

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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Remembering the true reason for Memorial Day



Robert Dees talked about the importance of honoring the fallen.

By Jessica Dillon

Veterans, families, and supporters were invited to Roselawn Cemetery for a Memorial Day Service on May 27, with retired Maj. Gen. Robert F. Dees the guest speaker.

Many representatives from Martinsville and Henry County attended, including Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis, retired Martinsville Police Chief Mike Rogers, Commonwealth Attorney Andy Hall, Debra Buchanan and Pam Cobler, both members of the Henry County Board of Supervisors, former Henry County School Board member Curtis Millner, and Kathy Lawson, a member of Martinsville City Council.

"This is what makes America great,



Patrick and Caren Rodgers, with daughter Hallie Rodgers, were among those to attend the ceremony.

this community, this cohesion, this (See Memorial Day p. 2)



The football field was filled with students and parents celebrating the class of 2024.

BHS Class of 2024 encouraged to remember what being a Bengal means

By Jessica Dillon

The 242 graduates of Bassett High School's (BHS) Class of 2024 were reminded on Saturday, May 25, that, "Being a Bengal means showing resilience in the phase of adversity."

Tiffany Gravely, principal, also noted the unique challenges the class faced.

After entering the ninth grade in the middle of a pandemic, "You demonstrated grit and determination to be in this position today. Being a Bengal means you're courageous and bold."

Noting that the class had received \$2 million in scholarships, Gravely said, "Being a Bengal means having ambition and drive. Your accomplishments at Bassett High School over the last four years are symbolic of what it means to be a Bengal,"

she said of state recognitions the class earned in BETA, FFA, JROTC, Track, Wrestling, and Band.

"Martin Luther King Jr. once said, 'If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward,'" she said, adding that she has been a Bengal for 19 years and knows what it takes to roar with courage and to keep moving forward. "I charge you to always remember what it means to be a Bengal."

"You started your initial days as Bengals without the typical first days of being freshmen," Anthony Hairston, senior class president, said. "You went from the traditional in-person classes to the pandemic-required virtual classrooms."

Hairston compared the change to

(See BHS Class of 2024 p.2)

MVHS grads directed to 'sit on the front row'



Duane Whittaker encourages students to keep pushing forward in life.

By Jessica Dillon

"Saturn is your only little planet where you can continue to grow," was the message to the 230 members of Magna Vista High School's (MVHS's) Class of 2024. The class took its place in the school's history during its May 24 graduation ceremony.

Noting the event was "a momentous occasion marking the conclusion of years of hard work, dedication, and perseverance," Dakota Hairston, who was among the graduates, said "Saturn," the SZA song, inspired his speech.

He added that he liked to interpret the lyrics from SZA song as



The Magna Vista class of 2024 prepares for graduation.

saying, "To find something worth saving is yours for the taking. We've formed lasting friendships and discovered our passions and are on our way to find our Saturn."

Whether headed to a four-year university, community college, or into the workforce, his class members will continue to grow, Hairston

said, and noted the difficulties that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to the class.

"Since most of us didn't go to school in person our first year, walking into sophomore year still felt like a freshman, I didn't know any of the teachers or where most

(See MVHS Grads p. 3)

Carlisle graduates told to be authentic, embrace challenges

By Taylor Boyd

The 13 graduates of the 51st Carlisle School Commencement Exercise on Friday, May 24 were directed to be their authentic selves while embracing "the challenges of life ahead and with courage and determination."

The words of wisdom were from Interim Head of School Neal Meyer, who added the graduating class can do this knowing they have good character, strong intellect, and the necessary leadership skills.

"Being like others is easy. Walt Disney said, 'The more you are like yourself, the less likely you are to be anyone else, which makes you



Valedictorian Lorelei Zagol spoke about how life changes.

unique.' Go against the norm...don't follow the crowd... be you, be your authentic self," she said.

Meyer told the graduating seniors the future is theirs to shape, and it's crucial to commit to a plan and see it through.

"But remember, it must be your plan. Each one of you has the

power to leave a mark so let the world know you, the true you, not some computer created version. Let the world know you, the most au-

(See Carlisle p. 7)



Class Co-President Nayti Bhavesh Patel said the graduates should always remember that Martinsville is home.



Class Co-President Christopher Bryant Talley II said the ceremony marks the end of their high school careers.

Graduates will make a difference

By Taylor Boyd

The 127 graduates of Martinsville High School (MHS) were told at their May 25 Commencement Exercise that they are going to make a difference.

The words came from School Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley Jr., who also said when he first looked at the class when they were in the second grade, he knew they were going to make a difference because they were sharp, smart, ambitious, and want something.

"When you look at their GPAs and their accomplishments, it's tremendous. They came to us at a time when we were in the bottom three of the entire 133 school divisions in the state, and they were in the second grade," he said.

Nine years later, Talley said the school division is accredited with higher test scores, and noted the graduating class started the upward momentum of the schools.

"God did not give you your intelli-

(See Graduates p. 7)

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Memorial Day

(cont. from page 1)



Families gathered flags to place on the graves of loved ones.

collaboration, and this sense of honor and dignity. I honor each one of you," said Dees.

"I honor all of you for keeping the main thing when we have many distractions on this national holiday," Dees said when talking about how the message of Memorial Day can be forgotten.

"The death of these selfless servants carries with them themes of commitment, sacrifice, and nobility," Dees said, adding that on Memorial Day, "We must ask ourselves an important question, where would we be today without those who paid the ultimate sacrifice? Those who slept on foreign soil? They were all in, and many of them never returned home."

Thanks to their sacrificial efforts, Dees said America remains the land of the free and the home of the brave.

"On this Memorial Day, it seems that we have

BHS Class of 2024

(cont. from page 1)



Students received their diplomas to the cheers of loved ones.

going from watching Disney's "Doc Stuffin" as a young child to watching the "Barbie" movie as a teenager, and added the difference in their first year was "just insane."

All the more reason that "as you accept your diploma and turn your tassels, hold onto these famous words by the poet Maya Angelou 'Success is liking yourself, liking what you do, and liking how you do it,'" Hairston said, adding that graduates will choose what success represents. In so doing, he urged the class to celebrate its current success.

"I encourage you all to remain successful in loving yourself first, embracing what you do, and liking how you do it," he said, and reminded the class that it can endure anything.

"This is a conquer chapter. Now turn the page and don't be afraid, for the plans for your life have certainly been made. Look at you. It's your time to rise," Hairston said.

"The Class of 2024 had to constantly overcome being one step behind, but we kept swimming," Aliviah Fulcher said, and compared the class's struggles to Dory's catchphrase, "Just keep swimming," from "Finding Nemo."

Fulcher noted that the class had no idea how much it would have in common with the fictional character as children, and emphasized the feelings of loss when entering

their sophomore year due to the pandemic.

"We entered our sophomore year not knowing who we were or where we were," she said, and the class always felt like it was one step behind due to the online classes.

"Let's face it, (in our) freshmen and sophomore years, we were all facing a serious identity crisis," Fulcher said, and recalled that questions about their plans after graduation terrified them.

"Why were we being asked this question so early? Unlike students in normal years, we had just arrived at Bassett for our true freshman year," Fulcher said. "As we now know, our world can be shut down and turned around in the blink of an eye, so even though we may have a plan, we should accept the realization that life has riptides that pull us in an unwanted direction."

She reminded the class that it can always ask for help, and urged her classmates to keep in touch with one another.

Above all, "I want you all to remember one thing, just keep swimming," Fulcher said.

"As I look out into the field of blue, I see individuals, each with their own hobby, passion, set of ideals, and goals. I see each of you," said Jenny Castro-Bermudez.

"The Class of 2024 is one. However, within this field of blue exists

two things to do: to render honor to who honor is due, and secondly, in Lincoln's words, to recommit to the premise that they shall not have died in vain," Dees said, and added that while it's always important to honor the fallen, we cannot forget to lead the living.

"Many communities just like yours are gathering around flags, around monuments, and around white stones on green blades of grass," he said, and quoted Marcus Cicero to urge listeners to honor the fallen: "Poor is the nation that has no heroes, but poorer still is the nation that having heroes fails to honor them."

Dees added that "for a family that has lost a loved one, every day is Memorial Day," with families mourning for the loved ones left behind, whether it's a recent memory or on the distant battlefields of history.



The Henry County Memorial Day Ruck raised more than \$8,000. The funds will be used to help veteran families. (Contributed)

"They've always been there for us. Now we must be there for them, America," Dees said, and praised those participating in the Henry County Memorial Day Ruck 22, which previously concluded and raised \$8,066 that will be split between two veteran families.

"It's not lost on me that 22 stands for the veterans that kill themselves every day," Dees said, and added that he runs the National Center for Healthy Veterans, which works to "bring in at-risk veterans and help them get healthy so they can get out and do good things for America."

He urged veterans who need help to visit www.healthyveterans.org.

The ceremony concluded with the laying of the wreath, followed by "Taps," and a benediction. Family members proceeded outside to collect flags to lay on graves.



Class president Anthony Hairston reminds students of their COVID trials.



Tiffany Gravely, principal, encouraged graduates to remember what it means to be a Bengal.

242 completely unique individuals. Even though we are almost mirror images of one another, this likeness is only what can be seen from the outside. To see our uniqueness, one must look inside the blue," she said, and talked about how her days in the band playing the flute helped her grow.

"As I look out into the field of blue, I see individuals, each with their own hobby, passion, set of ideals, and goals. I see each of you," Castro-Bermudez said, acknowledging how each member of the class has grown and changed, while urging her class members to take a look at themselves as they moved forward.

"As each of you moves toward

your destiny, always make sure to take time to look at you," she said. "Each one of us will always identify as a member of the Bassett High School Class of 2024, yet that is only one of the labels that make up the whole of our unique individual self. Always remember to take time to look at you, to look at your uniqueness, know that unquestionably there is not and never will be another you."

Alexia Martin performed "The Climb" by Miley Cyrus. The Class of 2024's gift to current and future students was new picnic tables for the senior courtyard. These tables will be available for the class of 2025 and onwards to use.

Annual golf tournament supports Children's Miracle Network

An annual golf tournament, the "Big Tee Off," sponsored by ValleyStar RISE Foundation, raised \$45,000 in support of the Children's Miracle Network. The event took place May 9 at the Chatmoss Country Club in Martinsville.

Organized by the ValleyStar RISE Foundation, the credit union's charitable arm, the tournament raises funds to buy life-saving medical equipment at Carilion Children's Hospital in Roanoke, Virginia. Carilion Children's annually treats over 40,000 children from 40 counties in Virginia and neighboring states, offering essential medical care to those who require it most.

Contributions from the RISE Foundation also actively support local college students by providing scholarships at Patrick & Henry Community College. This initiative not only ensures that the funds remain within the community but also plays a pivotal role in fostering educational opportunities for students residing in areas served by the credit union, and highlighting yet



another avenue through which the business demonstrates its unwavering commitment to giving back to the community.

"We are delighted with the outcome of the 'Big Tee Off' and extend our heartfelt

gratitude to all participants and sponsors for their generous support," said Rachael Williams, president of the ValleyStar RISE Foundation. "Together, we have made a meaningful difference in the lives of children and young adults in our community, and this achievement reflects our collective dedication to community service."

For more information about future events, sponsorship opportunities, or to learn more about the foundation, contact Williams at (804) 659-9609 or rachaelw@valleystar.org.

Headquartered in Martinsville, Virginia, the ValleyStar RISE Foundation was formed in 2019 and received its 501(C)(3) designation in January 2022. The foundation strives to bridge gaps in mental and physical health, and educational opportunities by providing funding as well as volunteer opportunities for the credit union's team and board members to give their time and talent to support the communities served. For more information, visit valleystar.org.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Monday, June 3

Martinsville IDA Meeting, 4-5 p.m., Municipal Building, 55 W Church St., Martinsville.

Thursday, June 6

Henry County School Board's monthly meeting, 9 a.m., 3rd Floor, Henry County School Board Office of the Henry County Administration Building.

Followed by Closed Session

Events

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.

Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) Celebration, 10 a.m. to noon, Dan River Church, 2805 Riverside Dr, Danville.

Storytime, 10 a.m., Spencer Penn Center, 475 Spencer Penn Rd, Spencer.

Benefit Fundraiser for Maria & Larry Mebane, 11 a.m., 681 Laurel Park Ave., Martinsville.

Tuesday, June 4

Silent Reading Hour, 5:30 p.m., Blue Ridge Regional Library, 310 E Church St, Martinsville.

Wednesday, June 5

Piedmont Arts will honor Guy Stanley and Rooster Walk for their support of the arts at the 22nd annual Clyde Hooker Awards. The museum will also recognize Arts in Education Award recipients and the recipients of the Nicodemus Hufford and Harold Knowlton Work Memorial Art Scholarships. The ceremony begins promptly at 5:30 p.m., with a reception to follow. In lieu of an admission cost, please consider making a donation to the Piedmont Arts Scholarship Fund. Reservations are required by Monday, June 3.

Saturday, June 8

Viva La BlackBox! Casino Night Fundraiser to benefit TheatreWorks Community Players, 44 Franklin Street, UPTown Martinsville, 7-10

p.m. Enjoy a real Vegas-style "Rat Pack" evening of food, drink, and gaming fun, with Blackjack, Roulette, Craps, and Poker, along with prizes, 50/50 drawing, photo booth, and music. Tickets are available at www.TWCP.net, for \$60/person. The price includes hors d'oeuvres, drinks, and betting chips.

World Wide Knit in Public Day, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Gravely-Lester Art Garden, hosted by Chix with Stix. Grab your knitting needles and celebrate. This event also features a yarn swap. Free and open to all. Please bring your own chair.

Friday, June 14

Music Night at Spencer Penn with The Country Boys. Gate opens at 5 p.m., the band starts at 6:30 p.m. Admission is a \$5 cash donation. Concessions, including the ever popular Spencer Penn hot dogs, chicken salad, BBQ, and homemade desserts, will be sold.

ONGOING

Verizon Innovative Learning STEM Achievers Program, Monday-Friday, July 8-26, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. P&HCC Patrick County Site, Stuart and P&HCC IDEA Center, Martinsville.

Bassett Train Station Farmers' Market is open 5-7 p.m. Tuesdays through September 24.

Uptown Farmers Market is open through November 16 on Saturdays 7:30 a.m. to noon and from July 10 to September 25 on Wednesdays from 7:30 a.m. to noon.

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.

The Bassett Ruritan Club hosts Rook Music & More on Fridays from 10 a.m. - noon. Play

Rook, work puzzles, make a craft and listen to a mixture of bluegrass, country & gospel music by different bands each week. If you want, bring a snack to share. This event is free to the public. Any donations received will go to the Bassett Ruritan Club to pay for electricity etc.

The Blue Ridge Regional Library offers free one-day passes to the Virginia Museum of Natural History and the Henry County YMCA with your library card. The passes are good for one day and exclude special events. There is a wait period before you can check out the pass again. For more details and exclusions, visit brrl.lib.va.us.

TOPS FIELDDALE VA 0626 meets Tuesdays at 5:30-6:30 p.m. at the Bassett Public Library, 3969 Fairystone Hwy, Bassett. New members welcome. For more information, please call Patti Farmer (276) 358-0489.

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. Registration is not required.

MVHS Grads

(cont. from page 1)



Students celebrate receiving their diploma.



Lauralee Robinson tells the Class of 2024's fortune.

of the classes were," Hairston said. Things got better as time went by and he got to know some of the "coolest teachers," as well as rekindle old friendships.

"Something non-academic that I learned was that I needed friends around me to survive these four years," he said, noting students had learned valuable lessons outside of the classrooms.

"We have witnessed firsthand that success does not come easily. It requires determination, sacrifice, and unwavering belief in ourselves. We are the leaders, innovators, and change-makers for tomorrow," he said, and encouraged the class to express gratitude to those who helped them make it through school.

"As you enter into the universe, find your Saturn. As we step out into the world, we are met with a landscape that is constantly evolving," he said.

Lauralee Robinson talked about reading fortunes and magic.

"When I was a little girl, I was fascinated by having otherworldly powers," Robinson said, and explained that she went on to be enthralled by fortunes and wanted to predict the future for the class.

"Whether you're pursuing your dream school with your degree, going into the workforce, or taking time to figure out what you wish to pursue, there is one thing that is always guaranteed: Happiness," she said.

At the start of her high school career, she knew that many of her classmates were filled with anxiety.

"You did not feel like your future was guaranteed, you did not feel like your happiness was guaranteed, however, like many of you, I always had a wonderful group of people filling my life with joy," she said.

Although they may not remember anything from geometry, the laughs they shared with peers and teachers helped motivate them through the uncertainty of freshman year, Robinson said.

The sudden passing of her grandfather had stirred up her tears, but through school, she found the arts, which helped her find her happiness, she said.

"A wise person once told me that it is our mindset that determines the day. We can choose to face each day with a positive mindset as we face each day with the power of yet," Robinson said, noting that while it isn't possible to always be masterful, the power of "yet" can help keep them working to improve.

"That mindset of achieving even the smallest goal can keep us building towards happiness," Robinson said, encouraging her peers to look for the positive. "If you find yourself feeling alone or scared, reflect on the memories you developed within these brick walls."

While no one can know the outcome or the future, each person can choose to live with happiness and kindness, she said. "Doing what you love is freedom, and loving what you do is happiness."

Duane Whittaker, principal, quoted his 2023 speech: "Wherever you go in life, sit in the front row. It's the best seat. Whenever you can refer to yourself in first person, take advantage of that opportunity."

He encouraged students to be proud of their hometown, even though "I want all of you to soar and travel to wherever your heart and desires take you. However, our hometown is more than just a place on the map. As you start chasing your future, it's important to remember where you came from."

Borrowing a quote from Tom Wolf, Whittaker said, "You can't go back home to your family, back home to your childhood, back to a young man's dreams of glory and fame."

Rather, leaving the field would signal a difference, and "while you may never be able to go back home in the same way as before, it's important to remember that you take a piece of this place, this school, and this community wherever

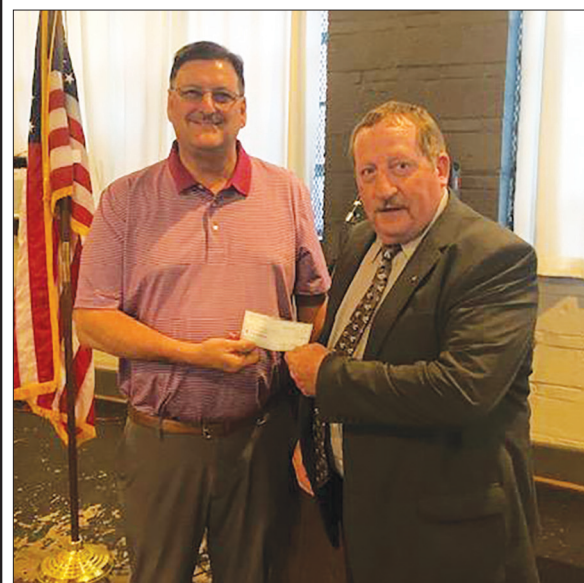
you end up."

"Everyone has a plan till they get punched in the mouth," Whittaker said of the words based on a Mike Tyson quote. He noted that life doesn't owe anyone anything, and encouraged students to "be ready when life decides to mess with your plans and your goals."

While it is okay to cry about problems, he urged students to start "figuring it out," and always keep fighting to move forward.

"You are going to have to figure out the new plan, the new path, the new answer," he said.

Bassett Kiwanis donate to Gideon group



The Kiwanis Club of Bassett recently made a donation to The Gideon International group. Providing Bibles and New Testaments has been a focus of Gideons since its founding. Representing the Gideons is Glen Dennis who is pictured receiving a check from Kiwanis member Rick Love.

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

OPINION

Editorial - We stand with Charles Roark

If there is a test to measure courage and fortitude, Charles Roark passed it last week when he stood alone against an angry group of people outside of a restaurant in Martinsville.

Charles is a polarizing character. Always has been, for as long as we've known him. He is also as human and fallible as the rest of us. While our methods differ, sometimes substantially, we can respect and appreciate that he has worked hard to build his brand and his business.

Recently, when he was covering a shooting incident at a local restaurant, a city law enforcement officer is seen in a livestream available on Star News' Facebook page, knocking Charles' camera out of his hands. Reportedly, Martinsville Police Chief Rob Fincher will investigate the incident, which shows his willingness to address it.

Episode 2: Charles returns to the restaurant (purposefully unnamed) for a follow-up story about whether city police officers were doing the bidding of Martinsville City Council in patrol-

ling "hot spots." Long story short, Charles was assaulted there - for reasons that were not immediately apparent - while doing his job. Some bystanders laughed, others jeered, and still others walked by silently, perhaps pretending not to see.

The owner advised Charles that he was not welcome in the restaurant, on its property or in its leased parking lots. Noting that he was on public property, Charles was determined to stand his ground and wait for a police officer to arrive.

Once on the scene, the officer seemed unmoved by visible signs of the assault. He did not appear to offer to take a report, or ask if medical aid was needed. Even after Charles explained that someone else on the street threatened to assault him, the officer walked away to consult with the owner and an apparent bouncer, who let Charles know that if he got in trouble while on the sidewalk, he was on his own. "I'm not going to protect you," the man declared - as though it was a stunning revelation considering what had

transpired minutes earlier.

We cannot imagine how dejected and alone Charles felt several minutes later when he silently returned to his vehicle.

In a social media post, Mayor LC Jones (a seasoned law enforcement officer) wrote that police officers are held to a higher standard "and responsible for always conducting ourselves professionally, regardless of our constantly changing situations."

He addressed the initial incident, and wrote that "being recorded while carrying out our duties is not uncommon. In particular, there should be no reason for an officer to feel threatened when they are surrounded by backup, have a suspect in handcuffs, and another individual is clearly holding a phone. We need to consider if this situation would be acceptable if it involved our own family members instead of a member of the media. Without someone recording, we might never have learned the full story in cases like George Floyd's or the recent Jadarrius Rose case."

Jones also noted the city "can-

not claim to be reducing crime when it continues to happen, and citizens do not feel safe - whether it's on the road, while dining out, or due to the overwhelming amount of drugs in our community. Upholding professional conduct is not just a requirement. It's a duty we owe to our community."

He called for "professionalism and ethics while reporting and delivering a story" among media representatives. "Considering their ongoing interaction with the police, fire department, and EMS, they should be aware of unspoken boundaries. Ethical reporting is not just a choice; it's the media's responsibility to the public."

We hope the mayor's words are a clarion call to action. If allowed to stand, these incidents set a dangerous precedent, ultimately prompting significant concerns about public safety and the role of the media, and raising questions about the need for a reassessment of community values - particularly those regarding the protection and support of individuals, regardless of their profession.

Business owner embraces the honor system

We realized we'd need more firewood for the night and the next morning, but when we got to the firewood place at the entrance to the campground, the wood bin was locked.

The store just outside the entrance had firewood, but I remembered a sign saying it was open until 7 p.m.

It was 7:05, I saw with disappointment, but there was a car out front so we gave it a shot.

The lady cheerfully rung us up, and her husband loaded our firewood. Then, he told us to come back and get more whenever we needed some; if the store was closed, just pay the next day.

In fact, he added, if we needed anything from the store after hours, just knock on the door of the RV next door and they'd take care of us.

Can it be that shop owners can just trust people to be fair with the honor system, and that they wouldn't mind being interrupted after long hours at work when the store was closed?

I was already a fan of the store, because it has a little bit of everything at good low prices (not the super high tourist prices one would expect) and is pleasantly decorated and just overall had a positive vibe, so the next day, I dropped back in and chatted with the folks.

Michelle and Jimmy Mullins of Franklin County run Salthouse Store & More just outside the Salthouse Branch campground at Philpott Lake. Two of the couple's four children, Olivia Mullins and Larry Hale, work there with them. They have a house but stay in the RV during the camping season.

Michelle said her grandfather, the late Early Shively of Bassett, "brought us here every weekend." It's where she learned to swim.

In fact, she's familiar with all the campgrounds around there, and Salthouse Branch is her favorite: "It's really family oriented."

She has a degree in criminal justice and has worked in a prison, at her husband's Custom Exhaust & Auto Repair on 220, across from Gilley's Mountain (he's also into racing) and even for the ABC to put a daughter through college.

She also has "this ability to bargain shop. I did so good on bargain shopping that he was like, 'You need a store,' she recalled.

In the summer of 2019, the couple were out at the campground and stopped by the store, which had been owned by someone else for almost 20 years, and her husband half-jokingly told the proprietor that she should sell it to them.

She said no, but the next day she said yes, and the rest is history.

That was just before the pandemic shut down businesses, but "Covid helped it more than anything, because it forced a lot of people outside," Michelle said. Even people who had never been camping before were pitching tents and launching boats - and stopping by Salthouse Store & More when they needed provisions.

She has added to it through the years, with a short order grill 3 years ago and a game room this year.



Holly Kozelsky



Jimmy Mullins, owner of Salthouse Store & More, will help you load firewood - but if the store's closed, folks are welcome to get what they need and just pay later.



Richard Martin of Martinsville camps at Salthouse Branch on Philpott Lake four or five times a year and always stops on at Salthouse Store & More while he's there. Owner Michelle Mullins said she enjoys seeing regular campers year after year.

Way on down the end of Henry Road and then some, it's such a long drive that only the propane, ice and ice cream companies will deliver. Everything else, Michelle has to go to town to buy. Sometimes she goes to town nearly every day, so she'll pick up special orders for customers. A recent one was for Azo pills and cranberry juice a man requested for his wife who wasn't feeling well.

She makes sure to stock a little of everything. When her family has an urgent need - something for the boat or to fix something that has broken down or fuses - she gets some for the store, too, because surely someone else eventually will need it too.

Richard Martin of Martinsville stopped by and chatted with her as she rang up his order.

He camps out there four or five times a year and loves the store, he said: "I hope it don't ever leave. Now she's got food and everything. Say you don't want to cook. You come up here and she'll cook you just about anything you want."

He is one of many regulars she sees through the years.

The store's guest book lists customers "from everywhere- India, Texas, New York. Some come the same weeks every year. I've watched their kids grow."

Customers buying firewood on the honor system have never let them down, she said.

"I've never had a bad customer. It's hard to say that in customer service," she said.

"It's the best job you could have. Everybody's on vacation, and they're so happy."

Memorial Day

Memorial Day is a time for celebrations across the Ninth District, only a few of which are mentioned here.

For many Americans, Memorial Day means the beginning of summer as outdoor gatherings are embraced.

But the weekend is not just a weekend of picnics, swimming pools, family vacations to the beach and cookouts.

It is about celebrating people and honoring the U.S. military personnel who lost their lives serving their country.

The Ninth District of Virginia has a grand tradition of honoring our fallen heroes.

Dublin's Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Pulaski County stands as an outstanding example. The cemetery is located on an 80-acre parcel of land transferred from the U.S. Department of the Army's Radford Arsenal to the Commonwealth of Virginia in 2008. The cemetery currently serves over 16,000 veterans.

I was honored to attend the Cemetery's Dedication Ceremony in 2011.

Radford's Glencoe Museum and Abingdon's Veterans Memorial Park are slated to attract visitors for their Memorial Day celebrations this year.

Martinsville celebrates Memorial Day annually. I have attended in the past their American Legion Post #78 service at Roselawn Chapel Funeral Home & Burial Park.

Marion's celebration also occupies the minds and hearts of Southwest Virginia every Memorial Day. This year's celebration will be particularly noteworthy and sad.

Not only are we honoring soldiers and particularly the soldiers of Smyth County. But the man who handled the Smyth celebration, which is one of the best in the country, passed away this year.

Mayor David Helms was the longtime Mayor of Marion, having served on the Town Council from 1990-2000 before becoming Mayor in 2000.

In public office, Mayor Helms pursued projects to revitalize downtown Marion and improve his community. His love for his community was evident: he spent decades in education, first serving as a teacher and then as a principal.

His love for America and celebrating veterans was a central tenet to his character and the man he was. Mayor Helms was a fierce advocate in recognizing veterans for their contributions and sacrifices. He worked closely with the Marion Veterans of Foreign Wars chapter and the East Tennessee Chapter of Rolling Thunder.

Every Memorial Day, Mayor Helms put on a celebration of epic proportions to honor the veterans of Smyth County and America. It receives widespread praise across



Morgan Griffith

Representative

the Commonwealth and the region every year.

The parade is beautiful. The town waves a massive American flag above the street with the help of a firetruck. They display another giant American flag at the downtown Courthouse.

Also at the Courthouse, you will find there is a wreath-laying tribute for the veterans. On the Courthouse lawn, the names of deceased veterans are etched into crosses planted in the ground. Full-fledged American flags accompany the crosses. There is a deluge of these cross-flag pairs on the lawn.

One of the crosses in Marion commemorates the Bedford Boys, in reference to the heroes from Bedford County that were amongst the first to land on Omaha Beach during the Allied invasion of Normandy.

Amongst the fallen on June 6, 1944, what we recognize as D-Day, is U.S. Army Private Thomas H. Williams of Marion. Private Williams served the 116th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division on that fateful day.

During the parade, you march down the street, say "hi" and wish people "Happy Memorial Day." High school marching bands from several Counties participate in the parade and perform tunes. Other organizations and floats also pay their respective tributes for all to see.

I have loved being in the parade with Mayor Helms. I have always been impressed with his hard work and thoughtful dedication in making the celebration a staple for our region.

Following the parade, there is a program at Marion's Veterans of Foreign Wars facility. Inside the building, one can enjoy a meal with the company of family, friends and neighbors.

Outside their doors, a small ceremony is held with music and speeches.

The festivities are some of the most patriotic to take place in the Ninth District. I am humbled and moved by them.

Most of all, they were never about politics. For Mayor Helms, it was about the soldiers of Smyth County who gave their lives.

On this Memorial Day, while I will be celebrating all veterans of the Ninth District and grateful for their sacrifice, I will also remember patriot Mayor David Helms.

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

OPINION

In defense of Charles Roark

Everyone in Martinsville and Henry County knows who Charles Roark is. I'm pretty sure babies in this area are born with some genetic memory of Charles Roark.

My introduction to Charles was in the mid-1990s. We would head to my grandparents' house in Stanleytown every Thursday night for dinner. When you walked into the living room, you would hear two things: the police scanner chattering next to my grandpa's easy chair, and Star News on the TV (of course, it was Cable 6 back then).

I could occasionally convince my grandpa to flip the channel so I could see the new episode of "The Simpsons," but once the credits rolled, it was back to Cable 6.

I was fascinated by Cable 6, and if I'm being honest, I was a bit afraid of it. Charles and his crew seemed like they could turn up anywhere, ready to shove a camera in your face and ask you the hard questions. Whether you were a local politician, local law enforcement, or a local business owner, if you made a mistake or — even better — did something sleazy, you were going to be prominently featured on Cable 6, and then there was going to be a week of call-in shows devoted to letting Martinsville and Henry County's finest call in and trash talk you.

I sometimes feared that if I did poorly enough on a math test, there was a chance Charles would appear at my school with his camera and ask me why I decided to disappoint my parents.

As I grew older, I followed Cable 6 and its evolution into Cable 18 and Star News. When I started working as a full-time journalist at the Martinsville Bulletin in 2012, I met Charles Roark for the first time. If you're a journalist in this area, it's impossible not to meet him; he's at nearly every event worth covering.

Charles couldn't have been any nicer to me. He told me I was doing great work, and he personally invited me to every local political debate that he hosted at Hollywood Cinema. On a personal level, I don't have a bad word to say about the man.

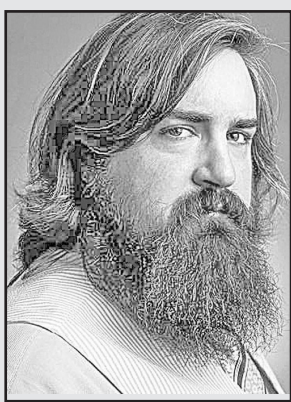
Now, I'm not going to say that I always agree with his methods. I'm not telling any tales out of school when I say that Star News can lean into the tawdry and sensational. But over time, I've developed a grudging respect for Charles' approach to local news coverage. Charles Roark is very purely himself. He knows exactly what the people want to see and he's good at providing it. And while he certainly has his detractors and critics, they don't mind tuning in when the camera isn't pointed in their direction.

All of this brings us to the Star News video that was sent to me Friday night. In the video, which was streamed live to Star News' Facebook page, Charles is standing outside of Tequila's Sports Bar and Grill in Martinsville. There had been a shooting at Tequila's on May 17, and Charles explained that at a recent city council meeting, the council had requested that the Martinsville Police Department have officers on standby at "hot spots" such as Tequila's on busy nights. Charles was there to see if there were any police officers present.

During the course of the video, he's told to leave by multiple people; he informs them that he's on the sidewalk, which is public property. He's right.

Multiple people also tell him that he doesn't have the right to record them in public. He informs them that legally, he does. He's right.

Throughout the stream, a wom-



By Ben R. Williams

an follows him from the parking lot and then stands on the steps in front of the business and yells at him. Then, for reasons known only to her, she suddenly approaches him and assaults him in the street. You hear him get knocked down, and you see a fair amount of blood running down his arm. Nobody comes to his aid. In fact, most people just laugh.

In a follow-up livestream, a police officer finally arrives and tells Charles that the owner is trespassing him. In both videos, however, no one seems to care too much that the man has just been violently assaulted in the street. And this is not the first time in recent months that Charles has had an interaction with a police officer that makes it seem as though his safety and rights are not a priority.

I can appreciate that if you're in local law enforcement and you see Charles Roark arrive on the scene of a crime, your night is about to become a little more complicated. But that's the nature of the First Amendment; the government can't abridge your freedom of speech or the freedom of the press. You don't have to like it, but Charles had every legal right to stand on the sidewalk Friday night and record. By the end of the video, he may have been physically assaulted, but on a reputational level, he was the only person to emerge unscathed.

Local journalism is more important than ever before. A large percentage of the country absolutely hates "The Media," and that's not limited to talking heads on big cable news channels. To make matters worse, local newspapers are operating on skeleton crews, and it's a challenge to cover every single local government meeting. It's crucially important to have journalists at these meetings; our elected officials need to know that the Fourth Estate is keeping an eye on them and keeping them honest.

You might argue that Charles arrived at Tequila's that night hoping to start a scene and get some good viral video. That may be true. But you could also argue that he was holding city council and the Martinsville Police Department accountable; city council asked that police officers be on the scene at "hot spots," and Charles went to find out if that request was being fulfilled. For the record, it sure didn't seem to be. I can understand that the business owner may not be thrilled to have Charles there, but if you serve alcohol and a shooting takes place on your premises, you should expect a little media scrutiny in the aftermath.

My journalism may be limited to columns now, but Charles Roark is still a peer and a colleague, and his public assault and the apathy that followed sets an absolutely terrible precedent.

Back in 2019, the city of Martinsville passed a resolution relating to the Second Amendment Sanctuary movement. Now might be the time to pass a resolution for a First Amendment Sanctuary.

Post sets Fish Fry to raise funds

The American Legion Homer Dillard Post # 78 will have a Fish Fry on Saturday, June 22nd, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at its home, located at 139 Creekside Dr., Martinsville. This will be a drive-thru event, (with limited

dining-in). The menu includes fish sandwiches, \$8, homemade desserts, \$2 and soft drinks, \$1. Please call (276) 224-5679 or (276) 340-5169 to place orders. The rain date is June 29th.

Club donates to volunteer department



The Oak Level Ruritan Club recently made a donation to the Bassett Volunteer Fire Department.

The club will hold a Drive Thru BBQ from 4-6 p.m. on June 22 to raise funds that are reinvested in the community. For more information and updates, follow the club on social media at <https://www.facebook.com/OLRClub>.

Keep yourself and your property safe: Lightning Safety Awareness Week

With lightning five times hotter than the surface of the sun and reaching temperatures of 50,000°, the effects of a lightning strike can be devastating.

That's why the National Lightning Safety Council is sharing information on how to stay safe during thunderstorms and lightning events during National Lightning Safety Awareness Week, June 23-29.

"Lightning is the weather threat that affects most people, most of the time, in most regions of the U.S.," said Kimberly Loehr, a lightning protection specialist and NLSC member. "Although approximately 90% of lightning victims survive being struck, injuries can be severe and debilitating."

The NLSC warns that no place outside is safe during a thunderstorm, and June, July and August are peak months for lightning activity across the U.S. This time of year also is peak time for outside summer fun, and almost two-thirds of lightning deaths from 2006-2023 occurred when people were enjoying outdoor activities.

To help keep yourself safe both outside and indoors, take the following precautions:

*If you hear thunder, quickly get to a substantial building or hard-topped metal vehicle.

*Avoid open areas, and don't be the tallest object.

*Stay away from isolated tall trees, towers, utility poles and metal conductors like wires or fences.

*When with a group of people, spread out.

*Avoid contact with water, plumbing and anything plugged into an electrical outlet.

*Stay away from outside doors and windows.

*Wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before returning outside.

Additionally, lightning is a leading cause of property loss in the U.S. The Insurance Information Institute reported there were over 62,000 lightning claims in 2022, totaling \$950 million. Virginia ranked in the top 10 states for homeowners insurance lightning loss claims.

"In our experience handling lightning-related claims, the one thing we see is the damage is always catastrophic," said James Walker, senior claims investigator for Virginia Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. "From causing fires in structures to destroying electrical systems and electronic equipment, the effects of lightning are costly."

Lightning can strike directly or strike nearby structures and travel underground into phone, cable and electrical lines. To protect houses, property and the people inside, homeowners can have lightning protection systems professionally installed to ground and dissipate lightning's electrical discharge.

"Lightning just wants to get to the ground, and a safety standard-compliant lightning protection system helps it get there without harmful impact to the structure, contents or building systems," Loehr said.

For more information on lightning facts and safety, visit lightningsafetycouncil.org. To learn about lightning protection systems, visit the Lightning Protection Institute at lightning.org/technical/#how-system-works.

Nilit Global donates to food pantry

One of the Henry County Food Pantry's mottos is attributed to Mahatma Gandhi, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others," and that is the pantry's goal every day, according to Sharon Mills, vice president and treasurer.

Located at 3321 Fairystone Park Highway in Bassett, the pantry provides food, household items and resources to families in need, partnering with other organizations which support its work.

Nilit Global is one such partner. Employees from the company situated in Ridge-way recognized Good Deeds Day by visiting the pantry and delivering boxes of items that will benefit local families.

Although Good Deeds Day, a global annual day of doing good, highlights the pantry's mission, the pantry desperately



Nilit Global employees celebrate Good Deeds Day by delivering boxes of items to the Henry County Food Pantry, which will in turn distribute the items to those in need.

needs items every day for local families, homeless, children, and even pets.

The food pantry needs shelf-stable foods that can be stored without refrigeration, such as canned fruits and vegetables, canned soups and stews, canned meats like tuna, chicken, SPAM and the like.

Other welcome additions are rice, pasta,

dried beans and legumes, pasta sauces and gravy, instant noodles and potatoes and oatmeal.

Other items needed are cleaning supplies, personal hygiene products, socks and underwear for children and pet food. Some used items are also accepted, like car seats (must be in date), baby cribs, clothing and furniture.

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LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. JJ014825-08-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE § 8.01-316
HENRY COUNTY J & DR - JUVENILE
Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* NORRIS, SAIGE NICOLE HENRY-MARTINSVILLE DSS v. HOUSTON EVERETTE NORRIS
The object of this suit is to:
TERMINATE THE RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS OF HOUSTON EVERETTE NORRIS TO HIS DAUGHTER, SAIGE NICOLE NORRIS, BORN 1/26/2011, PURSUANT TO VA CODE SECTION 16.1-283.
IT IS ORDERED that the defendant HOUSTON EVERETTE NORRIS appear at the above-named Court and protect his interests on or before 09/09/2024 at 9:45 AM.
05/23/2024

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. JJ014825-09-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE § 8.01-316
HENRY COUNTY J & DR - JUVENILE
Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* NORRIS, SAIGE NICOLE HENRY-MARTINSVILLE DSS v. CHEREE NICOLE DALTON
The object of this suit is to:
TERMINATE THE RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS OF CHEREE NICOLE DALTON TO HER DAUGHTER, SAIGE NICOLE NORRIS, BORN 1/26/2011, PURSUANT TO VA CODE SECTION 16.1-283.
IT IS ORDERED that the defendant CHEREE NICOLE DALTON appear at the above-named Court and protect her interests on or before 09/09/2024 at 9:45 AM.
05/23/2024

LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing has been scheduled for **June 12, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following this public hearing, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the application to the Board of Supervisors.
The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the following application on **June 25, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia.
The purpose of this public hearing is to receive input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearing: **Case R-24-10 Jerry Cecil Stump**
The property is located at 2129 Reed Creek Dr, in the Reed Creek District. The Tax Map number is 16.5(40)/9. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 1.6-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant wishes to build additional accessory buildings on the property.
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



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Graduates

(cont. from page 1)



The Class of 2024 prepares to walk across the stage to receive their high school diplomas.

gence for nothing. He didn't give you your standing, or foresight for nothing. He didn't give you your looks for nothing, your dreams for nothing," he said.

Talley said he also needs the graduating class to make a difference, particularly in Martinsville as the future of the city is changing and is going to continue to change.

"I need you to come back in the future and give something back to this community. I really mean that, you'll find out it's a whole lot more blessing to give than to receive," he said. "Your teachers have given you an education, your parents have struggled, they've worked, they've stayed with you, they pray with you, and now you're on your way to universities, to the Air Force, to trades. You are special."

Dr. Aji Dixon, MHS principal, thanked parents, grandparents, and teachers for helping the students reach graduation day.

"We want to thank you for all the support that you gave to ensure that these young people made it to this point. These young people" are here today "because of a lot of hard work went into helping to support them throughout these years," he said.

Nayti Bhavesh Patel, co-president of the class, said she knows many seniors continuously said they couldn't wait to graduate, "and look, here we are about to graduate. As many times as we kept saying 'I can't wait to graduate,' one thing is certain: we will all leave here with countless memories. This year was memorable, and we will always cherish it."

While the class has accomplished so much, and there will always be something to look forward to, Patel said "I want to tell you all to always cherish the memories and experiences that's going to lead up to every new milestone that's going



The Class of 2024 celebrate their graduation with the traditional cap toss.

to come up in your life."

As their adult lives begin, Patel said there will be challenges to face and many ups and downs.

"However, do not forget that you are a Bulldog and you have it inside of you to persevere through any challenge life throws at you. Whether you choose to go to college, community college, the workforce, or the military, you are destined to do great things and take every obstacle that may come your way with pride and confidence because you are brave, you are resilient, and you are capable of overcoming any challenge," she said.

Patel said she has no doubt that every graduate is destined for greatness with new horizons to explore, "but never forget that this place is home."

Class Co-President Christopher Bryant Talley II said the ceremony was a culmination of the class's high school journey.

"Looking back, we have grown academically and personally, and each challenge and triumph has shaped us into the individuals we are today," he said.

While the past four years have been fun, Christopher Talley said they were also challenging and memorable, especially as the class started freshmen year off differently, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We didn't get the 9th grade experience like everybody else did. It was difficult coming to the school that next year being classified as sophomores because technically we didn't have a freshman year. We had to adjust just like the freshmen that incoming year. It was a new experience, but a fun one," he said.

Christopher Talley said he enjoyed his time playing sports at Martinsville and being part of several clubs trying to make the school a better



Hundreds of family members and friends attended the May 25 Martinsville City High School graduation.



School Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley Jr. said he knew the Class of 2024 were going to make a difference because they were sharp, smart, ambitious, and want something.

place.

"Class of 2024, as we step forward into our future, let us carry on the lessons we've learned and the friendships we've formed. Whether you're heading to college, starting a career, joining the military, or exploring other paths, remember that the world is full of opportunities," he said.

Twenty students received the Superintendent's List award for a cumulative GPA of 4.0 or higher, 24 were "Big M" Trophy graduates, and 22 were "Big M" certificate graduates.

Twenty-one students were part of the National Honor Society, 21 were part of the BETA Club, and 22 were members of the National Technical Honor Society.

A moment of silence was also held at the start of the ceremony for the Martinsville junior and Magna Vista High School senior who lost their lives in a car crash earlier that morning.

Gabriel Lucas Haley led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Martinsville Gospel Choir performed "It's Not Over" by Jason McGee.

Carlisle

(cont. from page 1)



The Carlisle Class of 2024.

thetic you," she said.

While many people consider the number 13 unlucky, Valedictorian Lorelei Zagol said she believes it's fortunate in the graduating class's case.

"Through the random luck of the universe, I and 12 other people were joined to bring this final year" to a close together, "to claim our victory, and our diplomas upon this stage," she said.

Whether its trends, politics, or technology, Zagol said change is a constant in life.

"Even now on this very stage, we will embark on another monumental change. This change will greatly impact our lives. To many, including myself, the prospect of change can be frightening. Fears of failure and fears of the unknown are common across time and humanity," she said.

Zagol noted that change inevitably comes with uncertainty and the idea that one may not be prepared to take on the future. However, change can also be a good thing and can lead to growth.

"We are a small class, but that is not something that defines us. To paraphrase a quote I once read, 'Even the mightiest of redwoods began their lives as mere saplings.' We are all but saplings. Small trees with the potential to grow," she said.

Zagol said graduates will grow by learning and gaining knowledge that can help them in the future.

"I heard it said that the most successful people never stop learning, even when they are older. Indeed, Albert Einstein once said, 'Wisdom is not a product of schooling, but of the lifelong attempt to acquire it,'" Zagol said.

"We might be a small class of 13, but we have limitless potential. In our years of high school, we have gained knowledge and in our years in university we will gain knowledge. We will grow as people obtaining skills and accomplishments, newfound mastery, and intelligence. Armed with these, we can become the change we see all around us, we can truly make all the difference in the world," she said.

The ceremony's guest speakers were Carlisle



Guest speaker Kate Gibson.

alumni and siblings Kate Gibson and Lydia Gibson, who offered advice to the graduating class.

To prepare to answer the question of what's next after graduation, Kate Gibson said "First, hold on to the people who are dear to you, whether that's your classmates, your family, your friends, your friends from a summer camp, or from here.

"The second lesson I would share is to remain open to new friendships as you go along," she said, adding associations, even if fleeting, can make life enjoyable.

Kate Gibson also advised the class to take the opportunities offered, even if they are not planned, and most of all, relax, calm down, and focus on what matters.

"Getting lost on the way to class or getting to work isn't a catastrophe that it seems like at the time, nor is missing out on a party, not getting a job that you might have applied for, losing a game. As a beloved former headmaster at Carlisle used to say, 'not all flowers bloom at the same time, or in the same way and that's okay,'" she said.

For her advice to the graduating class, Lydia Gibson told seniors to go to their professor's office in college, and "ask them questions about whatever you're curious about or don't understand. I wish I'd done this more often because every time I did, it made classes more fun and more interesting. "Whenever I showed up to my professor's office hours they were welcoming and helpful, and happy to talk. A couple of them are people I still keep in touch with now," she said, adding doing this will also help ensure better grades.

She told graduates to talk to strangers, albeit not late at night or in a dark alleyway, because having conversations with people encountered in everyday lives can teach lessons students will not learn in a classroom.

"But also, they'll tell you what it's like to grow up in another country or another part of this country. Or how it feels to lose your home or raise a child, face a disaster, fight injustice, or get completely lost in a work of art," she said. "They'll tell



Guest Speaker Lydia Gibson.



you how it feels, in other words, to be whoever they are."

Lydia Gibson said this will often help the graduates define who they are.

"Which is something I think you all are still figuring out, which is good. But it can also help you expand your own edges, and that's even better," she said.

Like her sister, Lydia Gibson also encouraged the graduating class to relax and cherish the people in their lives.

Several annual awards were also given. The 2024 Carlisle Alumni Award was given to Christiana Jarrett, the Hooker/Garrett Award was awarded to Laura Walker, and Susan Aaron won the Francis T. West Chair for Teaching Excellence.

Nomination Period Opens for Governor's Volunteerism & Community Service Awards

Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced the opening of the nomination period for the 2024 Virginia Governor's Volunteerism & Community Service Awards, an annual award program coordinated by Serve Virginia and the Virginia Service Foundation, recognizing Virginians who volunteer their time to make a difference in their communities. Nominations will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Tuesday, June 25.

"I am incredibly proud of this year's Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Award winners," said Youngkin. "Their dedication to serving our communities is truly inspiring. They embody the Spirit of Virginia and represent the best that Virginia has to offer; we are a better Commonwealth because of them."

The Governor's Volunteerism & Community Service Awards recognize volunteers across a wide range of focus areas. Past honorees have

positively impacted the lives of thousands, increasing access to medical care and healthy food, protecting Virginia's natural resources, supporting youth and families, and inspiring students to become Virginians who give back, among other service areas.

The Awards honor individuals and groups in the following categories:

- *Individual, youth (aged 18 and under)
- *Individual, young adult (aged 19-30)
- *Individual, adult (aged 31-59)
- *Individual, senior (aged 60+)
- *Independent Group (family, friends, or other informal group)
- *Community organization (nonprofit or government)
- *Faith-based group (spiritual community)
- *Educational organization (K-12 school or higher education institution)

*Small business (for-profit, 0-50 employees)

*Corporation (for-profit, 51+ employees)

"Volunteering is beneficial to Virginians across the Commonwealth, providing individual and community health benefits as well as vital opportunities for connection," said Serve Virginia Director Kathy J. Spangler. "We are honored to spotlight Virginians who dedicate their time and talents to making a difference in the lives of others, as well as the organizations and businesses partnering to create meaningful service opportunities."

Virginia Governor's Volunteerism & Community Service Awards honorees will be recognized in a ceremony at the Executive Mansion this Fall. Additional information about the Awards and nomination process, as well as the form to submit a nomination, is available through Serve Virginia at [ServeVirginia.org/governors-awards](https://www.ServeVirginia.org/governors-awards).

Online Brain Health Workshop Series begins June 6

Virginians looking to improve their brain health will be able to get free tips and resources without leaving home as AARP Virginia teams up with the Alzheimer's Association of Southeastern Virginia for a series of online workshops throughout June.

June is national Alzheimer's and Brain Health Awareness Month and AARP is hosting several events across Virginia to increase knowledge about brain-healthy habits. The Brain Bites online series will be held 1-2 p.m. each Thursday in June on Zoom. Participants must register to receive the Zoom link.

The schedule of workshops includes:

June 6 -- Brain Bites: Healthy Living for Brain and Body -- will explore the latest research providing insights into how to make lifestyle choices that can help you keep your brain and body healthy as you age. Register at <https://events.aarp.org/brainbites06062024>.

June 13 -- Brain Bites: What is Dementia? -- will examine Alzheimer's disease, a progressive and fatal brain disease and is the most common form of dementia. Find out how Alzheimer's affects the brain, how it is detected, causes and risk factors, stages of the dis-

ease, treatment and much more. Register at <https://events.aarp.org/brainbites06132024>.

June 20 -- Brain Bites: Caregiver Process for Families Dealing with Alzheimer's -- learn some of the things you most need to put in place to help you and your loved ones, and what resources are available. What are strategies for care planning and support building? How do you prepare for doctor visits and where do you find support after a difficult diagnosis? We will answer these questions and more. Register at <https://events.aarp.org/brainbites06202024>.

June 27 -- Brain Bites: The Six Pillars of Brain Health -- Do you think you're too old to grow additional brain cells? Think again! Learn how to take charge of your brain health and improve the quality of your life at any age. Throughout this interactive presentation, attendees will learn and share information about what they are doing to help keep their brains healthy. The Six Pillars presentation is based on current brain research, vetted by AARP's Global Council on Brain Health and AARP's Staying Sharp program. Register at <https://events.aarp.org/brainbites06272024>.

American Legion Post awards scholarships to local students

The American Legion Homer Dillard Post #78 awarded two \$500 scholarships to local area high

school students this year. Post Commander Waren A. "Sonny" Richardson presented the scholarships.



Tayemar N. Cravely-Hodge, a Martinsville High School student and the son of Ms. Neishia Webster, received the Homer Dillard Scholarship. He plans to attend Ferrum College in the fall.



Sienna R. Bailey, a Bassett High School Senior and the daughter of Mr. Thomas Bailey, received the Carl H. Johnson Scholarship. She plans to attend Radford University in the fall.



As the weather warms up, consider these tips to help bring a garden back to life.

Tips to revitalize gardens, reduce stress and other benefits

Gardening is a rewarding hobby that pays a host of significant dividends. Many people love gardening because it allows them to spend time outdoors, and that simple pleasure is indeed a notable benefit of working in a garden. But the National Initiative for Consumer Horticulture notes that gardening provides a host of additional benefits, including helping people get sufficient levels of exercise, reduce stress and improve mood.

With so much to gain from gardening, it's no wonder people look forward to getting their hands dirty in the garden each spring. As the weather warms up, consider these tips to help bring a garden back to life.

- Discard the dead weight. Winter can take its toll on a garden, even in regions where the weather between December and early spring is not especially harsh. Discard dead plants that have lingered into spring and prune any perennials that need it. Branches that fell during winter storms also should be removed at this point if they have not previously been discarded.

- Test the soil. Soil testing kits can be purchased at local garden centers and home improvement retailers. Such tests are inexpensive and can reveal if the soil needs to be amended to help plants thrive

in the months to come.

- Mulch garden beds. Mulching benefits a garden by helping soil retain moisture and preventing the growth of weeds. Various garden experts note that mulching in spring can prevent weed seeds from germinating over the course of spring and summer. That means plants won't have to fight with weeds for water when the temperature warms up. It also means gardeners won't have to spend time pulling weeds this summer.

- Inspect your irrigation system. Homeowners with in-ground irrigation systems or above-ground systems that utilize a drip or soaker function can inspect the systems before plants begin to bloom. Damaged sprinkler heads or torn lines can deprive plants of water they will need to bloom and ultimately thrive once the weather warms up.

- Tune up your tools. Gardening tools have likely been sitting around gathering dust since fall. Serious gardeners know that tools can be expensive, so it pays to protect that investment by maintaining the tools. Sharpened pruners help make plants less vulnerable to infestation and infection. Well-maintained tools like shovels and hoes also make more demanding gardening jobs a little bit easier, so don't forget to tune up your tools before the weather warms up.

Former council member charged

A former member of Martinsville City Council was charged with driving while intoxicated-first offense, according to a report from the Martinsville Sheriff's Office.

Chad Everett Martin was booked in the sheriff's office on May 21, ac-

ording to the report.

Martin spent seven years on the council before he stepped down to accept a position in North Carolina. His resignation was effective on February 28, 2023, according to previous reports.

City schools to offer free summer meals

As part of its efforts to ensure kids have access to healthy meals during the summer months, Martinsville City Schools will once again serve FREE summer meals to children and teens age 18 and under beginning June 3. A list of summer meals sites and mealtimes is below, and also is available at <https://www.martinsville.k12.va.us/article/1615863>.

Please note that all meals must be eaten on-site during the month of June. Beginning July 1, pick up meals will be available at Martinsville High School. These meals are available for all children and teens. You do not have to be a student in the city to enjoy a free, nutritious meal at one of the sites. No application, registration, or proof of residency or citizenship is required.

Albert Harris Elementary School
710 Smith Road, Martinsville, VA
June 3-27 (Closed Fridays)
Breakfast: 8-9:15 a.m.

Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

*Closed Wednesday, June 19

Meals must be eaten on site.

Patrick Henry Elementary School
1810 Church St. Ext., Martinsville, VA
June 3-27 (Closed Fridays)
Breakfast: 8:45-9:25 a.m.

Lunch: 11-12:15 p.m.

*Closed Wednesday, June 19

Meals must be eaten on site.

Clearview Early Learning Center
800 Ainsley Street, Martinsville, VA
June 3-27 (Closed Fridays)
Breakfast: 8:30-9 a.m.

Lunch: 11:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

*Closed Wednesday, June 19

Meals must be eaten on site.

Martinsville Middle School
710 Smith Road, Martinsville, VA
June 3-27 (Closed Fridays)
Breakfast: 8-9 a.m.

Lunch: 12-1:15 p.m.

*Closed Wednesday, June 19

Meals must be eaten on site.

Martinsville High School
710 Smith Road, Martinsville, VA
June 3-27 (Closed Fridays)
Breakfast: 8-8:45 a.m.

Lunch: 11:45-12:30 p.m.

*Closed Wednesday, June 19

Meals must be eaten on site.

July 1-18 (Closed Fridays)

Pick up meals available from 11 a.m. until 12 p.m.

*Closed Thursday, July 4

The Summer Meals program is funded by the USDA and run by school districts and local organizations with sites throughout the community. Families can text FOOD or COMIDA to 304-304 and type in a zip code to find nearby summer meals sites along with operating dates and times.

Celebrate and support Virginia pollinators during national observance

Much of the food we eat and the natural beauty that surrounds us depend on pollinators. To illustrate their importance, June 17-23 is National Pollinator Week, an annual event designated by the U.S. Senate to highlight how essential pollinators are to the production of food and fiber. According to the non-profit Pollinator Partnership, about 75% of all flowering plants need help with pollination, and about one-third of all foods and beverages are generated by pollinators.

"When we think of pollinators and human benefits, we tend to think of honeybees, which are incredibly important for agriculture," said Stephen Living, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources habitat education coordinator.

He noted that while honeybees are primary pollinators for more than 130 types of fruits and vegetables, native bees also play an important role in pollinating crops like blueberries, squash and cherries. They also pollinate 80% of all flowering plants around the world.

There are 458 species of native bees in Virginia. Other essential pollinators include beetles, flies, butterflies, moths and birds.

But pollinator populations are declining worldwide due to factors like habitat loss, pesticide use and climate change. Virginia DWR's Wildlife Action Plan identifies 60 pollinators that are deemed "Species of Greatest Conservation Need."

Virginia Tech recently became Bee Campus USA-certified for ongoing efforts to conserve native pollinators. Students, faculty and administrators work together to carry out commitments to provide pollinators with a healthy habitat that is rich in native plants, provides nest sites and is protected from pesticides.

"These commitments align very nicely with the campus' commitment toward climate action and sustainability," explained Marga-

ret Couvillon, assistant professor of pollinator biology and ecology, and chair of the VT Bee Campus committee.

Since spring 2022, volunteers have planted three pollinator gardens, improved the habitat of one garden and installed bee hotels around campus.

Couvillon's research lab helps inform the committee on the best practices to improve pollinator health, including publishing a study of 25 common garden plants that attract abundant and diverse insect pollinators.

"Native plants do a much better job at supporting pollinators—offering nectar and pollen for adults and serving as host plants for young insects to grow on," Living said.

"If you go to a garden center and walk around, you can see what plants are attractive to insects because they will usually find it and come forage at it," Couvillon added.

Supporting native insects also is important for other wildlife species' survival, like that of the Carolina chickadee. It takes more than 6,000 caterpillars to raise a single nest.

Living encourages avoiding or minimizing the use of pesticides, and leaving fall leaves and standing dead plant material for native pollinators to use as winter cover.

Couvillon recommends delaying or partially mowing in the spring, as early season wildflowers offer important forage sources for bees and other insects.

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Natural Heritage Program offers a native plant finder for selecting and finding sources for native plants.

For more information on native plants and plant guides, visit the Plant Virginia Natives website at plantvirginiannatives.org. For more information on establishing a habitat at home, visit the Virginia DWR website at dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/habitat.

Council members learn about needed park improvements

By Jessica Dillon

The Martinsville City Council on May 28 heard a presentation on the condition of the parks and the possible implementation of a future splash pad. The council also heard a discussion about a special permit, and several citizens spoke about city concerns.

Graham Smith, president and landscape architect for Site Collaborative, presented the Martinsville Parks Improvement Study, which highlighted the current state of city parks, how they grade, and improvements needed to be made to get them to a top rating.

This was done by checking park amenities, and community input solicited in a series of four in-person meetings. Forty residents voiced their concerns, with 54.5 percent noting they were dissatisfied with park care and maintenance. Upgraded playgrounds and facilities were among the most requested improvements.

An online survey was conducted, and of the more than 200 residents who responded online, 56 percent had a neutral view of the parks, with 11 percent 'very dissatisfied.' Playgrounds, splash pads, hiking, and dog parks were the largest online requests.

A 12-year plan was shown that goes from most needed to least needed parks for repairs and upgrades.

Feedback on a splash pad was heard, and a couple of parcels have been considered as possible downtown locations. The location would be about three blocks from the Municipal Building.

"I know that the last time you were here, we talked about either combining some parks per se, maybe combining, saying maybe that there are certain parks that really maybe no longer need to be a park," council member Tammy Pearson said in reference to Cole and Carol and Oak St.

"The parks are well-liked and the parks well-located, so therefore let's not eliminate them," said Smith, and added not every park needs the same thing. He also acknowledged that not all parks need to be a heavy investment for the city.

"Cole and Carol serve a pretty interesting neighborhood," Smith said, and noted concerns that if Cole and Carol become passive it would become unkept.

The conclusion about Oak St. was a bit different, "That one's tough to call a

park," Smith said, and added that while it could be updated with small amenities it currently doesn't offer much.

"Thirteen parks for a city our size. Is that common? Is it not common? Is it too many, too few," asked Pearson.

"I don't think it's too many," Smith said, and explained the surveys noted that all citizens felt like they had access to a park, and most residents have a park within walking distance.

"There is a little bit of a service gap," said Smith about the gap in the southeastern portion of the city. Seven of the parks ended up in the poor category. The total cost to implement a park maintenance department would cost the city \$526,000 with a yearly upkeep cost of around \$250,000.

In other matters, the council:

*Heard a special request for a combined-use business and a residence at 1048 Independence Dr. Tony Williams, a resident professional woodworking artist, asked for a permit for a live-work residence.

A meeting was held on April 17 to hear the needs of neighbors and there were "no concerns," said Keith David, director of Community Development.

There were some concerns from the council about approving the special use permit, and Vice mayor Aaron Rawls pointed out the implications of approving the request.

"It's your land, and it's a perfectly reasonable use from what you've described," Rawls said. His concern is that it could open the door with other uses "that would impede the strategy as a city to develop land." Rawls said that, as a general rule, the council wouldn't generally approve these requests.

The council moved the decision to June 14.

*Heard a request from David to reduce the number of members on the Art and Culture Committee to seven.

*Heard an energy action plan that could help residents reduce electric costs.

*Heard from residents:

Debbie Youngman, who was concerned about a prayer box that had been continuously vandalized. It was also announced by a community member that plans are currently underway for prayer at the chair twice a month.

Ricco Johnson, owner of Kornna Kitchen, asked for the council to help improve traffic in uptown.



The Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission is a 28-member body created by the 1999 General Assembly. The May 22 meeting was hosted in Lincoln Memorial University's DeBusk Veterinary Teaching Center, marking the first time in the commission's history that meetings were held in Lee County.

Commission funds to benefit local initiatives

The Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission held its second of three scheduled meetings for the year on May 22, in Ewing with committee meetings held the day before in Wise.

The commission approved a total of 19 funding requests in support of a variety of organizations and initiatives across Southwest and Southern Virginia, including a \$75,000 grant to the VT Foundation Operating as Reynolds Homestead.

The funds will be used as a Planning Grant for Reynolds Homestead Food - based Business Incubator, and specifically spent to complete an environmental assessment, market analysis, and business and operations plans for

a shared-use, licensed, and fully equipped kitchen.

The Pittsylvania County Southern Virginia Megasite Natural Gas Gate Engineering and Permitting Loan received a \$500,000 grant to provide funds for the engineering and design of an improved natural gas gate at the Southern Virginia Megasite.

The commission also approved 11 Workforce Financial Aid requests to increase access to educational opportunities and job readiness across the footprint. Locally, the Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation and Danville Community College Educational Foundation, Inc., will each receive \$240,000 for use in their respective 2024-25 workforce programs.

Rollins selected to represent 21st Judicial Circuit

In a close race, Circuit 21 selected O. Randolph "Randy" Rollins as its representative on the Virginia State Bar (VSB) Council. The circuit encompasses the city of Martinsville and Henry and Patrick counties.

A former partner at McGuire-Woods LLP in Richmond and former Secretary of Public Safety under Governor Doug Wilder, Rollins now works in private practice and runs his farm in the Leatherwood area of Henry County.

Rollins previously served on the VSB Council for the 13th Judicial Circuit from 2009 to 2015. He created the nonprofit Drive-To-Work, the only statewide organization that assists low income and previously incarcerated persons with restoring driving privileges so they can drive to work.

Rollins, who is a graduate of Duke University and Duke School of Law, was selected to fill a three-year term.

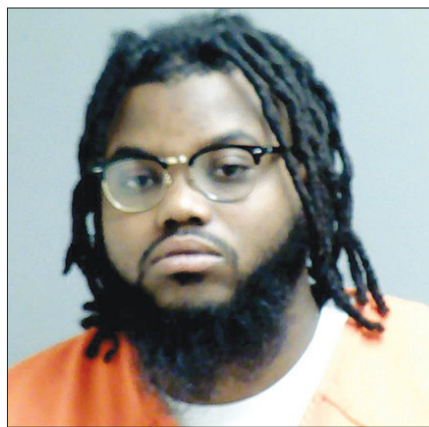


O. Randolph "Randy" Rollins was selected to represent the 21st Judicial Circuit, which includes Henry and Patrick counties and the City of Martinsville, on the Virginia State Bar Council.

Charges filed in connection with restaurant shooting



Rosario Nasiar Eggleston



Jalen Davon Pritchett

One Martinsville man is in custody and police are asking for help to find a second in connection with the May 17 shooting of an individual at Tequila's Sports Bar and Grill.

Rosario Nasiar Eggleston, 24, of Martinsville, was charged with malicious wounding, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, willfully discharge in a public place, possession of a firearm by a violent convicted felon, possession of ammunition by a violent convicted felon, and three counts of destruction of property in connection with the incident.

Police were dispatched to the scene around 11:45 p.m., in reference to a shooting in the parking lot. While on the scene, officers were told that an adult man was transported from the scene to SOVAH Health Martinsville with an apparent gunshot wound. The victim, a 20-year-old Martinsville resident, suffered from a non-life-threatening gunshot wound to his leg.

Officers collected evidence, in-

terviewed witnesses, and obtained surveillance videos during the investigation, and issued warrants.

Police are seeking information about the whereabouts of Jalen Davon Pritchett, 24. He is wanted on charges of malicious wounding, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, willfully discharge in a public place, possession of a firearm after an assault and battery of a family member, carrying a concealed weapon second offense, possession of a firearm under a protective order and three counts of destruction of property.

The case is still under investigation. If anyone has any information related to the incident or Pritchett's whereabouts, please contact Martinsville Police Sgt. Harley Durham at 276-403-5330, the city police department at 276-638-8751, or the Crime Stoppers line at 276-63-CRIME (276-632-7463). Crime Stoppers is an anonymous tip line. Callers with information that leads to an arrest and conviction could be eligible for an up to a \$2,500 reward.

Event cites VA family caregivers' work, reviews support

Edwin J. Viera

Virginia News Connection

For Older Americans Month, AARP Virginia is hosting an event today about family caregivers.

Virginia caregivers provided \$14 billion of unpaid care in 2021.

The roundtable discussion addresses a new Centers for Medicare and Medicaid regulation. It calls for reimbursing medical providers for time spent training family caregivers on certain responsibilities.

Jim Dau, state director of AARP Virginia, said being an unpaid family caregiver can be an arduous struggle with the unknown.

"Frequently, family caregivers will say, they're not really sure they know what they're doing," said Dau. "They leave a care setting, maybe with a stack of documents. It could be 25 pages deep without a real great sense of how to do everything on there."



He added that state-level initiatives such as a family caregiver tax credit can also help.

It would offer people an up to \$1,000 tax credit on eligible expenses - such as putting in shower bars or a chair lift, or renting or leasing medi-

cal equipment.

The event is from 1 to 2 p.m. at the VHC Health Auditorium. People interested in attending can register online at AARP Virginia's website under the events tab.

Federal legislation is also being

considered that could assist family caregivers.

One such bill is the Alleviating Barriers for Caregivers Act - which AARP's Healthcare, Family and Government Affairs Vice President Megan O'Reilly said helps caregivers navigate different information from federal agencies.

"It would really call on federal agencies such as the Social Security Administration and CMS," said O'Reilly, "to look at ways in which they can reduce that burden on caregivers when they're interacting with them."

Other legislation aims to reduce family caregivers' expenses and establish a federal family caregiver tax credit.

Higher utility and everyday costs only compounded caregivers' strained finances during the pandemic.

Fieldale man still missing after more than a month

By Taylor Boyd

The whereabouts of Kenneth "Kenny" Wayne Turner, 79, of Fieldale, is still not known, according to Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis, who added authorities continue to seek information about the man who went missing in mid-April.

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.

Turner weighs 240 pounds and is 6-feet, 4-inches tall, according to Davis, who added his agency's investigative team is still following up on any information that comes in.

"We have not received much information lately. We've remained in regular contact with his family, and again we encourage anyone in the community who may have seen or heard anything to come forward," he said.

While Davis said he doesn't know if that will happen at this point in the investigation, "we're not giving up hope," he said. "Our ultimate goal is to answer the questions of the family and provide closure."

Davis said his office is not currently conducting any ground searches, except for when it receives information that would direct officers to a specific area.

When "a tip comes in that directs us to an area that he may have



Kenneth "Kenny" Wayne Turner, 79, of Fieldale was reported missing on April 13.

been seen or known to frequent, we will conduct those searches, but we don't have any ongoing searches being done. We're following up on all tips that come in," he said.

Davis's office, along with the Henry County Department of Public Safety, Virginia State Police, and the Virginia DWR Conservation Police conducted a four-day ground search for Turner in the Fieldale area. The search ended on Tuesday, April 16.

Anyone who may have seen Turner or has information about his whereabouts is asked to call 9-1-1 or the sheriff's office at (276) 638-8751.



Gov. Glenn Youngkin participates in a bill signing ceremony on May 23, 2024.

New legislation intended to curb drug use

Three bills designed to prevent overdoses, and enhance student education about the dangers of drugs, were signed by Gov. Glenn Youngkin last week.

The trio of bills include SB 614 to combat the manufacturing of Xylazine, SB 726 to require local school boards to develop policies and procedures for opioid overdose prevention and treatment in schools, and SB 725 to rename the "Drug Treatment Court Act" to the "Recovery Court Act" reflecting a broader focus on recovery rather than just treatment and initiating a more holistic approach to addressing substance abuse issues.

"These bills are a testament to our continued efforts to address addic-

tion and overdose prevention by raising awareness and providing much-needed resources," said Youngkin. "We will continue to follow every path, use every asset, and employ every bit of our shared will to combat this epidemic. This is my pledge to all Virginians."

"It is critically important to support Virginians battling substance use disorders every step of the way," said First Lady Suzanne S. Youngkin. "That includes taking preventive action, providing ample educational resources, and changing the narrative to be more holistic, encouraging, and all-encompassing. I applaud the immense work being done by all legislators and leaders to support this most important mission."

Senate Intelligence Committee passes the Intelligence Authorization Act

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence passed the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (IAA) last week by a unanimous 17-0 vote. The bill authorizes funding, provides legal authorities, and enhances congressional oversight for the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC).

"The Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 reflects the Senate Intelligence Committee's bipartisan commitment to ensuring America's intelligence agencies have the authorities and resources they need to protect against rapidly evolving conflicts and threats," said Committee Chairman Sen. Mark R. Warner, D-Alexandria.

The IAA for Fiscal Year 2025 authorizes funding for the IC and ensures that it has the resources, personnel, and authorities it needs to protect our country and inform decision makers, while ensuring continued robust congressional oversight. The bill's provisions focus on the following key areas:

- *Increases oversight of the national security threats posed by the People's Republic of China (PRC), including its attempts to evade sanctions and regulations, military capabilities, and investments in, and attempts to dominate, the supply chains of artificial intelligence (AI), next-generation energy technologies, and biotechnology, among others.

- *Enhances the IC's ability to identify and counter threats relating to biotechnologies, including by improving and modernizing the roles, missions, and objectives of the National Counterproliferation and *Biosecurity Center and by directing the IC to identify PRC plans, intentions, and timelines relating to illicit uses of biotechnologies.

- *Enhances sanctions enforcement against terrorist and ransomware organizations and revokes foreign nationals' visas if they endorse/espouse terrorist activity.

- *Enhances policies relating to AI, including by requiring the President to develop procedures to ensure that Federal agencies better engage the private security on AI system-related threats, as well as establishing an AI Security Center within the National Security Agency to advance AI security research.

- *Enhances the IC's ability to procure, transition, and incorporate emerging technologies, including by creating a fund for acquir-

ing and transitioning such technologies.

- *Increases the IC's focus on the growing threats to the United States by ISIS and affiliated terrorist organizations.

- *Promotes reform of the nation's security classification system, by requiring the President to designate an Executive Agent for Classification and Declassification, improving the system for the classification and declassification of information, and requiring each Federal agency with access to classified information to establish an insider threat program to protect against unauthorized disclosures.

- *Prohibits entry into the Department of Energy National Laboratories by foreign nationals from adversary countries who pose counterintelligence risks.

- *Builds upon the Committee's efforts relating to energy security by requiring a strategy to improve information sharing between the IC and the private sector regarding foreign adversary-based threats to U.S. critical minerals and other energy-related projects abroad.

- *Requires the IC to conduct an assessment of the likely course of Russia's brutal war in Ukraine, and the effects of Western support to Ukraine.

- *Requires the IC to conduct an assessment of the Israel-Hamas war.

- *Improves oversight related to the Western Hemisphere, specifically when it comes to national security implications of visa-free travel by certain foreign nationals.

- *Enhances insight into the Venezuela Maduro regime's relationship with state sponsors of terrorism and foreign terrorist organizations.

- *Requires the IC to establish an IC-wide policy authorizing a program for contractor-based sensitive compartmented information facilities, to improve public-private cooperation on technology innovation.

- *Requires a Government Accountability Office (GAO) review of the All-Domain Anomaly Resolution Office regarding unidentified anomalous phenomena reporting and Federal agency coordination.

- *Reforms management of controlled access programs to improve Congressional oversight.

- *Enhances election security by requiring that voting systems undergo penetration testing for certification processes.

- *Maintains strong congressional oversight of and enhances protections for IC whistleblowers.

- *Ensures continued support to the victims of anomalous health incidents (AHIs or "Havana Syndrome") by improving funding flexibility for payments to qualified victims.

- *Safeguards important voluntary investments in watermarking and content authenticity by generative AI firms by establishing penalties for services that deliberately facilitate removal of those voluntary protections.

"This year's bill enhances the IC's ability to identify and counter emerging technological threats posed by adversarial nations, including foreign adversaries' efforts to use and dominate areas like artificial intelligence, biotechnologies, and next-generation energy," Warner said. "The IAA also designates foreign ransomware organizations as hostile cyber actors and ensures the IC has the tools it needs to counter economic coercion and illicit technology transfer, in particular by the People's Republic of China."

"It also reforms the nation's security classification system, strengthens the security of our election systems, and furthers the Committee's efforts to ensure the IC can attract and expeditiously on-board a talented, diverse, and trusted workforce to meet the emerging challenges we face," he added.

"Our Intelligence Authorization Act represents significant improvements to our national security tools, legal authorities, Intelligence Community workforce, and ensures resources are focused on the most pressing threats, specifically from China, Russia, Iran, and their partners, including Cuba, Venezuela, and North Korea, as well as terrorist organizations," said Committee Vice Chairman Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL). "Importantly, this bill takes unprecedented steps to address counterintelligence risks to our National Laboratories by prohibiting visitors from foreign adversary nations thereby protecting America's research and competitive advantage. I look forward to moving our bipartisan legislation to the full Senate and final enactment."

Teens die in crash

The Virginia State Police are investigating a single-vehicle crash that resulted in two fatalities, according to a release from the state police. The crash occurred Saturday, May 25, at 12:20 a.m., on Virginia 108, three tenths of a mile south of Virginia 928 in Henry County.

A 2014 Chevrolet Impala was traveling north on Virginia 108, when the vehicle ran off the right side of the roadway and struck

several trees. The Chevrolet then caught fire and became fully involved.

The driver of the Chevrolet was identified as Azetta Sone Hairston, 17, of Martinsville. The passenger was identified as Jahnavia Sadee Rose Hairston, 19, also of Martinsville. Both females died at the scene.

It is undetermined if seatbelts were in use, according to the VSP.

Youngkin Takes Final Action on 2024 Regular Session Legislation

Gov. Glenn Youngkin recently acted on legislation that was returned to his desk after the General Assembly rejected his proposed recommendations.

“During my State of the Commonwealth address in January, I made clear my intention to work in a bipartisan manner with the General Assembly to accomplish policies that move Virginia forward, and we have a lot to be proud of this session,” said Youngkin. “I sent 115 bills back to the General Assembly with amendments which improved the legislation and sought compromise on collective priorities. I’m glad the majority of those recommendations were accepted. While I look forward to working with the General Assembly to see if we can reach agreement on language in the future, today I must act on the language before me, and there are several bills which are not ready to become law.”

“This includes legislation related to contraception. Let me be crystal clear: I support access to contraception. However, we cannot trample on the religious freedoms of Virginians. And that is the issue the recommendations I sent back to the General Assembly addressed. I will continue to uphold the oath that I swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia,” Youngkin said.

The Governor signed seven bills, which included:

*SB 498 - School-connected overdose policies; guidelines, parental notification and response- the Virginia Senate accepted the Governor’s recommendation, which returned the bill to its stronger original version. The House of Delegates unfortunately rejected the recommendation. While the current language does not go far enough to ensure parental notification of school-connected overdoses, it allows the Board of Education to establish guidelines. The Board of Education will begin this important work immediately. In addition, Executive Order 28, which establishes a 24-hour parental notification

standard for all school-connected overdoses, remains in effect.

*HB 707 & SB 361- Consumer Data Protection Act; protections for children- the Governor’s recommendation would have expanded protections for children from harmful social media practices online. In its current form, the bill does not go as far as it should, particularly by excluding minors over the age of 13 from protection, but the bill can be signed as the Administration works with the legislature and stakeholders to further strengthen these protections next session.

*HB 1055- Eastern VA Health Sciences Center at Old Dominion University, board of directors; membership- The Governor’s recommendation strengthened the ability of the General Assembly and the executive branch to oversee the new board established by the forthcoming merger of Eastern Virginia Medical School and Old Dominion University. The bill in its current form can be signed, allowing the merger process to continue while pursuing future governance changes.

*SB 142- Public school teachers; licensure requirements, issuance of a one-year local eligibility license- the Governor offered recommendations that would have improved the functionality of the bill. While legislative changes will be necessary next session to make it more effective, the bill as it currently stands will improve the ability to hire teachers.

*HB 214- Common interest communities; residents providing certain services exemption- this bill was sent to the Governor’s desk in the “7-day” bill window during the 2024 Regular Session. Additional review was needed. The relevant agencies have been consulted and the bill is ready to be signed into law.

*HB 1071- Reduction of speed limits; local authority- while additional work will need to be done on this policy in the future to continue to improve its implementation while continuing to guarantee road safety, the bill can move forward at this time.

Unique family vacation ideas

By Staff Reports

Summer is the unofficial season of vacations, especially for families. School is not in session in summer, and kids’ often busy schedules may grind to a halt in summer, when sports leagues, dance classes and other activities go on hiatus.

School closures and a largely empty obligation schedule makes summer a great time for families to go on vacation. Traditional vacation hotspots like adventure parks and resorts merit consideration, but the following are some unique family vacation ideas that can help parents and their children make lasting memories.

· Ballpark tour: For families that love baseball, a summer ballpark tour can be a truly unique experience. Whether families prefer Major League Baseball and its large ballparks or the more intimate settings at minor league stadiums, there’s no shortage of options on a ballpark tour. Both MLB and minor league stadiums tend to be located in large or mid-size cities, which means there’s plenty to do in between games as well.

· Camper/RV trip: A family vacation in a camper or RV is a cozy way for families to bond as they vacation at their own pace. National parks across the United States and Canada make for ideal places to visit when touring each country in a camper or RV. But there’s really no limit to the experiences families can enjoy on self-driving trips when their beds are

on board for the ride.

· History road trip: Historical landmarks dot the North American landscape, making a history road trip a fun way to hit the road and learn a little something along the way. American history buffs have no shortage of historic sites to see regardless of which region of the country they plan to visit or which period of history most intrigues them, from the Revolutionary War to the California Gold Rush to the American Civil War and more. Canadian history buffs can go all the way back to the days of the dinosaurs at the Dinosaur Provincial Park in Alberta or visit Nova Scotia to see the eighteenth century economic and military hub the Fortress of Louisbourg, which is the largest historical reconstruction in North America.

· Urban tours: One of the joys of visiting Europe is the chance to travel from city to city without spending too much time in the car or on the train between stops. Though North America might be more spread out, families can still tour various urban locales in a single vacation. Parents can pick a region of the country (such as the northeastern United States) and then plan road trips that enable them to visit different cities in that area over the course of a week to two weeks. Make an effort to try the foods each city is known for and visit a local landmark, making sure to leave time to walk around so everyone can get a feel for what a day in each city is like.



Lee Clark, Director of Planning, Zoning, and Inspections for Henry County, reviews a map detailing the revitalization of the Fieldale Recreation Center.

Updates expected to county’s Comprehensive Plan

Henry County residents will soon get the chance to shape the future of their community by participating in an update to the county’s comprehensive plan.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors officially began the process Tuesday by awarding a \$212,139 contract to Berkley Group, LLC, to provide planning services over the next two years for a complete rewrite of the county’s comprehensive plan.

A comprehensive plan is a master document that expresses and regulates public policy on transportation, utilities, land use, recreation and housing.

“The last time that Henry County updated its comprehensive plan was 1995,” said Lee Clark, Director of Planning, Zoning and Inspections. “Times have changes significantly since then and this update will encapsulate those changes, as well as provide some direction on how our community wants to grow in the coming decades.”

The process will include numerous opportunities for public engagement. As part of this initiative, surveys and questionnaires will be developed to solicit feedback from Henry County residents. Four public workshops are also planned to address county-wide and neighborhood-specific issues.

Following the data collection and community engagement periods, Berkley will work with the county to draft policy solutions to comply with the new comprehensive plan.

“The plan will serve as a foundation to guide the growth and land development of the entire county,” Clark said. “It is one of the most important tools the county has in terms of planning and this process is a way for residents to impact their community for generations to come.”

An interactive website will be created to provide information and updates to residents throughout the project. More updates will be provided as the project gets underway.

In other matters, the board:

- Received an update on the local energy efficiency action plan and set a public comment period for the plan, scheduled to end June 24, 2024.
- Awarded a contract to Vest Sales and Services, Inc., in the amount of \$199,969 for the re-chassis of an existing 2019 ambulance to a 2025 Ford 4x4.
- Awarded a contract to TK Elevator in the amount of \$78,402 to update the elevator cabs and shafts in the Henry County Administration Building.
- Awarded a contract to Excel Truck Group in the amount of \$389,513 for the purchase of a 2025 Mack LR front loading garbage truck.
- Awarded a contract to D.H. Griffin in the amount of \$349,000 for the demolition of the previous jail building.
- Awarded a contract to Bassett Office

Supply to supply and deliver supplies to county offices. The contract does not include a set amount of expenses because purchases will be based on how many office supplies are needed at the time of purchase.

· Approved an additional appropriation of \$20,000 received from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to hire a licensed surveyor to reconfigure 31 existing lots into 16 building lots for the Villa Heights Housing Project.

· Approved an additional appropriation of \$15,698 received from the U.S. Department of Justice State Criminal Alien Assistance Program for deputy overtime, special operations, and off-site security of inmates during medical procedures.

· Approved an additional appropriation of \$1.5 million received from the Virginia Appalachian Regional Commission and a Community Development Block Grant for renovations to the Historic Fieldale Community Center.

· Approved an additional appropriation of \$1,341 from State Asset Forfeiture Funds for the purchase of furniture and fixtures.

· Approved a transfer of \$406,022 from the school’s Administration/Attendance and Health Category to the transportation and operations and maintenance categories. The funds will be used to purchase two new school buses and to upgrade school surveillance systems and classroom door locks.

· Approved a resolution honoring Mike Arnold for his 35 years of service to the county.

· Approved a resolution recognizing the 65th Anniversary of the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce.

· Approved a resolution recognizing May 2024 as National Foster Care Month.

· Approved a resolution establishing Ques Transport, LLC, as a designated emergency response agency.

· Awarded the inaugural Community Connected Citizen Award to Patrick Rodgers, James Rodgers, and Mike Matherly.

· Appropriated the fiscal year 2024-2025 total county and school budgets.

· Set a public hearing for July 23 to consider solar siting agreements with C.F. VA Solar.

· Appropriated \$28,00 from the Board’s contingency fund to purchase three lots and demolish an existing structure related to the Villa Heights Housing Project.

· Reappointed Michael Smith and Sandra Adams to the Parks and Recreation Board.

· Reappointed Stuart Warren, Wayne Moore, Gary Collins to the Patrick & Henry Community College Board.

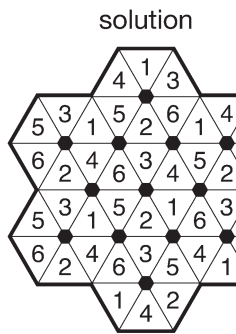
· Reappointed Garrett Dillard and appointed Bill Adkins to the Piedmont Regional Community College Board.

Puzzle Answers!

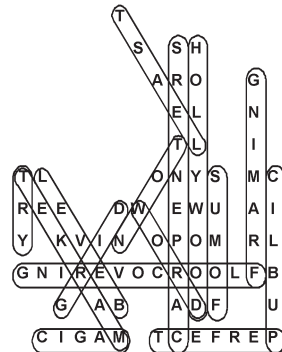
SCRAMBLERS

solution
1. Elate; 2. Detail;
3. Dirge; 4. Proud
Today’s Word
LOADED

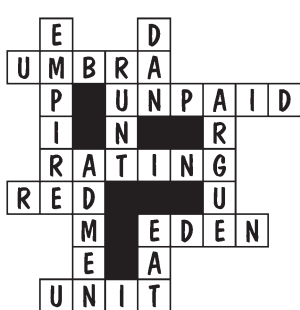
SNOWFLAKES



— SQUARES



FEAR & THE KNIGHT



Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

5	4	2	8	3	9	7	1	6
3	8	7	1	6	2	5	9	4
6	9	1	4	5	7	3	8	2
8	6	5	3	7	1	2	4	9
4	1	3	9	2	8	6	5	7
7	2	9	6	4	5	1	3	8
1	5	6	2	8	4	9	7	3
2	7	4	5	9	3	8	6	1
9	3	8	7	1	6	4	2	5

S	I	L	I	C	A	A	L	E	A	P	D	W	I	W	A	N	G		
O	V	I	S	A	C	R	O	U	S	H	E	I	N	O	D	O	R		
R	A	B	B	L	E	T	O	U	R	N	A	M	E	N	T	E	A	S	
E	N	S	N	A	R	E	D	A	N	O	D	E	T	I	G	H	T		
			B	B	C	R	A	P	T	H	E	M	I	S	S	I	O	N	
D	M	I	T	R	I	C	S	A	M	O	R	E	R	A	M	O	N	A	
O	O	P	T	I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M	H	E	R	E				
O	S	A	K	A	G	O	I	N	G	B	A	U	M	D	O	E			
M	E	D	S	D	A	W	N	A	V	E	N	G	E	R	H	U	N	T	
			B	I	D	F	R	E	A	K	M	O	U	S	E	R			
A	L	P	M	A	S	S	A	G	E	A	R	A	B	B	E	E	T	L	E
B	I	O	L	A	B	P	A	N	E	L	L	E	G						
R	A	M	B	L	E	D	E	G	G	S	W	H	I	R	I	D	E		
A	R	P				L	O	S	S	A	S	H	E	N	P	E	R	O	T
			C	A	I	N	O	U	T	I	N	G	R	E	P	O	R	T	
S	E	S	A	M	E	A	A	A	I	N	S	I	T	O	N	Y	A		
A	L	E	S	O	F	J	U	S	T	I	C	E	H	M	S				
H	I	L	T	S	E	L	I	M	S	A	E	S	T	H	E	T	E		
A	X	E	L	R	E	A	M	E	D	A	N	D	S	H	O	U	T	E	D
R	I	C	E	A	R	I	A	U	D	I	O	O	R	M	O	N	D		
A	R	T	S	E	S	T	L	E	A	K	S	T	E	E	N	S	Y		



PUZZLE TIME



FEAR KNOT

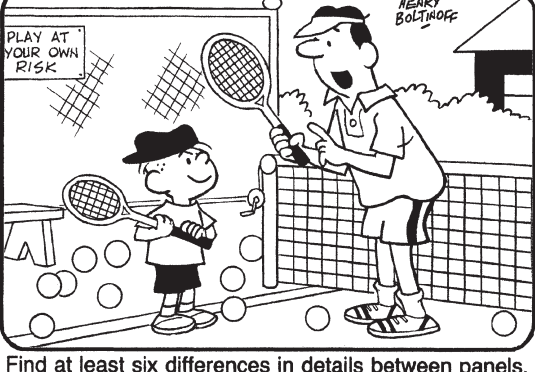
By: rj Johnson
DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

ERD
NIPDUA
♥BUARM
♥ENDE
♥AGNIRT
♥AET
♥UTRN
♥EMDNA
♥NDA
IMPREE
♥EGURA
TUIN

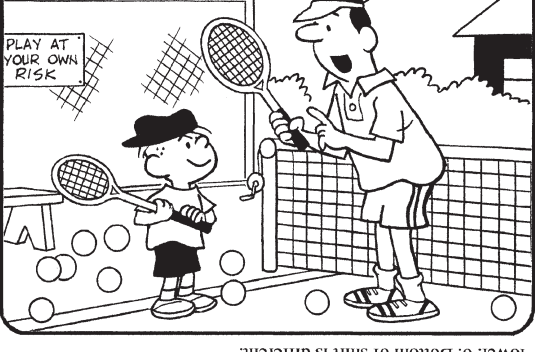
Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only **ONE** word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥**RATHE** becomes **HATER** or **EARTH** or **HEART**). Fit each string's word either across or down to knot all twelve strings together.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Ball is missing. 2. Racket is longer. 3. Stripe on shorts is different. 4. Fence is not as wide. 5. Sign on fence is lower. 6. Bottom of shirt is different.

MAGIC MAZE — SQUARES

G K I F C Z T W U R P M J H T
E C Z X U S Q S N S H L J G E
E C Z X V T R P A R O N L G P
J H E C A Y W V T E L R P N R
N L K I G E C B Z T L X W I A
U T L S R P O M O N Y S L M C
J R E E I G D W E E W U D A I
B Y A K V I N Y O P O M X R L
W G N I R E V O C R O O L F B
U T S G Q A B P O A D F N L U
K J C I G A M H T C E F R E P

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: FABRIC FLOOR COVERING

- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------|---------|------|
| Bevel | Grid | Market | Town |
| Carpenter's | Hollywood | Perfect | Try |
| Floor covering | Least | Public | Word |
| Framing | Magic | Sum of | |

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Super Crossword

ACROSS

- Quartz, e.g.
- Take — of faith
- Imbiber's hwy. crime
- Gown designer Vera
- Brood pouch
- Baseball Hall of Famer Edd
- German "a"
- Smell
- Sports contest between two disorderly crowds?
- Give relief
- Trapped
- Negative battery pole
- Fitting snugly
- Telly network
- Perform a hip-hop song about a military operation?
- Periodic table creator
- Mendelev
- Singer Cooke
- Mined matter
- Kid-lit "pest"
- Cry from a toddler who's dropped a Dairy Queen cone?
- Present
- Port in Japan

DOWN

- Leaving
- Oz creator L. Frank —
- Female rat
- Things docs prescribe
- Daybreak
- Search for a Marvel superhero?
- eBay action
- Flip (out)
- Rodent-catching cat
- Rubdown given in a mountain chalet?
- Winged insect native to Iraq or Oman?
- Use Lyft, e.g.
- Dadaist Jean
- Defeat
- Pale-looking
- H. Ross —
- Genesis brother
- Official account of an excursion?
- Bagel seed
- Towing org.

MISS SOUTH CAROLINA

- Entry points
- 2017 film about skater Harding
- Supreme Court members' favorite beers?
- Royal Navy letters
- Sword parts
- Some sports rounds, for short
- Lover of beauty buildup
- Skating jump
- Yelled while using a juicer?
- Pilaf base
- Singer Grande, to her fans
- The "A" of AV
- Actress Julia
- The "A" of A&E
- Vermont hrs.
- Tire problems
- lty-bitty

Region of Italy's "toe"

Sour in taste

Longtime Yankee nickname

Singer Rawls

Ger.'s continent

Very simple

Ghostly figure

Myers once of CNBC

"You can't — all!"

Savings acct. buildup

"Alas!"

Slowly, on music scores

Have as a snack

Green (old eloping mecca)

Sleuth, slangily

Jay of "Gary Unmarried"

Despot of old

— to go (eager)

Church cry

"It just came back to me"

Tragic destiny

Allison of jazz

Apple debut of 2010

Clucks of shame

Clumsy boat

"Zounds!"

Gelatin in a petri dish

"Tell Mama" singer

James

Clie — (Bic pen brand)

Place to buy a leash

Queens' homes

Novelist Oz

Hot cereal, often

Punchline drum hit

Big desert

Miracle drink

Choose

With milk, in French

"— sure you know ..."

Heckles

Give credit where credit —

"— So Shy"

Uproars

103 Newsman

Brit

Boys' school in Britain

Some till bills

Jacuzzi effect

Actress Issa

Org. for cavity repairers

Suffix with beat or neat

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- In 1925, a war between Greece and Bulgaria started after a stray dog crossed their border.
- During the 1917 siege of Jerusalem, the British, in an effort to capture the city from an entrenched Ottoman garrison, airdropped cigarettes filled with large doses of opium in the hope their opponents would be too stoned to fight. It worked.
- Holland, Michigan, has 168 miles of tubing coiled underneath its streets that circulates hot water in order to melt any snow on the ground.
- China's Three Gorges Dam is so huge that it's slowed the rotation of Earth.
- Hard-rocker Ozzy Osbourne once fell asleep during a driving test and woke up to find a note on the seat that said, "You have failed." But give him credit for persistence: After 19 attempts, he finally managed to pass the test in 2009 at the age of 60, and then purchased a Ferrari.
- In Wisconsin, it's legal for kids of any age to drink alcohol in a bar as long as they are with their legal guardian.
- Dwayne Johnson's beard in the movie "Hercules" was made of yak testicle hair.
- The Aztecs regarded childbirth as a form of battle. Women who didn't survive it were thought to rise to one of the highest heavens, the same one as for male warriors who died in battle.
- In 1986 a Soviet pilot made a bet with his co-pilot that he could land his airplane blind. He curtained all the cockpit windows and crashed the plane into the landing strip, killing 70 out of his 87 passengers.

Thought for the Day: "Life is like skiing. The goal is not to get to the bottom of the hill. It's to have a bunch of good runs before the sun sets." — *Seth Godin*

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

		2		3				6
3					2	5		
6	9		4					8
		5		7				4
4					8			7
	2		6				1	
1					4			3
		4	5	9		8		
	3		7					2

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

- ♦ Easy
- ♦♦ Medium
- ♦♦♦ Difficult

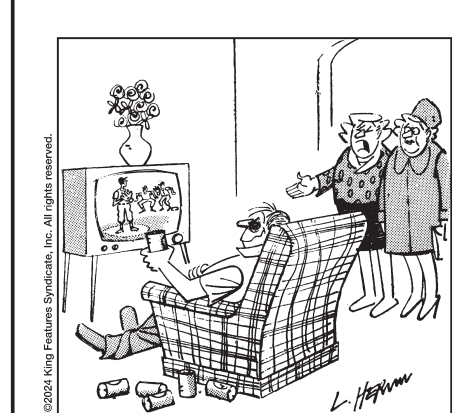
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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

WHY DO I START BACK WITH THE CLUBHEAD HELD SLIGHTLY ABOVE GROUND? ONE REASON IS THAT THIS REDUCES THE CHANCE OF INCURRING A PENALTY BY INADVERTENTLY MOVING THE BALL.

GUARDING AGAINST STUBBING THE CLUB IN THE GRASS BEHIND THE BALL, WHICH WOULD DISRUPT THE ENTIRE SWING, IS ANOTHER REASON.

THE FINAL AND MOST IMPORTANT ONE IS THAT NOT GROUNDING THE CLUB PROMOTES SLOW, SMOOTH INITIATION OF THE SWING.



SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Inspire

TEALE

Feature

DILATE

Elegy

RIDGE

Noble

DROUP

TODAY'S WORD

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VMNH receives \$4,500 grant to support Dino Festival

Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced that the Virginia Museum of Natural History (VMNH) has received \$4,500 from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) Virginia Special Events & Festivals Program in support of the museum's Dino Festival taking place July 26 and 27. This grant will support overall festival marketing and activities, while also supporting community partnerships for lodging, restaurants and visitor attractions, along with overall regional tourism.

"Dino Festival is an incredibly popular event that continues to grow in both scope and visitation," said Deputy Director Ryan Barber. "Not only is it popular with visitors from Martinsville and Henry County, but it also draws thousands of people from outside of the local area, many of whom visit from out of state. We're incredibly grateful to have the support of the Virginia Tourism Corporation, which will play a significant role in our efforts to continue marketing this event, the museum, and the region as unique and exciting tourist attractions and destinations."

Hailed as a two-day dinosaur extravaganza, Dino Festival provides visitors with the ability to view an extraordinary variety of life-size dinosaur cast skeletons and dinosaur fossils, the opportunity to interact with expert paleontologists, as well as the chance to participate in engaging dinosaur-themed activities.

"We truly believe Dino Festival is one of the premier dinosaur-themed events you can attend on the east coast," said Barber. The number "of displays, fossil specimens, and activities that are offered make the event an exceptional attraction. Having the support of the VTC will



This life-size cast skeleton of Acrocanthosaurus will be on display during Dino Festival.



go a long way towards helping us continue building awareness of this spectacular event."

The funding is provided to the museum as part of the VTC's Virginia Special Events & Festival Sponsorship Program, which assists with marketing and production of established Virginia special events and festivals. Preference is given to special events and festivals that have a significant and positive economic impact on the Virginia local community.

VTC's tourism marketing and sponsorship programs are designed to increase visitor spending by leveraging limited marketing dollars, to stimulate new tourism marketing through partnerships, and to extend the "Virginia is for Lovers" brand to drive visitation. Using the hub and spoke tourism partnership model, Virginia entities partner to apply for funding. Partners may consist of Virginia cities, towns, counties, convention and visitors' bureaus, chambers of commerce, other local or regional destination marketing organizations, museums, attrac-

tions, cultural events, and other tourism-related non-profits and tourism-oriented businesses. More information about VTC's Grant Programs can be found at vatc.org/grants.

"VTC's marketing and sponsorship programs are powerful incentives creating tourism partnerships across Virginia that are a robust part of Virginia's economic ecosystem," said Governor Glenn Youngkin. "Across the Commonwealth, the tourism industry recognizes the importance of having inventive strategies to showcase all that Virginia has to offer. These grants will support those efforts and help draw thousands of additional visitors to the Commonwealth to experience everything that makes Virginia so special."

This year's Dino Festival takes place Friday, July 26 and Saturday, July 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. General admission rates apply.

To learn more about the festival, including a list of available exhibit displays and activities, visit www.vmnh.net/events/dino-festival.

Martinsville Mile to be held in July

- The 2024 MARTINSVILLE MILE
- July 20 – 7 PM
- Dick & Willie Trail

The Martinsville Mile will return to the Dick & Willie Trail on July 20 at 7 p.m. The presenting sponsor is Lester Building Supply, and 2024 will mark the seventh consecutive year that Miles in Martinsville has conducted a one mile race at various venues around the community.

The series began in 2018 as the Martinsville Speedway Mile when competitors raced on the track at Martinsville Speedway. Following two years at the speedway, the race moved to the Smith River Sports Complex as the Smith River Mile. The race was moved to uptown Martinsville in 2021 and 2022. The uptown competitions were presented as the consecutive UpTown Martinsville Mile and the Bee City Up-Town Mile. Then, in 2023 the race was moved to a slightly downhill course on the Dick & Willie Trail, where fast finish times were enjoyed by runners of all levels.

This event is a salute to the historical allure of the one mile run. Distance runners, young and old, are likely familiar with the endeavor to run a fast mile as they perhaps experienced their first race in the one mile run as part of a school track meet. And, of course, a majority of sports fans are aware of the early efforts of athletes to run a mile in less than four minutes. In fact, May 5 marked the 70th anniversary of Sir Roger Bannister achieving that goal in a time of 3 minutes and 59.4 seconds.

This Martinsville Mile will not be run on a



Sienna Bailey at finish of 2023 D&W Mile. She won the Female Division in 4:58. A recent Bassett High School graduate, she will run for D1 Radford University next year. (Contributed)

standard 400 meter track but rather at a unique venue, a one mile downhill section of the area's iconic Dick & Willie Passage Trail. The race will start near the intersection of the Uptown Connection Trail and the Dick & Willie Trail and finish near the Liberty Street Trailhead.

All ages, speeds and experience are welcome. Two heats are planned. One for faster runners expecting to finish in seven minutes or faster. A second heat will include those expecting to run the course in over seven minutes plus walkers. The results from both heats will be combined to determine overall and age group winners.

An awards presentation and post-race gathering will take place at the Liberty Street Trailhead parking lot. Runners will enjoy snacks, beverages and awards ceremony following the



The beginning of the first mile, held at Martinsville Speedway in 2018. The event included several Roanoke Valley Elite runners; Sidney Allen, former MHS star miler and Carmen Graves, five time All American distance runner at Roanoke College.

race.

For more details and online registration, interested runners should visit the race website at: <http://www.milesinmartinsville.com/races.cfm>. Online registration deadline is midnight July 17. Online registration is strongly encouraged.

Paper registration forms are available at the above website link and at the front desk of the Martinsville-Henry County YMCA. Completed forms may be submitted at the YMCA. Late paper registration forms may be submitted at the YMCA on Friday July 19, noon – 6 p.m.; and on race day at the YMCA, 3– 5 p.m. There will be no registration or packet pick-up at race start or finish sites.

Miles in Martinsville is the running arm of

the Martinsville-Henry County YMCA. The group conducts running events throughout the year. More information is available on the website at <http://www.milesinmartinsville.com>. Questions can be directed to race officials by email at braverunner67@gmail.com.

Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society
Sounds on the Square
2024

7:00-10:00 P.M.
Opens at 6:00 P.M.

Free admission

All ages welcome

Food and other beverages available

Craft beers by Scuffie Hill Brewing Company

Bring a chair

Historic Henry County Courthouse, 1 East Main Street, Uptown Martinsville

Friday, May 3, 2024 • Andy Burnette Trio

Friday, June 7, 2024 • Barefoot Modern

Friday, July 5, 2024 • The League of Ordinary Gentlemen

Friday, August 2, 2024 • Forrest Taylor

Friday, September 6, 2024 • The Ghosts of Liberty

Friday, September 13, 2024 • "Line-Dancing on the Square"

Friday, October 4, 2024 • Andy Burnette Trio

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Class of 2024

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 Aaron McPeck, Janeka Hairston, and
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Well done, graduates!

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