



Damage from Hurricane Helene is evident along the roads to Crumpler, N.C. (Photos by Ray Reynolds)

Relief efforts for Western North Carolina continue after Hurricane Helene

By Jessica Dillon
Relief efforts are still underway to assist areas of western North Carolina devastated by Hurricane Helene, as local communities rally to transport much-needed supplies. Reports continue to detail the extensive damage caused by high winds and flooding, particularly around Asheville and surrounding areas. A local private pilot and his wife,

a nurse, who have chosen to remain anonymous, shared their firsthand experiences of the destruction. “I’ve flown supplies into Asheville, Morganton, Avery County, and Jackson,” said the pilot. His wife worked in Barnesville and Pensacola at a mobile hospital. “Some roads were completely destroyed, with only one way in and out. People (See Relief Efforts p. 2)

School board reviews cybersecurity policy, approves new buses

By Jessica Dillon
The Henry County School Board met on October 8 to discuss key issues, including cybersecurity measures for the school system. The board also approved the purchase of five new school buses and adopted revisions to various school board policies. Elizabeth Fulcher, Director of Technology, presented the board with an overview of the top cybersecurity threats facing the district, including phishing, ransomware, and social engineering. She emphasized that cyberattacks are becoming more frequent, often leading to system shutdowns or even holding data hostage for ransom. “Social engineering is especially dangerous because it preys on human psychology,” Fulcher explained. “Attackers may impersonate someone, deceive, or manipulate emotions to gain access to sensitive information.” Fulcher outlined preventive steps that help protect students, staff, and parents from cyber threats. Key strategies include using strong passwords, enabling multi-factor authentication, and regularly updating software. Within the schools, secure networks, device security, and student (See School Board p. 3)

MCPS Hosts Career Discovery Event for Eighth Graders



A student displays their career goal. (Contributed)

By Jessica Dillon
Martinsville City Public Schools (MCPS) recently hosted the inaugural MCPS CTE Discovery Career Quest, an event aimed at introducing eighth graders to local businesses and career opportunities in Martinsville. The event provided students with a chance to interact with local professionals and learn about the wide variety of careers available in the area. “It’s the first time we’ve ever done this,” said Callie Hietala, community and outreach coordinator. “Our eighth-grade stu- (See Career Discovery Event p. 2)

Study for Amphitheater Approved as Council Hears Game Room Proposal

By Jessica Dillon
Martinsville City Council met on October 8 to discuss plans for a potential amphitheater and hear a proposal for a casino in the city. The brief meeting featured two main presentations, with one moving forward to a vote during the regular session. The Harvest Foundation committed to a \$25,000 matching grant for a feasibility study to determine the appropriate size for an outdoor amphitheater. The venue would be Martinsville’s only entertainment space since the Rives Theatre burned down. “Honestly, right now, we don’t have an indoor venue either,” Council Member Tammy Pearson said. The discussion covered the potential for both free and ticketed events, with Roanoke’s amphitheater cited as an example. “Sometimes it’s free, sometimes it’s not,” said Council Member Kathy Lawson. The study will also assess what is needed to make the project sustainable. In addition to the amphitheater discussion, Mark Henderson, representing American Amusement, pitched a casino project to the council. Henderson described a vision for a “skilled game room” that would partner with the city and generate revenue. “Our recommendation is for the city of Martinsville to enter a partnership,” Henderson said. The game room would offer a 50% tax directly to the city, and Henderson emphasized the potential for increased tourism and business revenue. “We want to make this a money generator that can give back to the community,” Henderson added. He noted that many residents already travel to nearby counties to gamble and argued that a casino in Martinsville would provide a safer, local option. With businesses located in Kansas City and Charlotte N.C., Henderson also addressed concerns (See Amphitheater p. 3)

Lighthouse offers new hope for mental health crisis in community



The Lighthouse, a new crisis intervention center, is now open at 287 Commonwealth Blvd. in Martinsville.

By Jessica Dillon
Piedmont Community Services (PCS) unveiled its latest mental health service in Martinsville and Henry County on October 1—The Lighthouse, a crisis intervention center aimed at providing immediate support to individuals in mental health crises. The center will work closely with law enforcement to offer a brighter future for residents in need. “For the past 50-plus years, Piedmont has strived to uphold our agency motto. Our agency model is promoting compassionate solutions,” said Greg Preston, PCS executive director. Preston is collaborating with local government officials on the next phase of the project, which includes plans to establish a crisis stabilization unit for adults. Kelly Koebel, PCS’s director of behavioral health services, highlighted how Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s behavioral health initiative, ‘Right Help, Right Now,’ addresses the urgent need for mental health support. “What that means is that individuals in crisis can get the help that they need now,” Koebel said, adding that the strain on both law enforcement and hospital systems has prompted

the need for alternatives. “We’ve learned that many individuals can be safely managed without requiring inpatient hospitalization.” Erin Motley, PCS’s assistant director of crisis services, echoed this sentiment, expressing hope that The Lighthouse will relieve pressure on hospitals while providing trauma care. “Our hope and our goal is to be a beacon of hope for our community, helping individuals stabilize their crises locally,” she said. The Lighthouse serves both individuals under emergency custody orders and those

voluntarily seeking help during a mental health crisis. “We offer a 23-hour service,” explained Motley, noting that people aged 10 and up can stay at the center, undergo evaluations, receive medication management, and be connected to long-term resources. Regional Manager Richard Harris praised the facility’s name, noting that the Lighthouse truly “serves as a beacon of hope—a place of safety, refuge, and treatment.” He emphasized the center’s role in the community is to provide services to those in need. “The individuals we serve are the rea-

son we are here.” City Council member Kathy Lawson welcomed the new addition, calling it “a wonderful opportunity for our citizens to receive much-needed care without needing hospitalization or being sent away.” Jim Adams, chairman of the Henry County Board of Supervisors, said the community has long needed a crisis intervention center. “We will now be able to provide that essential support to individuals struggling with anxiety, depression, and addiction,” Adams said. He also expressed confidence that The

Lighthouse will play a key role in addressing the region’s opioid crisis. “This center will provide a safe and welcoming environment for those in crisis.” For those experiencing a mental health crisis, Piedmont Community Services can be reached at (276) 632-7128. If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts, call 988 for immediate assistance. The Lighthouse is located at 287 Commonwealth Blvd., Martinsville.

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UPDATES



Relief Efforts

(cont. from page 1)



David Boatman, of Boatman’s Cabinets; Ray Reynolds of Ray Reynolds Construction; Susan Roark Carter, who had property in Crumpler, N.C., that sustained damage, and Randy Hundley, of Martinsville, take time to share a smile during a recent delivery.

crawled for days to reach medical help,” she said.

The nurse described the harrowing conditions she encountered, including treating a woman whose life was saved when barbed wire caught her hand as floodwaters swept her away. “She treated that woman every day, cleaning her wounds. Since surgery wasn’t possible, they had to wait for the metal pieces to fester and come out on their own.”

The pilot also recounted the story of a man who lost his wife in the floodwaters. “They were holding onto the banister, but he couldn’t hold onto her, and she was swept away. He stayed stuck near her body for two days until help arrived,” he said.

Temperatures in the area are expected to drop to 40 degrees soon, and shelters are limited, leaving many vulnerable to the cold. In response, local residents have built a makeshift bridge to aid the delivery of supplies. “It took two days just to cut a path from the house we stayed in to the nearest road,” said the pilot.

In addition to physical recovery, there are numerous accounts of community members stepping in to assist with repairs. One local resident used an excavator to clear cars trapped by a mudslide. Many young men, some in their teens, were cutting down trees to help restore access to roads. “Their eyes were brown and black from debris. My wife cleaned their eyes, and then



Rocky Clark, at Harbour Garage & Towing, with items that will be transported to hard-hit areas, and distributed to those in need. (Photos by Ray Reynolds)

more of them came back after hearing about it,” the pilot said. The nurse helped provide safety glasses for the boys after discovering their old ones were no longer usable.

However, amid the positive stories of neighborly support, the couple acknowledged that chaos has emerged in some areas. ‘Fake’ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) agents reportedly attempted to shut down hospitals, and looting has occurred. “People addicted to methadone and suboxone, who can’t get their medications, are breaking into homes and stealing things,” the pilot said.

The natural disaster has also affected wildlife in the region, with many dead animals spotted, including deer. The pilot mentioned that displaced yellow jackets, unable to find their nests, were stinging people in their mouths. One woman with cerebral palsy was stung in the throat and tongue, leading to a life-threatening allergic reaction. “She needed to be flown out, but she refused to leave her son and went home with medication instead,” the nurse said.

The Carolina Aviation Network was among the first to respond to the crisis, working to provide assistance. Many mountain residents are



Debris from Hurricane Helene.

reluctant to accept help from the government, preferring to rely on their own resilience. “They believe they can fix things on their own,” the pilot said.

As winter approaches, the couple emphasized the need for donations of cold-weather supplies, including winter clothes, shoes, flashlights, portable stoves, propane heaters, wool blankets, and tents. “If people aren’t prepared, many could die from the cold,” warned the pilot.

While there is enough food in the region, the cold weather is the biggest concern. The pilot noted that FEMA was largely absent during his trips, and many residents were wary of donating to large organizations, and instead prefer to contribute through local churches or alternatives.

Locally, businesses like Harbour Garage & Towing, Ray Reynolds Construction, along with local churches such as Stanleytown’s Amazing Grace Baptist Church, and several other local charities like the YMCA and the Henry County Food Pantry working to ensure local relief efforts continue.

“We, the people, are helping the people,” said the nurse. “They’re going to make it.”

“They’re strong—very strong,” the pilot added.

Career Discovery Event

(cont. from page 1)

dents were able to walk from school to the Uptown area, where they could explore different businesses and speak directly with employees.”

At each stop, students were given information on the education and training required for various careers. “Some of the students got to walk around and talk to the employees, learning firsthand about potential career paths,” Hietala added.

Shauna Hines, coordinator of STEAM, CTE, and Fine Arts, emphasized the importance of early exposure to local opportunities. “Before you know it, these students will be seniors. We want them to know there are viable career options in Martinsville. If they aren’t going away to college or aren’t sure what they want to do, there are businesses and careers right here. You can make a successful life here,” she said.

Hines also noted the importance of students establishing early connections with local businesses to boost their chances for internships. “If we don’t show them these opportunities now, and no one else does, they may never know they exist,” she said.

The Virginia Museum of Natural History and Patrick & Henry Community College were among the participating agencies, offering students insights into career advancement and local college education options, including the availability of financial aid



Martinsville High School students help educate their younger peers. (Contributed Photos)



A group of middle school students take a break in front of the iconic ‘Big Chair.’

through FAFSA.

The Martinsville Fire Department and Police Department were also on-site, encouraging students to explore careers in public service. “We want to remind students that being part of the fire department is about more than just fighting fires or responding to EMS calls. We try to tell them about all the different programs we have. There



The Tad Space opened its doors to curious students.



The Martinsville Fire Department showcased a fire truck and gear for students.

are many ways to contribute,” said Martinsville Fire Chief Dan Howell.

Sgt. Vaughn of the Martinsville Police Department added, “Many students are shy around law enforcement, but once they meet us and see our equipment, they realize we’re just regular people. We draw some interest out, and they start conversing with us and show some interest in the job.”

Businesses along East Church Street, including Studio 107, Tad Space, Unique Styles and Boutique, and Marks Jewelers, also opened their doors to students. Martinsville High School students volunteered to share information with their younger peers about businesses that were closed.



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Friday, October 11
Arts and Culture Committee Meeting, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., Room 32, City Municipal Building, Building, 55 W Church St., Martinsville.

Monday, October 14
Martinsville City Public Schools School Board Meeting, 6 to 7 p.m., Martinsville City Public Schools Central Office, 746 Indian Trail, Martinsville.

Events

Friday, October 11
Martinsville City Schools Holiday

Saturday, October 12
Join the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society for its annual and largest fundraiser, Blue Jeans & Bling 2024, 5:30 p.m. social and dinner at 6 p.m.

Vote For Karen Baker Rally, 5 to 7 pm, Kornna Kitchen, 37 East Main Street, Martinsville.

Wednesday, October 13
Open Studio is offered every Wednesday from 1-3 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. Artists of all ages are invited to craft and create together in the Piedmont Arts classroom. Sessions are self-guided and provide a space to socialize, learn and share with fellow artists. Bring your own supplies. Free to members and \$5 for non-members. Pay at door.

Thursday, October 17
Swing Dance Party with Bob Peckman Jazz Band, 6:30 p.m., \$20 general admission, at Piedmont Arts. Live jazz music by The Bob Peckman Jazz Band from Roanoke, Va.

Register by Monday, October 14 for Roasting Goodness on Oct. 17, at the New College Institute (NCI), 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., cost is \$20. This hands-on workshop will teach the techniques and tips for roasting seeds and nuts to perfection. Visit <https://newcollegeinstitute.org/> for more information.

Saturday, October 19
The American Legion Homer Dillard Post #78 will hold its last fish fry of the year, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the post's home, 139 Creekside Dr. Martinsville. This will be a drive-thru event with limited dining-in. Fish sandwiches are \$8, homemade desserts are \$2, and soft drinks/water are \$1. Call (276) 224-5679 or (276) 340-5169 for pick-up. Proceeds will support local veterans and youth.

Sunday, October 20
If The Courthouse Could Talk 200th Anniversary, 3 p.m., Historic Henry County Courthouse, 1 East Main Street, Martinsville.

Monday, October 21
Upward Basketball & Cheerleading, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Fort Trial Baptist Church, 170 Oak Level Road, Stanleytown. Practices and games begin in January. Registration fee is \$65 per child. For more information, call Daniel Reed at (276) 629-2964.

Tuesday, October 22
Chix with Sticks, 10:30 a.m. at Piedmont Arts. Knitters are invited to work together on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Sessions are self-guided and provide a space to socialize while creating. Bring your own supplies. Advanced registration required. Free to members, \$5 for nonmembers who will pay at the door.

ONGOING

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

Uptown Farmers Market is open Saturdays 7:30 a.m. to noon through November 16.
The Martinsville-Henry County Lions Club regularly meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Pacific Bay Restaurant, 530 Commonwealth Blvd, Martinsville.

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

AWANA meets at Blackberry Baptist Church on Sundays, from 4-6 p.m.

The Bassett Ruritan Club hosts Rook Music & More on Fridays from 10 a.m. - noon. Play Rook, work puzzles, make a craft and listen to a mixture of bluegrass, country & gospel music by different bands each week. If you want, bring a snack to share. This event is free to the public. Any donations received will go to the Bassett Ruritan Club to pay for electricity etc.

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

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

The Henry County Adult Learning Center offers free in-house and online classes to help prepare for college, career, or earn your high school equivalency or GED. Call (276) 647-9585.

School Board

(cont. from page 1)



The Henry County School Board at a recent meeting. activity monitoring are essential components of the district’s cybersecurity efforts. “HCPS (Henry County Public Schools) fosters a culture of cyber awareness,” said Fulcher, highlighting that both students and staff receive training on cyber safety. Reporting suspicious activity is encouraged to detect and prevent attacks early. Cybersecurity education begins in elementary schools and continues through high school, helping students develop good “cyber hygiene.” HCPS also provides students with hands-on experience in cybersecurity, a growing field that offers valuable career opportunities.

Board member Benjamin Gravely expressed concern about personal cybersecurity, sharing, “I thought I was hacked the other day. This is really good information.” Fulcher advised that regularly updating passwords and making small variations across different accounts is key to staying secure. “And never share your password,” she added. The board also approved the purchase of five 65-passenger conventional school buses. “According to the bus replacement schedule, five buses are due for replacement,” said Assistant Superintendent Dr. Benjamin Boone. The total cost is

estimated at \$635,885, which will come from the FY25 Transportation budget. In addition to cybersecurity and transportation, the board discussed updates to Executive Order 33, which includes stricter cell phone policies set to take effect mid-school year. These rules will become permanent in January 2025 after students return from winter break. The board also completed the second reading of policy revisions, approving updates to modernize district policies and eliminate outdated ones. Other board actions included recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month and Bullying Prevention Month.

Amphitheatre

(cont. from page 1)



Martinsville City Council approved a feasibility study on a new amphitheater. about the social impacts of casinos, assuring the council that it would comply with safety, noise, traffic management, security, and zoning regulations. He suggested local restaurants, like Kornna Kitchen, could cater, and highlighted entertainment options featuring local talent. Lawson raised questions about a state ban on

certain gaming machines. Henderson responded by explaining that Martinsville would fall within the state’s allowed number of casinos. He also proposed potential locations for the casino, including a former chicken restaurant near the police department and the BB&T building, though no specific plans were confirmed.

The council did not take immediate action on the casino proposal. Mayor LC Jones reminded attendees that the city lacks a casino ordinance, and any further movement would require legal guidance. Jones noted that normal skill games previously located in store fronts have been removed from Martinsville.

Historical Society to hold inaugural ‘Ghost Walk’

Step back in time and uncover the hidden tales of Martinsville-Henry County’s most notable residents with the Historical Society’s Inaugural Ghost Walk, a family-friendly and informative (but not scary) stroll that is scheduled for Saturday, October 19, from 6 – 8 p.m. Tours will be conducted every 30 minutes. This free event promises an evening of storytelling and history unlike any other offered in the fall season. Securing tickets in advance is recommended as tours will be limited in the number of participants for this historically focused, one-night-only event. Tours will leave the Historic

Henry County Courthouse at 1 East Main Street in Uptown Martinsville every 30 minutes. There will be an ASL (American Sign Language) interpreter on the tours to ensure accessibility for attendees. Embark on a journey through historic West Main Street, North Moss Street, West Church Street, and North Bridge Street, where guided groups will encounter “ghosts” who will share the rich history of the community. Tours will begin and conclude at the Historic Henry County Courthouse, guided by knowledgeable society members. Good walking shoes and a flashlight are highly recommended for

Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society

Ghost Walk

MHC MARTINSVILLE-HENRY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Saturday, October 19, 2024

6:00 - 8:00 P.M.


Historic Henry County Courthouse

Free event but tickets required by tour time:
6:00 P.M. • 6:30 P.M. • 7:00 P.M. • 7:30 P.M. • 8:00 P.M.

this saunter around the city block. In the case of rain, the event will be held inside the old courthouse. For more information, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-2024-inaugural-martinsville-henry-county-ghost-walk-tickets-1041602068827?aff=oddtcreator>.

OPINION

Helene



Morgan Griffith
Representative

Hurricane Helene ravaged communities in Appalachia. The storm raced through the Southeast on its way to Virginia. Our area was hit hard!

Localities in the Ninth District were a target of fierce storms, tornado watches and flash flood warnings. Two deaths were confirmed.

Over the past week, I met with so many people impacted by the storm and its aftermath. Even in areas where damage wasn't as great, downed power-lines and telephone outages are wreaking havoc on people's lives. The people of Virginia have stepped up to help their neighbors recover, and moments like this highlight the importance of communities coming together.

I made several visits the weekend of September 28-29 to inspect and survey the damage inflicted by Helene. I met with Governor Youngkin and others on parts of that tour.

We went to Damascus in Washington County to thank our first responders and to get a firsthand look at the damage there. Houses were not only flooded but displaced. Looking at some damage it was unbelievable how cars were somehow smashed underneath houses.

A large part of the asphalt from the Damascus main street was lifted up and deposited 20-30 feet, with yellow lines intact, into someone's yard.

After Damascus, Josh Hess, my district director, and I were each driving to Independence. Josh is ok, but his car got stuck in a sinkhole. Luckily, with the help of several bystanders and a tractor, they got his vehicle out.

I did not know of his predicament because most of the cell service in Southwest Virginia was not functioning. For hours, I did not know what happened or where Josh was. This was very typical in Southwest Virginia.

When I got to Independence, I was advised that 42 roads in Grayson County were closed. I had witnessed closures on US 58 and US 21. Outside of Independence, 80-85% of the road had collapsed.

The following day, Governor Youngkin returned. I met him in Independence, where we got a briefing, saw some damage, then went to Fries and saw where three large trees - including

their root-balls and other debris - struck the low-water bridge, displacing it from its moorings.

Accordingly, Fries now only has one way in and out.

A tornado was confirmed in Bedford County. Montgomery County is on a boil notice.

Later that week I visited Bland, Smyth, Wythe, Montgomery, and Tazewell Counties and got a tour of the damage on Claytor Lake. At a couple of these stops, media were present. But I went to many places where press did not follow, because it was important to me to be anywhere that people are hurting.

Rainfall exceeded 12 inches in some areas and with the water from North Carolina flowing north in the New, it created an historic flood crest on the New River, from Grayson to Giles at the West Virginia border.

Further, many communities lost power for days.

Governor Youngkin is to be commended. He was quick to make a state of emergency declaration for the Commonwealth of Virginia. I received a phone call from him on Wednesday before Helene hit on Friday. He was pre-positioning emergency resources and swift water teams from across the state.

As of Monday, September 30, more than 70 rescues took place.

Governor Youngkin submitted a request to President Biden for a Federal Emergency Declaration. I wrote in support of Governor Youngkin's request, along with Virginia's two U.S. Senators, Mark Warner and Tim Kaine.

President Biden approved Virginia's request, allowing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide direct federal support for life-saving activities and other emergency protective measures. Such measures include evacuation, sheltering and search and rescue.

RISE Summit 2024 set for October 19

Entrepreneurs, innovators, and visionaries in Southern Virginia's entrepreneurial community are set to converge at the inaugural Regional Innovation Summit for Entrepreneurs (RISE Summit) on Saturday, October 19. This event promises a powerhouse lineup of inspiring speakers, hands-on skill-building workshops, and invaluable networking opportunities—all designed to connect existing businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs with resources to start, grow, or scale in Southern Virginia.

The summit will showcase speakers who live and work in Southern Virginia and understand the unique challenges and opportunities impacting the regional economy. For RISE Collaborative, the Southern Virginia region stretches along U.S. 58 to Patrick and Henry, Pittsylvania,


Halifax, Mecklenburg and Brunswick counties, and the cities of Martinsville and Danville. The region also extends north to Farmville, Prince Edward, Charlotte, Lunenburg, Cumberland, Nottoway, Amelia, and Buckingham counties.

Taking place in the resurgent city of Danville, the summit will be held at the Institute for Advanced Learning & Research from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Doors open at 8 a.m. for breakfast and networking, and the program begins at 9 a.m.

Summit event sponsors and partners include SOVA Innovation Hub, RetirePathVASM, Hitachi Energy South Boston, Letterpress Communications, Longwood SBDC, GO Virginia Region 3, Crater APEX Accelerator, Rudy's Girl Media, City of Danville Office of Economic Development & Tourism, Southside Tech Services, Community Investment Collaborative (CIC), Institute for Advanced Learning & Research (IALR), Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC), and the Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity (SBSD).

Tickets are on sale now for \$65 per person. A limited number of student tickets are available. A limited number of scholarships are available for those needing financial assistance. To learn more and purchase a ticket, visit <https://sovarise.com/summit-2024>.

On passing the baton



Holly Kozelsky

My sisters do not have children. They are gracefully, gradually, gently growing old.

I have a teenage daughter. I am handing over the baton, and my daughter is taking it with an explosion of beauty, competence and vitality, her every glorious step toward womanhood seeming to mirror the degeneration of the energetic young lady I once was into a tired old woman who is nothing special to the world.

Little by little, I have witnessed the bloom of her beauty in awe and wonder, just as I have discovered sign after sign that I am headed quickly into old age: wrinkle here, flab there, aches and pains.

This experience with aging, and with seeing my beautiful daughter evolve, has taught me a valuable lesson:

All those women who, earlier in life, I only ever saw as old women were once powerful and vibrant in their youth and beauty too.

Of course I knew, technically, that those old women were young once. Everyone was young once. I've occasionally seen a photo of an old woman when she was young and thought "Wow." But when you go through the passing of the baton, that phenomenon hits you like a gut punch. You have overlooked all the beauty of the other women surrounding you, because it had faded before it could reach you; but as you make the transition from young to old, your eyes open to others.

But it was there all along, in all these other old women, whom time had passed by long before their paths crossed mine.

Just as I will be invisible to the women who come after me, who will discount me as some old woman, as the next generation sail on their newly unfolded wings for a few glory years themselves.

We remember in ourselves our youth and passion and energy and optimism, and we may still see ourselves that way, which is a vicious trick, because perhaps no one

else does.

Or perhaps that treasure of a high school best friend who, yes, can pull that version of you back up from the deepest recess of memory.

How weird is it that you see two different versions of yourself on the same day, with the same clothes and hairstyle and makeup? At one glance at your reflection – in a mirror or a picture – you look great, which makes you proud; yet at another glance, you look haggard and puffy and overused and worn out. How can we be those two women at once? Which woman do other people see when they look at us?

One of the greater physical challenges I face every day is carrying the cat upstairs at night. Who would have ever thought?

Granted, both are extremes. This massive, fat cat weighs 19 pounds. The old-house stairs are excruciatingly steep, higher than they are wide, so most people do have to hang on tight to the hand-rail to get up them. I hold out the cat laid across my left arm while I use my right arm to hoist myself up the steps.

Yet I remember when I used to lift a 35-weight with my arm in basically that same position. I remember when I literally would run, not walk, up flights of stairs.

As I now struggle up the stairs, my lovely girl walks up them with grace and speed. No doubt once she gets up to her room she'll be fiddling with her hair or trying on new outfits, admiring herself in front of the triple mirror.

Let her. It is her time in life to revel in her own beauty.

It is her turn now, and I enjoy her enjoyment of youth and beauty.

My issue with land acknowledgement statements

Definition

A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes the connection of indigenous peoples to their ancestral land and serves as a public expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory you reside on.

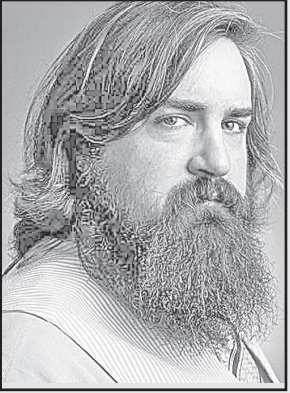
I would like to start today with a burglary acknowledgement statement.

A burglary acknowledgement is a statement that recognizes a place where people have lived historically and continue to live today, a place that I have personally burglarized in order to take all the cool stuff that was there.

This statement calls attention to your ongoing connection to your house, which I robbed blind, and acknowledges the importance of confronting the often violent history that forced you to leave your house when I broke into it wielding a tire iron. It also recognizes how institutions such as me have benefitted from your dispossession.

It is my hope that I can work with you, the Cumberland family, to better explain our difficult history to the public; i.e., that you had an 80 inch TV and I did not.

In the spirit of truth and reconciliation, I would like to acknowledge the Cumberland family, as well as other peoples whose homes I have robbed, and their expensive stuff that now resides in my house. I recognize your ongoing historical connection to your home, your land, and to a much lesser extent, your Nespresso machine. I do this to pay tribute to you, the Cumberland family, and to your elders past, present, and emerging. I hope to inspire greater curiosity among non-Cumberland peoples about the stuff which I stole from you in order to halt the erasure of your history and to encourage support of other burglarized communities both locally and globally.



By Ben R. Williams

I also recognize that the sovereignty of the Cumberland family over their home was never ceded even after their new robotic vacuum was unjustly removed from their home by me. Not even the noble Roomba can sweep away the painful history of our encounter.

I also want to thank the Cumberland family for their hospitality and stewardship of their large fire-arm collection. The serial numbers may have been filed away, but the connection to your family history will never be ablated.

In summary, I commit to continue working hand-in-hand with the Cumberland family to honor our shared history and build our future with truth. I know the Cumberdales appreciate my candor and integrity on this matter.

I would also like to point out that this acknowledgement should not be taken as an admission of guilt nor a promise to return any of this awesome stuff I stole. Rather, it is an opportunity for me to signal my virtue — or "virtue signal," if you will — to a wider audience so that they might have the wonderful opportunity to bask in my magnanimity, just as I bask in the warming light of the ProSun RenuvaSkin L32 Therapy and Tanning Bed that I, uh, recently acquired.

See more at
www.henrycountyenterprise.com

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GIVE US YOUR VIEW:

The Henry County Enterprise encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns.

Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publication. The Henry County Enterprise reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

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

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Sports Schedule

Following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of October 14-19:		Magna Vista		Washington	
10/14	7pm Volleyball Martinsville at Dan River	10/16	7pm Volleyball Halifax at Martinsville	10/18	4:30p Volleyball New Covenant at Carlisle
10/15	5pm Boys Soccer Blue Ridge at Carlisle		5pm Cross Country Bassett at Martinsville		7pm Football George Washington at Bassett
	7pm Volleyball Tunstall at Bassett	10/17	5pm Cross County Magna Vista at Martinsville		7pm Football Magna Vista at Martinsville
	7pm Volleyball Mecklenburg County at		7pm Volleyball Halifax at Bassett	10/19	3pm Boys Soccer Carlisle at Eastern Mennonite
			7pm Volleyball Magna Vista at George		

Economic initiative receives GO Virginia grant

A GO TEC Region 3 Expansion in Henry and Brunswick counties was among 21 projects to receive Growth and Opportunity for Virginia (GO Virginia) grant awards.

Each of the projects are focused on creating workforce pipelines for targeted industries and supporting the cultivation of critical industry resources to attract and grow Virginia-based businesses, according to Gov. Glenn Youngkin, who recently announced the GO TEC Region 3 expansion was awarded \$489,381 of the more than \$2.5 million total.

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) will add two new Career Connections labs in Henry and Brunswick counties that will focus on advanced manufacturing and IT modules. This project will also add equipment used for currently taught modules in 16 middle schools with existing career exploration labs, as well as a ninth- and tenth-grade bridge pilot program in Henry County that would bridge the gap between the current middle school GO TEC programming and CTE education.

“GO Virginia enables us to make

strategic investments in pivotal projects targeting regionally identified opportunities and nurturing collaboration between the private and public sectors for robust economic growth,” said Youngkin. “These projects showcase the innovative partnerships that GO Virginia aims to cultivate which are strengthening our workforce and propelling the Commonwealth forward in key industries.”

GO Virginia is an economic initiative focused on fostering regional collaboration to create jobs in traded industry sectors. The program focuses on investments in workforce development, start-up ecosystems, sites and infrastructure, and cluster scale-ups.

In addition to the awarded GO Virginia funding, the 21 awarded projects will leverage an additional \$1,527,455 million in local and non-state funding.

Since the program’s inception in 2017, GO Virginia has funded 311 projects and awarded over \$134 million to support regional economic development efforts. To learn more about the GO Virginia program, visit dhcd.virginia.gov/gova.

Health News

From the West Piedmont Health District

All West Piedmont Health District offices will be closed Monday, October 14 in recognition of Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day.

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is conducting a study about how Long COVID is impacting communities in Southwest Virginia. You can help the West Piedmont Health District (WPHD) by participating. To learn more, visit <https://redcap.link/virginalongcovid-study>.

Safe at Home

Although those in the WPHD are fortunate to not have experienced the level of devastation from Hurricane Helene as our neighbors in far Southwest Virginia or our friends to our south in Florida, Georgia or the Carolinas, many still felt serious impacts from the storm. The VDH continues to respond to Hurricane Helene by coordinating with affected local health districts and partner agencies, and is providing information on food safety, mold clean up, natural water safety, boil water instructions, well clean up and safety, and post-storm cleanup. Visit Hurricane Helene Post-Storm Response - Newsroom (virginia.gov)

Some negative and threatening impacts can be felt even without a serious storm like Helene, when copious amounts of rain can cause flooding and high humidity resulting in problems with water supply and mold.

WATER

The VDH has released facts to Virginia residents on the importance of boiling tap water during natural disasters or water main breaks. Reasons it is important include:

*If tests show that harmful microorganisms could be present in the water

*If the water pressure drops due to equipment failure or power outages

*Due to water main breaks or repairs

*If the water source has been

flooded

*Due to any other situations that warrant special action to protect consumers’ health

People who are at greater risk of infection include:

- people undergoing chemotherapy
- organ transplant patients
- people with HIV/AIDS (or other immune system disorders)
- elderly
- infants

For more information on ways to reduce infection from water contaminants can call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791 or visit their website.

MOLD

Molds are fungi that can be found everywhere. They reproduce by means of spores that are invisible to the naked eye and float through outdoor and indoor air. These fungi can grow on almost any substance where moisture is present. Molds can grow on ceilings, walls, under sinks, drywall, ductwork, furniture, and wood, among other materials. When there is a lot of moisture present, high humidity, and temperatures are above 65°F, mold spores become active and start to grow rapidly.

Some people are affected by the presence of mold while others can live in places with a large amount of mold and not experience any symptoms. Allergic reaction is the most commonly reported health effect of mold exposure. If you cough, wheeze, or have difficulty breathing around mold, you may be sensitive to certain molds. If continuously exposed to mold, some people may develop symptoms such as watery, itchy, burning or red eyes; nose or throat irritation; sneezing; coughing or wheezing; constant headaches; memory problems or mood changes; aches and pains; and in some cases, hives, welts, or skin rash.

Learn more about mold and its impacts by visiting Mold - Environmental Health (virginia.gov).

Letter To The Editor

For all the Trump haters

Look at these facts. This information has been covered up for years by the “fake news,” Democrats, ‘high tech” and others.

Was Donald Trump cheated in the 2016 and the 2020 election as he said he was?

Let’s look at some facts...

1) 2016 Election...Russia, Russia, Russia. Steele Dossier...Russian Collusion by Donald Trump?

It was “Crooked Hillary” and the DNC that cheated Donald Trump and the American public in the 2016

election.

“Crooked Hillary” and the DNC were both investigated by the Federal Election Committee (FEC) and found guilty of fraud and election interference...Clinton was fined \$8,000 (a meager sum for her) and the DNC was fined \$105,000 for election interference and fraud. Are they both not felonies? Yet, it was Donald Trump who was impeached (?) over the “Russian Collusion.”

Clinton was such a bad candidate and person she cheated and still couldn’t win. Now, for the 2024 election she is out there spewing her venom against Donald Trump. Who could believe anything she says?

Sources:

CNN (3/30/22) ...DNC fined \$105,000 and Clinton fined \$8,000
New York Post (Nov.5th, 2021) ...“Russiagate Scandal”....“Clinton Dossier”

Wall Street Journal (Nov. 11th, 2021) ...Durham Report

New York Post (May 14th, 2023) ...Opinion...Durham Report proves that Clinton, the DNC, and the FBI tried to rig the 2016

Support Lawson, Gravely, Mei

Many folks have asked me what is my thoughts on the upcoming Martinsville City Council election. I haven’t ever posted publicly of who I believe would be best to represent US as a city and most importantly who would make the best decision to move our city forward. I am not a current city resident but I actively participate in all that Martinsville offers not to mention that is my TRUE HOME.

Martinsville has had many transitions the past several years and WE are steadily growing. It is absolutely amazing to see the growth we have had and continue to have. This includes many new businesses, housing, parks, trails, economic revitalization projects and more. The next election decides what projects continue, what growth we will see, and overall how will OUR city survive in the coming years. So, respectfully the candidates below have my full support and I believe will bring the knowledge, the will, the drive, and the people to continue make Martinsville the very best we can be. I understand our opinions may differ and I also understand the candidates I have noted below may have different opinions BUT that is okay. A difference of opinion is good, remember there are always multiple sides to every story and Martinsville is a BIG story!

1. Kathy Lawson - Kathy is the definition of Martinsville. She has committed her life to the success of our city. Her knowledge of the transition our city has experienced is invaluable. She has experienced, engaged, and feverishly worked on many projects to make sure Martinsville was always put first. She has went toe to toe with many leaders on a local, state, and federal level. Her unwavering dedication to this city is second to none. I

election...”Crooked Hillary” fined \$8,000.

2) 2020 election and the “Hunter Biden laptop” and 16%.

WRAL News 3/2-3/3 Rep. Elise Stefanik 2/9/23

Several Post-election polls were taken in 2020 after the election and around 16% of the voters stated had they had known about the “Hunter Biden laptop” they would NOT have voted for Joe Biden. Do the math...Biden claimed to have received 81M votes...Donald Trump received 74M... 81 million minus 16% is around 12 million votes. 81 million minus 12 million equals 69 million votes...Trump wins in a landslide even if he doesn’t get ONE vote from this group. There may be several other discrepancies as well.

Look at the results of the last 3 1/2 years under Biden and Harris. I paid \$1.87 for gas on January 20, 2021...gas prices range from \$3-5 dollars per gallon now. Mortgage rates were around 2.5 % under Trump...now around 6-7%. Inflation under Trump in January, 2021...1.4%...average under Biden/Harris is 5.7% up to 9%. (Biden stated on national television he inherited a 9% inflation rate...another lie?)

Source: (BLS Price Index)

Was January 6th a scam? I have some facts that may show it was.

So many more facts available... Abortion, illegal immigration, and maybe January 6th.

To the American voter...Do your homework and see the REAL truth before you vote...I did!

Michael C. Jarrett,
Martinsville

can easily say she is the “Queen of Martinsville”. To loose this knowledge and experience would in my opinion be detrimental to our city infrastructure.

2. Rayshaun Gravely- Rayshaun has a drive like no other. His knowledge and wavering passion for community connection is truly one all of us need. Rayshaun has the dedication to make sure all is represented. Here’s one true FACT, we need younger representation. He’s the one. Rayshaun strives to make sure US, the younger folks are informed and included. This is very much needed. Rayshaun is very active in our community and is always working to make sure the community comes together no matter the situation, topic, or stance. He’s one for us all.

3. Julian Mei - Julian has long history in our community. It’s no secret his drive to be the very best is above all. Julian has strived to bring families to our community and has had overwhelming success. His ability to communicate, relate to ones issues, and overall commitment to make sure you have what you need is relevant for what’s to come. Martinsville needs this. We have major decisions to come. The need for vibrant, difficult, and open discussions are at an all-time high. If you ever had conversations with Julian he is your guy to make sure that happens. His drive to making sure Martinsville is on the map is second to none. Julian shows what true dedication is.

Again each candidate has their own opinions, each candidate have disagreements with each other, and each candidate have their faults but I am here to say that is needed.

Sidney R. McClure,
Ridgeway

Southwest Virginia hosts 2024 Pesticide Collection Program sites

Farmers, pesticide dealers, pest control firms, certified applicators, homeowners and golf course operators are encouraged to participate in the 2024 Virginia Pesticide Collection Program. The program collects unwanted, outdated or banned pesticides, at no cost to eligible participants, and disposes of them in a safe manner.

Following is a list of the 2024 collection sites and dates. All locations are open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Oct. 15 – Rockingham Cooperative-Troutville Ag

Supply, 79 Mountain View Rd., Troutville, Va.

Oct. 17 - Southern States, 885 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Va.

Oct. 22 – Duffield Fire Department, 1326 Industrial Park Rd., Duffield, Va.

Oct. 29 – Grover King VFW Post 1115, 701 W. Stuart Dr., Hillsville, Va.

Oct. 30 – Supergro of Virginia, 701 Lee Hwy., Marion, Va.

Participants are encouraged to complete a pesticide

collection registration form before the scheduled collection date and return the completed form to marlene.larios@vdacs.virginia.gov or mail to Office of Pesticide Services, VDACS, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, Virginia 23218. The form is available at www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/pesticide-disposal-registration.pdf or by calling (804) 371-6561. Participants may direct questions to their local Virginia Cooperative Extension agent or to the VDACS Office of Pesticide Services at marlene.larios@vdacs.virginia.gov.

CLASSIFIED

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

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

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

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



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WPPDC office to serve as drop off point

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) will serve as a drop-off location for donation items to aid those in Southwest Virginia who have been impacted by Hurricane Helene.

Donations can be delivered to the office located at 1100 Madison Street in Martinsville, VA between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Please proceed to the back of the building for drop-off and ring the doorbell. If you have a large donation or any questions, please call (276) 638.3987.

Below is a list of donations currently needed:

- Towels
 - Sheets
 - Bug spray
 - Gas cans
 - Individual propane tanks
 - Work gloves
 - Tarps
 - Baby formula
 - Baby wipes
 - Diapers
 - Batteries
 - Flashlight/lanterns
 - Shelf-stable foods
 - Peanut butter
 - Manual can openers
 - Buckets
 - Hygiene products/deodorant/shampoo/soap
 - Women's hygiene products
 - Water
 - Laundry detergent
 - Extension cords
 - Paper towels/toilet paper
 - Mops, brooms, shovels
 - Cleaning supplies
- To make a monetary donation to the United Way of Southwest Virginia please visit <https://unitedwayswva.charityproud.org/.../MiniCamp.../34132>

LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, the Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the following application **October 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia.
Case R-24-11 Ana Carter
The property is located on the south side of Mapleridge Rd, approximately 0.12 miles east of Stones Dairy Rd, in the Blackberry District. The property is shown on Tax Map number is 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, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **October 23, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of Special Use Permits for the following cases:
Case S-24-08 New Energy Equity / Henry Solar 1, LLC
A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-1801 through 21-1808; and 21-302 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a Large Scale Solar Energy Facility. The property is located on the east side of Meadowood Tr., approximately 1.2-miles north of Preston Rd, in the Horsepasture District and is zoned as Agricultural District A-1. The Tax Map is 50.1/2,4,102,102A. The proposal is to develop a 4MW solar facility on 27-acres of a 92-acre parcel.
Case S-24-09 New Energy Equity / Henry Solar 2, LLC
A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-1801 through 21-1808; and 21-302 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a Large Scale Solar Energy Facility. The property is located on the east side of Meadowood Tr., approximately 1.2-miles north of Preston Rd, in the Horsepasture District, and is zoned as Agricultural District A-1. The Tax Map is 50.1/2,4,102,102A. The proposal is to develop a 2MW solar facility on 18.99-acres of a 41.31-acre parcel.
The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
Lee H. Clark, AICP
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

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25th Annual



Apple Dumpling Festival

Downtown Stuart, VA

Saturday, October 19
10am - 4pm

Music • Crafts • Games
Music By:

11:00 - 11:45 am Marcie Home and Mike Pendleton
12:00 - 12:45 pm Face 2 Face - Christian Rock Band
1:00 - 2:15 pm Hutchens

Sound By: August Heat Audio

Apple Dumpling 5-K

Early registration through Oct 5 - \$25.00

Oct 6 through Day of Festival - \$30.00

Contact Patrick County Chamber of Commerce-276-694-6012 • director@patrickchamber.com

Registration at 7:00 am Race at 8:00 am

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NCI receives 2024 Community Partner Champions Award

The New College Institute (NCI) received the 2024 Community Partner CHAMPIONS Award for the New River Region from The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). This award recognizes NCI’s outstanding work in supporting individuals with disabilities through impactful employment that fosters independence and skill-building.

“This award is a testament to NCI’s unwavering commitment to serving our community, particularly our senior population and those with disabilities,” said NCI Executive Director Joe Sumner, “It highlights that we are not only willing to embrace the unfamiliar and challenging, but we are also dedicated to making a real, positive difference in the lives of those we serve.”

The award was presented during a statewide virtual ceremony held on Wednesday, October 2. Donna Martin, local DARS manager who nominated NCI, introduced the award, sharing insights into the strong partnership between DARS and NCI. In his remarks, Mr. Sumner reflected on NCI’s collaborative work with DARS, emphasizing the institute’s role in fostering employment and independence for individuals

across the region.

“The Champions initiative at DARS recognizes excellence in the disability employment experience, honoring businesses and industry leaders who hire individuals with disabilities, as well as those entering the workforce,” states DARS Manager Donna Martin. “On October 2, 2024, we proudly presented the DARS Community Partner CHAMPION Award to New College Institute of Martinsville, representing the New River District, for their exceptional support of students’ career exploration and training.”

NCI was also proud to see one of its own, Andrew Guerrero, recognized with a 2024 CHAMPIONS Award for his personal achievements in advancing his employment and independence goals. Andrew was one of a select group of honorees recognized from across Virginia for their remarkable efforts in pursuing meaningful employment and self-sufficiency in 2024.

“Andrew has been such a great participant,” exclaimed DARS Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Genevieve Cooley. “He is always open to feedback and willing to do whatever necessary to make others have a pleasurable experi-

ence. He is willing to learn and has grown so much over the years advocating for himself. Andrew loves his job and loves being able to greet people with a huge smile as they enter New College Institute.”

NCI will partner with DARS to celebrate Andrew’s accomplishments at the November meeting of the Martinsville Area Disability Employment Network (MADEN). This special recognition event will be held on November 14, at 9 a.m. in the Martin-Lacy Lecture Hall on NCI’s campus.

New College Institute (NCI) began working closely with The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) office in Martinsville in 2023 to support their participants through internships and on-the-job work experiences. NCI has worked with five interns and provided them with work experience in departments such as information technology (IT), facility maintenance, and advanced manufacturing. NCI also hired Andrew Guerrero through DARS’ on-the-job training program as a Customer Service Receptionist.

Staff milestones, leadership transitions coming to the Harvest Foundation



Sheryl Agee

The Harvest Foundation on Wednesday announced the upcoming retirement of Sheryl Agee, Senior Operating Officer, who will step down from her role in February 2025. As part of this transition, the foundation also announced the promotion of Latala Hodges to Senior Communications and Operating Officer and Stacy Peters to Grants Manager.

Agee joined the foundation in February 2013 as Grants Administrator, moving to her current leadership role in September 2020. Over her tenure, Agee has been instrumental in shaping the foundation’s strategy, leading two highly successful strategic planning processes, and working closely with grantees to measure their outcomes. A passionate advocate for early childhood education in Martinsville and Henry County, she has been a key driver of positive change for local children and families.

“As a quiet leader, most people probably don’t know the impact Sheryl has had in our community and at Harvest,” said Kate Keller, president of The Harvest Foundation. “Sheryl led our health and early childhood initiatives which resulted in significantly increased capacity and efficiency in both systems because Sheryl thinks in terms of system change. As a senior leader at Harvest, Sheryl is a significant thought partner and is behind the scenes guiding our strategic plan. While I am very excited for her to start her next phase in life, she will be greatly missed but we will be benefiting from her leadership for years to come.”

Reflecting on her upcoming retirement, Agee said she feels a mix of emotions but is ready to move forward.

“Retirement is often bittersweet,” Agee said. “On one hand, it’s a time to enjoy more moments with family and the spaces in life that bring you joy. On the other, it’s hard to step away from the work that has been such a deep source of passion, knowing the impact it has on people’s lives.”

She added, “The key to retirement is maybe finding a balance between the two—continuing to make a difference where we can while cherishing the time spent with loved ones and pursuing what makes us truly happy. I’m looking forward to that challenge!”

In her new role as Senior Communications and Operating Offi-



Latala Hodges



Stacy Peters

cer, Hodges will combine her expertise in communications with operations oversight at the foundation. This expanded role includes responsibilities such as staff training, supporting and monitoring the foundation’s strategic plan, and evaluating internal processes for continuous improvement.

“With change, there is always opportunity and Harvest’s next opportunity is having Latala join the senior leadership team,” said Keller. “Latala’s years with Harvest have shown us that she is an engaged community leader who always brings optimism and pragmatism to a challenge. Her lens of the world will help guide Harvest into the future and shape how we do our work. I am really thrilled to have Latala step into this new role and allow more opportunities for her to use her experience and expand her influence.”

Hodges said, “I’m both excited and humbled to serve my community and the foundation in this new role. There’s much to learn in the months ahead, and I ask for a little grace as I navigate this new journey. The support from the staff has been tremendous, and working alongside them in this capacity makes me even more optimistic for the future.”

Along with these staff changes also comes the addition of a new position, Director of Evaluation and Policy. This staff member will help strengthen the Foundation’s impact by leading the organization’s evaluation and policy activities across all programs and administrative departments. Find out more at theharvestfoundation.org.

Upward Basketball and Cheerleading Gears Up for 2025 Season

By Jessica Dillon

Fort Trial Baptist Church is preparing for the 2025 season of its long-running Upward basketball and cheerleading program, which has been providing a safe, encouraging environment for children to explore sports for 22 years.

Lead Pastor Daniel Reed, who organizes the program each year, highlighted its core mission. “Upward Sports is a nationwide, possibly worldwide, sports ministry based out of South Carolina,” said Reed. “While the focus is on sports, the goal is also to share the love of God with children.”

Last season saw approximately 160 elementary-age participants, including 110 basketball players and 50 to 60 cheerleaders. The program is open to children from kindergarten through fifth grade.

“Our goal is to provide a safe, fun, and encouraging environment for kids to learn basketball and cheerleading,” Reed said. “Parents consistently give feedback about the positive atmosphere and how their children are encouraged to grow and enjoy the sport.”

The league emphasizes fundamentals and equal playtime for all children. While older participants experience a more competitive environment, the primary focus remains on skill development and sportsmanship. “Every child will start at least one game during the season, and all kids get equal playtime,” Reed explained.

Each practice includes not only skill-building but also devotions

that focus on virtues like forgiveness, keeping the emphasis on faith. Devotions are also shared with the crowd during halftime, helping to point the entire community toward Jesus.

Reed, who has served as both a coach and program director, said one of his favorite moments each season is witnessing a child score their first basket. “The whole gym erupts in cheers. That joy on their face—it’s the highlight of the season,” he shared.

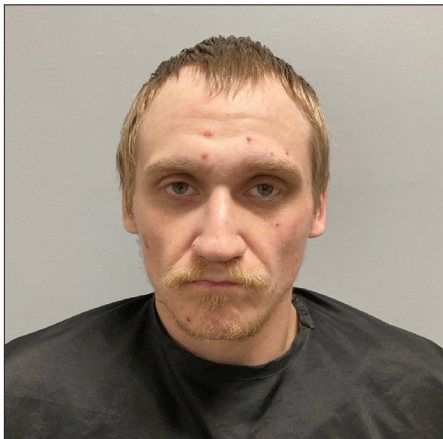
The program is divided into three divisions: kindergarten, first and second grade, and third through fifth grade, with at least four teams in each division. Participants practice one hour a week for 10 weeks, with games held on Saturdays from January through mid-March.

All coaches undergo background checks, with most hailing from Fort Trial Baptist Church or trusted members of the community. “Our coaches are people we can vouch for, ensuring a safe environment for the kids,” Reed said.

Evaluations for the upcoming season will be held on October 21 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m., November 2 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., and November 20 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Fort Trial Baptist Church, located at 170 Oak Level Road, Stanleytown.

Registration costs \$65 per child, and parents can call 276-629-2964 for more information or sign up online at [registration.upward.org/UPW86996](http://www.registration.upward.org/UPW86996).

Bassett men charged Oct. 3



Cody Cheyenne Moore

The Henry County Sheriff’s Office, Narcotics Interdiction Unit and SWAT Team conducted a narcotics search warrant on Oct. 3 at 58 Sanville School Road, Bassett. Deputies seized suspected methamphetamine, an unknown tan powder, a rifle, and digital scales. All suspected narcotics will be sent to the Department of Forensic Science in Roanoke for analysis.

Cody Cheyenne Moore, 31, of 58 Sanville School Road, Bassett, and Maurice Antonio Underdown, 39, of 64 Oakgrove Park Ln., Bassett, were arrested. All charges are felonies.

Moore was charged with possession of a controlled substance, possession of a firearm while in possession of a schedule II drug, and distribution of a controlled substance while on or near school



Maurice Antonio Underdown

property.

Underdown was charged with possession of a controlled substance, possession of a firearm by non-violent felon, possession of ammunition by a felon, possession of a firearm while in possession of a schedule II drug, and distribution of a controlled substance while on or near school property.

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

See more at
www.henrycounty
enterprise.com

Crossing the Lines

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

Local group provides hurricane relief to areas of Grayson Co.

Parkway closure impacts businesses, county's tourism efforts



Members of the Patrick County Patriots, including Sammy Hughes (right), president of the group, surveyed cleanup efforts on Laurel Creek Road. (Photo by Don Messer)

Six members of the Patrick County Patriots were the first chainsaw crew to reach parts of Grayson County, which was severely impacted by Hurricane Helene. Led by group president Sammy Hughes and Logistics Officer Don Messer, the team spent Thursday clearing roads in and around Troutdale to allow emergency vehicles and power crews to reach affected areas.

Initially, Hughes said the group was told that emergency management in Grayson County tried to limit the number of volunteers on the ground. However, after coordinating local officials and local contacts, the group was welcomed to help with road clearing efforts.

"We had a skeleton crew," Hughes said. "Our mission was to clear roads for fire and emergency vehicles." Despite working with a small team, they managed to clear vital routes from Troutdale to Elk Creek, where flood damage had made roads impassable for emergency and utility vehicles.

The crew saw linemen from several states working in the area. They recalled seeing crews "from Maine to Texas and Oklahoma."

Local residents had already begun clearing paths with their own equipment, but much of the area still needed attention. By the time the Patriots arrived on Thursday, the area had been without outside assistance for four days.

The devastation left by the hurricane was immense, particularly in low-lying areas. Messer described seeing vehicles turned upside down, debris lodged in bridges, and uprooted trees scattered across the landscape. The crew worked long hours, cutting through fallen trees and clearing

paths for emergency responders.

"Many of the roads were like the ones we see back home in Patrick County, narrow and winding through the mountains," Messer said. "We had to navigate carefully, as most of the bridges on secondary roads were washed out."

Despite the harsh conditions, the Patriots were able to make significant progress. Hughes credited their preparedness, noting the importance of safety gear and having a clear plan before heading into disaster zones. He also emphasized the need for coordination, and noted that unorganized volunteers could inadvertently hinder relief efforts.

The Patriots relied on donations from the local community to fund their equipment and safety gear, which Hughes said was crucial for their work. Local businesses, such as Woods Cold Storage, donated supplies, including fuel, oil and mix, to support the crew's efforts. Howell's Grocery donated ice and water for the crew.

Donations from the community and the group members' efforts at various events were used to help buy safety equipment, so "these guys could go into the situation safe, or as safe as we can make," Hughes said. "We took everything we needed with us," Hughes said.

Those who want to help are advised to support efforts like Jonathan Large, of the Insurance Center of Patrick, who works with a church group. To donate to the Patrick County Patriots, a nonprofit civic group, mail checks to P.O. Box 45, Stuart, Va., 24171, or see any Patriot member. All donations over \$100 are tax deductible.



The empty parking lot at Jane's Country Café was empty on Sunday afternoon. "On an ordinary Sunday in October, our parking lots would be overflowing with cars, but this is the situation today (Oct. 6) at 2:45 p.m.," Felecia Shelor said. She did not include a photo of the parking lot at Poor Farmers Market "because we had a few cars at the time, but our business is down 75 percent from what is normal for October." (Photo by Felecia Shelor)

Meadows of Dan was not a direct causality of Hurricane Helene, but the merchants there stand to lose much of their tourism business during what many consider their peak season after the Blue Ridge Parkway was recently closed due to storm damage.

"Crews continue their assessment of the damage from Hurricane Helene. To assist with recovery efforts, the National Park Service (NPS) has deployed its Eastern Incident Management Team, which brings specialized skills and resources to support the parkway with employee emergency needs, emergency stabilization of affected park resources, and damage assessments," a post on social media stated.

Patrick County Economic Development and Tourism Director James Houchins said that he's devastated about the closure because he knows it will have an economic impact on the county

"The businesses that need that income that comes in time of the year, it's really going to hurt them. I'm really hurt by the closing, but I also understand the necessity behind it," he said.

Houchins said the NPS maintains the entire parkway through-

out North Carolina and Virginia.

"What I would just like people to understand is they're trying to get those resources, especially in around the Asheville area and the other areas in Southwest Virginia. Those resources are going to be tapped for a while," he said.

While it's sad to have the parkway close due to the financial and economic impacts it will cause, Houchins said parkway staff must also perform regular maintenance. "This is only going to put them further behind on getting work and cleanup done.

"I understand that as we see it the parkway may have areas that are open and accessible, but again they have to look at it in the larger frame and larger scope, and have to be concerned about having limited personnel in one area versus another area when the need itself is at this time more critical for those areas that were definitely hit," Houchins said.

The effects of the shutdown are already being felt in Meadows of Dan, Houchins said. When talking with Trinity Goad, of Poor Farmers Market, Houchins said he was told the influx of tourists normally seen at this time of year is down.

Adcock, Dalton, Houchins vie for mayoral post

Three candidates – Rebecca Adcock, Terry Dalton and James Houchins – are vying to be the next Stuart Town Mayor in the November election, and while each have differing ideas on some aspects, they all cited transparency as a top priority.

Former Vice-Mayor Rebecca Adcock, currently in her third term on the Stuart Town Council, announced her bid for mayor following Mayor Ray Weiland's decision to step down at the end of the year. Adcock, 44, believes her experience and past work make this the right time to pursue the role.

Adcock said one of Stuart's biggest challenges, like many rural towns, is a lack of staff and resources to handle current operations while still working on future projects. She emphasized the need to complete the town's four active projects, totaling nearly \$5 million, before taking on new initiatives.

"We receive community input regularly, but having a more structured approach to understanding how residents want the town to evolve would be beneficial," Adcock said. She supports increased public involvement in local government, noting the unique nature of serving at the local level. "We're making decisions for our own community, not at the state or federal level. Town council is almost like a community organization rather than a political role," she said.

Terry Dalton, 56, has been a member of the Stuart Town Council since 2009, making him the longest-serv-



Rebecca Adcock

ing current member with 15 years of experience. While Dalton expressed that he wishes Mayor Ray Weiland would continue serving, he feels that his lengthy tenure makes him a strong candidate to succeed Weiland.

"I enjoy being on the council. It's been a vital part of my life, seeing the town grow, businesses develop, and managing the town's budget and staff. It's a good organization to be part of," Dalton said, adding that serving the community for over a decade has been a rewarding experience.

One of Stuart's biggest challenges, Dalton said, is maintaining the town's momentum. "The town is financially strong, with almost \$5 mil-



Terry Dalton

lion in active projects, mostly funded through grants and outside sources. The biggest challenge is to keep things going the way they have been because I feel like things have been going well," he said.

Jeff Houchins, 55, is vying for the role of mayor in Stuart's upcoming November election. Currently serving his first term as a Stuart Town Council member, Houchins previously worked for the town for four years. He said his decision to run for mayor stems from his dedication to the community.

"I just feel like it's my opportunity to become mayor and see what I can do for the town," Houchins said. "Everything I'm doing is for Stuart."

Houchins views the town's contin-



Jeff Houchins

ued growth as its most significant challenge, particularly in attracting more businesses and increasing activity, especially on weekends.

"I want to see the town busier, like what Franklin County and small towns like Mount Airy," he said. "More activities, more businesses, and more growth for Stuart."

Houchins supports continuing popular local events, such as First Fridays, and aims to work more closely with the Patrick County Economic Development Authority (EDA) to foster collaboration on town initiatives. He also encourages greater public participation in town meetings to enhance transparency and involve residents in decision-making.

1-3-5-7-9PM

1-4-7-9PM

1-4-7-9PM

1-3-5-7-9PM

1-3-5-7-9PM

\$5 tickets

HOLLYWOOD CINEMA beside WALMART Martinsville 278-858-3458

DRBA to receive grant for master plan

The Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) was among those recently approved for a grant by the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission. The organization was approved to receive a \$107,250 grant to help develop a master plan that enhances Southern Virginia’s blueways as a recreational destination through marketing strategies and infrastructure improvements across a nine-county region. This round aims to build on the success of previous rounds of the program and continue to bring innovative energy projects, along with the jobs and investment that come with them, to Southern and Southwest Virginia. The recently concluded second round of the program saw four projects funded that will help communities meet current and future energy needs, reduce costs for consumers, increase reliability and more. The commission, an economic de-

We Must Help Our Own

Dr. Glenn Mollette
Hurricane Helene hit our Southeastern, United States like a blanket of bombs that just kept wreaking catastrophic destruction throughout its path from Florida all the way to Virginia. It’s likely to become the deadliest storm in American history by the time all the bodies are recovered. The television images are horrific. Houses, cars, bridges, and families were washed away by the rapidly rising streams. Many thousands were caught off guard as the storm swept away everything they had. Every part of America is subject to horrific destruction from nature out of control. People in the mountains seldom worry much about tornadoes. Actually, hurricanes are not a typical concern but an overload of rain is always a concern. The water rolls down the mountain and can quickly turn a stream into a raging river. A small creek can become a tidal wave rolling down a holler, washing out houses, roads and bridges and taking lives. A quick four inches of rain in almost any Appalachian community creates worry and often panic. A rapid downpour of ten or more inches of rain almost always means disaster and 15-30 inches of rain like they received in different parts of Northwest, North Carolina became a weather monster of the ugliest kind in this area’s history. These people need our help, our donations, and our prayers. I don’t know what you can do but whatever you do will surely be greatly appreciated. There are many charities asking for help. Do your own research and fol-

VDOE prioritizing literacy support for most at-risk children

The Virginia Department of Education has been awarded a \$30 million Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant by the U.S. Department of Education to extend and expand literacy efforts for schools and student groups identified with the most need. “This grant will help deepen literacy opportunities for all students especially those students who need the most support,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Lisa Coons. “The Department will provide focused supports as educators work to improve literacy instruction for our English learners and students with disabilities.” The five-year, \$30 million grant will aid the VDOE in increasing supports for traditionally underserved students, with a focus on English Learners and students with disabilities. Virginia serves 1.26 million students in Grades K-12 throughout 131 school divisions, and nearly half of all students are economically disadvantaged (43.5%); 14.1% qualify for special education services; and 14.3% are English learners. VDOE has proposed a five-year intensive effort to improve literacy outcomes for students statewide. Its strategy is centered on schools identified by the new School Performance and Support Framework. VDOE will provide technical assistance and resources to promote coherent, evidence-based literacy instruction in the schools that need the most support. Schools will receive high-quality instructional materials and high-quality professional learning for students, participate in Literacy Improvement Networks that provide professional

development agency under the Secretariat of Commerce and Trade led by Secretary Caren Merrick, is now accepting applications for the third round of its Energy Ingenuity Fund, which aims to build on the success of previous rounds of the program and continue to bring innovative energy projects, along with the jobs and investment that come with them, to Southern and Southwest Virginia. The recently concluded second round of the program saw four projects funded that will help communities meet current and future energy needs, reduce costs for consumers, increase reliability and more. “The projects funded in the second round of the Commission’s Energy Ingenuity Fund will provide benefits to localities in the Commission footprint for decades to come,” commission Executive Director James E. Campos said. “I am excited to see the innovative projects brought forth in this third round.”

low your heart. Whether you are able to give \$5 or \$1 million dollars, there is no doubt it is greatly needed. If you can go and help, then God bless you for your efforts and action. FEMA says it’s not broke and the recent rumor they spent all their money on illegal immigrants is not true. They have also reported the \$750 cap to be given to the hurting families is not true either. Time will tell what FEMA will do. Let’s wait, watch and see what kind of care they render to so many who are displaced, hungry and emotionally lost. One thing we do know that is true is that our country has given over \$60 billion to Ukraine to help them fight Russia. We give Israel \$3.8 billion every year. We have approximately 40,000 of our military close by Israel now. How much is this costing? We handed over billions of dollars in military equipment and a state-of-the-art airport to the Taliban in Afghanistan. We have given billions to countries all over the world and continue to do so every year. Surely our government will come up with a few billion to help our own country. It will take Asheville, NC and the surrounding areas four to five years to rebuild and even then, it will not be the same. It will never be the same. However, as Americans, surely, we must hit a pause button on all this foreign aid and help our own. Glenn Mollette is read in all fifty states. Find books by Glenn Mollette at Amazon.com Learn more about his books, columns and music at GlennMollette.Com. Email him at gmollette@aol.com learning and receive technical assistance on evidence-based literacy practices. Identified schools with Kindergarten classes will collaborate with Pre-K programs to support increases in Kindergarten readiness and receive targeted resources to advance early literacy skills. Schools that are identified to have the greatest need for their English learners and students with disabilities will receive additional resources to identify causes for achievement gaps and craft action plans. Through this grant, divisions will receive support to create the conditions for literacy innovations to take hold and lead to improved student outcomes in identified schools. Divisions can use the lessons learned and resources developed through the grant to positively impact all schools within its division. The CLSD grant will enable VDOE to build upon the foundations laid by the Virginia Literacy Act (VLA) with a comprehensive and coherent literacy strategy from early childhood through grade 12. In 2022, the General Assembly passed the VLA and established core elements of high-quality, science-based literary instruction. Over the last two years, VDOE has enabled stakeholders to learn, collaborate, and lead evidence-based literacy initiatives to drive positive outcomes for students. With its intense focus on providing science-based literacy instruction in its earliest grades, Virginia is poised to be a national leader in improving literacy outcomes and ensuring that all Virginia students have a strong, coherent literacy education tailored toward their needs and led by a content-strong, effective teacher.

Educational Technology Library launched at NCI

The New College Institute (NCI) launched the EduTech Library, an innovative resource designed to empower educators by providing free access to cutting-edge educational technology. Much like a traditional library, the EduTech Library allows teachers to borrow educational tools and incorporate them into their classrooms, fostering hands-on learning opportunities for students. To support seamless integration, NCI offers free training and online resources to ensure educators can confidently use this technology to enhance their curricula. “We are excited to be able to provide access to educational technology that not only enhances the curriculum in our area schools but also provides students with hands-on project-based learning activities they may not have had access to without our EduTech Library,” stated NCI Chief Academic Officer Dr. Susheela Shanta. “It is important to us to support our area schools and being able to provide educators with technology that will help their students learn is something we are extremely proud of.” Henry County Public Schools (HCPS) is piloting the EduTech Library program by using NCI’s micro:bits in elementary schools. Two schools have gone beyond the basics, as students use the technology to create their own unique projects. “Henry County Public Schools has been using Micro:bits borrowed from New College Institute to introduce fourth and fifth graders to technology creation,” explained Phyllis Meade, the Elementary

Curriculum Coordinator. “The kids love interacting with the technology and the hands-on experience they’re getting. Their creativity is shining through with this resource.” The EduTech Library includes a wide range of technology designed to support dynamic, project-based learning: • Dash Robots: These robots help students understand coding concepts such as loops, algorithms, and variables. Students can program Dash to sing, dance, navigate obstacles, and respond to voice commands through self-directed play and guided challenges. • micro:bits: Small, powerful pocket-sized computers that introduce students to coding and hardware interaction. NCI provides lesson resources, professional development courses, and free coding tools to make learning easy and fun. • iBlocks: An online, easy-to-use, dynamic platform for students, teachers, and administrators to implement exciting project-based learning experiences into the classroom that enhance the existing curriculum. • STEMbot: Introduces students to cutting-edge, hands-on technology while educating them in a variety of STEM subjects, such as agriculture, coding, CNC operations, electronics, hardware engineering, and much more. For more information on NCI’s EduTech Library, or to learn how your school can participate, please contact NCI Chief Academic Officer Dr. Susheela Shanta at (276) 403-5623 or sshanta@newcollegeinstitute.org.

Unemployment assistance available to people who lost their job or business due to hurricane

Due to President Joe Biden’s October 1 approval of Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s request of a major disaster declaration for Virginia as it recovers from Hurricane Helene, the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) can provide temporary financial assistance to people whose employment or self-employment was impacted by Hurricane Helene in the following communities: Giles, Grayson, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, and Wythe Counties and the City of Galax. Unemployed individuals, including self-employed individuals who lost jobs, businesses, or had their work hours reduced due to the hurricane may qualify for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). The VEC will accept applications for 60 days from October 2 through December 1, 2024. You may be eligible if you don’t qualify for regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) and were living, working, or scheduled to work in an affected area when the disaster occurred. DUA applies to losses beginning September 25, 2024. The last payable week of this emergency benefit ends April 5, 2025, if your unemployment or self-employment continues as a direct result of the disaster. Eligibility for DUA benefits will be determined on a week-to-week basis for each week you file your claim. Who might be eligible To be eligible for DUA, you can’t be eligible for regular unemployment benefits in any state. When you apply, you must be able to work, ready and willing to accept work, and have the time and means to work, unless you suffered injuries directly linked to the disaster. DUA is a federal unemployment program that provides temporary payments for people who, as a direct result of Hurricane Helene: *No longer have the job that provided their primary source of income. *Are unable to reach their place of employment. *Cannot work because of an injury caused by the storm. *Were unable to begin employment or self-employment due to the storm. *You became the primary support of your family because of the death of the head of the household because of the disaster *Unemployment is a direct result of the major disaster if the unem-

ployment resulted from: *The physical damage or destruction of the place of employment. *The physical inaccessibility of the place of employment due to its closure by the federal, state, or local government in immediate response to the disaster. *Lack of work, or loss of revenues, if, prior to the disaster, the employer or self-employed business received at least a majority of its revenue or income from an entity in the major disaster area that was damaged or destroyed in the disaster or an entity in the major disaster area closed by the federal, state, or local government. Apply for the DUA benefits online at VEC’s Claimant Self Service at: uidirect.vec.virginia.gov/CSS/CSSLogon.htm which can also be found on VEC’s website, www.vec.virginia.gov or call VEC’s Customer Contact Center at 1-866-832-2363. You will first have to complete the UI form to determine eligibility for UI benefits or DUA benefits. To complete your application, you will need to provide your Social Security Number (SSN), and the name, address, and dates of employment of all your employers for the past two years, including out-of-state employers. You will need to provide all supporting evidence no more than 21 days after the application has been filed. The documents you need to provide might vary depending on your circumstances and previous employers but could include proof of identity, your most recent federal income tax form, and other documents proving that you were working or self-employed when the disaster occurred. If you need to submit proof of income for the past year, you can submit those documents after the 21 days deadline but no later than the end of the disaster assistance period. Delays in submitting your documents can impact your benefits and overall processing times. Visit VEC’s website for more information about DUA and other programs you may qualify for. You can also contact us at 1-866-832-2363. To learn about all the federal assistance programs, you and your family might qualify for, we recommend contacting FEMA’s helpline at 1-800-621-3362. Reemployment services are available at Virginia Works offices around the state.

Online portal launched to help families learn about early childhood options

Starting today, families can now access information about quality and safety for more than 3,000 publicly-funded early childhood sites across the Commonwealth via the Virginia Department of Education’s new, easy-to-use online VQB5 portal. With information on public and private early childhood sites in every city and county in Virginia, the new tool helps families learn about the quality of the sites to help them choose the best option for their birth-to-five children.

“We know the importance of early learning and school readiness in setting up our children for success, and with the VQB5 portal, families will be able to make informed decisions when exploring and choosing an early childhood program for their children,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Lisa Coons. “With nearly 30,000 classroom observations made over the last year alone, the quality of the information available to Virginia parents is greater than in any other state in the nation. We are proud to equip parents with the information they need to help make the best early childhood decisions for their children.”

Virginia Quality Birth to Five (VQB5) is a nation-leading statewide quality measurement and improvement system providing information about child care, family child care, Head Start, and preschool. VQB5, created by state law in 2020, includes all public and private programs that use public funds to serve children from birth to age five.

The VQB5 portal includes information on all publicly funded sites and any non-publicly funded sites who opt-in. It enables families to:

Easily find out whether a site has chosen a quality curriculum and access links to health and safety inspections.

View sites’ quality rating and performance information.

Review up-to-date data and information. The VQB5 portal will be updated annually and shared publicly each fall.

Easily search for a site or program by name, address, city, or zip code.

VQB5 results show that Virginia’s public-private programs positively impact more than 130,000 children under age five by providing warm, caring, and organized classroom experiences that actively promote learning, with 98% of 3,121 sites meeting or exceeding state expectations. VQB5 includes data from more than 28,000 rigorous classroom observations of teacher-child interactions completed in schools, child care centers, and family day home settings in 2023-2024, representing 2.1 million minutes of insight into what Virginia children experienced in infant, toddler and preschool classrooms last year.

The VDOE, in partnership with the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, administers VQB5 and supports nine Ready Regions to provide regional implementation of the system. Through this public-private partnership, Virginia has built capacity within all communities to observe and provide feedback to every early childhood educator. Prior to VQB5, fewer than 1,000 classroom observations were completed per year. In 2023-2024, Virginia completed more than 28,000 observations, representing an increase of over 3,000%.

“With the launch of the VQB5 portal, parents all across Virginia will now be able to make more informed decisions about their children’s early education experiences and environments,” said Kathy Glazer, President of the Virginia Early Childhood

Foundation. “Virginia is making strides toward an early education system that prioritizes quality, access, and affordability for families so that they can work, attend job training, and pursue greater self-sufficiency while putting their children on track for success in school.”

VQB5 results show that Virginia has 79 sites that could be considered national exemplars based on their results on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS) measure. These sites received Exceeds Expectations ratings for providing the highest quality learning and skills development and include public schools, child care, family day home, and Head Start. 60% of the sites that received Exceeds Expectations were in private settings, which is critical as two-thirds of Virginia families now choose options in private settings that better meet the needs of working families.

In addition, 51 sites received Needs Support ratings and are required to participate in improvement plans. Each of these sites will be assigned an expert to help them develop an individualized improvement plan and will be the priority for state-provided coaching through the University of Virginia as well as other resources.

To help all providers make improvements to their programs, VQB5 Site Quality Profiles provide site leadership with specific information on their strengths as well as their opportunities for growth. All sites in VQB5 are eligible for statewide improvement resources including an online Early Childhood Education Hub, classroom observer training, infant and toddler coaching, and free curriculum and assessment tools.

The VQB5 portal is located at earlychildhoodquality.doe.virginia.gov.

October afternoons present higher risk for roadway incidents with farm equipment

Crashes involving passenger vehicles and agricultural equipment occur year-round, but data suggests these incidents increase in October between noon and 6 p.m.

“As you can imagine, ag equipment, given the size and magnitude of it, tends to have a bigger impact on the vehicle it collides with,” said Ed Brokesh, Kansas State University assistant professor of agricultural engineering. “Passenger vehicles take the brunt of it.”

He shared crash research and safety tips in a recent National Farm Safety and Health Week webinar for AgriSafe Network, a nonprofit ensuring access to preventive services for farm families. Themed “Don’t Learn Safety by Accident,” this year’s observance was held Sept. 15-21.

According to the National Safety Council, approximately 15,000 farm vehicles are involved in highway crashes annually. By and large, incidents involving passenger vehicles and farm equipment happen most frequently from May to October, from the start of spring planting through the fall harvest.

Studies of collisions between slow-moving vehicles and motor vehicles show that about two thirds of those are rear-end collisions. This may be attributed to the significant speed differential between cars and farm machines, Brokesh added.

“A lot of ag equipment travels in that 30 mph range,” he explained. “Highway vehicles are traveling at 55 and up to 75, so you have a lot of energy avail-

able for the incident. And some pieces of equipment are built to tear up soil, so it will have some edges that can inflict additional damage.”

Incidents most often occur in high-traffic areas with increasing populations, on roadways with no shoulder, and roads with limited sight lines. Motorists should use extra caution in these settings, especially as rural areas see more residential development.

“There are more drivers on the road with less understanding of agriculture,” Brokesh said. “And farmers are spending more time on the road traveling between farms, since a typical production farm has greater distances to travel.”

As a farmer himself, Brokesh said he has traveled up to 17 miles between farms.

With shorter days in autumn, farmers may be under added pressure to finish tasks on tracts separated by miles of highway, said Matt Nuckols, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation safety coordinator.

“They have narrow windows to work, with a lot to get done in a short amount of time,” he said. “Drivers should slow down when approaching farm equipment on the road. And remember, farm machine operators making left turns will ‘swing’ their equipment far out to the right side of the road. Give them space, and do not assume it’s safe to pass.”

Visit vafb.com/Safety or agrisafe.org for more information on rural road safety.

Office of First Responder Wellness to be created

The Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security was directed to establish an Office of First Responder Wellness at the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to support the emotional, physical, and overall personal wellness of first responders in the Commonwealth. Given the significant cumulative effect of critical incidents involving tragedy and human suffering that first responders experience daily, more resources must be dedicated to supporting their mental and physical wellbe-


ing. “Hurricane Helene’s tragic devastation of Southwest Virginia reminds us that our First Responders are always our frontline heroes that are there to rescue and aid Virginians in need. We must support them better,” said Gov. Glenn Youngkin said. “The data clearly shows that repeated traumatic events experienced by first responders takes a toll on the human body, mind, and soul. The coordination and partnerships at the local, state, and federal level,

along with the private sector, will provide much better support and results for our first responder heroes.”

Youngkin issued Executive Order 38, which formalizes the existing Office of First Responder Wellness at the Department of Criminal Justice Services, directing them to provide training and support for mental and physical health of our first responder heroes, and creates a new Chief Coordinating Officer role under the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, directing the person to convene of work group of key state agencies, local first responder leaders, mental health professionals, clergy, and family members to advise on first responder wellness efforts.

The Governor has approved a request from DCJS to allocate \$3 million in unexpended Fiscal Year 2024 balances to the Office of First Responder Wellness to offer grants for non-profits and local agencies supporting first responder well-


ness efforts. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration estimates that thirty percent of first responders develop behavioral health conditions. Additionally, recent studies indicate that first responders are suffering from PTSD, depression, and anxiety due to work related stressors considerably above the national average and the divorce rate is fifteen to twenty-five percent higher than the general population. Unfortunately, almost one in ten first responders report having thoughts of suicide. “Thanks to the leadership of Governor Youngkin, we continue to support our men and women in law enforcement, corrections, fire, emergency medical services, and 911 dispatchers for their dedicated service to the Commonwealth,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Terry Cole. “The entire team in public safety and homeland security is excited to lead this significant initiative.”



Henry County

GENERAL & SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Tuesday, November 5, 2024



ELECTIONS FOR:

President & Vice President

Member U. S. Senate

Member U. S. House of Representatives 9th District

Constitutional Amendment

SAMPLE BALLOTS ARE AVAILABLE

STATEWIDE REFERENDUM/PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT:

Ballot Question: *Should the Constitution of Virginia be amended so that the tax exemption that is currently available to the surviving spouses of soldiers killed in action is also available to the surviving spouses of soldiers who died in the line of duty?*

AN APPROPRIATE ID IS REQUIRED TO VOTE AT THE POLLS

Please verify your voter registration, polling place, and VALID ID before voting!

vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation

POLLS OPEN 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.

October 15, 2024:

Last day to register to vote or change your voter registration information for this election.

Mailed voter registration applications must be sent to the Henry County Voter Registration and Elections Office postmarked on or before the deadline.

IN-PERSON EARLY VOTING

Henry County Elections & Voter Registration Office

located at the Henry County Administration Building

3300 Kings Mountain Road Martinsville, Virginia 24112

Monday – Friday, September 20 – November 1, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Saturdays, October 26, and November 2, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

****Saturday, Nov. 2, 2024:** Last day to vote an In-Person (early) Absentee Ballot at the Registrar’s Office**

MAIL ABSENTEE VOTING

Request an Absentee ballot application: vote@henrycountyva.gov or <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/citizen-portal/>

Absentee ballots ARE counted

Friday, October 25, 2024:

Last day to request an absentee ballot by mail.

Applications must be received in the Registrar’s Office by 5 p.m.

Tuesday, November 5, 2024: Election Day ALL DROPPED OFF

Absentee voted ballots must be returned to the Registrar’s Office by 7 p.m. (Virginia/Eastern Standard Time) to be counted.

Friday November 8, 2024: ALL Absentee voted ballots that are returned via mail

must be post marked on or before election day and received in the Registrar’s Office by NOON (Virginia time) to be counted.

BALLOT DROP OFF STATIONS

Monday – Friday, September 20-November 1, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Saturdays, October 26 & November 2, 2024: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Henry County Elections & Voter Registration Office

Henry County Administration Building 3300 Kings Mountain Road #103 Martinsville, Virginia 24112

On Election Day Only: All polling places and the Henry County Registrar’s Office

Dawn Stultz-Vaughn, Director of Elections & General Registrar

3300 KINGS MOUNTAIN ROAD #103 MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA 24112

TELEPHONE: 276-634-4698 FAX: 276-632-8278

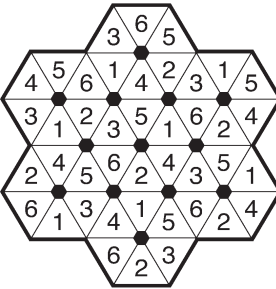
Email: vote@henrycountyva.gov

<https://www.henrycountyva.gov/178/Elections-Registrar>

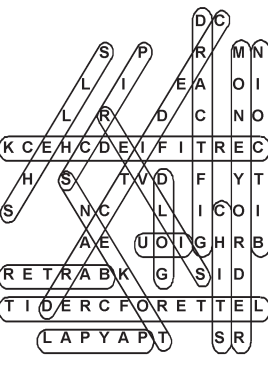
Puzzle Answers!

SNOWFLAKES

solution



SUBSTITUTES FOR CASH



SCRAMBLERS

solution

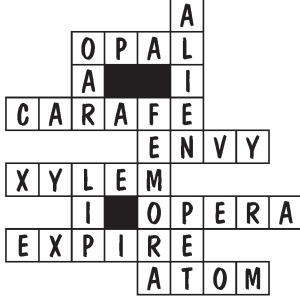
1. Sharp; 2. Grate; 3. Stymie; 4. Rumble

Today's Word

EMPTY

FEAR & KNOT

answer



Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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



FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

PLI
AFRACE
♥LENIA
♥TAMO
XIRPEE
ARO
NYEV
LEXMY
PTE
OFRAME
ARPOE
APLO

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 BOLTHOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Dishcloth is larger. 2. Picture on wall is missing. 3. Stack of dishes is shorter. 4. Cabinet handle is missing. 5. Report card is smaller. 6. Upper cabinet is missing.

MAGIC MAZE

● SUBSTITUTES FOR CASH

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: CERTIFICATES OF —

Barter	Credit card	Letter of credit	Shells
Bitcoin	Gift card	Money order	Silver
Certified check	Gold	PayPal	Tokens
Chits	IOU	Scrip	

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Super Crossword

“TENETS, ANYONE?”

ACROSS

1 Fitting name for a herding dog
5 Tense, with “up”
10 “This Is 40” director Judd
16 That guy
19 “... I could — horse!”
20 Actress Christensen
21 Mexican state
22 — Z (totally)
23 Start of a riddle
26 Cushion
27 Composer Antonio featured in “Amadeus”
28 Severe
29 Sap source
31 Actors Ken and Lena
33 Sparkly decoration
37 “By the way” comments
38 Riddle, part 2
43 Ending for pent- or prop-
44 City in central Sicily
45 Brand of cough drops
46 Like Diet Coke

DOWN

1 Piles needle and thread
2 “Very funny”
3 List-ending abbr.
4 Terraces
5 The “K” of K-Cup
6 White weasel
7 Sharp bark
8 Barely earns, with “out”
9 Tranquilizer shooter

101 Successor of Claudius I
102 Tijuana wives
103 Poet Sachs
104 Throw forcefully

106 Subway entry gate
108 Like most sandals
112 Tiny charged thing
113 Riddle’s answer
118 Tabloid paper
119 Singer
120 French capital, in a Cole Porter title
121 Word that’s pluralizable
122 Zine staffers
123 Ferret out folds
124 African antelope
125 Onetime JFK jets

10 Pippi Long-stocking creator Lindgren
11 Travel destination, generically
12 Very old: Abbr.
13 “TiK —” (Kesha hit)
14 Raw rock
15 Very friendly
16 Greeting on a Sunday holiday
17 Slanting type
18 Demure
24 Composer Bartók
25 — bill of goods (dupe)
30 Cause pain to
32 Plies a broom
34 Missionary “Mother”
35 Prefix with dermatis
36 Be cyclical
38 Pas’ partners
39 Ample, to Lil Abner
40 Utah’s lily
41 Law school newbie
42 Rice-A —
47 Is, pluralized

81 Tesla vehicle, e.g.
82 Elec. or gas
83 Golfer Ballesteros
87 Part of DOS: Abbr.
89 Summer, in Savoy
90 Swing wildly, as arms
91 Rising ground
93 In flames
94 Put more film in
95 Of the universe
96 Former NBA star Metta Sandiford —
97 Male tennis players
98 Was too syrupy
99 “— 3 Lives”
100 Auto-racing posts
105 Ticked pink
107 Appraisal, for short
109 “I” problems
110 Indecent stuff
111 — serif font
114 Seville cheer
115 Very big tub
116 Chicago-to-Toronto dir.
117 Noted period

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• Alcohol is considered a performance-enhancing drug in most shooting sports, as it calms your body down and allows you to shoot straighter.

• The universe has a color, but it’s not what you might think. Researchers at Johns Hopkins University took the average of light from over 200,000 galaxies. It turns out the universe is, on average, kind of beige. They named the shade “cosmic latte.”

• In a 2008 survey of British teens, 58% of the respondents believed Sherlock Holmes was a real person, while 20% said that Winston Churchill was not.

• When asked if her husband Abe had any hobbies, Mary Todd Lincoln responded, “Cats.”

• Amelia Earhart and Eleanor Roosevelt once sneaked out of a White House event, commandeered an airplane, and went on a joyride to Baltimore.

• The Karni Mata Temple in Deshnoke, India, is home to 20,000 rats who are believed to be descended from an incarnation of the Hindu goddess Durga.

• According to NASA, it possibly rains glass on the planet known as HD 189733b.

• The first baseball caps were made from straws and worn by the New York Knickerbockers in 1849. A few years afterward, the first merino wool baseball caps were put into circulation.

• Some traditions hold that walking backward while wearing your clothes inside out will allow you to see a witch on Halloween.

• In ancient Rome, lemons were used as an antidote to all poisons.

• One of the world’s largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons is located at a U.S. Navy base near Seattle, which is partially defended by trained dolphins.

• The highest mileage on a single car is over 3 million miles.

Thought for the Day: “History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.” — *Maya Angelou*

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦♦

♦ Easy ♦♦ Medium ♦♦♦♦ Difficult

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Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS

YOU’LL OCCASIONALLY SEE A GOLFER INITIATE THE DOWN-SWING BY THRUSTING THE RIGHT KNEE TARGETWARDS.

THE ONLY DANGER IN THIS IS BRINGING THE RIGHT HEEL OFF THE GROUND TOO FAST IN THE DOWN-SWING.

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ALLOWING THE RIGHT FOOT TO LIFT TOO HIGH AND SPIN OUTWARD TOO QUICKLY PROMOTES SWINGING “OVER” THE BALL WITH THE SHOULDERS.

THE ANSWER IS TO BEWARE OF EXAGGERATING A BASICALLY SOUND MOVE.

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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!

Acute	
HARPS	
Mince	
GATER	
Hinder	
MISTEY	
Growl	
LUMBER	

TODAY’S WORD

ADVERTISE!

Advertise With Us!

What we offer:

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

What we have:

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- A talented team of designers who will work to help you reach your base.

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

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

Annual summit attracts diverse audience



More than 230 people from 35 different states, Canada, the Netherlands, and Hong Kong attended the third annual Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Summit East.

The third annual Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Summit East returned to the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) Conference Center in Danville, on October 1-2. Co-hosted by Indoor Ag-Con and the CEA Innovation Center—a joint project with Virginia Tech’s School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, IALR and the Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center, the event attracted more than 230 people from 35 different states, Canada, the Netherlands, and Hong Kong.

The diverse audience of growers, educators, scientists, Extension personnel, suppliers, tech specialists, and government leaders gathered to explore the latest advancements in CEA technology and build valuable partnerships.

The two-day event featured a packed agenda of keynote presentations, panels, breakout sessions, and tours of the CEA Innovation Center facilities. Attendees had

the opportunity to engage with 21 tabletop exhibits showcasing cutting-edge innovations and services shaping the future of CEA. Alongside these sessions, a range of networking opportunities fostered new connections and strengthened existing partnerships.

Founded in 2013, Indoor Ag-Con has emerged as the largest trade show and conference for vertical farming | greenhouse | controlled environment agriculture. Its events are crop-agnostic and touch all sectors of the business, covering produce, legal cannabis | hemp, alternate protein and non-food crops.

The Virginia Tech-IALR Controlled Environment Agriculture Innovation Center is a joint project with Virginia Tech’s School of Plant and Environmental Sciences, IALR’s Applied Research division and the Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center. By developing



Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin, a steadfast supporter of the indoor agriculture sector, kicked off the event with the opening morning keynote address.

strategic partnerships with both industry and academia, the goal of the Innovation Center is to conduct research and educational programming to develop, promote and advance the CEA sector in the

U.S. and internationally. The next edition of CEA Summit East will be held September 9-10, 2025. Look for more information coming soon to the event website – www.ceasummit.com.

State department provides enhanced cell phone-free guidance

In response to Gov. Glenn Youngkin’s Executive Order 33 on Cell Phone-Free Education, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) released its final Cell Phone-Free Education guidance for Virginia K-12 public schools to ensure K-12 Virginia students have a distraction-free environment to focus on learning and reduce the alarming mental health crisis and chronic health conditions from cell phones and social media affecting Virginia students.

The Final Guidance continues to define Cell Phone-Free Education in Virginia’s public schools as “bell-to-bell,” meaning phones should be turned off and stored away from the first bell at the start of the school day to begin instructional time until the dismissal bell rings at the end of the academic school day. “Bell-to-bell” includes lunch and time in between class periods.

“We are so thankful for the collaborative input from families, educators, and students on such a critical challenge for our young people,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Lisa Coons. “Virginians helped us shape the final guidance and our implementation supports. We look forward to continuing to work with families and educators as we help ensure that every

student can have a Cell Phone-Free Education.”

The department received nearly 6,000 public comments and feedback during engagements, including 21 stakeholder convenings and public Commonwealth Conversations with over 1,160 Virginians. These comments reinforced the importance of “bell-to-bell” Cell Phone-Free Education to help teachers focus on learning and not discipline, ensure students submit authentic work, and allow students to develop critical communication skills. Families also chimed in that they wanted their students to focus on learning and not get caught up in the drama that social media often causes during instructional hours.

Polling released by the Washington Post-Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University poll on Friday, September 13, show that 69% of Virginia parents of school-aged children support Cell Phone-Free Education, including during lunch and class breaks. This aligns with the overall broad, bi-partisan feedback the department received during the months of July through September.

Of the concerns raised, one common theme was around medical needs – specifically use of phone-based apps for health monitoring - and the depart-

ment partnered with school nurses, pediatricians and the Virginia Department of Health to address practices for exceptions in the Guidance recognizing students with medical needs may require a medical exemption to the bell-to-bell policy included in their Individualized Education Plan, 504 plan, and/or individualized health care plans. Second, many students wrote in asking to use their phones during lunch hours. However, research shows students receive more than 200 notifications a day on their smartphones and two-thirds of U.S. students report being distracted by using digital devices. It is essential that students have the opportunity to develop face-to-face conversations and critical in-person communication skills during unstructured school hours.

Third, it became very apparent there are general gaps in parent, teacher and school communication resulting in parents feeling like they must communicate directly with their child for both emergency and non-emergency situations. Specifically, concerns focused on the ability for a parent to contact their child in a school-based emergency including during or immediately after lockdowns. The guidance has a clear section on communicating with parents during school-based and family-based emergency situations as well as non-emergency parent communications protocols. The enhanced guidance also includes a new Appendix section on School-Based Emergencies to support principals and superintendents with best practices.

In addition, Youngkin has charged the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, VDOE, and the Department of Criminal Justice Services’ Virginia Center For School and Campus Safety with supporting school divisions in the development of their required emergency response and communications plans to ensure that communications with parents during emergency situations is a top priority, consistent, and clear. A Task Force will be established to support school and division leaders with enhancing communications to and through school-based emergencies.

The Cell Phone-Free Guidance differentiates age-appropriate cell phone restrictions in Virginia’s elementary and secondary public schools.

If a parent determines an elementary student needs to bring a cell phone or personal electronic communication device to school, it must be stored, off, and away from the student during the school day. It should not be used in the school building or on the school grounds before or after school.

In middle school, students should not have an easily available cell phone or personal electronic communication device during the bell-to-bell school day. School divisions should establish local policies that determine cell phone and personal electronic communication device use within the school building or on school grounds outside of bell-to-bell, including before and after school.

In high school, students should not have an easily accessible cell phone or personal electronic communication device during the bell-to-bell school day. Outside of the bell-to-bell instructional time, cell phones and personal electronic communication devices may be used on a high school campus before or after school.

The guidance addresses students not having their cell phones “on their person” during the bell-to-bell school day, including not in their pockets. How and where cell phones will be stored during the bell-to-bell school day is a decision left to the school divisions. School divisions could choose to allow students to store their phones in their backpack, in their locker, in a locked pouch, or in a designated place in the classroom, amongst other options.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE DAY

FREE TO ALL CITY OF MARTINSVILLE AND HENRY COUNTY RESIDENTS
(Not available to Commercial Businesses)

ITEMS TO BRING

Solvents (mineral spirits, paint thinner, turpentine, acetone, etc.)
Paints (oil base, polyurethane, tung oil, deck or oil base stains, etc.)
Fuels (gasoline, #2 fuel, kerosene, diesel fuel, small engine fuel, etc.)
Automobile Fluids (motor oil, transmission fluids, antifreeze, etc.)
Lead acid batteries, computer equipment, cell phones, ink cartridges, paper (8.5 x 11, 4 boxes max)

ITEMS NOT TO BRING

Smoke detectors, compressed gas cylinders, explosives, radioactive materials, household cleaners, pesticides, herbicides, drain cleaners, tires, light bulbs, TVs

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26
9 am - 12 Noon (Will be held rain or shine)

LOCATION: BASSETT SERVICE CENTER
2285 Fairystone Park Highway
Bassett, Virginia 24055

Veterans Appreciation Day Picnic set for Saturday

The VSO Veterans Day Memorial Committee invites veterans and their families to a free hot dog picnic from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 12 at Jack Dalton Park in Collinsville.

This will be the third Veterans Appreciation Day picnic hosted by the VSO Veterans Day Memorial Committee which includes Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion, Veterans Honor Guard, Marine Corps League, and Amvets.

“We want all Veterans and their families to come out for a free hot dog meal, games, and a good time,” said Walter Shepperd, a member of the Marine Corps League and Veterans Honor Guard.

Representatives from each military branch will be in attendance to answer any questions veterans or their families may have. Vendors will also be on-site for attendees to browse and shop their products.

Teacher Vacancy Rate Down in Virginia

Virginia’s teacher vacancy rate dropped to 3.4% at the start of the school year, a 1.3% improvement from the teacher vacancy rate that was reported in July 2024. The lower rate, reported by school divisions on August 26, 2024, is an overall .5% improvement from the teacher vacancy rate reported for the previous 2023-2024 school year. Today, 35 Virginia school divisions have a 0-1% vacancy rate, and 64 divisions have a vacancy rate under 2%.

This achievement comes after the National Center for Education Statistics reported Virginia’s student-to-teacher ratio reached the lowest level in the last 17 years, reflecting unprecedented improvements in teachers’ workload and availability to serve students.

“Our schools divisions have worked incredibly hard to ensure that every Virginia child has a high-quality, committed teacher in their K-12 classroom,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Lisa Coons. “We remain focused on putting more qualified teachers in schools across the Commonwealth by providing innovative opportunities for aspiring educators, lowering classroom sizes, and decreasing workloads to retain the great teachers we currently have in our classrooms.”

Virginia continues to provide new pathways for educators. VDOE recently announced that, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement, the receipt of a State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF2) grant by the U.S. Department of Labor to develop and expand Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Pathway and pre-apprentice-



Join us for our annual

VETERANS APPRECIATION DAY PICNIC

with games, food and fun!

All Veterans and their family are invited!

October 12th, 2024
11a.m. - 3 p.m.
Jack Dalton Park
130 Jack Dalton Rd
Collinsville, VA 24078

Hosted by: VSO Veterans Day Memorial Committee

VSO Organizations:
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, American Legion, Veterans Honor Guard, Marine Corps League, AMVETS

For information on the event contact
Walter Sheppard 276.634.7007
Special accommodations are available upon request prior to the event by contacting Sto Belongia 276.226.1696

ship pathway opportunities in Virginia. The \$6 million grant will enable Virginia to focus on expanding its current 28 participating school divisions offering teacher apprenticeships for K-12 educators and building pre-apprenticeship on-ramps into the teaching profession.

On August 28, the Virginia Board of Education finalized new local eligibility license opportunities. School boards, with superintendent or board recommendation, may now issue one-year, nonrenewable local eligibili-

ty licenses valid only within the issuing division. Eligible individuals must hold a baccalaureate degree, possess relevant experience or training, and not seek special education or higher licensure. The Governor also signed into law earlier this year a bipartisan bill for Universal Teacher Licensure, making it easier for teachers from other states in good standing to get in Virginia classrooms faster.

Additional licensure programs can be found on the VDOE website.



Pink

OCTOBER

BREAST CANCER

AWARENESS MONTH

For cancer prevention, early diagnosis is important for a better cure, always consult a doctor

SPECTRUM MEDICAL

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

MARTINSVILLE
1075 Spruce Street
276-790-3233

spectrummed.com

MONDAY - FRIDAY 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM