

HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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First property demolished as part of Ridgeway project



Demolition of a Phospho Springs Road property is part of Operation: Ridgeway, It's a Great Place to Live! The demolition started on Monday, September 16.

By Taylor Boyd

Operation: Ridgeway, It's a Great Place to Live! kicked off with a bang on Monday, September 16 with the demolition of a derelict property.

Removal of the Phospho Springs Road property was long overdue, according to Ridgeway Mayor Craig O'Der. He explained that the idea to start the project began in July when the Ridgeway Town Council had its first meeting with the new fiscal year budget.

"We took a riding tour around the town to look at some issues that we were having as far as buildings and properties that were overgrown, out of compliance with local ordinances, and so forth. Stuff that we had received complaints about," O'Der said.

After that, town officials started working with Henry County and the Henry County Department of Planning, Zoning, & Inspections, O'Der said. Town officials started making a list of properties they felt needed to be improved, with the Phospho Springs Road property being number one on the list.



"It had been burnt out many years ago and had been neglected by the owners who moved out of the area. So, we coordinated with Planning and Zoning with the county, and my counterpart who's the Ridgeway supervisor Travis Pruitt, and County Administrator Dale Wagoner and the (Henry County) Sheriff's Office (See Ridgeway Project p. 2)

Candidates answer hot topic questions at forum

By Taylor Boyd

The five candidates vying for the three open Martinsville City Council seats in November outlined their platforms and fielded questions at a forum sponsored by the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce on September 12.

Held at the New College Institute (NCI), the five candidates were Kathy Lawson, Rayshaun Gravely, Lanita Herlem, Julina Mei, and John Wilson, III.

Phil Gardner served as the forum's moderator. He said the questions were made available to the candidates at 12 p.m. that day, so they had about six hours to prepare their answers. Each question had an allotted time for the candidates to answer. Gardner said the order in which the candidates answered the questions was determined by a random draw, and that positions would rotate in an attempt to be fair to everybody.

To familiarize himself with the financial issues facing Martinsville, Gravely said he's attended every city council meeting since he decided to seek a council seat.

"Number two, the current city manager gave each of the candidates an opportunity to meet with her to do a city orientation, and I took that op-

portunity to meet with her. She did an orientation overview of the City of Martinsville," he said.

Gravely said he's also reviewed the most recent city budget, and noted at most city council meetings some part of the budget is discussed, and the city's comprehensive plan which he believes is to help the city make better decisions in the future, and "also with the comprehensive plan, we've also got the Berkely Group that's helping out with that," he said.

Gravely said he was in attendance when Davenport & Co. presented a report on the city's financial health.

"Granted, that was pretty lengthy, but the overview of that was that the city's money is going in the right direction, and the stability of the city is just the fact that the city manager and her staff continue to get grants, reach out for funding. This week I did a seminar online that was called Thriving Communities, and after doing that seminar it shows that it is grant money that's funding out there for our community," he said.

Mei also reviewed all the finances related to the city, including the budget. He said the current budget for fiscal year 2024-2025, of which a substantial amount is devoted to Martinsville Public (See Candidates p. 3)



Runners and families join in at the post-race celebration. (Contributed)

Harvest Moon Runners enjoy a festive atmosphere

By Jessica Dillon

The Harvest Moon Run held Friday, September 13, consisted of two races, a 5K and a 8K, with a festival atmosphere to entertain the runners and their family. The event was put on by the YMCA with the

help of the Martinsville Arts and Culture Committee.

"It was the biggest Harvest Moon that we've ever had, probably 50 percent higher than average registration," said Joe Philpott, who (See Harvest Moon p. 2)

School divisions look forward to new accreditation system

By Taylor Boyd

While she knows there's been a lot of concern raised from longtime Virginia educators about the new system, Henry County Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis said she's looking forward to the new system because it's similar to what she experienced while working in North Carolina.

"I'm not fearful of it. I think that what we're going to get from it is better data. There's going to be layering in of VVAAS (Virginia's Visualization and Analytics Solutions) data. In North Carolina they referred to it as EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment System) data," she said.

Blake-Lewis said VVAAS will give the school division individualized student data information that will help it serve its students more and at a better level. "I'm actually looking forward to this new system," she added.

Blake-Lewis said the new system will absolutely impact the school system.

"Typically, what you expect to see when you convert from one system of accountability to another inevitably, you're going to have some difficulty with disaggregating the data and being able to



Henry County Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis.

know exactly what it's telling you right out of the gate," she said.

Noting there will be a learning curve, Blake-Lewis said principals and division-level staff will have to learn how to look at the new data reports. However, she believes it will ultimately help them to be better at what they do and give them a better indication of the type of individualized instruction students need from them.

Blake-Lewis said also she feels positive about the new system because it will focus on the growth aspect in a different way.

"Using that VVAAS

data is going to help us to determine which students are growing, which ones might be stagnant, which ones may be falling behind, so that personalization aspect of the new data reports is really going to be something that can help us do better for our students," she said.

The new accreditation system also will take more factors into account instead of primarily relying on Standards of Learning (SOL) scores. Blake-Lewis said factors like proficiency, growth, chronic absenteeism, career readiness indi-

(See School p. 7)

Henry County Fair brings in popular shows and national acts

By Jessica Dillon

The Henry County Fair is set to return from September 25 to 28 at the Martinsville Speedway, and Roger Adams, director of Henry County Parks and Recreation, is excited for this year's line-up.

"We have some awesome attractions and shows at the fair," said Adams.

For instance, the Pompeyo Family Amazing Dog Show, which was seen on "America's Got Talent," and the Space Adventure Show, Adams said both shows will be part of the fair.

Bands will perform nightly he said, and in fact, that's "one of the things I enjoy. The national name bands we bring here."

Key West, a Jimmy Buffett Tribute band, is set for Wednesday; Thursday will be Jack & David Reid (B-99 Night), and Friday will be Jordan Feliz Adams (Spirit FM Night).

"I think we have the best line-up ever this

(See Henry County Fair p. 2)



The Henry County Fair is set to return September 25 through 28.

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Ridgeway Project

(cont. from page 1)

to try to enforce some of these building codes and so forth," O'Der said.

The property owners were contacted and told the town felt like the property was dangerous and was a public nuisance. By September 16, the property was demolished, and while that marked the beginning, others are in the process.

"We've been sending out notices to property owners that they need to get their properties cleaned up, mowed, and then we're going to start taking action," O'Der said.

The town started at the top of the list and now is working on the top three properties that were deemed to be nuisances or that need work. O'Der estimates there are about eight to nine properties on the list including one on Summit Ridge Road.

Henry County Board of Supervisors member Travis Pruitt, of the Ridgeway District, said the funding for the demolition came from the pot of money each district has that's earmarked for blights, for cleanup, or properties on which the grass/vegetation is too tall or overgrown.

"The current budget year that we're in, it was added to, so we sort of replenished those pots in each district. So, each supervisor has money there to clean up this blight and make their communities look better," Pruitt said.

While the process is detailed as to how the

money can be used, Pruitt said each supervisor chooses what it is used for. He also has other properties within Ridgeway town limits that he wishes to use funding to help clean up.

"I have several others – one on King's Mill Road, one on Farm Brook Road that we're looking into as well," he said.

Ridgeway is such a beautiful place to live, O'Der said, "but we've had some properties over the years that people have neglected. We just really want to try and do what we can to work with those owners, and if they ignore us, well, how about my landscaping crew come in and mow the yard and send them a bill? Which I've already done for people who are just not going to do anything," he said.

While some might consider the operation to be heavy-handed, O'Der believes it is the right thing to do, especially for those who live right beside the derelict properties.

"It's not fair for them because the" derelict "properties decrease the value of their property, and everybody wants a beautiful place to live," he said.

Pruitt also believes the project is important to the community. He too is dedicated to creating a clean, welcoming community, in part because that's what drives economic development.

"We have tons of visitors in the Ridgeway Dis-

trict from Martinsville Speedway to the Sports Complex, so we want when they visit and when out in our community doing things," visitors will see "that it's clean," he said. "By restoring these neglected areas per se, Ridgeway remains that great place to live, work, raise a family, and we're also building that stronger, healthier, more beautiful community for everyone. It's just important to me that folks don't have to look at these structures that are falling down from their front porch when they're outside trying to relax, or work in the yard, or that type of stuff."

O'Der said the problem is not going to be solved overnight, but he hopes that as more action is taken, more residents will decide to take care of their properties.

"If I have to start taking action, start to put liens on people's residences for the cleanup costs, then that's what we'll start doing. We've sent letter after letter to some of these properties," and had nothing get fixed, he said.

While some residents never respond to the town's letters, O'Der noted some have been receptive to making improvements to their residences.

He also hopes to plan a community clean-up day in the near future to further beautify Ridgeway.

Harvest Moon

(cont. from page 1)

helps promote the event. Philpott said that despite the weather looking cloudy, the weather held, allowing organizers to host their biggest year yet.

Most runners participated in the 5K version of the race, with a little under 100 runners. The 8K version had nearly 50 runners, making the two races a great competition for those hoping to win an award.

The 5K women's division was led by new Martinsville resident, Buffie Hill, with a time of 22:36. The men's 5K was won by Caden Swisher of Reidsville, N.C. in 18:01. In the 8K, the women's division was won by Alice Kasens of Fincastle, VA, in 35:59. The men were led by Eli Roberson of Stuart, with a time of 28:04.

Philpott said awards also were given to each age group in the two races, and noted how winning a medal seems to put everyone in a great mood, especially if they had never won before. "Every picture that gets taken on the award stand is nothing but smiles," he said.

"The total registration was somewhere in the area of 170 to 175, and around 160 people ended up running," Philpott said. The festivities at the race also went well. Hugo's was on site serving food and Mountain Valley Brewery was selling beer for those old enough to drink.

The Martinsville Art and Culture Committee was on site to help volunteer and do crafts.

"They had a deal where they were giving out stickers so people could decorate their running bib, I think a lot of people did that, especially the younger crowd," Philpott said.

Music started before the race started and finished after 9 p.m., providing a fun atmo-

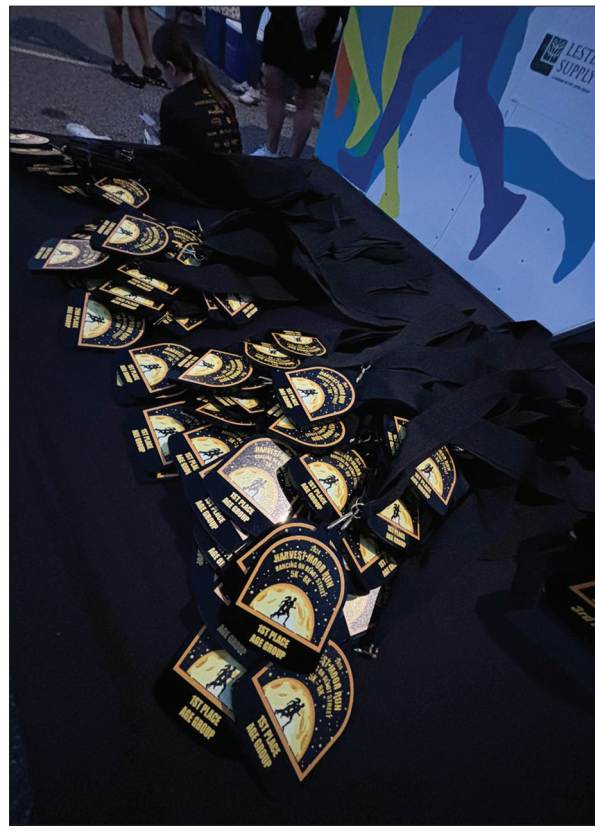


5K awards - 1st, Buffie Hill; 2nd, Cindy Bement; 3rd, Rachael Hunsicker (Contributed)

sphere. "You had a lot of people just hanging around and talking about running," he said.

Miles in Martinsville are going to start preparing for their next race on Thanksgiving, the Turkey 2 Miler.

This next race will take place further up the Dick and Willie Trail at the Smith River Sports Complex. The race will be held in the morning



Medals lined up on the awards table according to age group. (Contributed)

to allow runners a fun day while still allotting time for family traditions in the afternoon.

Miles in Martinsville is also gearing up for the Holiday Run Festival. Philpott said this year, runners will be spending more time running the NASCAR race track before leaving the Martinsville Speedway to run outside of the track.

Henry County Fair

(cont. from page 1)

year," Adams said.

Several games, food options, along with several rides also will be among the attractions.

"We have about 20 thrilling rides that are good for kids, teens, and adults," Adams said. Rides are being provided by Cole Rides, which provides state fair quality rides.

A petting zoo and competitive agricultural exhibits will also be on site. These exhibits will include Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, Miscellaneous Agricultural Products, Canned Fruits, Canned Vegetables and Meats, Pickles and Relishes, Bread, Bakes, Candy, Cookies and Pies, Flowers and Plants, Quilts, Crocheting, Knitting, and Textiles.

Participants who enter into the agricul-

tural exhibit will be competing for ribbons. The winner of the 2024 Miss Henry County Pageant, MaKayla Sprouse will also be in attendance. Sprouse will be representing the fair at the January pageant in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Adams said the fair has replaced the July 4th celebration. "The Fourth of July celebration is no longer offered since we are doing the fair," and a fireworks show is set for Saturday night.

The fair "is just such a great family-friendly event, and an affordable event," he said, adding the fair has grown each year.

"Friday night of the fair last year was the best we've ever had," Adams said, adding that

the fair draws in a large crowd from out of town as well, which helps to bolster revenue and fund the fair.

"We advertise regionally" to help attract as many people as possible, Adams said.

The Valleystar Credit Union Race will be held at the Speedway on Saturday night, in conjunction with the fair and will help to draw in more visitors.

There is a \$5 gate admission and separate ride wristbands. The admission fee includes shows, concerts, agricultural exhibits, and a petting zoo. "It's just such a great family-friendly event, and an affordable event."

Discounted wristbands can be purchased from www.colerides.com/tickets.

City to receive ARC funds

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has awarded the City of Martinsville a \$700,000 grant for the MiNet Expansion project. The funding will support MiNet, or the Telecommunications Department of Martinsville, in its pursuit of establishing a high-quality Fiber-to-the-Business network for local businesses, according to a release from 9th District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith.

"Investments in broadband access and service are key steps in supporting local businesses and serving those in rural and underserved areas," said Griffith, R-Salem. "This ARC grant for \$700,000 helps Martinsville build fiber infrastructure to deliver reliable, quality internet service to

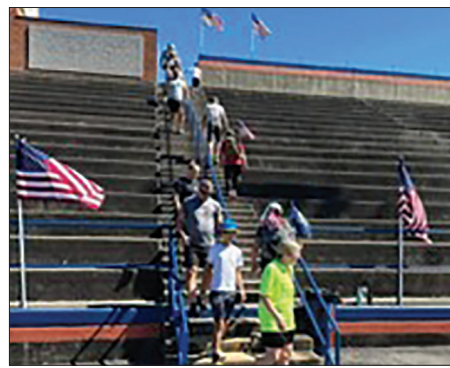
businesses."

The project includes the installation of 16 miles of Fiber-to-the-Business infrastructure to ensure access to reliable service for 150 small business establishments.

Griffith noted that he has advocated for greater access to broadband in the Ninth District, recently speaking in a Communications & Technology Subcommittee hearing with an official from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) as well as monitoring and encouraging approval of Virginia's Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) program submitted by Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

Climb held to honor 9/11 victims

A 911 Memorial Stair Climb was held last week in honor of the first responders who lost their lives at the Twin Towers. The event was organized by West Piedmont Health District (WPHD) Public Health Nurse Careen Rodgers and her husband Patrick, and supported by her co-workers Sharon Ortiz Garcia, Courtney Younger, Angie Inman, and Maite Arroyo. Also supporting were the Henry County Memorial Day Ruck 22 (since renamed to All Vets), the Henry County Sheriff's Department, and other community



groups. They climbed the equivalent of 110 flights of stairs.

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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

Tuesday, October 8,
Horsepasture Community Meeting, 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., Horsepasture Ruritan Building, 16209 A L Philpott Hwy, Martinsville.

Events

Saturday, September 21
Basic Contractor Licensing Class, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Patrick Henry Community College.

Wednesday, September 25 - Saturday, September 28

Henry County Fair, 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., Martinsville Speedway, 340 Speedway Road, Ridgeway.

Friday, September 27 - Saturday, September 28

The Friends of the Blue Ridge Regional Library are hosting a book sale in the basement of the Main Branch, 310 E. Church St., Martinsville. "Members Only," 2-5 p.m. (can join at the door) on Friday, and Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., is open to the public. Highlighting Civil war and general history books; children's books, and a special sale

Candidates

(cont. from page 1)

lic School system.

But "one of the biggest issues that's currently affecting the city financially are the three lawsuits in which the city is currently involved. One of them is a lawsuit between an employee and the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office in the City of Martinsville. The second, retirees - former city employees - are suing" because they do not believe that their retirement benefits are being honored by way of health insurance, he said.

The third, a big one in Mei's opinion, is Martinsville's lawsuit against the Henry County Public Service Authority (PSA). "We treat the majority of Henry County's sewer water and in my opinion, we don't have a fair deal, so I want us to win that lawsuit."

Mei said he's also attended almost every council meeting over the past few months. "I was actually ecstatic when I heard the Davenport report. It was about a 43-minute presentation, and as of the report presented on September 2, we found that the balance was increased \$6.2 million to \$9 million from the general fund. In other words, operating revenues exceeded expenses by \$2.8 million," he said, adding the report made him believe Martinsville was in strong financial shape.

Mei said the comprehensive plan the city's working on is an older one that's reflective of older data. He estimates about \$186,000 has been allocated to do a new comprehensive plan, and that it will take about two years for it to be completed.

"We need a comprehensive plan, because without a plan you are a rudderless ship, and this city needs strong people with strong plans to keep us moving in the right direction, not people who have absolutely no idea what they're talking about," he said.

Like Mei, Herlem said she did not get an invitation to do an orientation with Ferrell-Benavides. Instead, she contacted Ferrell-Benavides to ask to speak with her.

"It's my understanding she's putting a presentation together, she went over a little bit of it with me then we did a tour of the municipal building so I could see the damage and that sort of thing," she said.

Herlem said she's done a lot of research on reversion as that's something that she gets asked a lot of questions about. Because of this, she went back and did a deep dive of the budget back then to compare it to where the city currently is financially.

"I've spoken with city council members about it, and it's my understanding we had a \$2.8 million surplus, so when you look at where we were at with reversion with the latest city council, we are moving in the right direction," she said.

She only recently found out about the comprehensive plan, and Herlem said she hasn't researched it yet. "But if Julian's (Mei) saying it's an old plan, and we're looking at a new one, maybe I won't research it as much, but I will find it and look through it," she said.

Like others, Herlem was at the Davenport presentation, and like Mei she was really surprised.

"We don't have a credit rating, but based on the presentation, it looks like we have a pretty good foundation upon which to build. I don't want to say that we're on solid ground either, given our infrastructure particularly with water, sewer, and the electric grid. It's my understanding we could be right in the middle of a \$20 million disaster because of the neglect it has faced over the years," she said.

Herlem believes Martinsville is moving in the right direction, but noted it needs to move a little bit further. To do this, and to ensure the financial stability of the city, she wants to return to basics by fixing the infrastructure.

Regarding the budget, Wilson said he requested and read the copy he received.

"The city is doing very good just like it has been said. The Davenport report shows the city is in good financial stability. We're doing all the right things to keep going," he said.

Wilson said he's gone door to door to talk with city residents to hear what they believe the biggest issues facing the city are.

"Most people, the electric bill or the utility rates come up, then they worry about our infrastructure

and housing. These are all things that we've got to deal with as we move forward, and I believe we're heading in the right direction," he said.

Saturday, September 28
4RC Community Mental Health Walk 2024, 10 a.m. to noon, Smith River Sports Complex, 1000 Irisburg Road, Axton.

ONGOING

The 29th annual Coats for Kids Drive is underway through Nov. 29. For more information, call Debra Buchanan at (276) 358-1463. You also may drop off new or gently used coats at Hollywood Cinema or One-Hour Martinizing on Rivers Road, Martinsville.

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.

and took that \$16.04 and multiplied it by her usage. "It came out to be about right, so then I went online to see what was on our website." Breaking down her bill, she said "under residential, it said there is a \$14 a month charge, the first 900 kilowatts an hour is .1375, which is a little less than the 16. Then the power cost adjustment is .01, about .02. I'm like, 'why aren't I getting that 13.75 they say it is online?' So, of course it is too high," she said.

Herlem said energy rates are currently based on speculators that look at nation and international policy.

Despite this, Herlem said she would absolutely vote to lower utility rates as long as it doesn't hurt the city.

"Our electric grid has been neglected for years, and we have two transformers that need to be replaced or in the process of being replaced, and that's not cheap. So, I would have to look at where we're at and if it would actually hurt our electric grids to do that," she said.

Echoing the other candidates that of course no one wants to pay more on their utility bills, Wilson also asked if the city could afford to vote to lower them.

"If we vote to lower them, the city loses money. That hurts us. We're a small community, we need every penny we can get, but we need to do it the right way," he said.

Wilson said he knows that Martinsville buys its power on the open market. "Like it or not, it seems to be the best way for us because I know most of the power bills from the county are higher. Are they exorbitantly higher? No, but they are higher," he said.

Wilson said the council has to look at all its options and keep its grid up to snuff and take care of its utilities. He added Martinsville is also fortunate as when something happens in the city, residents aren't usually without power for very long.

"They're very quick to get on it and get it back on, and that's commendable. I mean that's just great. sometimes it takes some cities days to get back online," he said.

Noting that everyone feels utility rates are too high, Lawson said they compare favorably with AEP and have for several years.

"Some years, we are a little higher, and other years they are a little lower. Currently, our rates are a little lower. The city's electric fund, which is an enterprise fund, has to balance its revenues and its expenses. If you were to lower the rate, we would be subsidizing from other funds," she said.

Lawson said this could mean the city's real estate taxes could be subsidizing the electric expense of a large user.

"That would not be fair to any property owner," she said, adding the city provides quality service to its customers and its crews are out within minutes to take action when there are power outages to restore the power.

Lawson said the city has to charge rates based on the cost of the power and the transmission costs. Martinsville has no control over the transmission fees.

"I would only vote to change the rate to balance the actual cost to produce electric service with the actual revenues," she said.

Gravely said apparently the rates are too high as everyone's complaining about them.

"In all reality, the city of Martinsville is at a lower rate than most places are at this point. I looked in an article with AEP in Martinsville, AEP increased by 10 percent and Martinsville increased by five percent," he said.

With that being said, Gravely said he guessed it falls to city officials to find more resources and educate the citizens on what they can do throughout their home to keep the energy levels down.

"I also noticed that Henry County's residents are 171 for 1,000 kilowatts and the city of Martinsville is 160 for 1,000 kilowatts. So, I'm not in favor of raising taxes, but I am in favor of exploring other opportunities to see what we can do to keep it at a lower level or keeping that at a standstill," he said.

To watch the full candidate forum, go to [Facebook.com/StarNews](https://www.facebook.com/StarNews).

Herlem said she then went even further into it

OPINION

The SAVE Act

Early voting starts on September 20th in Virginia, and because there is some discussion in the press about the SAVE Act, I want to detail my involvement with the bill.

The SAVE Act prohibits non-citizens from voting by requiring states to obtain proof-of-citizenship when registering individuals to vote in federal elections.

Earlier this year I was one of six Members of the House who voted to send the SAVE Act to the full House for consideration.

During the summer, I supported the SAVE Act when it came to the House floor. The legislation passed with bipartisan support, though most Democrats voted against it.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Senate has yet to consider the legislation.

Non-citizen voting is complicated by federal government efforts to have federal agencies register voters and become political get-out-the-vote organizations, done on the order of someone who, at the time, was a candidate for president.

The Biden-Harris Administration directed executive agencies via Executive Order 14019 to work with local partners to register voters and turn out votes.

While the administration will tell you they are just protecting the vote, the involvement of numerous federal agencies is unprecedented.

Further, if their efforts are innocent, why haven't they responded to House Republicans' requests for the details of their strategic get-out-the-vote plans?

West Virginia Secretary of State Mac Warner testified before a House Administration Committee hearing to discuss his efforts to protect West Virginia elections. His state has removed 400,000 names from their voter rolls and implemented voter ID requirements.

Because of the federal Motor Voter law, every person applying for a driver's license with their state's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) receives a voter registration application. The various states' DMVs don't check citizenship status before giving out the voter registration application.

Because they receive a registration form from a government agency, many non-citizens don't know they are not supposed to vote and apparently some of them register to vote.

The same thing is likely to happen with federal agencies registering people with whom they come in contact.

I believe that is why the federal government has never done this before.

As far as I know, the agencies are not checking to see if a person they are dealing with is a citizen who is eligible to vote in federal elections before giving them voter registration forms.

From the non-citizen's view, the government encouraged them to register. Therefore, it must be legal to vote!

That is why we need the SAVE



Morgan Griffith

Representative

Act.

The SAVE Act makes clear that non-citizens have no business voting in American elections.

Shouldn't U.S. states be required to use their authority to obtain proof-of-citizenship when registering people to vote in federal elections?

When non-citizens have the opportunity to register to vote, some will vote, diluting the voting power of actual American citizens.

Last year, in order to address non-citizen voting, I introduced the NO VOTE for Non-Citizens Act. If a locality wants non-citizens to vote in their local election, the bill would require separate voter rolls for local and federal elections.

This push to address non-citizen voting comes as a result of looking at weaknesses in American election administration and recent state actions cleaning voter rolls.

In August, Governor Youngkin made a critical step by issuing Executive Order 35. The order codified security procedures put into place during the Youngkin Administration, which included stringent ballot security, complete and thorough counting machine testing, and best-in-the-nation voter list maintenance.

Following the Executive Order, the Youngkin Administration removed over 6,300 non-citizens from Virginia's voter rolls.

The integrity of our elections is also threatened by potential cheating via political entities.

The House Administration Committee, on which I serve, is investigating ActBlue, a website that raises campaign funds for Democratic candidates.

ActBlue collects campaign contributions from donors and then sends funds to various Democratic candidates and causes.

According to whistleblower allegations, ActBlue is potentially skirting campaign donation laws.

ActBlue allows donations through Paypal, Venmo, Google Pay, prepaid credit cards and gift cards. These contribution methods do not check or use card verification value, or CVV.

This failure makes manipulation and fraud by malicious actors easier.

In August, Virginia Attorney General Jason Miyares sent a letter to ActBlue requesting more information on the platform's verification processes and procedures when assessing the legitimacy and accuracy of donor and contribution information.

As of the date of this writing, the AG's investigation into ActBlue is ongoing.

Our elections must be secure in order to ensure fair outcomes and restore confidence in U.S. elections. That is why I continue to support the SAVE Act.



This unusual pocketbook has an unusual story behind it.

Significant inspiration

By Holly Kozelsky

This week I've been using a most unusual pocketbook. It is made of folded-up plastic Coca-Cola labels woven together.

It's not at all my style. To pull off carrying this crazy patterned bag, I've been dressing in dark solid colors.

This Coca-Cola-label bag brings me back to a newspaper article I wrote in 2010. For some reason, it was one of my favorite articles I've ever done, and that's quite a ranking, because I've been fortunate enough to have had all sorts of amazing and incredible things to write about.

The late Ricky Peters of Axton made all sorts of things out of potato chip bags, exactly like this pocketbook I'm carrying. The decorative picture frame he gave me is still on display in my office.

There was just something touchingly sweet about how earnest and dedicated Ricky was about his potato chip bag craft.

That spirit is inspiring. Most people just bumble along in life, passively accepting whatever endless feed of television shows or mind-dulling social media addictions the world puts in their paths. A few people blaze their own trails to energetically pursue a passion, and I guess that's why I liked Ricky.

He had that spark to pursue a specialty.

The things Ricky made included vases, purses, jewelry boxes, CD cases, model rocking chairs, and even a briefcase and a full-sized, old-fashioned well for his mother's front yard.

To make things, Ricky cleaned the bags, folded them around strips of paper and wove them together with fishing line. That well, he told me, took 4,598 bags and 646 hours to make.

Ricky cheerfully told me he learned and honed his craft while he was in jail. He saw that Doritos had won an award for having the best Super Bowl commercial. He was impressed by the snack food company's initiative in creating a great commercial.

At the time, the back of the Doritos bag said, "Do something." It inspired Ricky, who decided that he "would do something different that nobody's done before."

I don't know what level of dedication and thrill for the craft Rigoberto had when he made that pocketbook out of Coca-Cola labels, in the exact style Ricky made things out of potato chip bags.

He is not around to ask.

I met Rigo in the late 1990s when he was a fun-loving, energetic little boy, in the remote mountain village of San Rafael deep in the Si-

erra of Mexico.

I used to go there for long spells of time each year, and I've kept up with dozens of those children, who are now middle-aged adults.

There were six children in that family. They all lived in one hut with a dirt floor. On the rare occasions anyone came across money (for there were no jobs there), their alcoholic father drank it all. Their mother was usually elsewhere. Other women in the village, who often didn't have enough to feed their own children, took turns feeding those six kids.

When I'd visit the village, those six children spent a lot of time with me, and of course, we had our meals together. Rigoberto was a spark of joy.

The year I went for the fall festival, 14-year-old Rigoberto came driving slowly up the road (there were almost never any vehicles there) in a huge, shiny, new Dodge Ram. He waved at everyone who hadn't seen him in a while, and we all greeted him affectionately.

"Rigo is not suffering poverty now," one of them told me in a whisper, "but the life of a narcotrafficante is short. It is better to be poor for a long time than in money and drugs for a short time."

Sure enough, no one ever heard anything from Rigoberto after 2017, when he was 25. He is a "desaparecido," someone disappeared and presumed murdered.

All those kids, who would have no way of making a living in their home village, are scattered to the wind: Mauricio is a construction worker in Charlotte, N.C.; Donato owns a very successful construction company in Charlotte; Efigenio is a pastor and security guard in Monterrey, Mexico; Donato is a house painter and doting husband and father in France; and Estela is a housewife in Monterrey.

When I visited Estela in August, she lovingly and with grave emotion gifted me that Coca-Cola-label pocketbook which, she said, Rigoberto had made for her years ago.

Of course, I accepted it graciously, but I thought I'd never use it, and it would just take up space and create clutter in the closet but given its significance, I'd have to keep it forever.

Yet this week I decided to use it. I'm glad I did. It is a special feeling having a bit of Rigoberto and Estela with me all day long.

And here that unique craft of folding wrappers into items has woven together what otherwise would be two separate stories, one about Ricky's passionate dedication to his craft, and the other about Rigo's too-early and too-drastic escape from poverty and destitution.

Early voting now underway

In-person voting for the Nov. 5 general election began on Friday, Sept. 20 and will continue through Saturday, Nov. 2.

To vote early in-person, registered voters should go to the general registrar's office for the jurisdiction in which they are registered, present their ID and cast a ballot. The location of the general registrar's office for all jurisdictions can be found on the Virginia Department of Elections' website, as well as a list of acceptable forms of identification.

Additionally, requested absentee ballots will be mailed beginning Sept. 20, including ballots to registered military and overseas voters.

Any registered voter can request an absentee ballot either in person, by mail, online or by contacting their general registrar's office. The deadline to request a mailed absentee ballot is Oct. 25.

Registered voters do not need a reason to request an absentee ballot. Absentee ballots can be dropped off at the general registrar's office or polling location on Election Day. Absentee ballots returned by mail must be post-marked no later than Nov. 5 and received by noon Nov. 8.

Anyone with visual or manual dexterity impairment has the option to vote an absentee ballot using an electronic marking tool.

The deadline to register to vote and cast a regular ballot is Oct. 15. Afterward, voters can register and vote through same-day registration and cast a provisional ballot. Same-day registration must take place in person either at an early voting location for the jurisdiction in which the voter intends to register or at their polling location on Election Day.

Some jurisdictions offer early in-person voting at satellite loca-

tions in addition to the general registrar's office. Dates and times vary by jurisdiction.

Curbside voting is also available for those with disabilities and those over 65 who wish to vote in person. Contact your general registrar's office for more information regarding voting hours, additional locations and ballot drop boxes.

Voters with questions about absentee or early in-person voting can call their general registrar's office or the Department of Election at 1-800-552-9745 or email info@elections.virginia.gov.

On the ballot this year in Virginia are races for president, all 11 congressional districts, a Senate seat, an amendment to the Constitution of Virginia and a variety of local offices. A full list of candidates in all 2024 races can be found online at the Virginia Department of Elections website.

As of Sept. 1, there were 6,280,912 registered voters in Virginia.

Important dates for the Nov. 5 election cycle are:

Oct. 15 – Deadline to register to vote and cast a regular ballot

Oct. 16 – Same-day registration begins. Anyone registering and voting at the same time will have to cast a provisional ballot.

Oct. 25 – Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail or online

Nov. 2 – Last day of early voting

Nov. 5 – Election Day

Nov. 8 – All mailed ballots must be received by the general registrar's office by noon.

Nov. 15 – Deadline for local electoral board to certify provisional ballots

Dec. 2 – State Board of Elections certifies results.

Dec. 17 – Electoral College meets to cast votes for president and vice president.

OPINION

Regarding the Haitian migrants

There were at least two great laugh lines in the debate between former President Donald Trump and Vice-President Kamala Harris last week.

The first — my personal favorite — was when Trump said “I got involved with the Taliban,” which is a combination of words that you really don’t want to have exit your mouth while you’re in the middle of a presidential debate on the eve of 9/11.

You don’t even need me to tell you the second great laugh line; you know it by heart.

“In Springfield, they are eating the dogs,” Trump said. “The people who came in, they are eating the cats. They’re eating — they’re eating the pets of the people that live there.”

That’s a statement that would sound wild coming from your least favorite, most drunken uncle at Thanksgiving dinner. It’s absolutely insane coming from a former President during the middle of a Presidential debate.

Since then, Trump and his Vice-Presidential pick JD Vance have doubled down on the claims that Haitian migrants in Springfield, Ohio — the state where JD Vance is a Senator, by the way — have been eating people’s pets. Here are a few facts:

1. This whole rumor started when a Springfield resident named Erika Lee posted on Facebook that a cat owned by her neighbor had gone missing and the neighbor said she suspected the Haitian migrants next door were responsible. Lee has since said that she got the story wrong, she has no evidence that the cat met with foul play, and she’s filled with regret since seeing what her baseless rumor has done to the city of Springfield. We’ll come back to that.

2. Springfield has a large population of Haitian migrants who began arriving in 2018. They’re in this country legally under temporary protective status, and they largely moved to Springfield because of job opportunities and affordable housing. By most accounts, they’ve helped fuel Springfield’s once-stagnant economic growth, although not without some growing pains.

3. There is absolutely no evidence that any of these Haitian migrants have eaten anyone’s pets. There is also no evidence that they are eating Canada geese, which is another baseless claim that’s been shared.

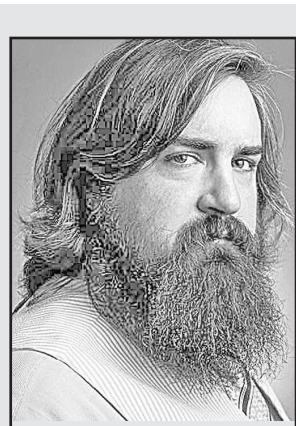
The situation we have here is that the Right has latched onto a harmful, baseless rumor at the expense of a group of people living in this country completely legally, and whenever they’re reminded that there’s no evidence, they double down.

How harmful has this rumor been? Since the debate, hospitals, schools, and government buildings in Springfield have been evacuated due to multiple days of bomb threats. Students have missed multiple days of school. Additionally, many of the Haitians living in Springfield are terrified.

Vilbrun Dorsainvil, who fled Haiti after someone attempted to kidnap him, said in an interview that he’s become afraid of living in the U.S.

“Before I was not, but right now I can say I am afraid,” he was quoted as saying. “Right now, I’m afraid there may be a mass shooting on us.”

He’s right to be afraid. That



By Ben R. Williams

strikes me as a pretty legitimate concern given the fear and hatred that’s being stoked against Springfield’s Haitian community.

Accusing a community of people who are different of eating cats and dogs or worse is an age-old tradition. How many times have you heard that a local Chinese restaurant serves cat meat? Regardless of what your sister’s husband’s landlord’s aunt may have heard, it’s never been documented once in this country. Not one single time. The urban legend actually dates back to the 1850s and was likely a rumor started by a restaurant owner to discourage people from dining at his competitor’s Chinese restaurant.

Really, you could even draw a straight line from this new outrage all the way back to the ancient tradition of blood libel, in which antisemites accused Jews of killing Christians in order to use their blood in secret rituals. Blood libel myths are still spread today and have also mutated into various new forms, like QAnon claims that Hollywood elites are harvesting adrenochrome from children in order to gain immortality. The hallmark of blood libel is the accusation that a group of people are such dangerous outsiders that they kill us/our children/our pets in order to perform their secret shadowy business. It’s part of a long, time-honored tradition of hatred and bigotry.

And just what is JD Vance doing to tamp down this fire and ease the fears of the Ohio residents that he represents?

Well, he went on CNN, and when he was asked if he would acknowledge that there was no basis to the pet-eating rumor, he had this to say:

“If I have to create stories so that the American media actually pays attention to the suffering of the American people, then that’s what I’m going to do.”

Back in high school, I read the William Faulkner short story “Dry September.” There’s a line in it that has always stuck with me.

The short story centers around a lynching that’s about to take place in a small Southern town. A black man has been accused of assaulting a white woman, and the town is up in arms. Sure, the woman isn’t exactly known for being truthful, and sure, the accused is known to be a good man, but no one wants to let the truth get in the way of justice.

In a scene set in a barbershop, one man dares to raise the question of whether the assault even happened at all.

“Happen?” another man replies. “What the hell difference does it make? Are you going to let the black sons get away with it until one really does it?”

Well JD, are you?

Sports Schedule

Following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of September 23-27:

9/23	7pm Volleyball Bassett at Chatham 7pm Volleyball Magna Vista at Gretna 7pm Volleyball Morehead at Martinsville
9/24	4:30p Boys Soccer Carlisle at Virginia Episcopal 7pm Volleyball Bassett at Halifax County 7pm Volleyball George Washington at Magna Vista
9/25	5pm Cross Country Bassett at Mecklenburg County 5PM Cross Country Magna Vista at Mecklenburg County 5pm Cross Country Martinsville at Mecklenburg County
9/26	5pm Volleyball Roanoke Catholic at Carlisle 7pm Volleyball Mecklenburg County at Bassett 7pm Volleyball Magna Vista at Martinsville
9/27	4:30p Boys Soccer Carlisle at The Covenant 6pm Volleyball Eastern Mennonite at Carlisle 7pm Football Bassett at Halifax County 7pm Football Magna Vista at Tunstall 7pm Football Martinsville at Mecklenburg County

Health Brief

The West Piedmont Health District is reporting:

Help decrease the risks of suicide

So far in 2024, there have been more than 700 deaths by suicide in Virginia, according to health officials in the West Piedmont Health District (WPHD).

Since September marks National Suicide Prevention Month, health officials note that it is important to remember that deaths by suicide is a national health crisis and one of the leading causes of fatalities in the U.S. and the 11th-leading cause of deaths in Virginia.

According to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, 1,230 people died by suicide statewide in 2023, and as of September 3, there had been 756 certified deaths by suicide accounted for this year, according to www.wavy.com.

In 2022, more than 84 million adults and 6.1 million teenagers were diagnosed with a mental health or substance use disorder, according to data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

A comprehensive list of resources for suicide help and prevention training is available online at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/suicide-prevention>.

The Suicide Prevention Inter-Agency Advisory Group (SPIAG) is a multi-partner volunteer collaborative effort working to build a connected system of suicide care throughout Virginia. If you are an organization interested in suicide work or an individual with lived expertise, your participa-

tion is welcome. Suicide Prevention Interagency Advisory Group (SPIAG), at virginia.gov.

COVID testing

COVIDtests.gov will re-open at the end of September. Households across the country can order four additional over-the-counter COVID-19 tests for free. These tests will detect the currently circulating COVID-19 variants and are intended for use through the end of 2024. You can also find instructions on how to verify extended expiration dates for any tests you may already have. To order four free, over-the-counter COVID-19 tests, visit COVIDtests.gov.

New dashboard version launched

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) has launched a new Respiratory Illness Dashboard, which replaces several older dashboards. This dashboard provides key insights into respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19, influenza (flu), and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). It also offers a comprehensive and streamlined view of respiratory disease trends across Virginia. The dashboard can be found at www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/respiratory-diseases-in-virginia/data/.

The VDH will retire the Influenza surveillance, COVID-19 summary, COVID-19 cases, and COVID-19 case demographics dashboards. The number of COVID-19 cases is no longer a reliable measure for tracking trends due to the widespread use of at-home tests, which are not reported to VDH.

Information sought after shooting incident

Authorities in Henry County are seeking information about the whereabouts of a man in connection with a Sept. 4 shooting incident.

Raymond Dwayne Taylor Jr., 37, of 614 Stoney Mountain Road, Axton, is wanted in connection with several charges, including malicious wounding, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, and possession of a firearm by convicted felon, according to a release from the Henry County Sheriff’s Office.

The Martinsville-Henry County 911 Communication Center received a call from SOVAH Health Hospital of Martinsville, around 9:04 p.m. on September 4, to a report of a gunshot wound.

The victim, identified as Julius Alfonso Page III, 44, of Martinsville, suffered a gunshot wound to his right thigh. He was treated at SOVAH Health for non-life threatening injuries and subsequently released from the hospital, the release stated.

Authorities learned that Page was walking on Lakewood Trail, in the Laurel Park area of Henry County, when he came in contact with a black man with dreads. Page alleged the man started yelling



Raymond Dwayne Taylor, Jr.

at him and then produced a firearm. Page then suffered a gunshot wound to the leg.

Taylor is currently on probation in connection with a burglary incident in the county.

Anyone with information about the incident or Taylor’s location 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 crime. The nature of the crime and the substance of the information determine the amount of reward paid.

Initial unemployment claims increase

The 2,129 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims filed during the week ending September 07, 2024, are 16.6 percent higher than last week’s 1,826 claims and 0.5 percent higher than the comparable week of last year - 2,118, according to Virginia Works.

Nearly 77 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (58 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (235); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (191); Health Care and Social

Assistance (186); Manufacturing (160); and Retail Trade (152).

Continued weeks claims of 15,006 were 3.7 percent lower than last week’s 15,589, and were 15.2 percent higher than the comparable week of last year - 13,027. Nearly 93 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (59 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (2,367); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,101); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,430); Retail

Trade (1,245); and Manufacturing (1,131).

A person who has already filed an initial claim and who has experienced a week of unemployment 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 benefits, and of labor market conditions. While continued claims are not a leading indicator, they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the economy.

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Sausage company recalls wiener products

Dearborn Sausage Company, Inc., a Dearborn, Mich. establishment, is recalling approximately 1,944 pounds of ready-to-eat (RTE) wiener products due to misbranding and undeclared allergens, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).
The labels of the two products implicated in the recall were inadvertently swapped resulting in soy, a known allergen, and pork not being declared on the product labels.

Alumni to celebrate end of summer

MHC Lancers (Longwood University) Alumni are to celebrate the End of Summer on September 24, from 6-7:30 p.m. at Dipper's Ice Cream with an ice cream happy hour. Alumni and family are welcome. Email Melody Margrave at mmargrave@yahoo.com for more information.

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Club honors local officers



The Fontaine Ruritan Club honored several first responders for their dedication and commitment to the community.



The Henry County Office congratulated Sgt. Tyler Marinus who was named Officer of the Year by the Fontaine Ruritan Club. Marinus has been with the Henry County Sheriff's Office for more than 6 years, and a K9 handler since August 2020.



Martinsville Police Department congratulated officer Trish Elgin who received the Fontaine Ruritan Club's Officer Appreciation award.

Softball team honored at board meeting

Del. Eric Phillips, R-Martinsville, attended the recent Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Board meeting on Sept. 16 to present a resolution from the Virginia House of Delegates to the P&HCC softball team.

For the first time in history, the P&HCC women's softball team advanced to the National Junior Collegiate Athletic Association Division III Women's Softball World Series, and won their championship by defeating North Dakota State of Science 6-4 on May 25.

Each of the players and coaches for P&HCC's Lady Patriots contributed throughout the regu-

lar season and in the national tournament, the resolution stated, and noted that P&HCC entered the national tournament as a number two seed, and defeated teams from Herkimer College, SUNY Corning Community College and others.

Noting that several individual players earned recognition, including Laila Rodriguez, who was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player, and head coach Robbi Cambell, who was named the Coach of the Tournament, the resolution stated that legislators commended the P&HCC team "for advancing to and winning the national championship."



Del. Eric Phillips (standing, right) at P&HCC while presenting a resolution to the Lady Pats. P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges (left) is pictured with the resolution as members of the athletic program and college board look on.



Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) women's softball team, along with Del. Eric Phillips and members of P&HCC's athletic staff.

School

(cont. from page 1)

cators, and others will be examined.

For middle school and elementary school students, Blake-Lewis said the high school indicator readiness models will be used.

"I think a lot of good things to help us always to focus on moving students forward and not being satisfied with 'oh, they made a 400,' because under the current system, 400 is the mark of proficiency," she explained.

"So, whether a child scores 425 or 400, that's proficient, but this new model is actually going to help us to really look at why is the child consistently scoring 400 and they're not doing better than that. You know, what could we be doing differently to help that child move from just barely proficient to highly proficient," she said.

For students who are constantly stuck in the 375 range on SOL testing, Blake-Lewis said this new accreditation system can help staff learn why they can't seem to get the students to 400.

"It's going to help us collect that data that will

better inform us in making those kinds of decisions to help the students," she said.

Martinsville Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Dr. Angilee Downing said the new accreditation system means that the state and federal accountability standards will align, which will make it easier for families and community to understand.

"Accreditation will now be based on compliance with the Standards of Quality, and schools will be given performance index measurements and ratings based on that performance index. The performance index is a weighted measure with many different components related to mastery, growth, and readiness," she said.

Downing said the Martinsville school division is looking forward to previewing its school reports under this new framework and is hopeful that it will provide its families and community with the information it needs about the schools.

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL24001014-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT
3160 Kings Mountain Rd., 3rd Floor, Martinsville, VA 24112
Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re*
FELIPE TORRES v. GLORIA ALICIA HOLLAND
CALLE ALESANDRO PRIETO 202 PTE
COLONIA ZONA CENTRO 89800
ELMANTE, TAMAULIPHS, MEXICO 89802

The object of this suit is to:
OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINVULO MATRIMONII
It is ORDERED that GLORIA ALICIA HOLLAND appear at the above-named court and protect her interests on or before OCTOBER 20, 2024.

AUGUST 21, 2024

Joseph A. Roberts
JUDGE CLERK

LEGAL

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Timothy E. Ross

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

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION - Unsafe structure
OWNER - Landowner: Timothy E. Ross
PROPERTY LOCATION AND TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER -
172 Reed Stone St. - Reed Creek District
Henry County, Virginia
Tax Map: 15.7(005) 000 /008
Account Number - 154330001

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

LEGAL

**COUNTY OF HENRY
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing has been scheduled for **September 25, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of Special Use Permit and Variances for the following case.

Case S-24-07 Michelle Hairston

A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-602 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a Family Day Care Home to accommodate up to 7 children. The property is located at 657 Chatmoss Ct. Ext. in the Iriswood District, and is zoned Suburban Residential District S-R as shown on Tax Map 43.6(40)5/28.

The application for this request may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

LEGAL

**COUNTY OF HENRY
REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing has been scheduled for **October 9, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following this public hearing, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the application to the Board of Supervisors.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the following applications on **October 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia.

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

Case R-24-11 Ana Carter

The property is located on the south side of Mapleridge Rd, approximately 0.12 mile east of Stones Dairy Rd, in the Blackberry District. The property is shown on Tax Map 25.1(22)11,12. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of two lots from Suburban Residential District S-R to Rural Residential District R-R. The applicant wishes to allow for the potential placement of manufactured housing, and market the property for sale. 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, ACP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

LEGAL



**ADVERTISEMENT FOR SNOW REMOVAL
EQUIPMENT SERVICES WITH OPERATOR SIGNUP**

The Virginia Department of Transportation invites heavy equipment owners to sign up for the rental of their equipment with operators for SNOW & ICE REMOVAL purposes in Martinsville Residency which includes the counties of Henry, Patrick and Carroll during the winter of 2024-2025. Price per hour shall include operators, fuel, tire chains, supplies and required insurance. DOT will need dump trucks, pickups with plows, motorgraders, backhoes, dozers, track loaders, tractors, rubber-tire loaders and farm tractors. All equipment shall be equipped for night work and be in good mechanical condition to ensure a safe and dependable 24/7 operation. VDOT reserves the right to determine acceptability of equipment size and condition for the task. Contractors submitting prices meeting the requirements of the Agreement may be contracted with and **may be eligible to receive a bonus payment and a minimum guaranteed payment for the season.**

Contractors must submit their application on the electronic M7B bidding site at <https://plow4va.vdot.virginia.gov>. All new and returning Contractors must be active in the Virginia eProcurement Portal (eVA) in order to do business with the Commonwealth of Virginia (<https://eva.virginia.gov>).

Applications received by 7:00 PM on Wednesday October 2, 2024, may be eligible for a bonus payment. See the EVA posting for additional information, including contract requirements.

Questions can be directed to the Martinsville from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday - Friday. Phone: 276-629-2582
Email: SalemDistrictSnow@vdot.virginia.gov

EEO/AA Employer

Axton man dies in crash

The Virginia State Police are continuing to investigate a single-vehicle crash, which resulted in a fatality. The crash occurred Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 10:53 p.m. on Virginia 57, at the intersection of Virginia 1649 in Henry County.

A 1998 Land Rover was traveling east on Virginia 57, when the vehicle ran off the right side of the roadway, struck an embankment and overturned, ejecting the driver.

The driver was identified as Ray D. Smith, 66, of Axton. He was not wearing his seatbelt and died at the scene.

Spencer-Penn Centre hosts Reading Festival



Jerry Hylton stirs a large vat of stew.



Attendees enjoy food at a previous MHC is For Book Lovers Festival.

By Jessica Dillon

The Spence-Penn Center is gearing up for a large-scale event – the MHC is For Book Lovers Festival - set for September 21. The event features both local and non-local authors and has a plethora of family-friendly events.

“We will have over 20 authors who are going to fill Alumni Hall,” said the Centre’s executive director Susan Sabin. An author panel hosted by Lindsey of the Based on a Book podcast will be on tap, and “you can come in and ask authors questions and chat with them,” said Sabin.

Authors will include Allie Marie, Amber Joi Scoot, Betsy Ashton, Beverly Belcher Woody, Cindy Ray Hale, Debbie Youngman, Donnie Stevens, Gale Buck, Heather Weidner, Joyce Graham, Katelyn Beck, Les Epstein, Melodie Parrish, Michael Rigg, Miski Harris, ML Nystorm, Nancy Naigle, Pam Cobler, Robert Bailey, Rose Cushing, Samson Ray, Stephen Mark Rainey.

“The reason I started this to begin with was for the authors,” said one of the event planners Kimberly Scott, who said she worked hard to ensure more authors could come to the event. “I’m so excited to do more with them with the author panel; we rearranged the room to fit more of them in there.”

Sabin is thankful for the opportunity to bring big-name authors like Naigle to the area.

“Nancy has books that have been turned into movies, it’s just really cool to see our community receive attention from the folks,” Sabin said, and added the old Spencer Fair that went away with COVID-19 also will be re-

vived.

“We’ve got Brunswick Stew that’s being served. You have not been able to sit with stew since before COVID,” she said, adding craft vendors also will be on-site

Tammy’s Grill, Mountain Valley Brewing, and Daring Wine and Cider Company will attend; music and entertainment also will be featured, with other offerings that include a Barnival, a Revolutionary War reenactment presented by ValleyStar Credit Union, and the Pumpkin Runner Family Run/Walk.

Sabin said the run is \$5 per person and it encourages young readers, with “little signs with pages to read as” runners “go about. The first 20 families will get a book to take home,” Sabin said, adding there also will be a special activity at the end of the run/walk.

In addition to music, weavers will provide demonstrations, the museum will be open, and the school’s former principal, Sally Rodgers, will give tours.

On the night before the MHC is For Book Lovers Festival there will be

A game night will be held the night before the festival, and visitors have the option of playing games with some of the authors, including Naigle, Harris, and Marie.

“I’m excited for our third event, and I’m hoping more people come out this year to check everything out,” Scott said. “Have fun, come hungry, we have tons of food vendors, shop, meet our authors, and listen to music. We really just want this to be a fun family event for everybody!”

NCI expands offerings with Praxis Testing and enhanced De-Escalation Training

By Jessica Dillon

The New College Institute (NCI) is expanding its educational programs with new additions aimed at improving local opportunities in safety and education. The college now offers Praxis testing and enhanced de-escalation training, both of which are designed to better serve the community.

The new de-escalation training program at NCI mirrors the training used by law enforcement officers at the Piedmont Criminal Justice Academy. Olivia Garrett, director of institutional advancement, explained that the program features advanced simulation technology, including a 45-foot screen and a model firearm. “It’s a highly interactive program,” Garrett said. “The simulation includes various scenarios such as domestic violence and mental health crises, allowing trainees to choose different responses and see how those choices impact the situation.”

Garrett noted that the simulation can increase the level of



A hostile scenario at a public park plays out during de-escalation training at NCI. (Contributed)

agitation in the virtual scenario, challenging trainees to de-escalate the situation without resorting to their weapons. “The program is designed to mirror best practices in law enforcement training,” she added. The training, which uses GoPro cameras for 360-degree imaging of real-world environments, is currently available only to public safety personnel but could be expanded

in the future.

In addition to the de-escalation training, NCI is now offering the Praxis exam, a critical component for students pursuing degrees in education. Garrett highlighted the logistical challenges that many students faced with the previous testing locations in Roanoke and Greensboro. “Our students often have full-time jobs or family responsibilities that made

traveling for the exam difficult,” she said. “By offering the Praxis exam on-site, we provide a more accessible option.”

The Praxis exams will be available at NCI on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m., Thursdays at 1 p.m., and the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m., providing flexible scheduling options for students. Garrett also reported that the education program at NCI is thriving, with approximately 20 to 25 students enrolled this year and a retention rate of about 90% for graduates of the Longwood Elementary and Early Childhood Education programs—significantly higher than the national average.

NCI remains committed to meeting the evolving needs of the community and is enthusiastic about the new programs. “We’re dedicated to providing essential training and addressing gaps such as the availability of the Praxis test,” Garrett said. “Our goal is to support students and professionals in overcoming barriers to their success.”

Two juveniles held in connection with school threats

The Henry County Sheriff’s Office received a report of a bomb threat shared via social media and made against Magna Vista High School on September 12. Deputies and Investigators immediately began an investigation and traced the threat back to a 17-year-old student.

During the investigation, authorities determined that the threat was a hoax. The juvenile confessed, authorities said. “and we want to reassure the public that there was never an actual threat to the school or public.”

The juvenile was charged with threat to bomb or burn (felony) buildings, and is currently incarcerated at W.W. Moore Juvenile Detention Facility.

The juvenile’s name will not be released due to their age.

On September 10, around 1:50 p.m., G. W.

Carver Elementary School received a threat that was made over the phone. At that time, the school was placed on a partial lockdown as a precautionary measure.

The Henry County Sheriff’s Office began an investigation into the threat. Investigators swiftly identified the origin of the threat and started working with another jurisdiction in Virginia to positively identify the individual responsible.

On September 11, the Chesterfield County Police Department helped to identify a juvenile from Chester, Va. The juvenile was charged in the incident and is currently being held at the Chesterfield County Juvenile Detention Center.

The child is charged with threatening to bomb, and use of profane, threatening, or indecent language, authorities said.

Recent tragedies at schools around the country have heightened everyone’s concern for the safety of students. The Henry County Sheriff’s Office takes every threat to our school system seriously, and will work diligently to bring those responsible for disrupting our schools to justice. Please remind students if they become aware of a concern to alert school administration and/or the school resource officer so that it can be dealt with quickly.

Authorities urged “parents to have open conversations with their children about the importance of reporting any threats they may hear and the serious legal repercussions of participating in these acts. It is crucial that students understand the gravity of these situations and the impact they can have on their lives and the community.”

Crossing the Lines

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

Board tables motion for second time



Michael McGuinness will serve as the county's new Facilities Director.



Scottie Hylton is the new Patrick County Transfer Station Manager.

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors tabled potentially increasing the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) by one percent at its Monday, September 9 meeting. The suggestion to increase the TOT from five percent to six percent originally came up in July after it was discovered the county needed an additional \$83,868 for required line items and an estimated \$68,719 for maintenance repairs.

To pay for the estimated \$152,587 in unexpected items, the board approved using some of its unrestricted reserves.

Doug Perry, chairman, and of the Smith River District, said the county's unrestricted reserves was enough to cover all the costs.

"We still have enough to be comfortable in our unrestricted reserve funds, so technically we don't have to act on anything right now. We did have some concerns" that were

brought to us by residents, "and other concerns were we didn't want to increase what a tourist or someone coming into the county would have to pay because we'd like them to come back, and bring friends, and give us a good thumbs up and encourage other people to come here," he said.

On the other hand, Perry said the average bed and breakfast in the area is about \$150 a night. He estimates one percent on the \$150 is an extra \$1.50 a night to the bill.

"We've got a lot of things coming up, a lot of things that have been pushed aside for a very long time to include the courthouse, to include investment in our rescue, especially talking about we have to get Station 8 into a home, having those ambulances sitting outside and running of the whole shift, that's not the best for ambulance or fuel," he said.

Town receives \$1.1 million for infrastructure upgrades



Members of the Stuart Town Council and Patrick County Board of Supervisors pose with a check presented by U.S. Sen. Mark Warner and U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith.

A congressional delegation visited on September 14, to present the Town of Stuart with a \$1.1 million check from the Congressionally Directed Spending Program for local water resilience and reliability upgrades.

"You've got the only municipal system here in the county and Stuart," U.S. Sen. Mark Warner said at the check presentation ceremony held Saturday, at the Stuart Volunteer Fire Department. "My understanding, at least, is if you have a power outage, not only does that system shut down for Stuart, but it also shuts down across the whole county."

Warner added that he also thinks no one really focuses on the intricacies of water systems unless they are directly involved with it, or they turn on the faucet and water doesn't come out.

"What we are doing with this \$1.1 million of federal funds is making sure that Stuart, and by extension all of Patrick County, has that resilience and backup so people in the event of shutdowns are still going to have that access to water," he said.

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith explained that funds from Congressionally Directed Spending are earmarked funds that fed-

eral representatives decide how to spend. "It's just directing that money out of what is already going to be spent. The money that we're announcing is something that we all worked on together, it's something that will affect this community in a positive way," he said.

Stuart Town Manager Bryce Simmons said the funds are allocated by congress to specific projects that are important to the security and well-being of local communities.

"This spending should be seen as an investment in the long-term function of the services and the infrastructure that our local government is tasked with providing. The efforts to secure these funds deserve to be celebrated as clear, bipartisan support for the citizens of the Town of Stuart and our larger service area of Patrick County," he said.

Noting that when Stuart has a water leak, he's often said, "it doesn't matter if you vote red, blue, green, or purple, the expectation is that the problem will be fixed and paid for," and as a result, Simmons said it was only fitting to acknowledge that both Warner, D-Alexandria, and Griffith, R-Salem, supported the water resilience and reliability initiative for passage in the appropriations bill.

Wood named vice-chairman

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors selected Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District, as vice chairman at its meeting Monday. The decision was made after a majority of the board approved a motion to not approve the August 12 and August 19 meeting minutes because the board's chairman and vice-chairman were listed in the meeting minutes.

Beginning in July, Doug Perry was listed as chairman and Steve Marshall was listed as vice chairman, according to Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District. But "I don't remember voting or picking the chairman and vice-chairman."

Perry, who was vice-chairman, began serving as the board's interim chairman when then-chairman Brandon Simmons' resigned in April, said he thought the board discussed the

issue. But its order of succession is confusing.

The way Perry said he remembered it, "it would be Peters Creek (District) that would be next in line in our order of succession for chair, but after Mr. Simmons stepped down, I would move into the chair and Mr. Marshall would take vice-chair."

"I thought that was our agreement, and come January," when the officers change, the board could vote then to return to its traditional order of succession, Perry said.

"Whoever is next in line to be chairman serves as the vice-chairman," Kendrick said, adding that while the order is confusing, the vice-chairman post should have been filled by the Peters Creek representative - in this case, Wood.

Marketplace breakfasts offered daily

Daily breakfast at the Marketplace in the Career & Technical Education (CTE) classroom behind the Patrick County School Board Office began on Monday, September 9.

Patrick County High School (PCHS) Assistant Principal/CTE Director Trey Cox said breakfasts are offered every school day from 8:30-9:30 a.m. and will include coffee and pastries. A soft opening of the program's lunches was also held on Wednesday, September 4, with school board office staff receiving pre-ordered salads and cupcakes.

"So, pretty much she has the class divided up into groups, a salad group, a chicken group, a group making the croutons. It was a pretty impressive showing, I'll give her credit for that," Cox said of the CTE teacher. Employees in the Patrick County Administration Building will most likely be the next group the culinary arts classes cater to, he added.

While the class is still working out the kinks in the marketplace, Cox said the current plan is to have lunches sold twice a week. A start date has yet to be announced, but the idea is for the early week meal to be held on Tuesdays -- something on the lighter side like salads and quesadillas. The end of the week



Patrick County High School (PCHS) Assistant Principal/CTE Director Trey Cox said the American flags made by PCHS students cost \$50 and are available in the Marketplace at the Patrick County School Board Office.

meal on Thursday will be something heavier, like pasta or a meat dish.

"Start the week light and give them more time to make a bigger meal" at the end of the week, he said of the class members.

Cox noted the culinary arts classes also plan to distribute a survey to get feedback from customers on the food and suggestions for future meals. Students will then use the suggestions to decide what meals to create for the following week.

Nine PCHS grads named P&HCC Scholars



Pictured, left to right - front row: Miranda Hall, Lauryn Williams, Avery Brintle; second row: Stephen Spencer, Moises Cisneros, Jonah Byers, Lindsey Jones, Luke Cutchins and Jackson Barbour.

The Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Foundation welcomed nine P&HCC freshmen as Foundation Scholars at an orientation on August 15 and at their board meeting last week.

In addition to the 125 scholarships the foundation awards to students annually, P&HCC Foundation recognizes local scholars who have brought distinction to themselves through academic achievement, community involvement and leadership potential

with full tuition scholarships each year. Patrick & Henry Scholars also receive free books and fees for up to two years.

"We are thrilled to support the education of these nine scholars as they pursue their academic and career goals," said Foundation Executive Director Tiffani Underwood, adding, "their ongoing dedication to accomplishing great things is inspiring and we are proud to be part of their future successes."

To read more about these and other stories, check out *The Enterprise*, www.theenterprise.net.



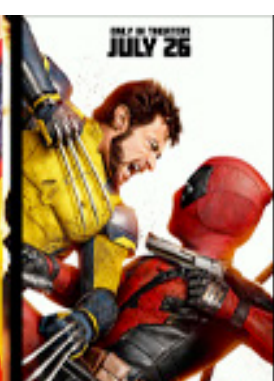
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1-3-5PM



1-3-5PM

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Work-From-Home-Job Scams

Many Americans are on the hunt for the perfect remote job or side hustle, and criminal scammers are ready to exploit these ambitions. With work-from-home jobs increasing in popularity and employment scams on the rise, now is a great time to review the warning signs of

a shady job posting. Beware of any job that offers a large income with little to no training or experience. Likewise, avoid any position that requires you to pay in advance for certification, training, or equipment. Business offers guaranteed to “pay off quick-

ly” or “double your investment” are also highly suspicious. Make sure to check that job sites specializing in remote work screen the openings and companies listed, and don’t assume a position is genuine just because it was posted on a legitimate job board. It could

still be a scam. Furthermore, it’s important to be cautious of online testimonials; work-at-home sites are full of fake personal stories of people claiming to make thousands of dollars a month because they took advantage of this “amazing opportunity.”

Communications Choices Available for Low-Income Virginians

The State Corporation Commission (SCC), partnering with the Federal Communications Commission, encourages lower income Virginians to explore opportunities for discounted voice and broadband services during National Digital Connectivity and Lifeline Awareness Week (September 8-14). Administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), the Lifeline program offers a monthly discount of up to \$9.25 on qualifying voice and

broadband services for eligible subscribers. Access to high-speed internet has become fundamental for Virginians to remain digitally connected. If your income falls below a certain level – at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines – you could be eligible for the Lifeline benefit. Additionally, you may qualify if you participate in one of the following federal assistance programs: *Supplemental Nutrition Assis-

tance Program (SNAP) *Medicaid *Supplemental Security Income (SSI) *Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA) *Veterans Pension and Survivors Benefit Companies participating in the Lifeline program can help with enrollment. The National Verifier is also available to check eligibility and to sign up for the Lifeline benefit. Be sure to contact area tele-

communications service providers to see if they participate in the program, as not all companies are required to offer Lifeline services. To learn more about the Lifeline program and the National Verifier, and to see if you are eligible, call 1-800-234-9473, email lifelinesupport@usac.org, or visit www.lifelinesupport.org or the FCC website at www.fcc.gov/lifeline-consumers. You may also contact USAC at LifelineProgram@usac.org.

Authorities discuss online safety for juveniles

By Jessica Dillon

A bill introduced in 2023, called KOSA (Kids Online Safety Act) passed the U.S. Senate in August. The Online Children’s Safety Protection Act (SB684) also was passed in VA. The federal bill increases safety precautions for minors online and prevents algorithms from targeting youth with “personalized recommendations” or ads. The Virginia version protects data collection from children.

even aware of,” Fincher added. Predators take advantage of many social media platforms to lure underage children. Fincher said online child predators aren’t a rarity, and parents should be concerned.

ous social media platform that really draws an alternative crowd, and it’s ripe with predators,” Davis said, and noted a 2021 case against a child predator luring started when the young girl was using Discord.

that those devices have the proper safeguards so they can’t access materials that are age appropriate. I also believe that parents should be working diligently to monitor children’s online and social media presence,” Davis said, and added that parents should talk to their children and warn them against predators.

Martinsville Police Chief Rob Fincher said he doesn’t believe many companies are internationally targeting children for ads. He believes the algorithm is a powerful tool that just happens to target consumers well.

Online predators are “so much more (common) than what” most parents realize,” he added.

“Of all the social media platforms, Discord is one of the most dangerous,” said Davis.

The D.A.R.E program also helps to educate school children about the dangers of social media, and adults that would like to take advantage of our youth.

“I think they found a very good algorithm that’s targeting ads towards people,” Fincher said.

Both the city and the county have worked together to eliminate child pornography and catch predators.

Issues with children’s online safety have been present since the early days of social media messaging, prevalent on 2,000 children-targeted sites like Webkinz and Neopets.

According to the Child Crime and Prevention Safety Center, an estimated 500,000 predators are online each day. The site reports that 50 percent of victims range between the ages of 12 and 15, with two out of children being between the ages of 8 and 11.

Keeping children safe online has been a decades-long fight that both police Fincher and Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis know all too well.

“By the time it gets to us to investigate, it’s a definite case. What we are seeing is just a small portion of everything out there. We are a member of the Southern Virginia Internet Crime Against Children Task Force. In addition to that, we have numerous investigators and undercover chat rooms where we seek out child predators,” said Davis.

“What I would like to promote is parental involvement,” said Fincher, who urges parents to check-in on their children regularly and to be nosy when it comes to their children’s privacy. “That’s our job as parents, to invade their privacy,” the chief said.

“It breaks our hearts when we are investigating cases and children are being victimized in one avenue or another,” Fincher said. “We really don’t want to see anyone’s child being victimized in the future. We want to encourage parents to be involved in the education and upbringing in their future.”

“The world of online predators is a real threat,” said Davis.

He added authorities have had success luring and arresting predators using undercover cops.

“We have a 23-year-old daughter, and we’re still tracking her on Life-360. She does us, too. Having that open relationship with each other, I think, is a good thing, and keeps us all accountable to each other,” said Fincher.

“It’s our responsibility to ensure

“There’s a lot of social media avenues out there that adults aren’t

Both Fincher and Davis agreed that Discord, an online app for connecting video game players, is of particular concern.

“Discord is a particularly danger-

Family-friendly outdoor activities



Parents who want their children to reap the rewards of being exposed to the great outdoors can encourage educators to incorporate nature into school curriculums and also embrace these family-friendly outdoor activities.

Children who spend a lot of time outdoors benefit from exposure to nature in myriad ways, some of which may surprise even the most devoted outdoorsmen.

Parents who want their children to reap the rewards of being exposed to the great outdoors can encourage educators to incorporate nature into school curriculums and also embrace these family-friendly outdoor activities.

sessions thanks to the assortment of vibrant colors that have become synonymous with autumn landscapes.

promised in the backyard, find a local spot where everyone can get a clear view of the night sky.

According to a 2006 study published in the journal Human Dimensions of Wildlife, fifth graders who attended school at a local prairie wetlands where lessons in science, math and writing were integrated in an experimental way had significantly stronger reading and writing skills than their peers who attended more traditional schools. Another study published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health found that holding a class outdoors one day a week significantly improved the daily cortisol patterns of students, reducing their risk of stress and improving their ability to adapt to stress.

Nature treasure hunt: A treasure hunt in nature can keep kids engaged on family hiking excursions and provide an excellent opportunity for parents to teach children about the assortment of plants, birds and wildlife that live in the parks and along the trails near their home.

Bonfire: Outdoor activities need not be limited to daylight hours. A post-dinner backyard bonfire can entice everyone outside, where families can tell scary stories as they make s mores.

Fruit picking: Apple picking is a popular autumn activity, but families need not wait for the autumn harvest to enjoy a day picking fruit or vegetables at a nearby farm. Visit a local farm during its harvest season, teaching children about how the foods they love are grown and eventually make it to the family dinner table.

Stargaze: Stargazing is another way families can spend time outdoors and learn a few things at the same time. Some blankets, a thermos of hot cocoa and a chart of constellations can provide the perfect complement to a sky full of bright stars. If visibility is com-

Families looking to spend more time together in the great outdoors can look to a number of activities people of all ages can enjoy.

Puzzle Answers!

SCRAMBLERS
solution
1. Berate; 2. Change; 3. Limber; 4. Bother
Today's Word
HEALTH

FEAR KNOT
answer

MIST
A T
N E E
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S A C S R
F F I C H E
E I A I
T A L O N

Weekly SUDOKU
Answer

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SNOWFLAKES
solution

— COAST

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

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



PUZZLE TIME

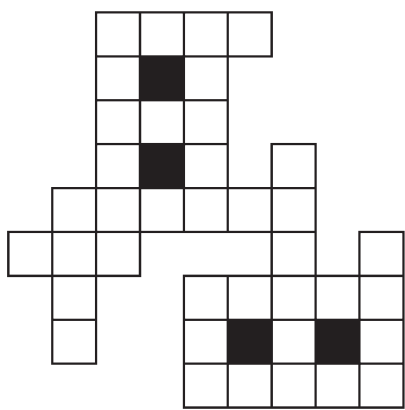


FEAR & KNOT

By: rj Johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

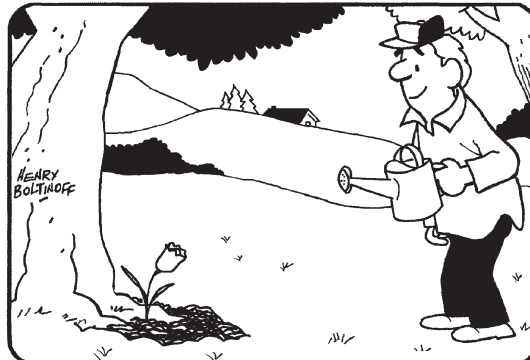
- ENE
- ASRIFA
- ♥ HIFEC
- SMTI
- ♥ SCIFLA
- ACS
- ENRI
- ♥ ESALT
- IFT
- CAMNIA
- ♥ LOTNA
- ESFA



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

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Tree trunk is different. 2. Spout on watering can is longer. 3. Cap is larger. 4. Hat is larger. 5. Mountain is different. 6. Flower is different.

MAGIC MAZE • — COAST



Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: RED-BROWN METAL

- Adelle
- Atlantic
- Barbary
- Coromandel
- East
- Forgotten
- Gold
- Gulf
- Ivory
- Malabar
- Mosquito
- Pacific
- Sapphire
- Sunshine
- West

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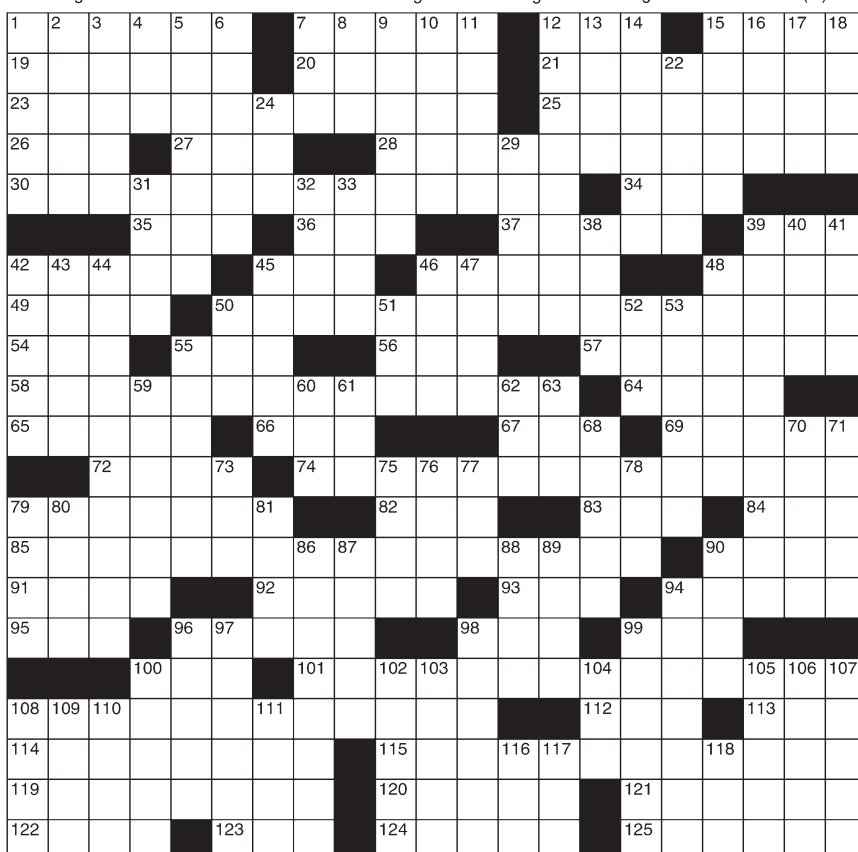
Super Crossword

DISORDERLY CREATURES

- ACROSS**
- 1 Old-time crooner
 - 7 Julius
 - 7 James — Garfield
 - 12 Taxing org.
 - 15 Old news-paper section
 - 19 On cloud nine
 - 20 Having fine granules
 - 21 Refilled to the brim
 - 23 Nocturnal burrower wearing clothes?
 - 25 "Rocky" star
 - 26 French "a"
 - 27 Taking after
 - 28 Semiaquatic reptile that's really zealous?
 - 30 Big spotted cat released from jail early?
 - 34 Doc treating laryngitis
 - 35 Orig. texts
 - 36 Sports official
 - 37 Interprets
 - 39 Antifraud org.
 - 42 1990s Toyota coupe
 - 45 "McQ" actor
- DOWN**
- 1 Starting boost
 - 2 Actress — De La Garza
 - 3 More scarce
 - 4 Gambling parlor, in brief
 - 5 "Look here, too," in a reference
 - 6 Befuddles
 - 7 Doc's gp.
 - 8 Shut-eye site
 - 9 Dust picker-upper
 - 10 Take — of faith
 - 11 Actress Loy
 - 12 "Agreed!"
 - 13 Campus mil. gp.
 - 14 Zoned (out)
 - 15 Ignited again
 - 16 2004-11 Laker Lamar
 - 17 Bluefin, e.g.
 - 18 Unbox, e.g.
 - 22 Schemes
 - 24 With 31-Down, it doesn't bode well
 - 29 Like the verb "go": Abbr.
 - 31 See 24-Down
 - 32 Humdinger

- 92 Fix up, as an old house
- 93 Hard wood
- 94 Actress Blair
- 95 Kid's amuser
- 96 Eighth Greek letter
- 98 Mil. bigwig
- 99 Irish dance
- 100 Waterloo marshal
- 101 Wheel-spinning rodent that's a Bay State college mascot?
- 108 Large lizard from northern South America?
- 112 Dialect suffix
- 113 Penny prez
- 114 Electric circuit component
- 115 Mimicking bird that's predatory?
- 119 Classic typewriter brand
- 120 TV show blocking device
- 121 Text alterer
- 122 Trait carrier
- 123 Enervate
- 124 Latin abbr.

- 33 Aussie birds
- 38 "... three men in —"
- 39 She starred in "Room"
- 40 — Actress (award for 39-Down)
- 41 Thai currency
- 42 Serenity
- 43 "Hi," in Hilo
- 44 Nonpolluting power source
- 45 Bonnie's pal
- 46 — torch
- 47 Linear, briefly
- 48 Sahara's land
- 50 Agent's cut
- 51 "Say what?"
- 52 Seize
- 53 Spruces up
- 55 Sinful
- 59 Group of PC gurus
- 60 Hard wood
- 61 Covert org.
- 62 Actress Long
- 63 Actress Jillian
- 68 Fajita meat
- 70 Was keen on
- 71 Singer O'Day
- 73 "Don't tell — can't!"
- 75 Singer Coolidge
- 76 Chi-Town daily paper
- 77 Singer Janis
- 78 Novelist Tan
- 79 Future atty.'s exam
- 80 Other, in Oaxaca
- 81 Pertaining to "Return to reality!"
- 87 SeaWorld whale, once
- 88 Leaves
- 89 Vent vocally
- 90 Sty animals
- 94 Greenish citrus drink
- 96 All wound up
- 97 "Regency" hotels
- 98 Pie charts, e.g.
- 99 Quartz type
- 100 Easily duped
- 102 Presnell of "Fargo"
- 103 Legislate
- 104 That girl!
- 105 Petite pies
- 106 Kindle buy
- 107 New attempt
- 108 Sailor's quaff
- 109 700-mile-long Congolese river
- 110 "The check — the mail"
- 111 Ninth Greek letter
- 116 Game draw
- 117 Trio before R
- 118 Free (of)



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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• Beethoven went out of his way to ensure his morning coffee was made with exactly 60 beans per cup.

• In the hit film "Back to the Future," the time machine was originally an old fridge. According to HuffPost, "Ultimately, it was determined that it probably was not a good idea to use a refrigerator in such a manner as kids might want to reenact the scene."

• Up until the beginning of the 19th century, models were not used to showcase clothes. Fashion companies would use dolls instead.

• Pentheraphobia is the intense and disproportionate fear of your mother-in-law.

• To ensure Queen Elizabeth II received her food on time, clocks in the royal kitchen at Windsor Castle were set five minutes ahead.

• While they might look the same, Jenga blocks have subtle differences in dimensions to make their construction less stable. Each brick is a different size and weight, so no two games are alike.

• As a souvenir from his trip to the Middle East, French author Gustave Flaubert brought home a mummy's foot and kept it on his working desk.

• Herrings communicate through farts.

• In 1916, Adeline and Augusta Van Buren became the first women to travel across the country on two solo motorcycles. They made it despite frequently being arrested for the "crime" of wearing pants.

• Galileo's middle finger is on display at the Museo Galileo in Florence, Italy.

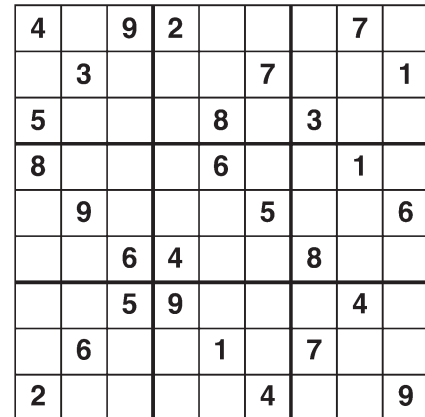
• In 2009, a team of scientists searched Scotland's Loch Ness for evidence of Nessie. While the fabled monster remained elusive, they at least recovered more than 100,000 golf balls.

Thought for the Day: "Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul." — Samuel Ullman

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle



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: ♦♦

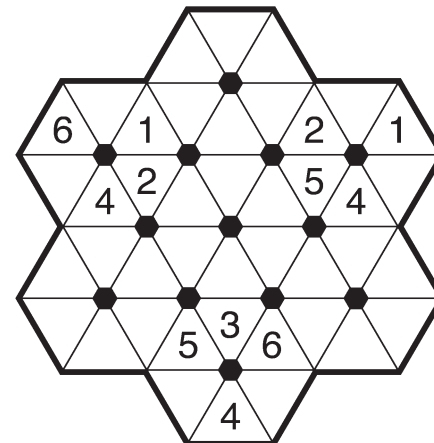
- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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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.

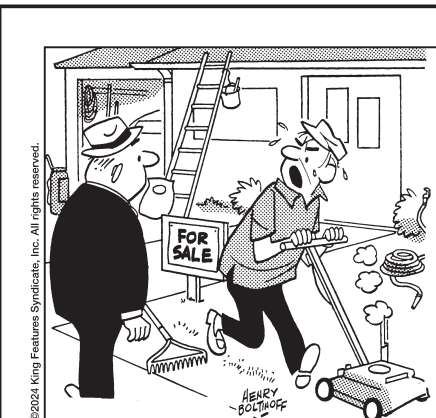
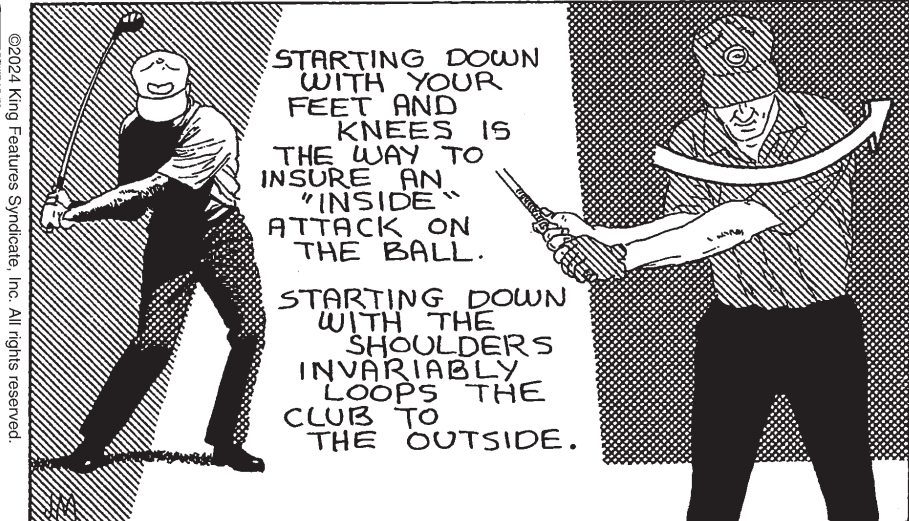


DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦♦

- ♦ Easy
- ♦♦ Medium
- ♦♦♦ Difficult
- ♦♦♦♦ Very Difficult

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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!

Chide

BEATER _____

Revise

GNACHE _____

Lithe

RIMBLE _____

Annoy

THEORB _____

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A Family Legacy is Created at Fisher Farm Park



Sharon Tahirkheli, Michael Nichols, family members, DRBA staff and Roger Adams from Henry County Parks & Recreation cut the ribbon. (Courtesy of DRBA)



Sharon and Michael by the new overlook deck.



Sharon and Michael by the new Monarch Butterfly Waystation.

Contributed

Sharon Tahirkheli and her brother Michael Nichols wanted to do something special to honor their parents Cody and Virginia Nichols. Cody and Virginia were long-time residents of the area, living less than a mile from the Smith River for more than sixty-five years. Cody, even at the age of 87, joined his great-grandchildren and walked the trail at Fisher Farm Park near Marrowbone Creek with his great-grandchildren. Cody and Virginia were thrilled to support efforts to pre-

serve the areas around the Smith River.

“Our parents were enthusiastic nature lovers,” said Michael, who lives in Northwood, New Hampshire, “They took a keen interest in the development of parks and recreational opportunities in the Smith River region.”

Sharon and Michael decided to provide a gift in memory of their parents to the Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) to enhance Fisher Farm.

“It has been exciting to work with DRBA to make this trail and garden a reality,” said

Sharon who resides in Fairfax, Virginia, “Our parents would have been delighted with the outcome.”

With Sharon and Michael’s gift, DRBA constructed a nationally certified Monarch Waystation with signage that helps educate park visitors about the importance of pollinators and protecting local natural resources.

“A Monarch Waystation is a habitat that provides monarch butterflies with the resources they need to survive and reproduce. Milkweed is the host plant for monarch larvae, and nectar plants provide energy for adults,” says Krista Hodges, Education Outreach Manager. “The Waystation is a beautiful way to honor the Nichols family while also providing rest and replenishment for our critical pollinators.”

DRBA was also able to repair the steps and trail at the park and build a new deck overlooking Marrowbone Creek with their generous gift.

“We are very excited to have partnered with the Nichols family and Henry County to enhance an already well-loved park,” said Brian Williams, DRBA’s Virginia Project Manager. “The funding provided helped add a safe trail and provide access to an area of the park that was not easy to reach and it gives visitors an opportunity to learn more about the Marrowbone Creek watershed while enjoying a shaded walk in the woods.”

A ribbon cutting was held at Fisher Farm Park on September 17 for family members and local officials.

The mission of the Dan River Basin Association is to promote and protect the natural and cultural resources of the Dan River basin through education, recreation, and stewardship. DRBA works to fulfill that mission by building river accesses and trails, educating people of all ages about protecting our natural resources, and protecting our water resources through water quality monitoring, cleanups and master planning. The Dan River basin is 3,300 square miles including sixteen counties throughout Virginia and North Carolina.

To learn more about DRBA’s impact and programs that protect and conserve our natural resources, visit danriver.org.



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Low SNAP enrollment among Virginia seniors signals calls for reforms

Trimmel Gomes
Virginia News Connection

A new report showed more than 100,000 eligible Virginians 65 and older are not enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

With senior participation rates at just 37.4%, advocates are calling for urgent action, particularly during Hunger Action Month.

Cassie Edner, public benefits attorney and director of Virginia Hunger Solutions at the Virginia Poverty Law Center, explained several factors contribute to the low enrollment, according to the report by the National Council on Aging and the Urban Institute. She noted a general lack of awareness and the complexity of applying for benefits in the Commonwealth may be key barriers for many, regardless of eligibility.

“It just could be too low,” Edner acknowledged. “We often hear of people that say, hey, this



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isn't worth going through the hoops that we have to go through in order to receive just \$23 per month.”

Despite progress made with programs such as the Elderly Simplified Application Project, which streamlines the process for seniors without earned income, Edner emphasized more must be done to reach the most vulnerable populations. The Virginia Food Access Coalition and the Federation of Virginia Food Banks are partnering with the coalition to urge legislators to reduce administrative barriers to SNAP participation.

Edner and other advocates are urging policymakers to raise the minimum SNAP benefit for seniors to \$50 per month and simplify the application process. In the meantime, the center operates a hotline to assist seniors in navigating the benefits process. She said many seniors are un-

aware of deductions to help increase their minimum benefit.

“You just need more than \$35 in medical expenses for seniors and individuals with disability to get a \$200 deduction for medical expenses, and we often see this not used often,” Edner observed. “In some of the state, it may be difficult to receive information about SNAP.”

Edner suggested mailing issues could be a factor, as the report shows the lowest SNAP enrollment rates are in Southeast and Northern Virginia, with fewer than one in four eligible seniors receiving benefits in York County and Poquoson City.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2023 Household Food Security Report revealed 13.5% of U.S. households, 18 million in total, experienced food insecurity last year. In Virginia, 10% of the population faced food insecurity between 2021 and 2023.

See more at www.henrycountyenterprise.com

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