

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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Apartment owner plans to work with county on issues

By Taylor Boyd

Ken Lazaro, the owner of the Crestview Apartment complex on Halifax Drive in Collinsville, plans to meet with the Henry County Board of Supervisors this month to discuss the issues neighbors are having with his property and its tenants.

During a July 29 interview, Lazaro said the meeting time has not yet been set up.

“Two of the people were in training, out of town, and couldn’t make it. So, I would imagine sometime in August. I think” the supervisors said they’d “give me at least three dates,” he said.

Several neighborhood residents attended the July 23 board meeting to detail the issues they’ve encountered with the apartment complex including multiple acts of violence, drug issues, dead bodies, vermin, the apartments’ derelict conditions, and numerous others.

One of the residents was Donald Gilbert, who noted these issues have existed for more



Rick Anderson, who lives in the Halifax Drive neighborhood in Collinsville, surveyed the nearby apartment complex.

than 20 years and were presented to the board in 2008.

“It’s been 16 years and very little improvements have been done,” he said at the meeting.

Lazaro said he’s doing what he can to improve the apartment complex, and that he has a building permit to install new decks and siding on the buildings.

Part of the issues stem from the pandemic, he said, and while he doesn’t want to shift the blame, Lazaro said the government made it hard for him to take action and fix the issues.

“I had issues during COVID, and people didn’t pay their rent, and I couldn’t throw anybody out. For months, I could not throw anybody out, and I had a lot of dead-beats move in here. It was like 22 months, the government said you can’t throw them out, we don’t want people that could be sick on the street or get sick on the streets, so I couldn’t throw them out,” he said, adding while this was going on, these tenants weren’t paying rent.

Lazaro noted he evicted those living in one apartment, and (See Apartment p. 2)



A solar facility is being built on the former Bassett Country Club property. (By Ray Reynolds)

Solar project causes property owners concern

By Jessica Dillon

Clearing of the former Bassett Country Club property has brought attention to a solar farm that will be located across from Stanleytown Elementary School and was approved in 2020.

Many residents living nearby said they are unhappy about the farm, and some said they were never notified about the project.

Donna Jarrett, who lives at the backside of Hillcrest Park, has felt the effects of the farm’s construction. “They burned (debris) Sunday, and it was so bad that you couldn’t even go outside,” Jarrett said. The entire Bassett Forks area is being affected by the

plume of smoke. “The smoke is terrible.”

She doesn’t know whether the project may devalue her property, but Jarrett said that she felt that it wasn’t worth it to try and contact anyone about the project.

“We figured once it was set to go, we didn’t stand a chance,” she said, adding that residents weren’t properly notified about the project. “Nobody knew anything about it until they started clearing the lot.”

Jarrett and others also are concerned about noise from inverters.

“This was something we weren’t aware of was even an issue when (See Solar Project p. 4)

Protecting a presidential candidate

By Debbie Hall

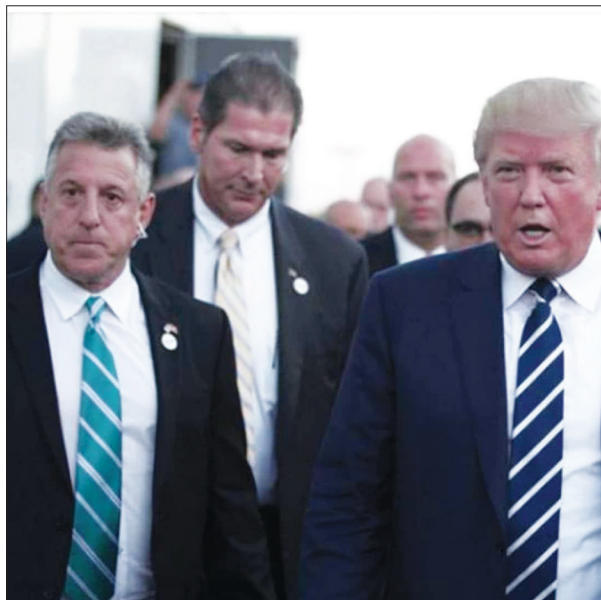
Eddie Deck Jr. knows a thing or two about personal protection, after he and his company worked for the Trump campaign in 2015-16.

“I first met Eddie in 2015, when I was covering Trump rallies,” Collinsville resident Ray Reynolds said of Deck, a retired FBI agent and United States Marine Corps (USMC) Infantry Company Commander who was hired in June 2015 as the personal security detail for former Pres. Donald Trump.

Reynolds, a photojournalist, has attended 85 Trump events and written books about his experiences.

During many of those events, Deck and his company, XMark Group, provided Trump’s personal protection (PPD). Even after November 2015, when the Secret Service provided Trump’s personal security, Deck and his team of six to eight other retired FBI agents and retired NYPD officers to provide event security.

When all was said and done, the group provided protection at 73 Trump rallies in 2015-16, as well as Trump’s



Eddie Deck Jr. (left), president of the XMark Group, is pictured with former Pres. Donald Trump. Deck and his company served as Trump’s personal protection detail. (Contributed)

2017 inauguration.

Deck said during his watch, thankfully, nothing like the July 13 attempted assassination in Butler, Penn., occurred. There, one person died, and others were wounded, including Trump.

But there were a few harrowing incidents, Deck said, and offered a behind the scenes glimpse of the process.

“We did about five or six venues that were similar to the way it was set up in Butler” Penn., Deck said, and recount-

ed two of those experiences.

The first was an August 2015 rally in Laredo, TX.

“I did all of the advance work – met with the police chief, Texas Rangers, all of that,” Deck said. “I wasn’t Secret Service, so I had to depend on the local police – city, county and state, because I did not have the support or structure the Secret Service has. They have a lead guy and 19 other Secret Service agents.”

(See Candidate p.3)

Back2School event serves more than 2,000 children

By Jessica Dillon

Over the last few weeks, several local churches have banded together for the Back2School program, collecting hundreds of backpacks, filling them with supplies, and then distributing them to more than 2,000 children at a multisite event that occurred on August 2-3.

The effort included a ‘pack the bus’ event, and according to Stevie Byrd, a volunteer, people were “very generous.”

Michael Harrison, pastor of Community Fellowship, helps lead the program that he started in 2007, a year after founding the church.

“The first year we served 75 kids with school supplies. The next year, we added backpacks and served 500,” Harrison said.

The following year, shoes were added to the offerings, and registration increased to include 1,000 youngsters, which prompted the addition of satellite locations.

“The largest we’ve ever been is 18 locations in five different states. This year we are at 10 locations in 10 different states,” he said.

Project leader Katie Whitlow said that “one of my favorite things



Brittany Adkins, a volunteer, shows off a donated backpack during the Pack the Bus event.

about back to school is it’s a partnership between different denominations.” She said that she felt like everyone “was united for one purpose, and that’s Jesus.”

The backpacks were filled and transported during a large-scale Fill the Backpacks charity event. Tracie Hinchcliff, the executive director of Grace Network, was among the volunteers at the event, and led the city cluster of churches. “It made sense for all our (See Back2School p. 5)

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Apartment

(cont. from page 1)



they simply moved into another unit.

"If there was somebody else living there, they moved into it. I had them running extension cords from one apartment to another to another because they couldn't do the electricity. The electric company could shut the power off," he said, "but I couldn't throw them out."

"Now all the neighbors say, 'you make too much noise up here and this and that.' Sorry, I'm doing the best that I can," he said.

Lazaro, who's owned the property for about 30 years, said he's "trying to put it back together now."

Of his 20 units, 10 are currently rented. He is currently not looking to rent the others, "because I figure the more people up in here, the more likely it's going to be more noise, and more commotion, and more problems, and I've got a pretty good crew here right now."

At the July 23 meeting, Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis said there were 778 calls for service either at the apartment complex or from neighbors calling about issues relating to the apartments. In a three-year period, Davis noted there were 379 calls for service there.

"I ran those numbers for the past 12 months from the date, and 12 months ago 202 calls for service. What's interesting about that is half of those were self-initiating proactive policing calls where we initiate it ourselves," Davis said at the board meeting.

The apartment complex hasn't had any drug issues for the past 6 to 8 months, Lazaro said, and wondered if the numbers Davis provided included multiple calls for the same incident.

"There are many tenants here and neighbors. I mean, somebody could call because they heard loud noises, or they heard dogs barking. It could be three people calling for the same thing," Lazaro said, adding that he thinks neighbors may be forcing the issue by making more phone calls,

"Probably more than they need to just so that Wayne Davis is getting a headache out of it," Lazaro said, adding that he wants others in the neighborhood to know that he's trying his best to repair the apartment complex.

"If they want me to snap my fingers, it's just not going to happen. You can't let something go down for years and then turn it around in a month," he said.

County Administrator Dale Wagoner said the county is exploring every legal option to remedy the situation. It's "a very bad situation in our community."

While the county has had discussions with Lazaro, Wagoner said it has not set a firm date to meet with him yet.

Neighbors like Joan Cline cited several issues. Cline has lived across from the apartments for more than 30 years, and her issues with the complex started about six years after her family moved to the area.

It "constantly kept getting worse and worse and worse," Cline said.

For instance, she said her electricity has been turned off because her address is sometimes used as the mailing address for the complex.

"I'm constantly getting mail from up there. I had my power cut off and it was an act of congress to get my power cut back on, and that's been" within the last year, she said.

Years ago, Cline said chaos involving fighting and guns at the apartments made her sleep in her back room on the floor with her children. Cline estimated she's called the police about 50 times since she moved to the neighborhood.

"We've had two stabbings, shootings. A gang fight - they woke me up in the middle of the night banging on the door needing the police and they beat him up before the police got here, took him off," she said. "There was one night they were out there fighting, and the car jumped out of gear, or they didn't put it in gear, and it rolled downhill and almost hit my house."

"I had called the police, and I was scared that they would shoot their weapons out or something in the house. So, I slept on the floor for a week with the children," she said, adding that a dead body had been found inside one of the apartments, about two weeks after death.

Cline said she isn't scared living across from the apartment complex "anymore because I'm used to it, and I have security cameras, and I also have guns."

Aside from those safety concerns, Cline said there also is a trash issue, with debris blowing out of the dumpster. Loud music, and people driving out of the complex so fast she doesn't believe they even check to see if anyone's already coming down the road also are issues, she said, and noted the county's animal control officer has been by because of multiple dogs running around. Cline suspects a puppy mill was on site at one point.

The condition of some of the apartments also concerns her.

"I just don't think they're fit for

anyone to live in, not at all. I mean you can see the installation right there," Cline said of an end apartment, "and when it rains hard, it's got to be getting wet. It's just horrible, things I have seen in 32 years, and I don't see them getting any better at all, not unless it's torn down."

She's all but lost hope of the situation improving.

"Whenever we go and talk to the board of supervisors, he starts doing a little work here and there to try and show that he's trying to do something, and as soon as it calms down, he quits. It's time something's done," she said, adding the apartments "are beyond repair. Much money needs to be put into those apartments to get them back to where they look nice."

Cline said the apartments need to be torn down instead of being vacated, otherwise, there is a potential for squatting.

"They can't be left sitting" empty, she said. "I think that would be more trouble that we've got."

Cline said she and other neighbors met with Lazaro and county officials about 24 years ago.

"He was acting like we were just being nick picky, and we just didn't want people over there. It wasn't that at all," she said.

Rick Anderson, who lives about 1,000 feet from the apartment complex, retired from law enforcement in 2018. "Over the years, I've had seven DUIs from this place in my front yard."

There have been shootings, stabbings, Anderson said, adding that he believes if he didn't have a law enforcement background, he might be fearful of his life living close to the complex.

"It scares my wife to death," he said.

Anderson said a shotgun was pulled on one neighbor. Another's property was broken into, and another had a car roll down the driveway into a tree. A realtor who sold the property next door to the complex demanded a privacy fence be put up before selling the house.

Anderson said there's never been a rat or roach problem that didn't stem from the complex.

"I actually killed 25 rats in a year" outside the house, Anderson said, and added that he'd love to see the complex torn down.

"It'd probably cost an easy \$100,000" to make the needed repairs, he said, and noted that is a hefty investment.

Don Gilbert, who's lived across the street from the apartments since 2002, recalled that once when he and his wife were in the basement of their house, they could hear water running but didn't know where it was coming from.

When he went outside, he said people with 20-gallon buckets were getting water from his spicket in his front yard, he said.

"I said, 'what are you doing?' They said, 'oh, we ain't got no water over there,'" and had been told "that you said it was okay for us to come over here and get water from you." I said, 'no, I didn't give' permission, Gilbert said, and estimated that he has called law enforcement at least a dozen times because of issues related to the complex.

Gilbert said the complex was in good condition years ago. "If he would go and honestly fix those things up the way they should be" it could be better. "I'd love to see the place fixed up," he said.

While he understands that everyone needs a place to live, Anderson said the complex would not be his choice in its current state.

Usually, when neighbors complain to the county, efforts to repair the complex begin in earnest, but those efforts are short-lived.

If the apartments aren't repaired, Gilbert said he's among those who would like to see them torn down.

"Those people over there deserve better than to live in that mess," he said.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Friday, August 9

Arts and Cultural Committee Meeting, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., City Municipal Building, 55 West Church St. Martinsville.

Monday, August 12

The Martinsville City School Board meets at 6 p.m. in the MCPS School Board Central Office, 746 Indian Trail, Martinsville.

Thursday, August 16

Architectural Review Board Meeting, 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., City Municipal Building, 55 West Church St. Martinsville.

Events

Friday, August 9 – Saturday, August 10

The Shape of Things, 7 p.m., TheatreWorks, 44 Franklin St, Martinsville.

Saturday, August 10

Registration for the 22nd annual Jennifer Short Educational Scholarship Benefit Ride, presented by the G=Fraternal Order of Eagles #3739, begins at 10:30 a.m. at 210 Mill Creek Drive, Bassett. Kickstands up at 12:30 p.m. for the event, with door prizes, 50/50 raffle and a meal provided. For more information, call Trish Grogan at (540) 922-6037 or email trish86.tk@gmail.com.

Martinsville Food Truck Pull-up, 3 p.m. to 8 p.m., Uptown Martinsville, Main St W, Martinsville.

Fairystone State Park will host Second Saturday at Mayo River Trails: Redbud Trail Hike (approx. 2 miles), 10 a.m., 500 Pratt Road, Spencer; Fairy Stone Hunt, 12 p.m. at the Visitors Center; Turtle Time, 1 p.m. at the Visitor Center; Fairy Stone Workshop, 2 p.m. at Shelter 4; For Goodness Snakes! 2 p.m. at Shelter 3; CSI: Creek Scene Investigation, 4:30 p.m. at Shelter 4, and Mystery Moths, 9 p.m. at Shelters 3 & 4.

Sunday, August 11

The Shape of Things, 2 p.m., TheatreWorks, 44 Franklin St, Martinsville.

Fairystone State Park will hold a Moonshine

Hollow Hike at 10 a.m. at the Visitor Center; Fairy Stone Hunt, 12 p.m. at Visitors Center; Moonshine Murders, 2:30 p.m. at Shelter 4; Insect Safari, 3:30 p.m. at Shelter 4, and Fungal Friends, 5 p.m. at Shelter 4.

Monday, August 12

Fairystone State Park will hold a Fairy Stone Hunt at 12 p.m. at Visitors Center and Monday Market, 5-7 p.m. at Shelters 3 & 4.

Tuesday, August 13

Fairystone State Park will hold a Fairy Stone Hunt at 12 p.m. at the Visitors Center.

Friday, August 16 - Saturday, August 17

The Shape of Things, 7 p.m., TheatreWorks, 44 Franklin St, Martinsville.

Fairystone State Park will hold a Whiskey Run Hike at 8:30 a.m. at Iron Mine Parking Lot, a Fairy Stone Hunt at 11:30 a.m. at Visitors Center, and Who Made Those Tracks While You Slept?, 3 p.m. at Shelter 4.

Saturday, August 17

Mt. Nebo Holiness Church will hold the 8th annual bike ride, car show, and fish fry. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the ride leaves at 11 a.m. The cost is \$20 per bike or autos, and this covers the meal for the driver. The fish fry will start at 8 a.m., and vendors will be on site. All proceeds will benefit the church. For more information, call Angie Penn at (276) 732-6014.

Sunday, August 18

The Shape of Things, 2 p.m., TheatreWorks, 44 Franklin St, Martinsville.

Tuesday, August 20

Cricut Creations: Printable Stickers, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., NCI, 191 Fayette St, Martinsville.

Saturday, August 24

13th Annual Bikers for Babies, MHC, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., Big Chair Parking Lot, Broad St & Church St. Uptown Martinsville.

ONGOING

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

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

to September 25.

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 FIELDVALE 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

A series of classes on genealogical research will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Bassett Historical Center each Tuesday in September. Genealogy 1 and Genealogy 2, offered on September 3 and 10 respectively, are for those just beginning their family research. Genealogy 3 and Genealogy 4, offered September 17 and 24, will cover the use of several different genealogical websites. To benefit from the 3rd and 4th classes, participants will need to have taken the first two classes and/or have a basic understanding of computer use. There is no charge for the classes. Call (276) 629-9191 to reserve your spot.

Candidate

(cont. from page 1)

He explained that the Secret Service and its team of about 30 are primarily assigned to protect the principle – in this case, Trump.

During his tenure, Deck said he worked with local and state law enforcement agencies, met with the SWAT team leader and others, “so I had a lot of law enforcement that helped out.”

Additionally, Deck and his team did not have magnetometers to screen for weapons, but they used other tools, like K-9 officers.

“The liaison with the local (law enforcement agencies) would take dogs to the arenas early in the morning” to check for anything untoward, Deck said. Tactical meetings were held to identify “where you know the weak areas are” and potential threats. Then, the agencies involved worked to mitigate potential incidents in advance.

At the Laredo event, Trump was scheduled to hold “a big press conference on the border,” and the police chief there went with Deck to survey the site, which was on the Rio Grande River, in a historical area that included a large archway.

Trump was to address the crowd while standing under the archway, Deck said. “It was all set. We had everything set. It was locked down and we were done.”

But after an unexpected 4 a.m. wake up on the day of the event, Deck decided to change the location of the rally. He explained that one of the scheduled speakers received death threats, and there was concern that would impact Trump, who expected to arrive from New York at 1 p.m.

Deck met with the police chief and brought him up to speed, and also requested more help or “assets.”

The chief suggested the new site, which was a “desolate area. There was actually a truck crossing for trucks that go back and forth across the border



Eddie Deck Jr. (Contributed by Ray Reynolds)

from Mexico, but there was not a building around,” Deck said.

The site would accommodate sniper teams, and “believe it or not, the chief had a very good relationship with the Mexican Marine Corps, and he let them know what was going on. They actually located a sniper team from across the river,” Deck said. The chief also provided additional support with 25 to 30 motorcycle officers and other resources.

The event went off without a hitch. “We had no issues, no problems,” Deck said, of the event that was an example of the “show must go on” attitude of the campaign.

But that was not always the case, he said, and recalled that an event scheduled to be held at an indoor arena in Chicago was canceled due to security concerns.



Ray Reynolds, of Collinsville, is pictured with Eddie Deck Jr. (Contributed by Ray Reynolds)

Deck said that often, attendees begin arriving at the event venue long before Trump was scheduled to speak. In this case, he had ample time to observe the crowd and the many ‘bad actors’ and potential troublemakers attending.

Deck called the campaign lead person, and said, “If it was me, I wouldn’t even bring him (Trump) over. Not only would I worry about his safety, but the safety of all of the people at the rally.”

The campaign made the decision to cancel that event, Deck said, noting the sentiment in that case was “why chance it?”

When assigning blame for the July attempt on Trump’s life, “people can draw their own conclusions,” Deck said, adding that it failed “by the grace of God.”

Health district receives national award

The West Piedmont Health District (WPHD) is among 14 local health departments across the nation, and the only one in Virginia, to be recognized for a Model Practice, by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO).

Model Practices are programs demonstrating exemplary and replicable qualities in response to a critical local public health need. WPHD’s initiative, Community Health Workers as Data Collectors Provides Equity in Rural Virginia, garnered the award during the NACCHO annual conference in Detroit on July 25.

Community health workers collected data throughout the health

district (City of Martinsville and the counties of Henry, Franklin, and Patrick) by conducting surveys and using tablets to record responses. Because they are trusted members of the communities they serve, community health workers provide important health and wellness outreach. The information they collected was vital for broad and equitable representation in the content of the Martinsville Henry County Community Health Equity Assessment in 2023.

Winning projects are determined through a competitive, peer-reviewed process and will be added to NACCHO’s Model Practice searchable online database

where other local health departments can review these best practices and adopt them for use in their community.

“This award would not have been possible without the continued partnerships West Piedmont Health District has with its community partners, including FQHCs (Federally Qualified Health Centers), nonprofits and state-local government,” said Pamela Chitwood, Health Equity Specialist/Population Health Community Coordinator at WPHD. “This year’s awardees have demonstrated exceptional service in developing programs to address substance use, health inequities, infant and child health, health



literacy, immunization, foodborne illnesses, hepatitis, and other pressing health challenges in their regions. This recognition is sure to inspire continued excellence and progress in public health practices across the country,” said Lori Tremmel Freeman, NACCHO CEO.

OPINION

Pro Forma

At the end of July, I presided over a pro forma session of Congress in the U.S. House of Representatives.

When a pro forma session is called, it typically means there is no consideration of legislation or debate scheduled for the floor of a chamber. Almost every Member of Congress is serving their respective constituencies back in their districts.

Annual sessions of Congress begin in January, when the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate convene.

We are currently in the second annual session of the 118th Congress, denoted as 118-2 by some.

The U.S. Constitution deems that neither chamber may adjourn for three days or more without consent of the other.

The Adjournments Clause of the Constitution reads, "Neither House, during the session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days."

This applies to both the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

Pro forma sessions are meant to maintain compliance with this provision of the U.S. Constitution. Pro forma sessions prevent the occurrence of a "recess of the session." In effect, the session for the year continues, whereas an adjournment would end the session.

My presiding over the pro forma session allowed the second session of the 118th Congress to continue without termination.

But pro forma sessions are valuable for other reasons as well.

Preventing recess or adjournments from taking place is rooted in the belief that the executive branch could "run wild" if Congress were not in session.

For instance, presidents retain the power to make recess appointments. Under the Recess Appointments Clause of the U.S. Constitution, the president may temporarily appoint somebody to a position if a vacancy occurs while the U.S. Senate is in recess. These positions can range from a new U.S. attorney for the Western District of Virginia to a Supreme Court justice.

This temporary appointment then expires at the end of the following session of the U.S. Senate, and the appointee would need to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate if they were to continue in their appointed role.

Alexander Hamilton, an ardent Federalist and believer in a strong executive, viewed the Recess Appointments Clause favorably so the president could fill vacancies without delay.

President Obama was found to have unconstitutionally recess appointed three individuals in National Labor Relations Board v. Canning.

In a unanimous ruling, the justices wrote that a pro forma ses-



Morgan Griffith

Representative

sion does not create a recess long enough to trigger the Recess Appointments Clause.

The opinion notes: "For purposes of the Recess Appointments Clause, the Senate is in session when it says it is, provided that, under its own rules, it retains the capacity to transact Senate business."

Furthermore, the justices established that a recess has to constitute a period of time greater than ten days.

Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon issued executive orders while Congress adjourned. Nixon's order established a Council on Environmental Quality and a citizens' advisory committee to the council.

TIME magazine described the council as "a Cabinet-level advisory group designed to coordinate governmental action against environmental decay at all levels, create new proposals to control pollution, and foresee problems."

The council served as a basis for establishing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

State legislatures adjourn too.

As a former member of the Virginia House of Delegates, I am used to adjournments of greater than ten days.

The general assembly session is held for sixty days in even-numbered years, and generally forty-five days in odd-numbered years. For a big chunk of the year, the general assembly stands "sine die", meaning adjourned.

In 2000, the Republicans passed a biennial budget for Virginia including two steps in the repeal of the state's car tax, an issue that then-Governor Jim Gilmore supported.

Gilmore's campaign slogan of "Axe the Tax" was popular when he ran for governor in 1997.

In 2001, I moved for the House of Delegates to adjourn sine die without Senate consent in order to preserve the second step in the biennial budget to take the car tax relief to 70%.

Because of that adjournment, today you pay roughly 20% less on the car tax.

That experience taught me that adjournments, while seemingly benign on surface, can be a powerful tool indeed.

Accordingly, I was glad to perform the functions of a pro forma session so the legislative branch could keep in check executive action.

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

Stark realities and the things we take for granted



To heat water for bathing, just put this metal coil into the water bucket, and plug it into the outlet.



The hot-water heater, which is submerged into a bucket of water and plugged into the wall, is stored hanging on a towel rack when not in use.

By Holly Kozelsky

My week out of the country left me grateful for even the silliest and least necessary of the US's health and safety regulations which mean we can take beautiful, wonderful, blessed safety for granted.

In Mexico, where as I write this I'm staying with Sofia, a 37-year-old woman I've known for 30 years, and her 15-year-old daughter, it's the opposite. Assume you could be killed at any moment, and take appropriate precautions.

It's a tough life. For perspective, last night we had a simple restaurant meal for three, delivered. It cost 280 pesos - about \$15, a day's wage for common unskilled labor jobs such as what Sofia has in the factory of an American company.

Right now, as I write this it's the next morning. I'm laying in the lower bunk bed with Sofia. She has bad diarrhea and nausea. My left eye is red and has been watering all morning. This might cancel our plans to go to the beauty shop today for fake fingernails and eyelashes, in preparation for a big party tomorrow.

We are playing with a tiny kitten her adult son found on the street. There are always stray cats and dogs everywhere.

I'm drinking instant coffee with sugar and milk out of a new ceramic mug, part of a dishes set I bought her yesterday. "Wow, Ama" (affectionate way to say "mama"), she said. "I've always loved dishes but never dreamt of having any." Up until yesterday they ate off mismatched plastic discs.

My dangers on the way to this cup of coffee:

I washed my hands with the sink water, but brushed my teeth with bottled water. There is no current government warning that the tap water is so contaminated that it only should be used for flushing the toilet, but you still can't drink it.

When I held the lighter to the stove's burner to ignite the gas to heat the water, the flames exploded out onto my hand. Sofia and her daughter are used to that, but I'm not.

The pot used to heat water is a two-handled old casserole dish. There are no potholders - what a luxury expense that would be! - so I bunched up the old cut T-shirt which doubles as two dish towels to protect my hands from the heat of the handles.

It was stifling hot downstairs, so I attempted to open the front door to let in the morning air. I could not get it unlocked. The door has two deadbolt locks, and so does the heavy-duty screen door, which has metal security bars to keep out criminals. The key to the deadbolt goes all the way through the door - it's twice as long as the keys we use in the U.S. I tried and tried and tried to get the lock open but could only budge the bolt partway.

Sure, Sofia or her daughter could jiggle it to open it - but - the naive American guest could not, a person with arthritis could not and neither could a short child. If there were a fire or other emergency, there would be no escape. There are two windows downstairs, but both are covered by

security bars.

Just go out the back door, you say? Well luckily the other set of keys is right by the door (if the keys are lost, you're trapped inside). However, the back patio (cement yard) is only about 10-by-6 feet and completely surrounded by 10-foot-high concrete block walls which keep out criminals who don't have ladders. It also keeps us in.

That patio, incidentally, is used for laundry. Here a house commonly comes with a built-in cement sink with scrub board bottom for washing clothes, but Sofia has the luxury of a washing machine. It's outside, so no telling how long it will last being exposed to rain. Laundry lines hang all around it.

During the course of my writing Sofia got up to take a bath. The bath situation scares me most of all: Put a heating coil of metal into a 5-gallon bucket of water then plug the heating coil's electric cord into the outlet (there's not even an off-on switch) and pull the plug out when the water is hot enough. And here in the US they're always telling us not to put electric things in water!

Yes, she has a shower, but it's not in use. The water pressure isn't strong enough to bring water up there, but even if it was, she doesn't have a hot water heater.

Sofia is grateful for her house. She grew up in an idyllic mountain village, the stuff of legends - got water from a spring in buckets carried on the head, no cars, no televisions or refrigerators - but also no jobs to be had and no way to feed your family unless you were a major landowner with enough farming space.

She came, wide-eyed and innocent - to a city of millions to earn a living. After 15 years of working, she was able to buy a newly constructed house, under a government program. It cost 427,000 pesos (\$22,968), and 500 pesos (\$26) are deducted from her paycheck each week to pay for it.

The cement townhouse is two stories, 10 feet wide by 25 feet long. The lower floor was just one long empty cement room with some electrical outlets in the walls and plumbing hookups for a sink. It has four circuit breakers in a breaker box with no cover, in the bathroom.

After she had lived here for about a year, she had installed some cement shelving and counter to form a kitchen area.

Well, my column is out of space without even having begun telling you how crazy dangerous it is outside with electrical hookups, traffic, water and sewage, etc.

So, I get out of bed, go downstairs, step up onto that cement block in front of the unusually high sink, and wash my coffee cup - careful not to splash water into the electrical outlet that is directly behind the faucet at counter level; if you don't turn on or off the cold water carefully, your hand bumps the outlet.

Sofia announced that she's feeling better, so we just may go fancy ourselves up at the beauty shop after all.

Solar Project

(cont. from page 1)

these projects started being proposed to Henry County," she said.

Lee Clark, the county's director of planning, zoning, and inspections, said "Henry County does not have anything invested in this or these projects." Because the solar project is privately funded, local tax money will not go toward the project.

The property is owned by the Lester Group Inc., and the energy produced on the site will not contribute to the county or the city, according to county officials.

Clark said that the level of noise is linked to the type of inverter that's used on site. He is aware that a solar farm in Axton is currently responding to many noise complaints due to the inverters installed there.

"That has created a noise issue or noise complaint from the humming or the noise that they make," he said. "I'm not aware of what type of inverters are proposed to be used on this project."

Clark said that in 2020, adjoining property owners were notified about the solar farm plan and an upcoming meeting. The county advertised the

public hearing on the project in the local newspaper.

"At the time, we had very little feedback from the residents. We did have some that inquired in our office and came in to view the plans for the facility," Clark said, adding that little feedback was heard at the public hearing.

As for the disposal of the debris, Clark said landowners are allowed to burn organic materials, despite the smoke.

"That is something that is allowed unless there is a burn ban or something else in place," he said, and currently, it is considered safe to burn organic materials on the property.

In terms of property values, Clark said "if a project like this is done well, and it doesn't adversely affect the adjoining properties, that means that there is not any noise that affects the other properties. It doesn't visually impact the other properties in a negative way, then typically, solar projects don't have a significant impact on property values."

The environmental impact of the farm is also under control.

"Henry County is responsible for enforcing the regulation for erosion and sediment control for that property," Clark said. The Department of Environmental Quality also handles and reviews stormwater regulations to help control runoff.

"They make sure that any sediment that is created by that site stays on the site, from a stormwater standpoint, those measures are also put in place, but they are more long term for the entire life of the project, not just

during construction," said Clark.

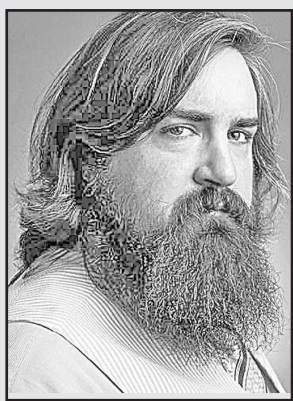
The county has ordinances that restrict the size and quantity of solar farms.

"One, we implemented a two-and-a-half percent density maximum in a five-mile radius of any solar project," Clark said. A one percent cap is also implemented for solar farm use.

"There is probably in the neighborhood of six or seven hundred acres left within that one percent cap," Clark said.

OPINION

The arch-capitalists



By Ben R. Williams

A year or so ago, I stopped going to a popular fast food franchise because they raised the price of my regular order from \$6.50 to \$9.50 for no apparent reason. I only ever went there when I was in a hurry and needed something cheap, so when they could no longer fulfill the second half of that bargain (and the first half was hit or miss to begin with), it wasn't a hard choice to drop them.

I don't want to reveal the name of this franchise, so I will instead simply describe it as a formerly clown-themed interstate-adjacent hamburger dispensary.

My girlfriend Lauren and I were on a trip recently and we stopped at one of these restaurants because it was conveniently interstate-adjacent and we needed to walk our dog Hank. I went inside to order two things: a fountain drink for myself and a cup of water for Hank.

I hadn't been inside one of these places in a long time, so the

first thing I noticed was that you couldn't just go up to the counter and order anymore. Instead, they had these kiosks where you had to enter your order on a giant tablet.

I punched in my drink and went through the menu options to figure out how to order a cup of water. Under the "water" subheading, there were two options: a bottle of water for almost three dollars, or a free cup of water. The free cup of water was marked as "sold out."

I ordered my drink and a bottle of water, which came to about six dollars. After navigating through multiple menus to confirm that I was not a member of the Hamburger Discount Club and I did not want to round up my order so that I could contribute to the parent company's annual tax write-off, I was finally able to pay.

The credit card reader gave me an error message and told me to take my receipt to the front counter. It did not print out a receipt.

I went up to the front counter, managed to summon an employee, paid for my order, and left.

I'm going to confess a personal failing of mine. I mask it pretty well, but the truth is, I have no patience. None. Something broke inside my brain while I was working from home during the pandemic and now every time I'm in public I'm experiencing, at best, constant low-level agitation. So I'm not exaggerating when I say that spending several minutes navigating a fast food kiosk and then having it fail at its most basic functions fills me with white-hot, incandescent rage.

This is a feeling I experience pret-

ty regularly now because — and perhaps you've noticed this as well — every technological advancement that capitalism has given us just lately is absolute garbage.

I don't want to navigate automated phone menus. I don't want to scan and bag my own groceries. I don't want to scan a QR code to view a menu. I don't want to have to download an app to pay for parking. I don't want to have to download any more apps at all. I may be a Millennial, but I'll die on this hill with the Boomers.

I just want companies to pay people a living wage so they can interact with me. Is this too much to ask? It was a pretty good system that lasted for centuries before tablets became cheap.

Why is everything so terrible? The answer is actually pretty straightforward:

It's the shareholders' fault.

If you're on the board of directors for a company, you answer to the shareholders. And the shareholders want only one thing: every fiscal quarter, they want you to present them with numbers that are bigger and better than the numbers you brought them three months ago.

Did you experience record-breaking profits last quarter? Congratulations! Your reward is that you now have a new record to break! And you'd better do it or there will be consequences.

But what happens when you've hit equilibrium, the point where you've opened every restaurant that the market will bear and lured in every customer that will ever buy your product?

What seems to happen is that companies figure out how to automate different processes so that they can cut down on their employees. Then they start boosting prices to gouge their customers.

It's not too bad at first. You notice that the stuff you used to buy went up in price a little bit, but maybe that's just the aftershocks from those supply chain issues we had awhile back. You notice that there seem to be a whole lot more self-checkouts than there used to be, but maybe it's just your imagination.

But the shareholders are never satisfied, and the death by a thousand cuts continues, and the next thing you know, the business you used to patronize is a sterile, empty husk designed to pry money out of your pocket and kick you back out the door as quickly as possible.

Eventually, I think all of these companies that are gouging their consumers in the name of profit are going to have to either reassess the way they do business or face total collapse. The franchise I mentioned at the top of the column has already been reporting lower revenues as their customer base is increasingly deciding to eat at home or spend their money elsewhere.

Corporations and their shareholders will eventually have to learn that nothing can grow forever. Everything in nature must eventually find equilibrium.

Actually, there is at least one good example in nature of something that doesn't stop growing until it destroys the system in which it exists. It's called cancer.

Back2School

(cont. from page 1)



Thousands of school supplies were donated for the Back2School event.



Martinsville Mayor LC Jones prepares to fill backpacks with school supplies.

churches to go in together."

For parents whose schedules wouldn't allow them to pick up backpacks, Grace Network stepped into help. "Grace Network brings the backpacks back to Grace Network and contacts the families to have them pick up there," said Hinchcliff.

She explained that "everybody gets a certain number of extra backpacks and supplies." Although there weren't extra shoes, there are several clothing closets that parents can check, including the First United Methodist Church and Community Fellowship.

"We have resource sheets at Grace Network, so they can come, and we can give them a resource sheet," Hinchcliff said.

Martinsville Mayor LC Jones also stopped by the event to help prepare the backpacks.

"To me, community is all about helping each other, giving back, and celebrating each other," Jones said, adding that he believes helping others "fulfills you as an individual."

The group also helped to pack backpacks for out-of-town sites/guests, including Jacob Brock, a volunteer from South Carolina.

"We are very, very excited to have 375 sign-ups. It's the first time," Brock said, and he loved to see "the community come together."

Children who participated in the event had their feet washed when arriving to pick up the school supplies.

"We tell them a story about a man from Africa" who received a pair of shoes and learned "about Jesus," Harrison said. "We tell his story about how he heard about Christ."

Haircuts, additional clothing, and fun activities for youngsters also were offered at some sites, Harrison said.

Churches involved in the drive included Abundant Life, Community Fellowship, Uptown, Stanleytown Amazing Grace Baptist, Fairway Baptist, Marble Hill Church of God, First Baptist - Ridge-way, Wellford Baptist, Crossroads Baptist, and Providence Baptist. The program has been going on for 18 years and has now served over 39,000 children.

Historical events from August 1924

The month of August has been home to many historical events over the years. Here's a look at some that helped to shape the world in August 1924.

- Three people are killed and 10 others are injured when a boiler fire erupts on the French battleship Courbet on August 1. The Courbet survives the fire and is eventually utilized during World War II.

- Boca Raton, Florida, is incorporated as "Bocaraton" on August 2. The name was changed to "Boca Raton" less than a year later.

- John Carroll O'Connor was born on August 2 in Manhattan. O'Connor would become one of the most memorable television actors of all time, notably portraying "Archie Bunker" in the sitcoms "All in the Family" and "Archie Bunker's Place" in the 1970s and early 1980s.

- Berlin Jews hold a memorial service for Jewish soldiers who died during World War I on August 3. The Jewish service takes place after a Jewish preacher was forbidden from delivering a prayer during a similar service held outside the Reichstag commemorating German soldiers who died during the war.

- Women from six European nations compete in the first Women's International and British Games in London on August 4. The competition is held because track and field events at the Summer Olympics were limited to men only.

- Confidence man Charles Ponzi is released from prison in Plymouth, Massachusetts on

- August 6. Ponzi served less than four years of a five-year sentence for financial crimes.

- Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich of Russia, a first cousin of the late Tsar Nicholas II, declares himself "Guardian of the Throne" for the Russian Empire on August 8. Two years later, the Grand Duke would declare himself the emperor-in-exile.

- On August 10, Austrian police claim they

100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

- discovered a Soviet slush fund for stirring up unrest and revolt in the Balkans.

- The earliest sound film footage of an American president is recorded on August 11 when Lee de Forest films U.S. President Calvin Coolidge on the White House lawn. De Forest uses his experimental Phonofilm process to make the recording.

- Andrew S. Anderson, the Democratic Party nominee for South Dakota Governor, is gored by a bull on his property on August 11. Anderson does not survive the attack.

- Former world middleweight title holder Kid McCoy shoots his lover, Teresa Mors, on August 12 in Los Angeles. McCoy, retired from boxing at the time of the shooting, shot Mors

- in a drunken rage after she told him what her friends thought of him.

- Anthropologist Margaret Mead arrives in Samoa on August 17. Mead proceeds to begin working on her book, *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilization*, which became a landmark text and sparked years of ongoing, intense debate upon its publication in 1928.

- Canadian mountaineers complete the first ascent of the 2,603-meters-tall Mount Fitzsimons in British Columbia on August 19.

- United States Senator Nathaniel B. Dial and John J. McMahan, his challenger for the Democratic Party nomination in an upcoming election, are each arrested for disorderly conduct in South Carolina on August 20. Dial approached McMahan brandishing a chair during a campaign meeting that became contentious.

- On August 23, the planets Mars and Earth are the closest they had been since August 18, 1945. The two planets, which were the equivalent of around 34.6 million miles from one another, would not be as close again until August 2003.

- On August 26, The Montreal Star publishes an interview with American automotive executive Henry Ford in which the industrialist claims the Ku Klux Klan was a patriotic organization and "a victim of lying propaganda."

- Director John Ford's first major film, "The Iron Horse," premieres in New York City on August 28.

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

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

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LEGAL

Notice of Public Hearing

A public hearing for the City of Martinsville Planning Commission will be held on August 21, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the City of Martinsville Municipal Building located at 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville, VA 24112, for those parties in interest to the following request:
REQUEST for RIGHT OF WAY ABANDONMENT - Application of Derek Brown, Applicant and Owner, requesting the city's abandonment of an approximate 2500 square foot section of the right of way at property located at 406 James Street. The abandonment of streets, alleyways, right of ways or easements are a request that require review and approval of the Planning Commission and City Council, as it will amend the city's adopted Comprehensive Plan.
Any comments or questions can be directed to Hannah Powell, Community Development Specialist, at (276) 403-5156 or hpowell@ci.martinsville.va.us
Notice Submitted By:
Hannah L. Powell, CZA
Community Development Specialist

LEGAL

VIRGINIA:
IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF HENRY COUNTY
LIBERTY MUTUAL PERSONAL INSURANCE COMPANY,
Petitioner,
Case No: CL24-188
v. RYANPERSAD MAHADEO, by his mother and next friend, TRUDY ASSAM, Respondent.

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The reason for this cause is to notify the father of Ryanpersad Mahadeo, Inderpersed Mahadeo of the settlement of a personal injury case. Inderpersed Mahadeo's whereabouts are unknown.
Upon consideration wherefore, this Order of Publication is granted, and it is ORDERED that Inderpersed Mahadeo, do appear hereon on September 24, 2024 at 11:00 a.m., which date is no sooner than fifty (50) days after entry of this Order of Publication.
And it is further ORDERED that this Order of Publication be published once a week for four (4) consecutive weeks in The Henry County Enterprise newspaper, a newspaper having general circulation in Henry County, Virginia.
ENTERED this 8th day of July, 2024.

J. J. [Signature]
Judge

LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for August 28, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of a Variance and Special Use Permits for the following cases.
Case S-24-05 Hugh Kenneth Beveridge, Jr.
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a campground facility to accommodate up to 4 sites. The property is approximately 32 acres, located at 311 Florence Dr. in the Reed Creek District, is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 15.2/259.
Case S-24-06 Gwendolyn Hernandez Delgado
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a Family Day Care Home to accommodate up to 12 children. The property is located at 76 10th St. in the Horsepasture District, and is zoned Suburban Residential District S-R as shown on Tax Map 28.8(10)10/4.
Case V-24-03 Margaret Baker
A request for a Variance was received under Section 21-304 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a free-standing garage that will be located approximately 43' from the center of the road, instead of the required 60'. The property is located at 100 Mathews Mill Rd. in the Horsepasture District and is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 38.8/82G. The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

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

Partnership announced for Fall Truck Series Playoff Race

Martinsville Speedway is welcoming a new entitlement partner to the fall triple-header NASCAR Playoffs race weekend with Zip, who will hold the naming rights for the upcoming NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series race at the famous short track.

The Truck Series race, officially known as the Zip Buy Now Pay Later 200, will take place on Friday, Nov. 1, with drivers fighting for their final chance to secure a spot in the championship four before the season finale in Phoenix.

"The fall Playoff races at Martinsville Speedway always delivers intense competition, but with the addition of the NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series to the weekend, there's room for so much more excitement," said Martinsville Speedway President Clay Campbell. "Between the high stakes racing and an atmosphere from some of the best fans in the sport, we couldn't think of a better weekend to welcome Zip to Martinsville, and Friday night's race is sure to bring the action."

Zip is a financial services company that presents customers with an easy and efficient payment process. The Buy Now, Pay Later platform from Zip enables users to split orders into equal installment payments to minimize checkout stress. Zip offers customers the flexibility to purchase an item today and pay for that item over time, making it easier to stay on track financially. For more information, visit www.zip.co.

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The Zip Buy Now Pay Later 200 at Martinsville Speedway is the company's second event within the high-speed world of NASCAR. Zip previously held the entitlement for the NASCAR Xfinity Series race at Sonoma Raceway earlier this year.

"We're excited to extend our partnership with NASCAR at Martinsville Speedway," said Joe Heck, U.S. CEO, Zip. "We've found that many of our customers are passionate about using Zip's flexible payment option for both their automotive needs and to experience once-in-a-lifetime events like NASCAR Playoffs. This partnership is an ideal way to remind them to start their engines for financial success."

The Zip Buy Now Pay Later 200 is the first race of an action-packed triple-header weekend at the historic half mile of Martinsville Speedway. The intense short-track racing begins on Friday, Nov. 1 with the Zip Buy Now Pay Later 200, followed by the NASCAR Xfinity Series Playoff race on Saturday, Nov. 2.

Then on Sunday, Nov. 3, the NASCAR Cup Series Playoffs Xfinity 500 will round out the weekend, as drivers from all three National series battle for their spot in the season finale in Phoenix.

Fans can purchase tickets to the 2024 NASCAR Playoffs Race Weekend via phone at 877-RACE-TIX or online at martinsvillespeedway.com.

Set teens up for success with safe driving tools

The riskiest time for a teen driver is often at the start of their driving career.

According to data from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, the fatal crash rate per mile driven for 16-year-olds is 40% higher than for 18-year-olds.

There's a lot of anxiety that comes with sending your teen off to drive. Fortunately, there are plenty of tools available for helping teens achieve a safe and successful driving career.

Parents can help their teen driver get off to a solid start by enrolling in Virginia Farm Bureau's Smart Start Program.

"It's all about starting off with good driving habits," explained Barry Light, Virginia Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. senior product development manager.

The program takes about 30 minutes to complete and includes a video, booklet and quiz on covered materials. Participants will find helpful tips on Virginia driving laws and a review of safe driving habits, as well as a pledge to drive smart.

New drivers under 18 who successfully complete the course can receive an extra 5% off auto insurance premiums.

Teens may enroll online or through their Farm Bureau agent starting at age 16, but they must

be accident- and conviction-free to qualify for the discount. Enrolled drivers also must maintain a valid Virginia driver's license and stay listed on a VFB personal auto policy.

To learn more, visit vafb.com/insurance/Information-center/smart-start-program. To enroll, contact your local Farm Bureau insurance agent.

Evaluating teens' driving habits also has gotten much easier, thanks to a wealth of no-hassle safe driving mobile apps.

VFB's Drive2Save program offers extra incentives for downloading the Routely app, which helps users assess their driving habits in real time. Customers can receive a 10% discount on their auto insurance for enrolling in the program, and the safest drivers can save up to 30% at their next renewal.

"Safer drivers make safer roads," Light noted. "Drive2Save is a great tool to supplement creating those good habits."

Routely detects distracted driving, high speeds, sudden braking and time of day. Once the app is set up, it will automatically assess trips and provide tips to improve driving scores. Rates will be adjusted automatically at renewal.

Contact a VFB agent to enroll in Drive2Save and request an activation code. Visit vafb.com/drive2save for more information.

New Tourism Spending Record set in 2023

Virginia's tourism industry generated a record high \$33.3 billion in visitor spending in 2023, an increase of nearly 10% from 2022, according to a release from Gov. Glenn Youngkin and the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC).

"Travel and tourism play an essential role in Virginia's economy," said Youngkin. "The Commonwealth's record-breaking visitor spending numbers are a testament to our abundance of attractions and unique destinations. As the top state for business, our tourism industry is a crucial part of driving economic prosperity, providing jobs, building vibrant communities, and enhancing the quality of life for all Virginians."

The tourism industry in Virginia directly supported over 224,000 jobs in 2023, an increase of over 13,000 jobs relative to 2022. Direct travel employment is now at 93% of pre-pandemic employment levels.

Travelers spent \$91 million a day in Virginia in 2023, up from \$83 million in 2022. Virginia visitors directly drove \$2.4 billion in state and local tax revenue, an increase of 9% from

\$2.2 billion in 2022. Overnight visitation to Virginia increased by 1.4 million to 43.6 million visitors in 2023, up from 42.2 million in 2022, essentially reaching full recovery to pre-pandemic levels.

All five categories of visitor spending in the Commonwealth have now fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels and beyond. Those categories include recreation, transportation, lodging, food & beverage, and retail. Recreation was the fastest growing category in 2023, up 12% over 2022 and 24% beyond pre-pandemic levels, more than any other category, as travelers continue to show a strong preference for experiences. Transportation saw the second highest growth, up 11% in 2023, placing it 11% above pre-pandemic levels. Transportation captures the largest share of visitor spending at 30% due to Virginia's major gateway airports, Washington Dulles International and Reagan National. Lodging spending grew by 9% in 2023, surpassing 2019 levels by 13%. Throughout 2023, Virginia's visitor economy benefited from balanced hotel performance as business and



Deputy of the month selected

Henry County Sheriff's Deputy Nicholas Golden was selected Deputy of the Month. The pre-

sentation is sponsored by Michael Jarrett Marketing.

State of Emergency Declared in Advance of Tropical Storm Debby

Gov. Glenn Youngkin on Tuesday declared a state of emergency based on National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center forecasts that indicate a tropical storm with significant rainfall and flooding across the entire Commonwealth could cause transportation difficulties and power outages.

A state of emergency allows the Commonwealth to mobilize resources and equipment needed for response and recovery efforts. While the track of Tropical Storm Debby is still uncertain, it appears increasingly likely that Virginia could see impacts and therefore must prepare for the possibility of flooding, high winds, and potential storm surge that could come along with a tropical storm or hurricane.

Recommendations for Virginians:

*Make a plan. Plan in advance a route to a safe place, how you will stay in contact with family and friends, and what you will do in different situations. Additional planning resources

are available at vaemergency.gov/prepare/make-a-plan.

*Prepare an emergency kit. For a list of recommended emergency supplies to sustain your household before, during, and after the storm visit: VAemergency.gov/emergency-kit.

*Stay informed. Virginians should follow the Virginia Department of Emergency Management on X and Facebook for preparedness updates and their local National Weather Service office for the latest weather forecast, advisories, watches or warnings. Download the FEMA app on your smartphone to receive mobile alerts from the National Weather Service. Power outages are always a concern during weather events—make sure you have a battery-operated radio available so you can still receive life-saving alerts.

For more information about preparing your business, your family, and your property against hurricane threats visit: VAemergency.gov/hurricanes and ready.gov/hurricanes.

Uptick in COVID cases reported locally

Health officials reported an uptick of cases of COVID-19, based on visits to emergency departments.

The Centers for Disease & Prevention (CDC) reported that most areas of the country are experiencing consistent increases in COVID-19 activity. COVID-19 test positivity, emergency department visits, and rates of COVID-19-associated hospitalizations remain elevated, particularly among adults 65+. Surges like this are known to occur throughout the year, including during the summer months. There are many effective tools to prevent spreading COVID-19 or becoming seriously ill.

The increase is no surprise because the new variant, FLiRT, is the most dominant and is responsible for more than 30% of cases in the U.S. In fact, COVID-19 cases in Virginia have more than doubled over the past month, according to recent reports from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).

This variant is highly transmis-

sible compared to other variants, with symptoms that are consistent with other variants, including sore throat, body aches, cough, runny nose and shortness of breath (especially in unvaccinated people or those infected long ago).

The next booster vaccine should be available between September and October, and it will protect against this strain, according to the CDC, which recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a COVID-19 vaccine.

It is not too late to get vaccinated if you haven't received a 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine and are at high risk for serious COVID-19. For influenza vaccination, CDC recommends annual vaccination for everyone 6 months or older with rare exception. Influenza vaccination in July and August is not recommended for most adults but can be considered for some groups. Vaccination by the end of October is recommended, if possible.

To find pharmacies near you, visit www.vaccines.gov.

group demand recovered strongly on weekdays against a backdrop of stable leisure demand during weekends.

"The full recovery and growth of all five categories of visitor spending reflects the diverse and dynamic tourism assets that Virginia has to offer. Recreation and transportation, in particular, have seen remarkable increases, driven by a strong preference for unique experiences and the Commonwealth's strategic position as a major transportation hub," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Caren Merrick. "The attributes that make Virginia the best place to live, work, and raise a family are also some of the same qualities that attract visitors to vacation here. Accelerated tourism growth is a win for all Virginians - visitor spending saves every Virginia household \$955 in state and local taxes, showcasing the tangible benefits of a robust tourism industry."

"We are incredibly proud that Virginia's tourism industry reached unprecedented heights in 2023, with visitor spending hitting a record over

\$33 billion," said President and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation Rita McClenny. "This \$3 billion increase from 2022 not only surpasses pre-pandemic levels by an impressive 14.7% but also underscores the resilience and appeal of our Commonwealth as a premier travel destination. As our current flagship campaign emphasizes, 'Vacation starts with VA,' and as Virginia looks ahead, VTC remains committed to promoting the Commonwealth's unique offerings and supporting the growth of the tourism industry. The success of 2023 sets a strong foundation as we build on this momentum in the years to come."

Virginia Tourism Corporation receives its annual economic impact data from Tourism Economics. The information is based on domestic visitor spending (travelers from within the United States) from per-person trips. Visitors included those who stayed overnight or traveled more than 50 miles to the destination. Detailed economic impact data and methodology are available at vatc.org/research.

After Hours Open Mic Series returns for all new season

Calling all writers, poets, comedians, songwriters, and more. The "Make Some Noise: After Hours Open Mic Series" returns for 2024-2025. The series began at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 15 with an event hosted by Natalie Hodge Davis, founder of Rudy Girl's Media, free and open to the public with a cash bar. Hosted by Piedmont Arts in their galleries, this series is designed to share the unique voices, perspectives, and creativity of Martinsville and Henry County. Artists will sign up for a performance slot upon arrival.

"There is so much creativity in our area," said Piedmont Arts' Programs Coordinator Lauren Ellis. "We wanted to create an opportunity for our local writers, performers, and creators are a showcased and celebrated."

She added that this event is a perfect place for beginners to come share their material and work because the environment is so welcoming and inclusive. "We really focus on celebrating the individual creators, so everyone is welcome and will be cheered on loudly."

Held once a season, other events in this series will take place on:

Thursday, Oct. 10 at 7 p.m. Hosted by Jake Earles.

Thursday, Jan. 9 at 7 p.m. Hosted by Taye the Truth.

Thursday, April 10 at 7 p.m. Hosted by Anna Wheeler.

The first host for this event, Natalie Hodge Davis, is an award-winning writer, entrepreneur and community transformation strategist. She is the owner of Rudy's Girl Media, a Martinsville, Virginia-based content development studio that specializes in digital storytelling and creative marketing solutions. In November 2023, her company launched RGMTV on Xfinity channel 16 as a platform to showcase local talent on a regional television station. She has published four books and produced numerous independent shows and short films. While she is a firm believer in the power of positive thinking, she believes the greatest changes take place when people begin doing.

For questions about this event, email Ellis at lellis@piedmontarts.org.



Make Some Noise returned on Thursday, Aug. 15 for the 2024-2025 season.



The season opens with an event hosted by Natalie Hodge Davis, founder of Rudy's Girl Media.



Writers and creators of all styles find a welcoming audience at the event.

Basketball Clinic is a slam dunk

The Michael C. Jarrett 6th annual Basketball Clinic on July 29 and 30 attracted several youngsters, organizers said.

Former Globetrotter George Bell helped coach youngsters, and was available for photos. He said he does so because he has a passion for helping kids and speaking out about bullying.

"I do some public speaking with kids about bullying," said Bell, who has worked with Jarrett on anti-bullying events in the area.

"I've been coming here for about three years," Bell said, having helped with several other basketball clinics. He said he continues because he hopes to inspire youngsters.

At 7-feet, 8-inches tall, Bell has been featured on several TV shows, including "American Horror Story."

Two local coaches, John Martin, coach of Bassett High School's Girls Basketball Team, and Bill Adkins, coach of the Carlisle Girls Basketball Team, also participated.

"I've helped with basketball around the community my whole life," said Martin, and added that there is a "big turnout" for basketball at county schools currently. "They had 50 kids come out for the middle school team. At most, 12 or 13 can be on a team."

Many children who are hoping to polish their skills take on summer clinics in hopes of playing during basketball season, Martin said, adding that his son also plays and is part of Fort Trial Baptist's Up-

ward Basketball Program.

Adkins said he and his family have a tradition of playing basketball.

"My daughter graduated from Carlisle and played basketball. My granddaughter is out there getting ready for the clinic, and I played basketball in high school and at Averett in college," Adkins said.

Jarrett said the clinic would not be possible without the coaches.

"We have outstanding coaches," said Jarrett, and added that the clinic went well.

Participants worked on team-building drills, and life lessons were woven into the curriculum, he said, adding that children were divided by age, with younger children in the morning and older children attending camp in the afternoons to help facilitate an accurate balance of height and skill levels.

A few local businesses supported the clinic, Jarrett said, of Charles Roark, who provided movie passes, and Sullivan's Restaurants provided happy meals from McDonald's.

For the first time this year, the clinic was held at Fort Trial Baptist Church.

"I really appreciate the people that have helped out with the clinic," Jarrett said, adding that he is already planning for the clinic to return for a seventh next year in 2025.

In the meantime, Fort Trial Baptist Church also will be hosting its Upward Basketball and Cheerleading Program in 2025, with registration beginning in October.

Brewing company wins bronze medal

Scuffle Hill Brewing Company won the Bronze Medal of the Virginia Craft Brewers Cup at the Virginia Craft Brewers Guild Gala. Scuffle Hill's "Major Redd Imperial Red IPA" won third place in the Specialty IPA category on July 22 at the Farm Bureau Center in Doswell.

A record 128 breweries competed in this year's competition, including 20 new participants. Entries were judged on overall impression, aroma, appearance, flavor, and mouthfeel.

Jake Abell, owner and brewmaster of Scuffle Hill Brewing Company, said, "This opportunity allows members to compete, obtain critical feedback from certified judges, and get statewide recognition to help build our brands. This was the first competition we've ever entered, so we're humbled to receive an award."

Abell earned a Beer Brewer Professional Certificate from Virginia Tech and the University of Richmond. A Veteran of the U. S. Marine Corps, he graduated from Patrick & Henry Community College and Liberty University. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Martinsville Henry County Historical Society.

The Virginia Craft Brewers is an association of independent, small, and traditional breweries dedicated to growing the craft beer industry in the Commonwealth and is the state



Jake Abell is pictured with the Bronze Medal recently awarded to Scuffle Hill Brewing Company.

affiliate of the Brewers Association. The Virginia Craft Beer Cup continues to be the largest state competition of its kind in the United States. The VCBG has developed additional media, retail marketing, and tourism opportunities for Cup winners, ranging from a Cup Winner Beer Trail to digital medals for labels and retail POS displays.

"The VCBG wishes to congratulate this year's Virginia Craft Beer Cup competitors and winners," said Brett Vassey, VCBG President & CEO. "The Cup competition continues to grow, and the quality of independent craft beer being judged is absolutely remarkable."

Jennifer Short Scholarship Ride set for Aug. 10

The 22nd annual Jennifer Short Educational Scholarship Benefit Ride is set for Saturday, August 10.

Sponsored by the Fraternal Order of Eagles #3739, registration will begin at 10:30 a.m. and the ride will start at 12:30 p.m.

The event will be held at 210

Mill Creek Drive in Bassett.

The cost is \$20 for bikes, cars, and trucks, and \$5 per passenger. There will be door prizes, 50/50 raffles, and a meal provided.

For more information, sponsorships, or donations contact Trisha Grogan at (540) 922-6037 or via email at trish86@tk@gmail.com.

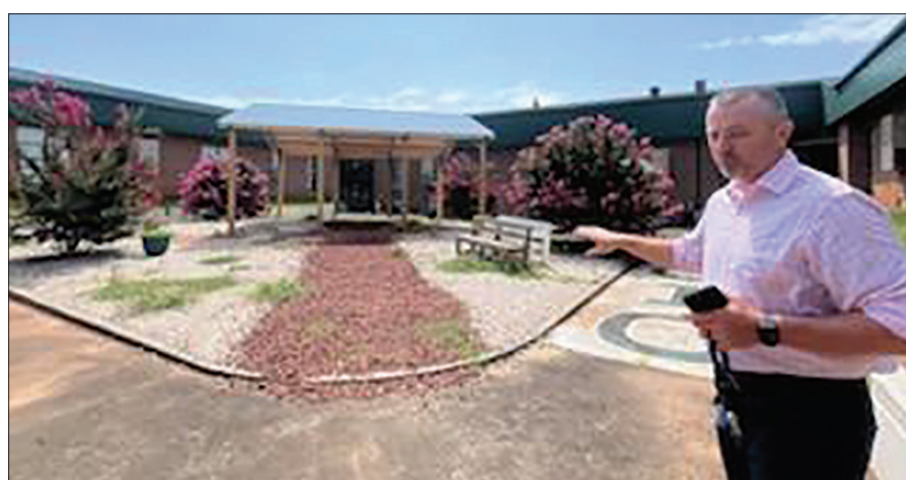
Alleyway sports new lights



The Uptown Partnership announced that the Wall Street Alleyway now has lights. Reed Electrical Solutions helped with the installation.

Crossing the Lines

News snippets from outside the city/county lines ...



Schools Superintendent Jason Wood explained that an outside gazebo at Patrick County High School will allow more students to enjoy lunchtime outside.

Several renovations completed in Patrick schools

The upcoming school year for students in Patrick County schools began on Thursday, August 8, and Schools Superintendent Jason Wood said returning students will likely notice the completion of several projects that will benefit them.

“For example, at the high school an entire hallway of lockers was removed to allow for bench seating outside of the cafeteria at Patrick County High School (PCHS), which will be a benefit for students to be able to spread out during lunch,” he said.

Because there are only three lunch times at Patrick County High School (PCHS), Wood said the cafeteria can become crowded.

“Now after students eat, the high school’s going to try seniors and then maybe juniors and see if those two classes are going to make the inside of the cafeteria much more manageable and easier to supervise when they leave,” he said.

Wood said a large gazebo was also constructed in the PCHS courtyard to allow seniors to eat outside. Previously, “they didn’t have enough space, so they had to sit on the steps. Now, they can go outside.”

When lunch periods aren’t underway, “classes can go outside and have an outdoor learning environment that’s also secured that is enclosed by the entire building,” he said.

Wood said the space will be open to any teacher who wants to reserve it, and noted he can see any class utilizing it during the year.

“We have new picnic tables, and we actually bought those locally from Frontier Farm and Home Center, LLC “in Meadows of Dan,” Wood said, and added the PCHS horticulture class will maintain the area.

A small outdoor area was also installed in early fall of last year for the school’s handicapped students.

“Wheelchair-acceptable swings, and the students actually maintain their little garden. It’s nice, the wheelchair students come out and use these,” he said.

There are also new lights outside at the football stadium. Wood said this completed project will allow the PCHS marching band to practice on the field under the lights at night.

Visitors from as far away as Africa flock to music jams



Debbie and Robin Young, of Ararat, with Pastor Wilson Oberoi from the Republic of Kenya, Africa. Young is pastor of Willow Hill Church. Kenny King, from Ararat, also is pictured in this July 19 photo by Mary Dellenback Hill, Representative, Dan River District, Patrick County Tourism.

Over the last several months, Ararat has welcomed visitors from Arizona, the USA, Ontario, Canada,

and the Republic of Kenya, Africa, at the Appalachian Acoustic Open Jam on Friday Nights, an affiliated partner of The Crooked Road, Virginia’s Heritage Music

Trail. Several visitors took time to have their photos taken with the Virginia LOVEWORKS sign at the event, which is held every Friday Night at 144 The Hollow Road, Ararat. Doors open at 6 p.m. for food and drink, Appalachian Acoustic Music, and dancing from 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Evidence-based program gets underway in PCHS

The Patrick County school division began to receive the first installment of a three-year grant from the Virginia Foundation of Healthy Youth on July 1. The funds will be used to provide an evidence-based drug prevention program in the schools, according to Piedmont Community Services (PCS), which is partnering on the project with the school division. Regina Clark said the grant will provide \$43,431 per year, for a total of \$130,293 over the three-year cycle.

that are geared to help improve local lives and may include Catch My Breath, Too Good For Drugs or the CHILL program. The program will be available for students in grades 8-12 at Patrick County High School, Regina Clark said.

“It’s wonderful to get that grant, and we can renew it. That shouldn’t be any problem,” said Clark.

But it’s important to note that PCS services are not limited to youngsters. For instance, Drug Free Patrick County is the adult version of the CHILL program.

PCMA to hold second ‘Songwriter Circle’ show

The Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) is set to hold its Songwriter’s Circle Series II Guys & Gals on Saturday, September 14, at the Historic Star Theatre with doors opening at 5 p.m. The show starts at 6 p.m.

PCMA President Denny Alley said the original plan for the show was to have only female singers and songwriters perform, which is why the May show only featured men.

“The problem we have here is finding four girl singers. There’s not eight women around that sing and write” songs, Alley said.

Performers include Marcie Horne, Yvonne Smith, Olivia Jo, Wendy Dearmin, Jordan Morrison, Tim Lineberry, Miller Hopkins, and Barry Hutchens, according to Alley, and all are from Patrick County except one.

At the show, Alley said the four female performers will be grouped together and then take turns performing their original songs for three rounds. Then the male performers will do the same.

Alley expects the show to last three hours, until 9 p.m.

He was inspired to start holding this type



The Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) will hold its Songwriter’s Circle Series II Guys & Gals on Saturday, September 14 at the Star Theatre.

of show because it’s something different.

“This is something you see on RFD-TV on Sunday nights from Tennessee. They’ll have a songwriters’ circle, and Barry Hutchens goes to Nashville to the Bluebird Inn Songwriter Restaurant,” Alley said, adding that he’s interested in holding similar shows in the future.

“The first one was very successful, and we’re hoping this one will be too, bringing in the gal singers. It

should bring some people in. I mean, if the second one is a success like the first one, we’ll be doing two a year – spring and fall,” he said.

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at the Coffee Break, Quilted Colors, and the Patrick County Visitor’s Center.

“We’ve sold many tickets, probably 50 to 60, in the last few weeks. People need to come by and pick up their tickets” before they sell out, Alley said.

Houchins among participants in economic development training



James Houchins (4th from right) is pictured with other regional leaders at a recent Economic Development training session. Houchins serves Patrick County as both the director of Economic Development and Tourism.

James Houchins was among the local leaders and professionals from the Southern Virginia region to convene at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research last week for specialized training in economic development. The event featured Carol Johnson, founder of Continuous Dialog, and renowned for her expertise in the dynamic field of economic development across the United States.

Houchins, who currently serves the dual roles of Economic Development and Tourism in Patrick County, was among those to hear that demonstrating competitive economic development skills is no

longer just an option for economic development professionals who wish to be successful in retaining, growing, and winning quality jobs for their communities, according to a release from the Southern Virginia Regional Alliance (SVRA), which hosted the training session.

“I thought the workshop was excellent,” said Houchins. “Carol brought energy, presented the information with great passion, and made it relevant to our roles as economic development drivers. This is exactly what I needed as a newly appointed Director of economic development.”

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DEADPOOL 3

THE TWISTERS

BLU-RAY™ AND DVD™

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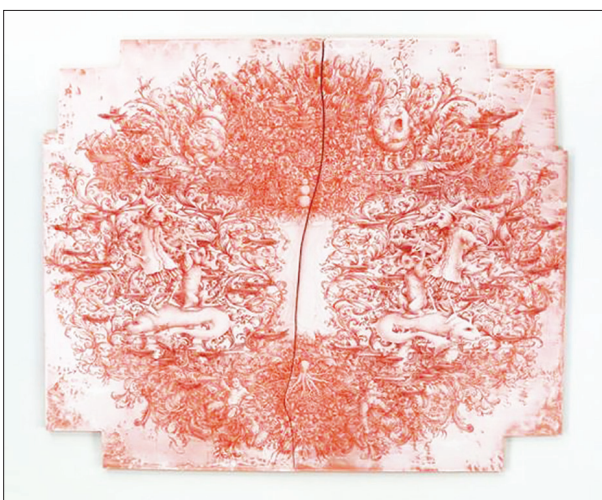
New imaginative, evocative exhibits to be displayed at Piedmont Arts

Works by Patricia Bellan-Gillen and Jessica Bloch-Schulman blur lines between fact and fiction.

An opening reception in honor of the museum's new exhibits was held on Friday, August 9, at the museum. The exhibits will be on display from August 10 to Oct. 26. Exhibits at Piedmont Arts are always free and open to the public.

In the Hooker Gallery, "History, Legends, and Fairytales," by Patricia Bellan-Gillen will be on display. These larger-than-life works utilize the most intricate line drawings, collage, and other mediums to create enveloping and immersive experiences for the viewer. The drawings combine imagery generated through reading and study with imagery that is personal and intuitive. In the artist's own words, "Sacred imagery moves about in the temporal lobe with iconic characters from children's stories and recent news flashes picked from the internet join the sagas of black and white television. My mixed media drawings and collages use these bits and pieces of visual history... the stones and bones of memory... to suggest a narrative and to engage the viewer's associative responses." Bellan-Gillen was born in Beaver Falls, PA and lives and works in rural Washington County, Pennsylvania adjacent to the West Virginia border. She is a retired and award-winning educator from Carnegie Mellon University where she held the Dorothy L. Stubnitz Endowed Chair.

"Lingering: Contemplations," by Jessica Bloch-Schulman will be featured in the Pannill gallery. This collection of ceramic sculptures uses the female form in juxtaposition with abstractions and dreamlike components. While exploring deeply personal experiences to cre-



ate psychological self-portraits, the pieces are rooted in universal themes and emotions. "I am interested in how our memories are stored; the neural pathways and chemical interactions that write the invisible maps of our emotional lives," Bloch-Schulman says. "The symbols and markings on my figures form a kind of legend, alluding to milestones or meaningful events that would otherwise remain concealed. Overall, these pieces invite the viewer to linger, to feel something familiar, and to consider the shapes of the stories that persist in our minds." Bloch-Schulman is a figurative ceramic sculptor living in Greensboro, NC

The Lynwood Artists Gallery will feature "A Life in the Blue Ridge" by Paula Melton. Melton is a watercolor artist who uses her medium to explore the beauty of living in the mountains. The Lynwood Artists Gallery is curated by Lynwood Artists, an organization for practicing artists in the Martinsville-Henry County area. Its members share a desire to stimulate



understanding and enjoyment of fine art and the artistic process, while providing area artists with opportunities to exhibit and further develop their talents.

The opening reception and exhibits are sponsored by Page and Ben Beeler, Cindy and Steve Edgerton, Robert Harder, Lynn and John Korff, Nancy and Henry Moore, Susan and David Morris, and Lynwood Artists.

The opening reception is free and open to the public. Complimentary wine and light refreshments will be served. For more information, visit PiedmontArts.org.

School board hears update about new cell phone policy

By Jessica Dillon

During an August 1 meeting, the Henry County School Board discussed reforming its cellphone policy – following discussions about mental health and cellphone usage, a push for the Kids Online Safety Act to pass, and an executive order by Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

The board has been discussing additional cell phone restrictions during instruction times. "It relates to a larger scale of mental health with students," Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis said. "A draft guidance will be issued by the Virginia Department of Education by August 15, and that will be for us to review at that time and give additional feedback."

The final guidance is expected from the state on September 16.

"We will be able to take that final guidance and cross that with what we currently have in place for our cell phone policy to ensure that it is in compliance," Blake-Lewis said. She told the board that it would need to make changes to the existing policy to be in line with the new policy.

Blake-Lewis said there is "surprising support" to eliminate cell phones from instructional hours.

"Our current policy largely already covers most of this," said board chairman Teddy Martin II.

"Our policy does eliminate cell phone use during instructional time, but our students are still permitted to use the phones in transition, at lunch, and before and after school," said Blake-Lewis, noting the new policy could include a ban on cell phones during currently permitted times.

"The governor's intent is to focus on the larger scope of mental health of students," said Blake-Lewis. According to research, hav-

ing a cell phone can negatively impact the mental health of students.

In other matters, the board:

*Heard and approved a request for direct services through Allied Instructional Services.

"Direct services for students with visual impairments from a Teacher of Visually Impaired and orientation, TVI, and mobility services, O & M, are required by law to ensure consistent service delivery in compliance with Individualized Education Plans," Emily Taylor, director of special education and related services, said.

The fiscal impact of the program will be \$150,000 from the FY25 budget, she said, and funds would be used to help fill the current vacancy for the upcoming school year.

*Heard that installation of playground at Stanleytown Elementary School has begun, and the maintenance crew has been working to get the facilities ready for students.

* Dr. Benjamin Boone, assistant superintendent, said he anticipates the school division will "hopefully" have 10 new school bus drivers employed.

*Recognized Marci Lexa for the HCPS's Virginia School Boards Association 2024 Food for Thought Award.

*Recognized outgoing student school board member Lakyn Cochran.

*Recognized incoming student school board member Bryson Bateman.

*Recognized students from the Virginia FFA State Convention.

*Recognized students for baseball, tennis, all district girl's track, all district boys track.

*Recognized Kevin Underwood, who was selected as the Boy's Field and Track Coach of the Year.



Veteran resident with a robotic pet.

Robotic pets used to help veterans cope with dementia

A Falls Church - based company, Capital Caring Health, is providing companion robotic pets for veterans at the Commonwealth's veteran care centers, according to the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond, Davis & McDaniel Veterans Care Center in Roanoke, and Jones & Cabacoy Veterans Care Center in Virginia Beach each received six robotic pets – three dogs and three cats. The Puller Veterans Care Center in Warrenton will also receive six robotic pets upon its opening.

According to clinical studies and first-hand experience at Capital Caring Health, these companion pets have been proven to improve the quality of life of veterans and others suffering from dementia and/or loneliness.

"We find that the robotic pets are very helpful in assisting with residents when they are agitated or restless," said Robyn Jennings, Administrator at Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center in Richmond. "It gives the veterans a sense of peace when holding the pets."

The pets arrive ready to enjoy and interactively react to human touch and voice like real pets. Capital Caring Health has donated robotic pets not just to Virginia's state-run veterans care centers, but to every state-operated veterans care center throughout the Nation.

"Recipients of our robotic pets usu-

ally keep them around the clock and name them," said Stephen Cone, Chief of Communications, Marketing & Philanthropy at Capital Caring Health. "Personalities of the veterans change from agitated and confused to often joyful, happy and calm – a dramatic transformation that improves the veterans' lives. I hear from families all the time how miraculous it is for their family member to have received one of these pets."

These robotic companion pets are provided free of charge to any professional caregiver or family caregiver who contacts the company on behalf of a loved one or patient with dementia, thanks to donations from individuals, companies, and foundations.

Recently, the veterans care centers also implemented additional technology to include the use of virtual reality (VR) headsets – all with the goal to improve the lives of the veterans who live there.

"Our goal is to consistently improve the quality of life of the residents in our care centers, which is why we are committed to utilizing the most innovative technology to meet their needs," said Chuck Zingler, Virginia Department of Veterans Services Commissioner. "Not only are we implementing these robotic pets for our dementia patients, but we also have been using virtual reality (VR) headsets to assist with PTSD, as well as telehealth appointments to make it easier for our less mobile residents to still meet with their doctors."

(lifejackets) are required for river cleanup.

What: Clean up our beautiful river and give back to nature with a land or water cleanup! (BYOB) Bring your own boat!

When: August 17 from 9 a.m. to noon (lunch provided)

Where: Meet at Smith River Sports Complex River Access- turn left at the warehouse/driving range and follow to the end.

Email Brian Williams bwilliams@danriver.org for additional information.

Smith River Cleanup set for Aug. 17



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www.danriver.org



Every year, River Heroes help to clean the Smith. Join us on August 17th and give a few hours back to the river you love. Bring your canoes, jon boats, kayaks, and river shoes to the annual Smith River Cleanup.

Volunteers can choose the morning of the event whether they'd like to be on water or land for the cleanup. You can choose to stay for a short time or the entire event. Around Noon, all volunteers will be treated to a catered lunch at the

Smith River Sports Complex.

If you want to do your own thing but still need bags and gloves, swing by the Sports Complex and we will have supplies. The best boats for clean-ups are jon boats and canoes but you can bring your kayak and drag a trash bag alongside. We will help shuttle you where you need to go to start, or gladly take you back to your vehicle after the end of the clean-up. Waivers are required to be signed for this event.

Who: You, ready to get dirty, water shoes, dry fit clothing, and PFDs

Abatement Authority awards \$9.1 million in funding to Va. agencies

A committee of the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) voted on Friday, August 2 to award \$9,079,332 in funding to sixteen different agencies of the Commonwealth for opioid abatement and remediation efforts.

Under a statute that was passed into law in 2021, a minimum of 15% of opioid settlement funds paid to the Commonwealth is to be spent on abatement efforts managed by state agencies.

Sen. Todd Pillion, chairman of the OAA, noted that the awards will be used to expand and accelerate the fight against the opioid crisis in Virginia. "The OAA's financial support of these state agencies will allow Virginia to continue to lead the nation in fighting the scourge of opioid and substance use, by investing in efforts that include prevention and education, research, treatment, and support for people in recovery." Funding for these projects is scheduled to be transferred from the OAA to the recipient organizations as early as October 1.

Dr. Sarah Thomason, a clinical pharmacist who chairs the OAA's Grants Committee, noted that with this latest round of awards, the OAA will have allocated nearly \$64 million in awards to cities, counties, and state agencies since the OAA began offering grants last year.

The approved projects were selected through a competitive process and included a review of proposals submitted by the agencies. The resulting awards will be the second allocation of OAA funds for state agencies. Funding for the OAA grants and awards is a result of Virginia's participation in numerous national settlement payments from manufacturers and distributors of prescription opioids. The payments from the various settling companies are expected to continue for at least 15 more years and will likely exceed \$1.1 billion in total funding.

The OAA was established by the General Assembly in 2021 to oversee the distribution of 55% of Virginia's total settlement funds. Of the remainder, 30% is distributed directly to cities and counties and 15% to the Commonwealth. The use of funds is restricted by court orders and state statute, with the restrictions aiming for the funds to be used for opioid abatement efforts.

For more information contact info@voaa.us Among agencies to receive funding in Virginia are:

Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services (DBHDS) - \$117,165 for the second year of funding of a Substance Use Data Analyst. The agency will also carry forward a balance of \$11,133, thus the total expenditure will be 128,298.

*\$385,000 to enable continuing collaboration with the Virginia Recovery Corps (an AmeriCorps program). Recovery Corps develops qualified, Certified Peer Recovery Specialists that are integrated into and add to a full continuum of addiction recovery services. OAA funding will enable VRCP to access and draw down nearly \$2 million in Federal matching funds that will be used to support 70 Peer Navigator positions.

Department of Corrections (DOC) - \$276,770 for the second year of funding for six social workers (located at six VADOC specialized SUD program sites) that assist with substance use disorder treatment. In addition to the recommended funding of \$276,770, VADOC will carry forward \$293,236 from the first year for this program, thus the total expected expenditure will be \$570,006.

Department of Education (DOE) - \$520,250 for the second year of funding for DOE's statewide, cross-sector effort to address opioid misuse by educating students, parents, school employees, and student-athletes about the dangers of drug use and how to prevent opioid misuse and addiction.

Department of Health (VDH) - \$473,137 for the second year of funding for the statewide

naloxone distribution program.

*\$277,944 for the second year of funding for the "Comprehensive Harm Reduction" project. VDH will also carry forward \$722,056 from the first year for this program, thus the total expected expenditure will be \$1 million.

*\$128,703 for the second year of funding for three substance use coordinator positions at the Richmond and Henrico Health District, the Hampton and Peninsula Health District, and the Portsmouth Health District. VDH will also carry forward \$176,278 from the first year for this program, thus the total expected expenditure will be \$304,981.

*\$83,685 for an Overdose Prevention Strategist position for the West Piedmont Health District.

*\$130,407 to support the establishment of a standardized approach for local and regional overdose review teams.

Department of Health Professions (DHP) - \$361,219 for the second year of funding for a program that connects the prescription monitoring program to prescribers' electronic health records and pharmacists' pharmacy dispensing systems.

Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) - Continuation of the multi-year, multi-step "Discharge Bridge Program." DMAS will carry forward \$150,000 from the first year.

Department of Social Services (DSS) - \$411,000 for the second year of funding for the kinship navigator program in coordination with local governments and community partners.

*\$291,247 to implement an Opioid Reduction Registry within the 211 Virginia Resource Database and the creation of a text platform for individuals dealing with substance use disorder, as well as the inclusion of new and expanded substance use disorder services that will be more readily available statewide, all integrated with 988 and various resource locators.

Office of the Attorney General (OAG) - \$675,000 for the second year of funding for the OAG's "Fentanyl and Opioid Prevention and Awareness" mass media campaign to educate Virginians regarding the dangers of opioids, with a focus on fentanyl.

Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia (OES) - \$113,000 for the second year of funding for the development and promotion of a statewide best practice standard for drug testing within alternative dockets and recovery courts. OES will also carry forward \$387,000 from the first year, thus the total expenditure will be \$500,000.

Radford University - \$210,698 for the second year of funding for the "Healing, Outreach, Prevention, and Empowerment (HOPE)" project run by Radford Collegiate Recovery Program. Radford University will also carry forward \$90,908 from the first year, thus the total expenditure will be \$301,606.

University of Virginia (UVA) - \$269,489 for the second year of funding for the UVA "Street Medicine Access Reduction and Treatment" (SMART) clinic, an office based opioid treatment (OBOT) program to engage individuals with opioid use disorder.

*\$215,075 for the pilot "COSMOS" digital contingency management platform. UVA has designed this pilot to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of digital contingency management intervention in reducing opioid and substance use, as well as improving participant recovery outcomes.

Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) - \$207,820 for the second year of development for a technical resource "toolkit" of opioid abatement best practices and evidence-based programs that cities and counties can implement using opioid settlement funds. VCU will also carry-forward \$28,279 from the first year, thus the total expenditure will be \$236,099.

*\$74,401 for the second year of a project by

the VCU Massey Cancer Center to research and develop protocols for pain management in palliative care settings. VCU will carry-forward \$170,599 from the first year, thus the total expenditure will be \$245,000.

*\$575,088 for the "Virginia Naloxone Project," which will train, equip, and support at least twenty emergency departments across Virginia with take-home Naloxone for at-risk patients, as well as the improved connection to addiction treatment services and the development of data collection and continuous quality improvement program structure.

*\$84,373 for a "Fast Track to Certified Substance Abuse Counselor (CSAC) Program" to expand existing VCU coursework and clinical internships for Bachelors level (BSW) and Masters level (MSW) social work students to provide credit towards the Virginia Certified Substance Abuse Counselor (CSAC) certification.

*\$82,322 to support the expansion of VCU's Recovery Scholars Program (RSP), which will extend to ten colleges and universities across Virginia. These funds will support scholarships to students in recovery who are pursuing certification for Substance Abuse Counseling (CSAC) and professional Certified Peer Recovery Specialists in the workforce who are seeking to further their careers.

Virginia Cooperative Extension Service (Virginia Tech) - \$725,008 for the second year of a program to provide training for teachers to implement the evidence-based Botvin Life Skills program, Mental Health First Aid, and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) training in schools, as well as VCE's continued partnership in regional substance use education and prevention coalitions.

Virginia Foundation for Health Youth (VFHY) - \$1,400,000 for the second phase of the "Prevention and Education Campaign on Fentanyl and Overdose for Youth and Young Adults" (also referred to as "Deadly Dose") project, a statewide prevention and education campaign for youth and young adults.

*\$115,000 to support the "Expanding Access to the Dangers of Fentanyl Module" program in high-risk public-school systems. VFHY revise the existing "Dangers of Fentanyl" educational module for use in middle schools, provide training to teachers on curricula usage, and create a Spanish-language version.

Virginia Indigent Defense Commission (VIDC) - \$374,546 for the second year of funding for collaboration between the VIDC and Virginia Recovery Corps (an AmeriCorps program) to embed peer navigators within public defender offices in localities with the highest overdose death rates combined with the largest public defender caseloads. VIDC will also carry forward 33,194 from the first year, thus the total expenditure will be \$407,740.

Virginia State University (VSU) - \$241,341 for the VSU Public Health Institute's "Healthful Engagement for Support, Treatment, Recovery, and Interventions" project to enhance treatment and recovery service accessibility for adult residents through individual and group support sessions for substance use, and evidence-based and empirically supported therapies for addiction recovery.

*\$90,100 for the VSU "Leveraging Workforce Needs" program to address workforce needs for abatement efforts. In this project, VSU seeks to educate and prepare certified peer recovery specialists, certified substance abuse counselors, and Virginia certified drug and alcohol counselors. VSU will coordinate pipeline related opportunities for Virginia State University psychology and social work students.

*\$169,534 for the "Mobilization of Access for Underserved and Marginalized Communities" project to identify and address disparities in access to abatement efforts for people in traditionally disadvantaged communities.

VDOC assumes control of Lawrenceville center

The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) has officially assumed control of Lawrenceville Correctional Center, according to Director Chad Dotson. The move was announced in December 2023.

Lawrenceville Correctional Center opened in 1998 and, until the switch, was the only privately-operated state responsible prison in Virginia.

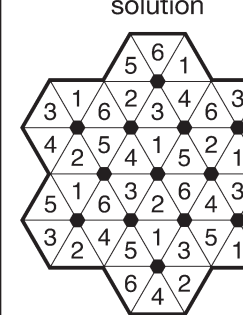
"Today marks a new day at Lawrenceville Correctional Cen-

ter," said Dotson. "Our Department is excited to assume operations at this facility - and to continue achieving the VADOC's mission of ensuring public safety for the Commonwealth by providing effective incarceration, supervision, and evidence-based re-entry services. I thank the corrections team at Lawrenceville for their professionalism and dedication throughout this process."

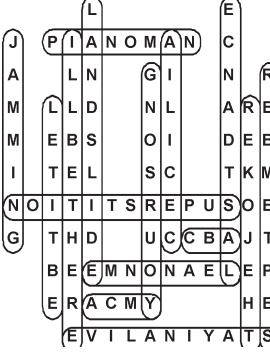
Submit your community news and photos to dhall@theenterprise.net and be sure to like the Henry County Enterprise on Facebook

Puzzle Answers!

SNOWFLAKES



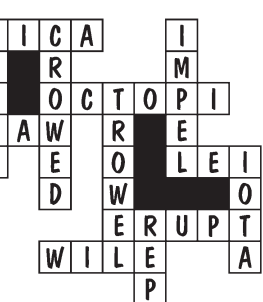
SONGS FROM THE 1970s



SCRAMBLERS

solution
1. Snack; 2. Warden;
3. Parent; 4. Amount
Today's Word
TEAMWORK

FEAR KNIGHT



Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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



PUZZLE TIME

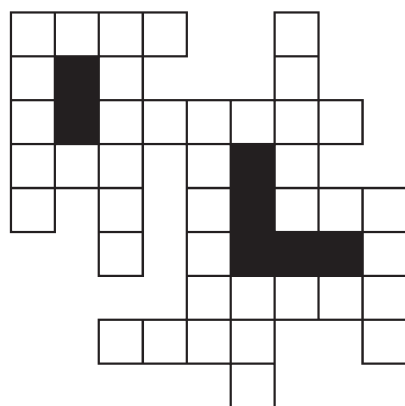


FEAR KNOT

By: rj Johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

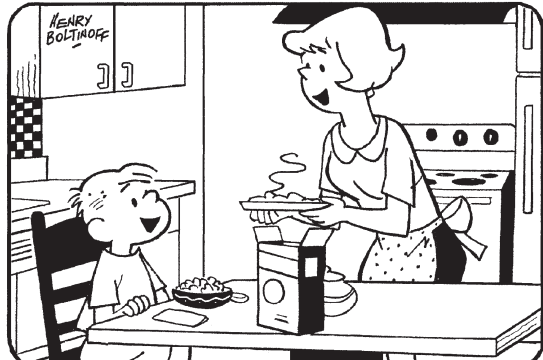
- WAM
- PICOOT
- TRUPE
- CAIP
- WOCDRE
- ♥ ILE
- LEWI
- ERMPI
- ♥ RPE
- WRELOT
- ELMPI
- OAIT



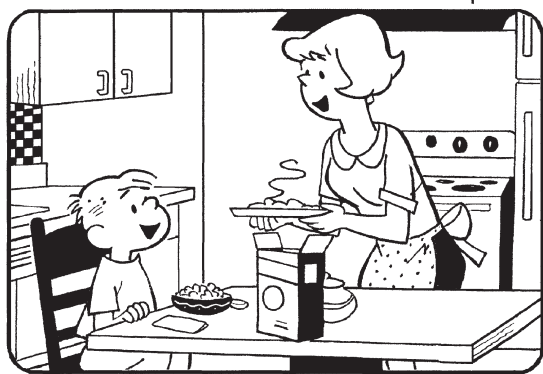
Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only **ONE** word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥ **RATHE** becomes **HATER** or **EARTH** or **HEART**). Fit each string's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

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Title pattern is different. 2. Arm is not showing. 3. Cabinet is not as wide. 4. Table is not as long. 5. Curt is added to sleeve. 6. Plate is longer. 7. Fall away console game Nintendo.

MAGIC MAZE ● SONGS FROM THE 1970s

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: **Keep Fallin' On My Head**

- ABC
- Cecilia
- I'll Be There
- Jamming
- Landslide
- Last Dance
- Lean On Me
- Let It Be
- Piano Man
- September
- Stayin' Alive
- Superstition
- The Joker
- YMCA
- Your Song

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Super Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Downgrade
- 7 Morals
- 13 Rich fabric with a silky finish
- 20 "Barn!" chef
- 21 Result in
- 22 Went to the polls again
- 23 1978 arcade classic
- 25 Immemorial
- 26 Gyro breads
- 27 Sue Grafton's "— for Alibi"
- 28 Its highest mountain is Denali
- 30 "... good witch — bad witch?"
- 31 Emphasize
- 33 Healthy
- 34 Bread sliced doubly thick
- 37 College transcript no.
- 39 Charge to pitch a product
- 44 Many a hospital delivery
- 45 Bottled water brand
- 49 " 'Tis a pity!"
- 52 What a DJ talks into

DOWN

- 1 Cruel ruler
- 2 Domain
- 3 Butcher's tool
- 4 Whale variety
- 5 Dead heats
- 6 Lilly of drugs
- 7 TV's
- 8 Tantalizes
- 9 Contained
- 10 Brain gains
- 11 Key near Alt
- 12 Sammy of the diamond
- 13 Car stopper
- 14 Of monarchs
- 15 Coincide partly with
- 16 Coke, e.g.
- 17 Truckloads
- 18 China's — Xiaoping
- 19 Border
- 24 Mil. alliance since 1949
- 29 White birds
- 31 Pig's digs
- 32 Auto garage brand
- 35 Lawyers' gp.
- 36 Lay turf on
- 37 Enthusiastic greeting
- 38 Mas' mates
- 40 Stops
- harping on the subject

NOVEL INTRODUCTIONS

- 41 "As is" transaction
- 42 Beseeched
- 43 Acronym for four entertainment prizes
- 46 Scott Turov memoir
- 47 Actress Laura
- 48 Sp. woman
- 49 Dress of India
- 50 Opulent, floor-length cloak
- 51 Of lesser importance
- 52 Parisian pronoun
- 53 "You win"
- 54 Religious law
- 58 1040 ID
- 59 Must-see
- 61 It's south of Tenn.
- 63 Become a participant
- 64 Pollute
- 65 "Get what I'm talkin' about?"
- 66 Home to Augusta
- 71 It's south of Tenn.
- 72 Senate affirmatives
- 74 Pigeon shed
- 75 Allay
- 76 Home pest
- 77 Curved paths
- 78 Hailed vehicle
- 83 Brand of root beer
- 84 Stranded cell stuff
- 86 Nintendo game console
- 87 Fall away
- 89 Lighthouse lights
- 90 Sushi tuna
- 91 Border
- 95 Noble sort
- 96 Thawed
- 97 Beginning painting class
- 98 Accepting of
- 99 Became tiresome to
- 100 Gets wiser
- 102 Pop singer
- 103 City in southeast Minnesota
- 104 Fess up to
- 106 Frying fat
- 107 "The Time Machine" race
- 108 — monster
- 109 No-show GI
- 110 Not fully shut
- 111 Super review
- 113 Food herring
- 114 Cattle group
- 117 Cochlea site
- 118 W-2 pro

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Medicine cabinets are one of the worst places to store medicine because of the high temperatures and humidity in bathrooms.
- A Hershey's Kiss contains 26 calories that take about four minutes of kissing to burn.
- You say money doesn't grow on trees? Try telling that to a certain dog in Colombia. After seeing students pass money to a food stall attendant, the pooch began a regular practice of "paying" for dog biscuits with tree leaves!
- The main exporter of Brazil nuts is not Brazil, but Bolivia.
- Screenwriter Bob Gale confirmed that Marty McFly's nemesis in the "Back to the Future" trilogy, Biff Tannen, was modeled on Donald Trump.
- A scientific method called toxineering turns venoms into painkillers.
- As novels became more prominent during the 1700s, society and the media became increasingly concerned that young people spent too much time reading books. They even went so far as to call it "reading rage," "reading fever," "reading mania" and "reading lust."
- A regular BIC ballpoint pen can draw a line that's about 2 kilometers long — more than six times the height of the Eiffel Tower.
- Nazis planned to kill Sir Winston Churchill with a bar of chocolate. A bomb made of thin steel was covered by real chocolate that would explode once a chunk was broken. Luckily, British Allies discovered the plan.
- At his presidential inauguration, Theodore Roosevelt wore a lock of Abraham Lincoln's hair.
- Before Usain Bolt won the 100 meter sprint in the Olympic finals, he ate only McDonald's chicken nuggets, as he didn't want to risk getting an upset stomach from local cuisine.
- Yamaha produces some of the world's most popular motorcycles, but the company started off as a piano manufacturer.

Thought for the Day: "Motion feels like progress. Action is progress." — *Ianos Clear*

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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: ♦♦

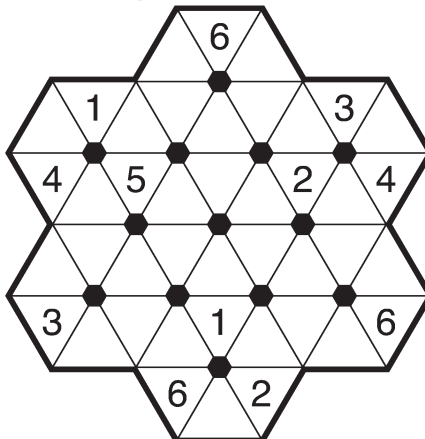
- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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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
- ♦♦♦♦ Very Difficult

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

SHOULD YOU AIM OFF AND LET THE WIND BLOW THE BALL BACK ON TARGET, OR TRY TO "HOLD THE BALL UP" BY DRAWING OR FADING IT??

GOING WITH RATHER THAN FIGHTING THE WIND IS MUCH EASIER AND SAFER FOR MOST WEEKEND GOLFERS.

ON TEE SHOTS, SET UP TO THE SIDE OF THE TEE FROM WHICH THE WIND IS BLOWING, TO GIVE YOURSELF MAXIMUM ROOM FOR THE BALL'S DRIFT.

ALSO, AIM DOWN THE SAME SIDE OF THE FAIRWAY AS YOU TEE THE BALL.



"You'll like the _____ here."

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!

Nibble

CANKS

Keeper

DRAWN

Raise

ENTRAP

Number

OUTMAN

TODAY'S WORD

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Initial claims for benefits jump

The 2,682 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims that were filed during the week ending July 27, 2024, is 31.1 percent higher than last week's 2,045 claims and 18.2 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (2,269), according to Virginia Works.

Nearly 82 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (64 percent) were

Manufacturing (426); Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (253); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (240); Health Care and Social Assistance (212); and Retail Trade (203).

Continued weeks claims (16,858) were 0.8 percent higher than last week (16,721) and were 22.8 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (13,727). Nearly 94 percent of claimants

self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (60 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (2,495); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,236); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,713); Retail Trade (1,541); and Accommodation and Food Services (1,415).

A person who has already filed an initial claim and who has experienced a week of unemploy-

ment files a continued claim to claim benefits for that week of unemployment.

On a weekly basis, continued claims reflect a good approximation of the current number of insured unemployed workers filing for UI benefits, and are a good indicator of labor market conditions. While continued claims are not a leading indicator, they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the economy.

Latest survey indicates increase in workers switching jobs

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' May 2024 Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) reports the churn rate, an indicator of worker movement from job to job, increased over the month, according to Virginia Works (the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement).

The most recent BLS JOLTS survey data suggests the number of May 2024 hires in Virginia rose by 23,000 over the month and was up by 28 percent from five years earlier. BLS JOLTS data provides information on all the pieces that go into the net change in the number of jobs. These components include job openings, hires, layoffs, voluntary quits, and other job separations (which includes retirements and worker deaths). Putting those components together reveals the overall change in payroll employment. JOLTS data is seasonally adjusted and describes conditions on the last business day of the month. Current month's data are preliminary and the previous month's data have been revised.

On the last business day in May, there were 257,000 job openings in Virginia, seasonally adjusted, a 4,000 increase from April's revised figure. The number of U.S. job openings the number of job openings changed little at 8.1 million. This measure was down by 1.2 million over the year. Job openings decreased in accommodation and food services (-147,000) and in private educational services (-34,000). The number of job openings increased in state and local government, excluding education (+117,000), durable goods manufacturing (+97,000), and federal government (+37,000). The largest increases in the job openings level occurred in California (+90,000) and New York (+45,000), as well as in New Jersey and Washington +38,000 each). The decreases occurred in Texas (-76,000), Tennessee (-22,000), and Arizona (-21,000).

In Virginia, the May job openings rate was 5.7 percent, little

changed from April's rate. The U.S. rate was little changed at 4.9 percent in May. The largest increases in job openings rates occurred in Washington (+1.0 percentage point) and in Indiana and New Jersey (+0.8 point each). A significant decrease occurred in Texas (-0.5 point).

The number of hires in Virginia rose to 189,000 in May, an increase of 23,000 over the month and up by 11,000 from May 2023. JOLTS defines hires as all additions to the payroll during the month. The number of hires was 29 percent lower than the series high of 267,000 set in June 2020. In May, the number of hires was little changed at 5.8 million. Over the year, hires were down by 415,000. The largest increases in the hires level occurred in New York (+43,000), Michigan (+32,000), and North Dakota (+4,000). A significant decrease occurred in Louisiana (-15,000). In Virginia, the 4.5 hires rate was an increase from April's revised 3.9 percent rate. The U.S. rate, at 3.6 percent, changed little in May. Large increases in the hires rate occurred in North Dakota (+0.8 percentage point), Michigan (+0.7 point), and New York (+0.4 point). The decrease occurred in Louisiana (-0.8 point).

The Virginia hires-per-job-openings (HPJO) ratio rose to 0.74, its highest level since December 2020. This measure shows the rate of hiring compared to open jobs and is a proxy for time to fill positions.

In May 2024, there were 0.5 unemployed per job opening in the Commonwealth, compared to nationwide, with 0.8 unemployed per job opening nationwide. In Virginia, the unemployed per job opening ratio (sometimes called the 'job seekers ratio') peaked at 4.4 unemployed per job opening in February 2010 during the Great Recession, while the number of unemployed workers per job opening stood at 3.3 in April 2020 during the height of pandemic employment impacts.

Total separations in Virginia

increased by 17,000 to 168,000. Nationwide, the number of total separations in May changed little at 5.4 million. This measure was down by 424,000 over the year. Large increases in the total separations level occurred in Massachusetts (+30,000), as well as in Idaho and Montana (+9,000 each). A significant decrease occurred in Ohio (-32,000). The Virginia total separations rate rose to 4.0 percent, the highest rate in a year. The U.S. total separations rate changed little at 3.4 percent. Significant increases in total separations rates occurred in Montana (+1.6 percentage points), Idaho (+1.0 point), and Massachusetts (+0.8 point). A significant decrease occurred in Ohio (-0.5 point).

An estimated 111,000 workers quit jobs from Virginia employers in May. The number of quits increased 15,000 from April's revised figure. That was lower by 16 percent over-the-year but 19 percent higher than five years earlier. Quits, a component of total separations, are voluntary separations initiated by the employee. In May, the number of quits nationwide was little changed at 3.5 million. Over the year, quits were down by 550,000.

Significant increases in the quits level occurred in California (+75,000) and Massachusetts (+19,000), as well as in Idaho and Mississippi (+7,000 each). Large decreases occurred in Florida (-71,000), Ohio (-25,000), and Colorado (-23,000). The quits rate in the Commonwealth edged up to 2.6 percent and remained at levels seen over the last two years. The U.S. rate was 2.2 percent for the seventh month in a row in May. Significant increases in quits rates occurred in Idaho (+0.7 percentage point), Massachusetts (+0.5 point), and California (+0.4 point). Significant decreases occurred in Colorado (-0.8 point), Florida (-0.7 point), and Ohio (-0.4 point).

The number of layoffs and discharges in Virginia was 49,000 in May. This was up by 20 percent over the year and up by a third

from five years earlier. Layoffs and discharges are countercyclical, which means that layoffs typically increase during economic contractions and decrease during economic expansions. In May, the number of U.S. layoffs and discharges changed little at 1.7 million. Significant increases in the layoffs and discharges level occurred in Florida (+51,000), Texas (+34,000), as well as in Montana and Oklahoma (+9,000 each). Significant decreases occurred in Arizona (-12,000) and Connecticut (-7,000).

The Virginia layoffs and discharges rate edged up to 1.2 percent, while the U.S. rate was little changed at 1.0 percent but for establishments with 5,000 or more employees, the layoffs and discharges rate increased. The largest increases occurred in Montana (+1.7 percentage points), Florida (+0.6 point), and Oklahoma (+0.5 point). The decreases occurred in Connecticut (-0.5 point) and Arizona (-0.4 point).

The May 'churn' rate (the sum of the hires rate and total separations rate) in Virginia rose by a full percentage point from April's revised 7.5 percent figure, the fastest pace in a year. This was a departure from nationwide as recent U.S. trends indicated a continued deceleration of movement of workers from job to job since the beginning of 2022. While more volatile month-to-month, Virginia's pace has been more active for over a year.

On the last business day in May 2024, hiring in Virginia remained more prevalent than before the pandemic as the number of hires and hires per job opening rose to their highest level in a year. At the same time, job separations also rose over the month, primarily driven by job quitting. This increased hiring and separation activity pushed a measure of job change velocity, the churn rate, upward, indicating a still-active labor market for job seekers in the Commonwealth heading into summer.

Meat, poultry recall expanded

Boar's Head Provisions Co., Inc., a Jarratt, Va., establishment, is expanding its July 26 recall of deli meat products that may be adulterated with *Listeria monocytogenes*, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). The company is recalling approximately 7 million additional pounds of ready-to-eat meat and poultry products.

The expansion includes 71 products produced between May 10 and July 29, under the Boar's Head and Old Country brand names. These items include meat intended for slicing at retail delis as well as some packaged meat and poultry products sold at retail locations. These products have "sell by" dates ranging from 29-JUL-2024 through 17-OCT-24.

As of July 30, 34 sick people in 13 states reported becoming sick after consumption of one of the products. The illnesses included 33 hospitalizations and two deaths. Samples were collected from sick people from May 29 to July 12. The investigation is ongoing, and FSIS continues to work with the CDC and state partners. The CDC Food Safety Alert, *Listeria* Outbreak Linked to Meats Sliced at Delis, will continue to be updated with the latest investigation details.

The products subject to recall were distributed to retail locations nationwide and some were exported to the Cayman Islands, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Panama. The products shipped to retailers bear establishment number "EST. 12612" or "P-12612" inside the USDA mark of inspection on the product labels.

The problem was discovered when FSIS was notified that a liverwurst sample collected by the Maryland Department of Health tested positive for *L. monocytogenes*. The Maryland Department of Health, in collaboration with the Baltimore City Health Department, collected an unopened liverwurst product from a retail store for testing as part of an outbreak investigation of *L. monocytogenes* infections. Further testing determined the product sample tested positive for the outbreak strain. Anyone concerned about illness should contact a healthcare provider.

The FSIS is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state public health partners to investigate the multistate outbreak of *L. monocytogenes* infections linked to meats sliced at delis.

Consumption of food contaminated with *L. monocytogenes* can cause listeriosis, a serious infection that primarily affects people

who are pregnant, aged 65 or older, or with weakened immune systems. Less commonly, people outside these risk groups are affected.

Listeriosis can cause fever, muscle aches, headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance and convulsions sometimes preceded by diarrhea or other gastrointestinal symptoms. An invasive infection spreads beyond the gastrointestinal tract. In people who are pregnant, the infection can cause miscarriages, stillbirths, premature delivery or life-threatening infection of the newborn. In addition, serious and sometimes fatal infections can occur in older adults and persons with weakened immune systems. Listeriosis is treated with antibiotics. Those in the higher-risk categories who experience flu-like symptoms within two months after eating contaminated food should seek medical care and tell the health care provider about eating the contaminated food.

The FSIS is concerned that some of the product may be in consumers' refrigerators and in retail deli cases. Consumers who have purchased these products are urged not to consume them and retailers are urged not to sell these products with the preferred sell by dates. These products should be thrown away or

returned to the place of purchase. Consumers who have purchased these products are also urged to clean refrigerators thoroughly to prevent the risk of cross-contamination.

The FSIS recommends retail delis clean and sanitize all food and non-food surfaces and discard any open meats and cheeses in the deli.

The FSIS routinely conducts recall effectiveness checks to verify recalling firms notify their customers of the recall and that steps are taken to make certain that the product is no longer available to consumers. When available, the retail distribution list(s) will be posted on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls.

Consumers with questions regarding the recall can contact Boar's Head Provisions Co., Inc., Customer Service at 1-800-352-6277.

Consumers with food safety questions can call the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 888-MPHotline (888-674-6854) or email MPHotline@usda.gov. For consumers that need to report a problem with a meat, poultry, or egg product, the online Electronic Consumer Complaint Monitoring System can be accessed 24 hours a day at <https://foodcomplaint.fsis.usda.gov/CCF/>.

New policy would reduce Salmonella in raw poultry products

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issued a comprehensive proposed rule and determination to more effectively reduce Salmonella contamination and illnesses associated with raw poultry products. This is the culmination of FSIS' three-year effort to reevaluate their strategy for controlling Salmonella rates in poultry and protect American consumers from foodborne illness linked to consumption of poultry products.

Salmonella bacteria cause over 1 million human infections in the United States each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Food is the leading source of Salmonella infections and poultry is among the leading sources of foodborne Salmonella illnesses. FSIS estimates that there are 125,000 chicken-associated and almost 43,000 turkey-associated foodborne Salmonella illnesses per year. Despite FSIS data indicating that Salmonella contamination in poultry products has been decreasing, there has not been an observed reduction in Salmonella illnesses.

"Far too many consumers become sick from poultry contaminated with Salmonella, and today's announcement marks a historic step forward to combat this threat," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "This proposed framework is a systematic approach to addressing Salmonella contamination at poultry slaughter and processing, which includes enforceable standards that will result in safer food for consumers and fewer illnesses."

The proposal would establish final product standards to prevent raw chicken carcasses,

chicken parts, ground chicken, and ground turkey products that contain any type of Salmonella at or above 10 colony forming units (CFU) per gram/ml and any detectable level of at least one of the Salmonella serotypes of public health significance from entering commerce. The proposed Salmonella serotypes of public health significance identified for raw chicken carcasses, chicken parts, and comminuted chicken are Enteritidis, Typhimurium, ... and for raw comminuted turkey are Hadar, Typhimurium, and Muenchen. The proposal would also require poultry establishments to develop a microbial monitoring program to prevent pathogen contamination throughout the slaughter system.

"The proposed Salmonella framework is grounded in data and rigorous scientific evaluation, and it reflects feedback from extensive stakeholder engagement," said USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Emilio Esteban. "We encourage all interested stakeholders to submit comments and relevant data on the proposal as we work to finalize data-driven, science-based regulatory policies to address Salmonella in poultry."

Since 2021, the FSIS initiated several activities designed to gather data and information to inform the framework proposed rule and determination. These activities included charging the National Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Food to provide guidance on the types of microbiological criteria the agency might use to better prevent Salmonella infections associated with poultry products; conducting a risk profile for pathogenic Salmonella subtypes in poultry and developing two quantitative risk

assessments; hosting a public meeting and several roundtables; conducting an exploratory sampling program for young chicken carcasses to generate microbial data and adding quantification to FSIS' Salmonella testing program.

The Salmonella framework proposed rule and determination builds on the FSIS' continued efforts under the Biden-Harris Administration to protect American consumers, including preventing false and misleading label claims. As part of this effort, earlier this year, the FSIS published a final determination to declare Salmonella an adulterant in raw breaded stuffed chicken products when they exceed the threshold of 1 CFU per gram of Salmonella contamination. FSIS also announced this year a final rule allowing the voluntary "Product of USA" claim to be applied only to those FSIS-regulated products that are derived from animals born, raised, slaughtered and processed in the United States.

Comments on this proposal must be received within 60 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Comments may be submitted online via the federal eRulemaking portal, available at www.regulations.gov; by mail sent to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mailstop 3758, Washington, D.C. 20250-3700, or by hand or courier delivery to 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Jamie L. Whitten Building, Room 350-E, Washington, D.C. 20250-3700. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the agency name and docket number FSIS-2023-0028.

Pursuit ends after PIT maneuver deployed

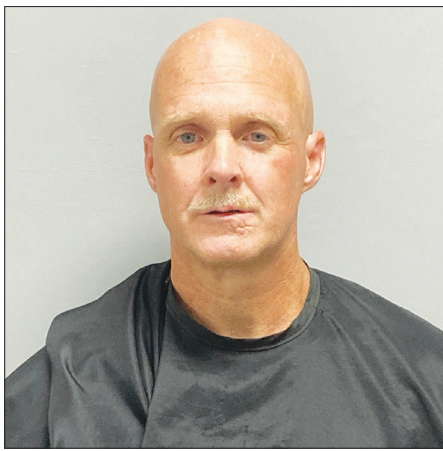
A Henry County Sheriff's deputy initiated a traffic stop on a red Ford Ranger truck on Horsepasture Price Road around 3:18 p.m. on August 3.

The driver of the Ford Ranger allegedly ignored the deputy's emergency lights and siren while accelerating its speed. A pursuit ensued down Horsepasture Price Road, with speeds reaching as high as 80 mph. During the pursuit, the driver of the Ford Ranger allegedly drove recklessly, overtaking several vehicles on double yellow lines, driving into oncoming traffic, and forcing vehicles off the roadway, according to a release from the Henry County Sheriff's Office.

The pursuit continued on Horsepasture Price Road and entered into North Carolina. As the Ford Ranger made a right turn onto Martinsville Loop, the deputy successfully performed a Precision Immobilization Technique (P.I.T. maneuver), and the Ford Ranger lost traction with the roadway, sliding into a ditch on the shoulder of the road.

When the truck hit the ditch, it rolled onto its side where it came to a stop, according to the release. The driver of the truck was taken into custody without further incident.

A female passenger sustained a minor laceration to the back of her head. She was transported by rescue to UNC of Rockingham where she was treated for minor injury and released from the hospital.



Otis Lee Hill Jr.

The driver of the Ford Ranger was identified as Otis Lee Hill Jr., 51, of 33 Wisteria Lane, Martinsville.

According to authorities, Hill had multiple outstanding felony warrants. In addition to being arrested on the outstanding warrants, Hill also was charged with felony eluding police and obstruction of justice.

He is being held without bond in the Henry County Adult Detention Center.

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

Winchester man arrested for making threats against VP

A Winchester, Virginia man, who allegedly made thousands of posts and replies in online forums threatening the President of the United States, Vice President of the United States, FBI Director, and other public officials, has been arrested on federal charges.

Frank Lucio Carillo, 66, made his initial court appearance on Monday in U.S. District Court in Roanoke, Virginia after being arrested last week at his home in Winchester. Carillo is charged in a federal criminal complaint with one count of making threats against the Vice President of the United States.

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

According to court documents, on July 27, 2024, the Maricopa County, Arizona, Recorder's Office notified the FBI's Phoenix Office of potential threats being made on the social media platform GETTR. The threats were being made by a user with the name "joemadarats1."

FBI searched the "joemadarats1" user account and discovered approximately 4,359 posts and replies made by the user targeting various public officials including, but not limited to, President Joseph Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, and FBI Director Christopher Wray.

Vice President Harris was men-

tioned 19 times by "joemadarats1," including numerous threats of violence.

In a February 2024 post, "joemadarats1" said he had his "AR-15 LOCKED AND LOADED."

Authorities used GETTR subscriber information and other investigative methods to match the "joemadarats1" username with Carillo and to locate his physical location in Winchester, Virginia.

On August 2, 2024, authorities at the FBI Richmond executed a search warrant at Carillo's home and seized a 9 mm pistol, an AR-15 rifle and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

"Open political discourse is a cornerstone of our American experience. We can disagree. We can argue and we can debate. However, when those disagreements cross the line to threats of violence, law enforcement must step in," United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh of the Western District of Virginia said.

"The FBI's mission is to protect the American people. We take all threats of violence seriously, and we will investigate them to the fullest and hold those responsible accountable," Special Agent in Charge Stanley M. Meador of the FBI's Richmond Division said.

The FBI in both Richmond, Virginia and Phoenix, Arizona, and the United States Secret Service are investigating the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Sean Welsh is prosecuting the case.

Tick-borne illness can cause confounding symptoms

Tick bites often go undetected until symptoms arise.

Charles Green, deputy commissioner for the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, ate a cheeseburger at lunchtime one day, and by dinnertime suffered a mild heart attack.

"I knew something was really wrong," Green said.

It took five months for Green and multiple doctors to realize the symptoms were an allergic reaction to red meat and dairy from a molecule transmitted by the Lone Star tick.

Alpha-gal syndrome wasn't high on Green's "worry radar" as he worked on his King William County family farm in 2022.

"I was dressing for the summer weather," he said. "But not dressing to avoid tick bites."

Initial blood tests revealed elevated troponin, which suggests cardiac stress. Multiple procedures did not find anything amiss.

"In a last-ditch effort, I asked my primary care physicians to run oddball tests," he said. "Luckily we included alpha-gal."

The diagnosis was a game changer.

In addition to avoiding red meat and dairy, he also has to be careful with mammalian derivatives used in products like gel caps and lanolin lotions.

Subsequent tick bites can worsen or awaken the condition, Green noted, so he now he wears layers and tucks in permethrin-treated clothing while working outside.

"It took months to figure out what was going

on with me, while others go years without an answer," he said. "If any person has unexplained symptoms, this awareness may help find a path forward."

Sometimes tick bites happen out of season, like they did for the Gwaltney family in Giles County.

Jessica and Wes Gwaltney spent time outside on a warm winter day in 2022 with their two young daughters. They checked them for ticks, but didn't find any.

Three days later, their 3-year-old daughter, Ella, felt one on her neck. It was a blacklegged deer tick, which carries Lyme disease.

The family called their doctor, who advised keeping an eye on the bite zone.

A month later, Ella complained of sore knees. "We asked the pediatrician to test her specifically for Lyme, and it was positive," Wes said.

Antibiotics were prescribed, but were followed by headaches, stomach pain and night terrors. Ella was prescribed a more aggressive antibiotic.

One night she woke up not breathing, and that snowballed. Finally, an allergist helped the Gwaltneys navigate Lyme disease, and Ella was prescribed a steroid for flare-ups, which helped. "We don't want other families to experience this. Take tick bites seriously," Jessica said.

To prevent tick bites, the Virginia Department of Health recommends:

- Walking in the center of trails, and avoiding brushing against weeds and tall grass.
- Keeping grass and underbrush cut

down. Place a 3-foot-wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between lawns and wooded areas to restrict tick migration into recreational areas.

- Wearing light-colored clothing so ticks can be seen easily, and tuck pant legs into socks.
- Conducting tick checks on children and pets every four hours when staying outside.
- Applying insect repellents containing active ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, oil of eucalyptus, Bio-UD or IR3535 to exposed skin.
- Checking armpits, ears and hair, belly button, backs of knees and groin.

If bitten by a tick, Virginia Cooperative Extension recommends using tweezers to grasp the tick as close as possible to the skin, and pull slowly with even pressure. Wash the bite wound with antiseptic.

Drop the tick in rubbing alcohol, and keep it for a few months to identify it in case any disease symptoms develop.

Get help with tick identification through the VDH website at vdh.virginia.gov/ticks.

Email submissions@
theenterprise.net



With football season on the horizon, here are some tailgating dos and don'ts.

Tailgating dos and don'ts this season

Many sports enthusiasts feel there's no better tradition than mingling with fellow fans while tailgating. Tailgating entails arriving at a stadium parking lot several hours early on game day; icing down beverages in a cooler; heating up the grill; and seeing some familiar, perhaps fanatical, faces.

The origins of tailgating are as varied as those spinning tailgating yarns. Some say the tradition dates back to community events in ancient Greece and Rome that were tied to the harvest. In America, the tailgating tradition seemingly has roots in the late nineteenth century, when college football began to invigorate the masses with popular teams at Harvard, Yale and Princeton tearing up the gridiron. Fans would gather around the tailgate of horse-drawn wagons (later automobiles) that were carrying the team's equipment. This was the unofficial meeting point before a game.

With football season on the horizon, here are some tailgating dos and don'ts.

DO wear the team jersey. Of course, you'll want to wear the jersey or team colors to express your fandom. It also identifies you as a friend (not a foe) to other fans.

DON'T expect a saved spot at the stadium. Tailgating typically is a first-come, first-served process in the parking lot. Unlike your tickets that promise a specific section and seat, if you want prime tailgating real estate, plan to arrive early.

DO know the rules of the venue.

The rules of tailgating vary by location, but may include anything from prohibiting outside alcohol to refusing pets on property to not allowing noisemakers or fireworks. Familiarize yourself with the rules when planning your tailgate.

DON'T leave it all to chance. Create a list of ways to stay busy. Many tailgaters, in addition to bringing food, will pack activities. These can include a small pigskin to toss around or cornhole boards. Again, make sure you abide by the rules of the site.

DO pay attention to the food's temperature. One way to tank the experience is to get food poisoning. When dining outdoors, it is essential that cold food remains cold and hot food is cooked to the proper temperature. Plenty of ice, coolers and a way to heat up food will be needed. Portable gas or charcoal grills can cook food quickly.

DON'T ignore the weather. Everyone hopes for beautiful weather on game day, but Mother Nature isn't predictable. Plan accordingly by layering clothing and bringing ponchos or other protective gear if it is going to rain or even snow.

DO clean up after yourselves and do not leave a mess behind in the lot.

DON'T get intoxicated and/or drive while under the influence. Unruly, intoxicated behavior likely will not be tolerated. And you never want to run the risk of endangering yourself or others by driving drunk.

DO have fun and enjoy yourself. After all, that's what tailgating is all about.

5 notable games on the 2024 college football schedule

College football fans spend a good portion, if not all, of the summer anticipating the return of their favorite sport. Each college football season is full of excitement, and the coming campaign is sure to provide its share of thrills. As summer winds down, fans anxious for the return of their favorite sport can look ahead to these five notable games on the 2024 college football schedule.



As summer winds down, fans anxious for the return of their favorite sport can look ahead to these five notable games on the 2024 college football schedule.

1. Western Kentucky at Alabama, Saturday, August 31: Though this game may not rival other opening week contests in terms of competitiveness, it marks the dawn of a new era for the Crimson Tide. All eyes will be on the Tide's new head coach, Kalen DeBoer, who replaces recently retired legend Nick Saban. Saban coached at Alabama from 2007 to 2023, winning six national championships during his run in Tuscaloosa. Those are big shoes to fill, and DeBoer will undoubtedly be looking to make a statement in his debut.

2. Notre Dame at Texas A&M, Saturday, August 31: For those who want something juicier during college football's first full weekend, this matchup between the Fighting Irish and the Aggies is sure to please. Mike Elko makes his debut as head coach of the Aggies, who are looking to turn the page after the underwhelming Jimbo Fisher era. Elko comes from Duke, where last season he and Notre Dame coach Marcus Freeman locked horns in a memorable contest that saw the Fighting Irish score the game-winning touchdown with just 31 seconds remaining.

3. Texas vs. Oklahoma (in Dallas), Saturday, October 12: College football is steeped in tradition, and the Red River Rivalry between these two programs that share a border is loaded with history. This particular installment of the rivalry is historic even before the opening kickoff, as it marks the first clash between the two schools in the newly expanded Southeastern Conference. Longhorns coach Steve Sarkisian is looking to build off his team's run to the

College Football Playoff a year ago, while his counterpart Brent Venables is hoping to build upon his successful first year in Norman, during which the Sooners finished 10-3 in the program's final year in the Big 12 Conference.

4. Michigan at Ohio State, Saturday, November 30: Rivalries have fueled the popularity of college football, and perhaps no such feud is more heated than this annual clash between the Wolverines and the Buckeyes. Ohio State has lost three straight to the Wolverines, but the architect of two of those victories, Jim Harbaugh, is now back coaching in the National Football League. Sherrone Moore, who coached the Wolverines to a memorable 30-24 victory over Ohio State in the suspended Harbaugh's place a season ago, takes over the program this season on the heels of the school's first national championship since 1997.

5. Ohio State at Oregon, Saturday, October 12: Longtime college football fans will need some time to adjust to the sport's wildly different landscape in 2024, and perhaps no matchup underscores the new lay of the land better than this Big Ten clash between the Ducks and the Buckeyes. The Pac 12 is officially a thing of the past, and the Ducks will host their new conference rival Ohio State in Eugene in early October in what promises to be an exciting, contentious clash.

These are just five games on a 2024 college football slate that's sure to entertain diehard fans who can't wait for the season to kick off in late August.



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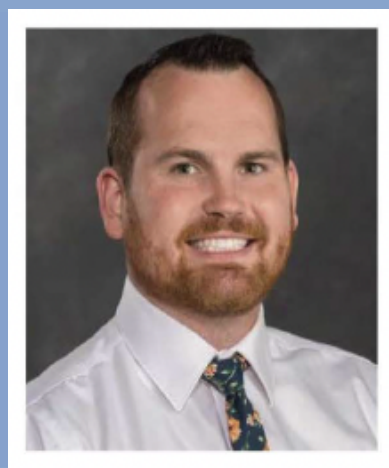
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Altrusa members install 'Laundromat Library'

The members of Altrusa MHC recently announced the opening of the group's third Laundromat Library at The Scrub Board on U.S. 58 West. The new library is filled with wonderful children's books, ready for young minds to explore and enjoy.

Altrusa is adhering to its motto: "Read a book, take a book, love a book, share a book."

Pictured are Lillian Holland, Altrusa MHC Vice President, along with Richard and Linda Dorr, as they help set up the library.

"A heartfelt thank you to all our community partners who made this possible. Your support continues to help us spread the joy of reading throughout our community. Come visit us and dive into a world of stories," the club wrote in in a social media post.



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