Smith believes this election is about four things: courage, integrity, loyalty, and experience.

"Our guys, our Republicans, have to have courage. We got to stop being weak in the knees," Smith said, adding that Republicans also must have the integrity to do what they say, and never side with the Democrats on critical issues that affect the foundation of the Republican Party.

"Loyalty to the Republican Party. We have no loyalty to the Democratic Party, we have no loyalty to the independents," he said, adding an experienced candidate also must run in the election.

He joined the United States Marine Corps in 1970 during the height of the Vietnam War.

"One out of three soldiers were coming home in body bags. A lot of our

guys were coming home in body bags, a terrible time," he said. "Some young people tell stories about courage and the candidates you work for. Let's not get it confused, courage is courage."

Smith said he is the only Marine - a retired Navy JAG Commander with 26 years of combined service - among the nine people in the race to face Kaine,

"There's only one person who's the former chairman of the largest Republican Party sitting committee in the Commonwealth of Virginia. There's only one person in this whole race who has practiced law, not just longer than every other person running in this race, but longer than Tim Kaine," he said.

Smith, who was raised in a church by his grandmother, said he believes in America, "the founding fathers, God Almighty, and We the People."

"It's precisely because I believe you can count on me to stand for America, stand for Virginia, and stand by the grace of God, come hell or high water no matter what, stand and endorse Donald J. Trump as the next president of the United States of America and never let him down, so help me God," he said.

Smith stressed he's not a weak, establishment politician. A pro-life, child safety, and school choice, supporter, Smith also supports the concept of

Make America Great Again (MAGA).

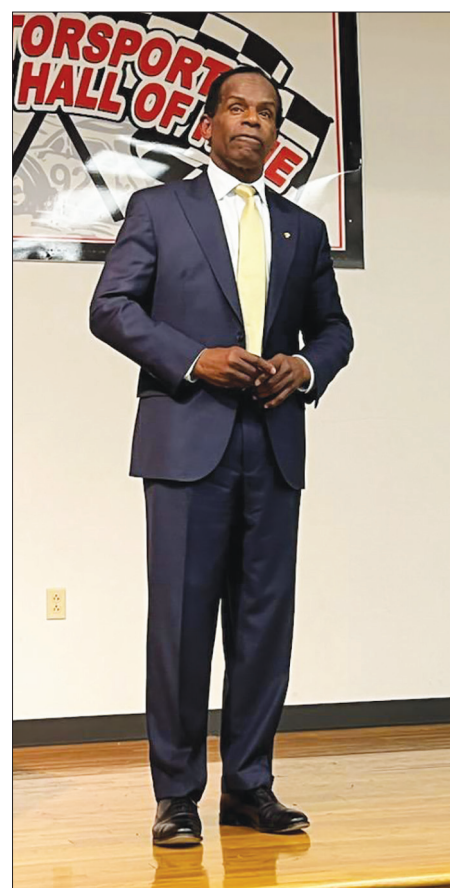
"Automatically anti-Democrat and a card-carrying, gun-toting one hundred percent unapologetic supporter of the second amendment to the United States Constitution, our military, and our men and women in blue," he said.

Smith also wants to take care of veterans, rebuild America's infrastructure, and become energy independent. He plans to protect families by fighting "wokeism and cultural Marxism, stopping transgenderism, and fixing schools.

"Unlike the weak establishment Republicans who have constantly failed to win a United States Senate seat in over 20 years, the only way to win back Virginia is for a true, Populist conservative to mobilize the old dominion voters on issues they're concerned about," he said.

Smith said these include American jobs, secure borders, a strong military, and no more pointless foreign wars.

"Instead of pointless foreign wars, why don't we stop the influx of illegal immigration, fentanyl trafficking, drug trafficking, human trafficking, sex trafficking across our Southern border," he said. "Instead of funding foreign wars, why don't we enshrine election integrity on election day and get rid of absentee balloting and mail-in balloting."



Senate candidate Chuck Smith.

Representatives from the Gwendolyn "Gwen" Hickman and Scott Parkinson campaigns also attended the committee meeting and spoke about their candidates.

## Budget

(cont. from page 1)

“This is one of the best school systems in the state of Virginia,” said Palmer.

Garrett Dillard, of the Iriswood District, asked County Administrator Dale Wagoner about providing additional funding for the schools.

“What would be the reasons we wouldn’t have gone further to give the school what they requested,” Dillard asked.

Wagoner said the county must balance the other departments “Every dollar in this budget is important to someone. It becomes a very delicate balance in determining where the dollars go.

“Our community couldn’t stand a tax increase at this time,” he said. “I felt that the budget presented in this document accomplishes all of those goals without raising taxes.”

Reed Creek District Supervisor Dr. Pam Cobler asked for clarification about the \$90 million dollars the county has in reserve.

“A lot of the citizens and the general public look at the county bank account and say, ‘well, they have \$90 million in the bank,’” she said.

Wagoner explained that some of those funds have already been committed.

“At the end of the fiscal year, you have more than \$60 million of that committed,” Wagoner said while comparing commitments to pending orders in a regular bank account. The county also has to manage its finances to obtain better rates if and when it needs to borrow money for projects.

Cobler said, “We should get a megaphone and stand on top of the buildings, on top of the administration building, on top of NCI, on the top of the schools, and say we have

some of the greatest schools in Virginia. We do have comparable teacher salaries. We are not broke in Henry County.”

Many parents of students who attend Carlisle School rallied to ask the board to consider giving additional funds to help the school access another School Resource Officer (SRO).

The county currently has no funding earmarked for the private school, but representatives asked the board to consider giving additional funds to help the school access another School Resource Officer (SRO).

“As a (county) taxpayer, I would never think that public funds should go for private education,” Matthew McKinney, a Carlisle School board member, said. “That’s a non-starter as a taxpayer. We’re not asking you to educate our kids. We are asking you to keep them safe.”

He added the school must take funds “from education and provide safety for our school.”

Debra Buchanan, of the Horsepasture District, inquired about the number of county students that attend the school.

Head of School Beth Gammons explained that Carlisle currently has 320 students, 130 of which are from Henry County.

Buchanan asked Sheriff Wayne Davis to clarify the current pay arrangement for the SRO at Carlisle School.

“The same contract that we did with the county elementary schools, we did with Carlisle,” Davis said, and explained that Carlisle is currently paying the officers \$35 an hour for the time they spend on school grounds, the same rate that county elemen-

tary resource officers get paid. This cost the school more than \$43,000 annually.

A police car was recently provided to the school by the sheriff’s office to further enhance school safety, Davis said.

“Are you for-profit or non-profit,” Buchanan asked about the school, and she wondered about the amount of real estate taxes the school pays to the county.

“Carlisle is a federal 501-3c non-profit private education institution, and the best information I can get is that they do not pay taxes on real estate,” Wagoner said.

“Has anything been asked of the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors or the Martinsville City Council to share in paying the resource office,” Joe Bryant, of the Collinsville District, asked. “It looks like the vast majority of the students are coming from other areas.”

Noting that Carlisle is situated in the county, an audience member said, “that would be who would respond to a call” in the event of a tragedy.

Carlisle representatives said the school has not sought funding from other areas, such as the City of Martinsville or Pittsylvania County.

“There’s nothing more important to me at the end of the day than to know our students are safe and secure, and no harm has come to them, the same we want for all our children,” Gammons said. “This need for an SRO to continue for our school is not about Carlisle School, it’s about Henry County children. That’s all it’s about.”

The board will consider adoption of the budget at its 3 p.m. meeting on Tuesday, April 23.

## Parker

(cont. from page 1)

to, but they certainly don’t answer to the public and it looks like they don’t answer to Congress either, so I’m not sure what they do,” he said. “The Federal Trade Commission stands for ‘F’ the Consumer or Forget the Complaint, take your pick for an acronym or an explanation.”

The FTC, Parker said, is supposed to protect the public from companies like Facebook and Google which knowingly violate their own terms of service.

“With Congress being as somewhat impotent as they are, I’m not sure what the outcome’s going to be,” Parker said. “The people that are helping me and working with me are still going to keep pushing this, but I don’t know. The outcome is sort of unknown at this point.”

While Parker wants to be optimistic, he said it’s hard given what he’s experienced in the past five years since he testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on this subject.

There have been several hearings on

this subject, with one of the more famous ones involving Frances Haugen, a Facebook whistleblower, “who essentially validated everything I’ve been saying over the years,” Parker said.

Additionally, he added this type of violent content is often monetized, which may benefit the company.

“Unfortunately, because of Section 230 they have complete immunity from any kind of liability. So, there’s no incentive for them to do anything,” Parker said. “You would think it would be incentive for the Federal Trade Commission to do something, but I’m not so sure they’ve got any incentive either.”

The Congressional Research Service (CRS), Section 230 of the Communications Act of 1934 “provides limited federal immunity to providers and users of interactive computer services. That statute generally precludes providers and users from being held liable for information provided by another person, but does not prevent

them from being held legally responsible for information that they have developed or for activities unrelated to third-party content.”

Ultimately, Parker believes the only way people are going to be able to reign in the social media platforms is to amend or remove Section 230.

An attorney Parker’s worked with from New York who’s had limited success said the only way to stop this type of stuff is for people like Parker that have been injured to “sue the living shit out of these platforms. And if you do it, they’ll stop it.”

Parker said if there were lawsuits, companies likely would cease “this dangerous behavior and abuse.”

Despite it being almost eight years since his daughter’s death, Parker said he’s not going to give up.

“I’m going to keep fighting for as long as it takes because Alison would expect nothing less,” he said.

## Phillips

(cont. from page 1)

scores 375-399 range on the Standards of Learning shall be eligible to retake an expedited retake and then still be offered what they call intervention services,” he said.

Phillips was asked to bring this bill to the General Assembly by the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) and various other school agencies.

The second among his approved bills was HB1511, which focuses on the City of Martinsville’s Charter change about reversion.

“Basically, it got rid of the sunset provision from the prior bill,” he said. Del. “Danny Marshall in the House and (Sen.) Bill Stanley in the Senate in 2022 brought a bill forward and that bill basically said before the city could revert, that they would have to have a citizen referendum, and the people of Martinsville would vote on one simple question, and the question was shall the City of Martinsville become a town.”

Phillips said that bill included a so-called sunset provision, or expiration date, and it was scheduled to expire in 2026.

“What my bill did was get rid of the sunset provision, so from now on it’s actually in the city charter that if they ever want to revert from a city to a town, they have to have a referendum,” he said.

Phillips said his bill does not keep Martinsville from reverting to a town, it just says the citizens have to agree to it before it occurs.

The other bill was HB1512, which updates some of the language in Martinsville’s city charter.

Phillips said any charter change for a city must go through the General Assembly.

“This one simply changed their charter to allow them a different way to give notice of special meetings. In other words, it doesn’t have to be a paper copy. It could be through

an email or electronic means, which obviously is the way most people communicate now,” he said.

Secondly, the bill provides for compensation to council members to be in accordance with general law.

“The way they are paid now apparently is per meeting. That’s actually not in accordance with general law in the Commonwealth anymore, so this changes the way they’re paid. It doesn’t mean that they are gonna get a pay raise, all it does it make us legal,” he said.

Phillips said the bill also provides for action by resolution to make the appropriations for indebtedness.

“So basically, it changes the language around the city being able to issue bonds or take on debt,” he said.

The bill also requires the city manager to become a resident of the city or live within a certain distance of the city.

Phillips said the two city charter bills were requested by the Martinsville City Council.

“They asked for these things. The Martinsville City Charter hasn’t really been changed or amended since 1952, which is a long time. Obviously, a lot’s changed in the past 70 years,” he said with a chuckle.

Phillips’ budget amendments that were passed include funds for a library remodel in Gretna.

“We got, Bill Stanley and I along with Del. Carr, got the second-year funding in the budget for the New College Institute (NCI), which was a big win for our area,” he said.

A budget amendment for funding Mayo River State Park in Henry County was not passed.

Phillips said one of the biggest things he learned during session was, “I think that everyone there really wants to move the

Commonwealth forward, we just have very different ideas about how you do that and what that looks like.”

However, his number one take away is the perceived and strong Republican-Democrat divide.

“The number one thing in Richmond, to the detriment to our area quite honestly, is the divide between rural and urban communities. We’re of course in the rural areas and folks in the urban areas frankly don’t understand our culture, they don’t understand our economy, they don’t really understand all of our needs because they’re so different in Martinsville or Chatham than what they are in Fairfax or Alexandria,” he said.

When one looks at urban Virginia’s infrastructure and cost of living versus rural Virginia, Phillips said there are really two Virginias, and “a lot of the divide, frankly, is that. So, that’s an uphill battle for us here in rural Virginia to fight for our fair share.”

Phillips said this is one of the reasons he sought the 48th District House seat in the first place.

“I’m a huge advocate. Of course, I live here, and I represent these people, but I’m huge advocate for rural Virginia. You know, we shouldn’t have to be subject to the whims of Northern Virginia and Tidewater and Richmond,” he said.

Phillips said he’s excited about next year’s session, especially as delegates can begin working on their legislation now for next year.

“Now, I’ll actually have the time to really introduce a lot of legislation that, one I’m passionate about, and two, that just helps our people in their everyday life. A lot of legislation that’s super beneficial,” he said.

# Most firearm regulation measures meet veto pen roadblock



An estimated 22,000 gun rights advocates crowded the Capitol to protest proposed gun legislation on Jan. 20, 2020. All streets surrounding the Capitol were close to traffic and filled with law enforcement. No firearms were allowed on the grounds. (Photo by Jeffrey Knight.)

By Vali Jamal  
Capital News Service

Democrats delivered on their campaign promises to introduce gun safety measures if they won control in the state General Assembly, although most bills did not pass the desk of Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

Youngkin vetoed over 30 bills related to the regulation of firearms, some duplicates from both chambers. The bills included measures to institute a waiting period, raise the purchase age, regulate concealed carry and a total ban on assault weapons.

Democrats promised and delivered in the sense that they advanced the bills to Youngkin's desk, according to Alex Keena, an associate professor of political science at Virginia Commonwealth University.

"Even if the governor vetoed the legislation, it still is a 'win' for the Democrats because the governor is vetoing legislation that a majority of the public supports," Keena stated. "Which makes the Republicans look bad and the Democrats look good."

Youngkin amended six firearm-related bills that he said "will make it harder for criminals to use guns in the commission of a violent act."

He signed four that he said were bipartisan, "commonsense reforms."

Two identical bills punish parents who let their children possess a firearm if they had been previously warned by school officials that their child poses a threat to themselves or others.

The other two identical bills ban auto sears, a device that allows a semi-automatic firearm to shoot automatically more than one shot, without manual reloading. This brings the state into alignment with federal law.

"So in that regard, they were able to move the needle (so to speak) by getting the governor to approve reasonable gun safety measures with broad popular appeal," Keena stated.

**Virginians want more gun policy, Democrats say**

Sen. Saddam Azlan Salim, D-Fairfax, sponsored multiple pieces of gun legislation throughout the session, many of which were vetoed by the governor.

Democrats pushed firearm legislation because their constituents often brought up "gun violence prevention" as a top issue, according to Salim.

"Right now kids have to go through active shooter drills, where no one in this General Assembly has had to do that when they were in school," Salim said. "So how do we tell a parent, 'hey it's just a drill,' and we're doing the drill knowing that there could be an incident that could happen in the future?"

Youngkin's veto sends a message to Virginians that he doesn't care about what the majority wants, Salim said.

Virginians have the most consensus around creating criminal penalties for gun owners if their firearms are used by minors in a crime, and requiring gun owners to lock up firearms if children are in the home, according to a January survey by The Wason Center.

A slight majority support banning assault-style weapons, and oppose allowing teachers to carry guns in K-12 schools.

Salim introduced Senate Bill 327 to raise the minimum age to purchase a gun to 21. The bill passed in a party-line vote in the Senate. One House Republican legislator, Del. Carrie Coyner from Chesterfield, supported the bill.

Youngkin also vetoed SB 491, introduced by Sen. Jennifer Carroll Foy, D-Woodbridge.

Her bill held the firearm industry liable if guns were sold to someone who the sellers could have "reasonable cause" to assume might use a firearm in a crime, or who is prohibited by law from owning a firearm.

Carroll Foy cited gun violence as a major issue for her constituents.

"We knock on doors and we hear from constituents that their top concerns are mass shootings, and their



Gun show attendees browse the selection at the Sunday, March 25, 2018 gun show. A majority of vendors own retail stores around Virginia and traveled to the Richmond show with a smaller selection to sell. (Photo by Erin Edgerton)

top concerns are the increase of the use of guns by minors, by people who are mentally ill, by people who are a danger to themselves and others," Carroll Foy said. "We listen to those concerns."

Democrats put forth "commonsense" safety measures, according to Carroll Foy.

"While I understand the Republican response is 'the answer to guns is more guns,' we know that's faulty thinking," Carroll Foy said. "It is a fallacy to believe that more guns is the answer to gun violence in this country."

**Philosophical differences between parties**

Democrats passed a number of gun control measures while in control of both chambers for two years under former Democratic Gov. Ralph Northam, according to Carroll Foy.

This included background checks, purchase limits, locality regulation of firearms on government property and a red flag law that prevents purchase or possession of a firearm by those deemed to be a danger to themselves or others.

"We philosophically disagree with Republicans, whose platform on gun safety reform is to do nothing," Carroll Foy said.

Youngkin cited the constitution and protection of the rights of law-abiding citizens as reasons for his vetoes.

Senate Minority Leader Ryan McDougle, R-Hanover, said the fundamental difference between the parties is whether to focus on guns or criminal activity.

"Republicans, for the most part, believe that the Second Amendment is a constitutional amendment and there should not be the effort to just take guns from law-abiding citizens," McDougle said. "The focus should be on making sure that the community is protected from people that have

proven they are not willing to follow the law."

**Gun rights advocates back Youngkin**

National Rifle Association executive director Randy Kozuch praised Youngkin's vetoes of "ill-conceived" gun control bills.

"His refusal to bow to unconstitutional overreach — stopping widespread bans on semi-automatic firearms, blocking ill-conceived laws like arbitrary waiting periods, and unjust age restrictions — underscores his fierce commitment to safeguarding our fundamental rights," Kozuch stated.

Philip Van Cleave is president of the Virginia Citizens Defense League, an organization that lobbies on behalf of gun owners. Van Cleave opposed most of the measures Democrats supported and said they were not aimed at criminals, but at people like him.

"The vast majority of the Republicans understood the issues, that these bills were bad, that they wouldn't lower crime, that they would only make it harder on good people," Van Cleave said. "They did everything they could do."

The governor "did an excellent job" with the vetoes, Van Cleave said.

Van Cleave's organization originally opposed two bills that the governor signed, because they "overreached."

"But they were narrowed down by the time they got to the governor," Van Cleave said. "We were neutral on them."

The General Assembly will reconvene on April 17 to review and vote on the governor's changes and vetoes.

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

## Young and beginning farmers tackle obstacles to securing their future

Recent survey findings reveal a new generation of farmers answering the call to provide healthy food, preserve the land and cultivate community well-being, but myriad challenges stand in the way of their success.

Today's beginning and young farmers face obstacles like student loan debt, climate change, immigration issues, and access to land, capital, affordable housing and federal programs, according to the 2022 National Young Farmers Coalition Survey.

Tackling start-up challenges alone can be "overwhelming," as first-generation farmer Swathi Gaddam learned after leaving a career in information technology to pursue her calling.

Enrolling in the Northern Piedmont Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program at the Fauquier Education Farm was "life-changing" for Gaddam. The program offers two multi-week courses for those who are new to farming or just dreaming of starting a farm.

The program is part of the Virginia Beginning Farmer & Rancher Coalition, which aims to improve opportunities for beginning farmers to establish and sustain viable agricultural operations and communities.

Gaddam has continued learning through Fauquier Education Farm's New Farmer Incubator Program. This course sets up participants for success with ongoing mentorship, hands-on experience with onsite plots and direct sale opportunities at the Warrenton Farmers Market. It also helps participants develop sustainable business plans.

The VSU Small Farm Outreach Program features a beginning farmer program with a similar holistic approach.

Roger and Amanda Weakley-Scott, the 2021 Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers Achievement Award

winners, had to "scrounge up lots of capital" when starting their now-multiple farm enterprises.

"And navigating the 'alphabet soup' of resources online can get overwhelming fast," Amanda noted.

She recommends first writing up a business plan and then sitting down with Virginia Foundation for Agriculture, Innovation and Rural Sustainability to identify opportunities for grant funding. She also recommends meeting with an accountant and attorney to help navigate the set-up process.

The Scotts utilized U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency loans, but issues with timeliness can be prohibitive—especially for those looking to secure land.

Amanda said land seekers should use the Virginia Farm Link Program to connect with retiring farmers and landowners.

"We've got new threats to prime farmland and agriculture's future all the time—it seems like there's a new battle to fight every month," remarked Pam Jones, chair of the Loudoun County Young Farmers Committee.

The committee received national recognition for voicing concerns to county leaders about overdevelopment and under-regulation.

According to the most-recent U.S. Census of Agriculture, almost 11,000 farm acres in Loudoun County and half a million statewide were lost between 2017 and 2022.

Loudoun's Young Farmers continue to push for a purchase of development rights program, protection for prime agricultural soils when cluster subdivisions are proposed, and programs for area beginning farmers.

See more in Virginia Farm Bureau News magazine at [bit.ly/4cUILLa](http://bit.ly/4cUILLa).

## Spend Earth Day at one of Virginia's 42 state parks



Volunteers at Caledon State Park

In recognition of Earth Day, Virginia State Parks are hosting more than 50 events to celebrate and preserve the natural wonders of the commonwealth. From educational programs to hands-on conservation efforts, the parks invite visitors of all ages to join in honoring our planet and taking action for a sustainable future.

"We believe that Earth Day is not just a day to celebrate, but it's also a day to act," said Virginia State Parks Director Dr. Melissa Baker. "Our goal is to empower individuals to make a positive impact on the environment, both within our parks and beyond. By coming together as a community, we can create lasting change for the betterment of our planet."

With a mission to conserve

and protect Virginia's natural resources, Virginia State Parks have long been at the forefront of environmental stewardship. On Earth Day, they reaffirm their commitment to conservation through a range of engaging activities and initiatives.

From April 20 through April 28, visitors can participate in a variety of Earth Day service projects, including trail cleanups, invasive plant removal, seed and tree planting, and bird box building. Additionally, educational programs will be offered to raise awareness about environmental issues and inspire visitors to take action in their communities.

There will be something for everyone this Earth Day at Virginia State Parks. To learn more, go to [virginiastateparks.gov/earthday](http://virginiastateparks.gov/earthday).

# New Space for Outdoor Learning on Smith Opens

The Dan River Basin Association announced that the final phase of the Eastman Smith River Eco-Learning Station, an outdoor learning space installed along the Smith River at the Great Road Access in Fieldale, is complete. This project was generously sponsored by Eastman Performance Films and the Department of Forestry Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

Completed in two phases, this site will provide a site for hundreds of regional students to experience learning outside of their normal classroom setting. Studies show that field study can help youth excel in STEAM and drive community environmental initiatives. Students will have the opportunity to participate in water quality monitoring, learn about riparian buffers and Virginia watersheds.

“At Eastman, we value our community partners, and we know that investing in STEM education is an investment in our future workforce. We also take our commitment to environmental stewardship and operating responsibly very seriously,” said Amanda Allman, Eastman Corporate Communications. “This project brings together those values and commitments in a tangible way, and we are incredibly proud to be part of Eastman Smith River Eco-Learning Station. We are excited to see the eco-learning station come to fruition and our local students enjoying hands-on learning through this unique experience.”

The first phase of the project was completed in 2019 and included a ground level boardwalk and educational signage. The final phase is now complete and includes a pavilion, interpretive signage and a fishing line collection bin.



**A ribbon cutting for Smith River Eco-Learning Station was recently held. From left to right - Bill Sweeney, Regina Flora, Kristoff Lievens, John Edwards, Tanya Foreman, Jim Adams, Krista Hodges, Benny Luther, Dale Wagoner, Daniel Reynolds. (By Dan River Basin Association)**

Located near a flood plain, the new pavilion is open-air concept with a metal roof. The educational signage was selected with input from local teachers and includes the Smith River Ecosystem, Water Cycle, Life of the River, and the Importance of Riparian Buffers. Accessories in the shelter include a work table in the middle to allow for hands-on activities such as water quality testing.

“The Eco-Learning Station is an excellent opportunity for our students and visitors to enhance their learning and appreciation for the environment through field study along the beautiful Smith River,” said Henry County Administrator Dale Wagoner. “This investment demonstrates a commitment to education, recreation, and environmental stewardship. We are grateful to our many community partners who had a hand in completing this project.”

The pavilion will primarily be used for educational purposes and open for local teachers and schools in Martinsville/Henry County to use on a first come, first serve basis. In addition to an outdoor learning space for regional students, the site will also provide outdoor space for visitors and a site for Citizen Water Quality Monitoring of the river.

“DRBA hosts hundreds of students annually at the Great Road River Access through the Trout in the Classroom program,” says Krista Hodges, Education Outreach Manager. “Students release trout fingerlings every spring into the Smith River while learning about the importance of water quality, river ecology, conservation and the life cycle of the trout through this hands-on environmental education program. We look forward to working with students from around the basin at the new outdoor classroom.”

The Great Road River Access is

owned and maintained by Henry County Parks and Recreation.

“The Eastman Eco Learning Station is a great addition to our parks system and the Great Road River Access Area. This station will allow various organizations and schools that we partner with to be able to offer educational and environmental programs and activities for all ages”, said Roger Adams, director of Henry County Parks and Recreation. “We are thankful to Eastman and the Virginia Department of Forestry for funding this and for the Dan River Basin Association spearheading this.”

DRBA is currently looking at phase three of the project which will add to the features of the outdoor classroom.

“The Virginia Department of Forestry is pleased to be able to support the completion of this outdoor classroom, and we look forward to any opportunities to work with the

Dan River Basin Association in this new space,” said Bill Sweeney, Watershed Specialist of the VA Department of Forestry.

DRBA expressed gratitude to Eastman and the VA Department of Forestry for funding this resource to support environmental education in the Dan River basin.

DRBA is an environmental non-profit that protects the region’s natural assets such as the Dan River and its tributaries. The agency is working to promote tourism as well as healthy lifestyles. DRBA assists localities in creating community parks, trails and access to local rivers and streams. Our mission is to protect and promote the Dan River Basin through recreation, education and stewardship.

Visit [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org) to learn more about protecting and conserving our local natural resources and how you can get involved in your community.

Exciting things coming May 27.

American National Bank will become Atlantic Union Bank. And that means **more branches and ATMs** for you or your business, plus an **award-winning bank** with **great products and digital tools**. It’s a convenient way to bank, all with caring, knowledgeable service.

AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK & TRUST COMPANY

will become

**Atlantic Union Bank**

Starting May 27, stop by a branch or visit [AtlanticUnionBank.com](http://AtlanticUnionBank.com) to set up an appointment.

Member FDIC

## Spencer-Penn Centre's Pig Cookin' Contest

April 20, 2024  
10am to 4pm

### Entertainment for the Day

• ValleyStar Credit Union Cruise-In • Pig Pattie Bingo • Visit Martinsville BARNIVAL: Children's Activities • Craft & Vendor Booths • Live Music and Performances • And More!!!

**HANDICAP PARKING & SHUTTLE SERVICE PROVIDED**

### Menu:

- Food available in Alumni Hall Starting at 10:30am
- BBQ and Slaw Tubs To-Go • BBQ Plates (includes slaw, baked beans, and roll) • BBQ Sandwiches • Kid's Meal (Hot-dog, chips, and drink) • Homemade Desserts
- Chicken BBQ Sandwiches Available Upon Request

**CASH ONLY**

### PLATINUM SPONSORS

Visit Martinsville HENRY COUNTY VIRGINIA

ValleyStar CREDIT UNION

### GOLD SPONSORS

WILLIAMS Auction Company

AIR CONDITIONING & REFRIG Vipperman Since 1977

TRIANGLE ELECTRIC Corporation

**Silver Sponsors:** • A+ Lawn Care • Bassett Office Supply • Connect Health & Wellness • Debra Buchanan • DeShazo Oil Co. • Harrison Toms • James River Equipment • Jennings Creek Farm • Martinsville Engraving • Mountain Valley Brewing • Nelson Family Auto • Old Country Store • Perry Farms • Sarver Cleaning Services • WoodmenLife

THE SPENCER-PENN CENTRE EST 2004

P.O. Box 506  
475 Spencer-Penn Road  
Spencer, VA 24165  
276-957-5757



# Girl Scout troops ready community garden for planting



The Girl Scouts gathered at the Spencer-Penn Centre to prep the community garden's raised flower beds.



Girl Scouts stained and painted several boxes with unique designs.

By Jessica Dillon

The Girl Scouts started work at the Spencer-Penn Centre on March 22 to ready planters for a community garden. Several area troops showed up, with girls of all ages involved in the project. The group has recently been trying to gain traction to bolster its membership numbers and has been involved in several activities that have helped the community throughout the years.

The girls gathered to stain and paint raised garden beds for the new community garden in Spencer-Penn's library parking lot. Several girls gathered around each planter to stain and then paint their designs to make the garden more colorful. The palettes were made from recycled cookie palettes.

"We like recycling, reusing, and repurposing, they're not real fancy boxes, but

the only cost to them is the screws," said Donna Hubert, a Martinsville Henry County Troop Leader and the area's cookie manager.

Hubert made 15 raised garden planters. Plants will be brought into the community garden by 4-H Club members, who have grown several plants from seeds. The community garden will be open for the public to take the food they need, and some of the yield will be sold at the Farmers' Market - if there is an abundance of fruit and vegetables.

The Girl Scouts aim to empower young women to step into leadership roles and learn the value of teamwork, Hubert said.

"We emphasize using our resources wisely and being a friend to our sister Girl Scouts," said Hubert while talking about the organization's goal. In the past, the group included 37 troops with more

than 300 members in Martinsville Henry County, but in recent years, registration has dwindled.

Currently, there are nine troops with 45 to 50 girls enrolled. The girls are sorted by age, starting with 'Daisys' at the kindergarten and first-grade levels, and ending as Girl Scout Ambassadors at grades 11 through 12.

"The older scouts help their sister Girl Scouts, especially to help the little ones. Every Girl Scout you meet, they're your sister Girl Scout," said Paige Canada, service unit leader for Martinsville/Henry County Girl Scouts.

"They really enjoy helping others. A lot of them have volunteered at the SPCA, taken up supplies to give to the food pantry, and they really learn the importance of helping our community and smaller kids," said Canada.

Both troop leaders agreed that they have noticed that the girls in their troops become more outgoing after staying in the program for an extended length of time. "It gives them confidence, a lot of confidence," said Canada.

Families interested in enrollment may call the Roanoke Girl Scout Office at (540) 777-5100 for more information, or email [info@gsvsc.org](mailto:info@gsvsc.org). To sign up and view troops, visit the Girl Scouts of Virginia Skyline website to make an account and look at troops that might be a good fit in their area.

Enrollment can begin once a child reaches kindergarten, and is open for children up to grade 12. Interested adults can sign up to be troop leaders. If no troops match the family's needs, there is also an option to begin creating a new troop.

# Understanding climate change and how it's affecting the world today

The term "climate change" has become part of the modern lexicon. The term "global warming" was once widely used, but the term climate change became more common after researchers discovered that the changes affecting the planet involved more than a rise in temperature.

What is climate change?

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in weather patterns and temperatures, according to the United Nations Climate Action. Although natural forces, such as natural disasters, can affect climate change, by and large the most prolific influencer has been human behavior, notably the use of fossil fuels. NASA says burning fossil fuels increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in the Earth's atmosphere, raising the overall surface temperature of the planet.

Signs of climate change

Scientists already are seeing evidence of the effects of climate change. NASA says loss of sea ice, melting glaciers and ice sheets, rising sea levels, and more intense heat waves already are occurring. Additional notable and evident effects of climate change



The more people understand about global climate change, the more they can do to help combat it.

include:

- Glaciers are melting at a faster rate.
- There is less snowpack in mountain ranges and polar regions.
- When snow is present, it melts faster.
- Permafrost is melting, releasing methane. This is a powerful greenhouse gas that rises into the atmo-

sphere and compounds the climate change problem.

· Sea ice in the Arctic Ocean and around the North Pole is melting at a faster rate. Data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) indicates ice covering the Arctic Ocean has diminished by more than 40 percent since the start of the satellite era in 1979.

· Tropical storms have become more severe as a result of warmer ocean water temperatures.

· Sea levels are rising, threatening coastal communities and ecosystems. The NOAA reports that, in 2022, global average sea level set a new record high of 101.2 mm. That is four inches above 1993 levels.

· In many coastal locations around the United States, the rate of sea level rise is even higher than the global average due to erosion, oil and groundwater pumping, and subsidence.

· High-tide flooding is now between 300 and 900 percent more frequent than it was 50 years ago.

· The ocean is storing the majority of excess heat from rising global temperatures, contributing to measurable shelf retreat and stress on marine life.



**Dr. Stephen Ernst** joined the Spectrum Medical team in July 2023. After growing up in Charlottesville, he attended the University of Virginia.

Dr. Ernst specializes in surgical and non-operative management of all levels of shoulder and elbow issues. His most frequently performed surgeries include shoulder replacement, rotator cuff repairs, shoulder stabilization, minimally invasive elbow surgery, tendon repairs, nerve decompression and fracture care in the upper extremity. He looks forward to using his advanced orthopaedic training to widen the scope of orthopaedic services offered in southern Virginia.

## Meet Our Providers

**STEPHEN M.C. ERNST, M.D.**



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

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

## SAME DAY X-RAYS

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




**NO REFERRAL NEEDED**  
UNLESS REQUIRED BY INSURANCE



**2 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS**

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

**MARTINSVILLE**  
1075 Spruce Street  
276-790-3233

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