

Pickurel honored for career in racing



Clarence Pickurel (wearing an orange shirt) is surrounded by a group of some of the biggest names in racing at a tribute held at Clarence's Steakhouse in Ridgeway, on Monday, October 28. (Photos by Ray Reynolds)

By Taylor Boyd
Some of the biggest names in racing gathered at Clarence's Steak & Seafood House on Monday, October 28, to pay tribute to Clarence Pickurel, a legendary car owner, driver and sponsor in Late Model Stock Racing.
At the tribute, Clay Campbell, president of the Martinsville Speedway, said he saw the admiration and respect everyone in attendance had for Pickurel.
"I told somebody earlier that in Late Model Stock Racing and in Modified Racing years ago, Clarence's name is on par with the Petty name in Cup Racing. Now, if you're a fan of Late Model Stock Racing (and) you hear that name Clarence, you know," he said.
(See Pickurel p. 2)



Patrick Henry Elementary School students focus on building rubber band-powered race cars.

STEM Learning Experience held at Martinsville Speedway

By Jessica Dillon
Martinsville Speedway recently opened its media center and track to offer a hands-on STEM experience for fifth-grade students from Patrick Henry Elementary School, opening its media center and track to the young learners on Oct. 23. Students had the unique opportunity to interact with racing professionals, build their own race cars, and compete at Martinsville Speedway's historic starting line.
"They asked some really good questions; it's impressive to see how inquisitive they are at this age," said Martinsville Speedway President Clay Campbell. The event included an interactive question and answer session, where students interviewed Campbell and Niece Motorsports drivers Bayley Currey, Matt Mills, and Matt Gould. After-
(See STEM Learning p. 2)

Early voting ends Nov. 2

By Jessica Dillon
Absentee voting ends on Saturday, Nov. 2, in advance of Election Day on Tuesday, Nov. 5.
Election Day marks the final chance for residents to cast a ballot in national elections, as well as those contests closer to home.
According to online information, the Henry County Registrar's Office is open until 4:30 p.m.
In the City of Martinsville, the Registrar's Office is open until 5 p.m.
When early voting ends on Nov. 2, voters may cast a ballot by visiting their assigned precinct on Election Day, which is Tuesday, Nov. 5.
Polling places will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Virginia law requires that all voters present an acceptable form of identification when voting. Any voter who does not have an acceptable ID may sign an ID confirmation statement.
In addition to the national races, five candidates are vying to fill the three open slots on the Martinsville City Council: Rayshaun Gravely, LaNita Herlem, Kathy Lawson (an incumbent), Julian Mei and John Wilson III.
The candidates have shared their visions for the city, emphasizing themes of community improvement and growth.
Herlem, who highlights "appropriations, communications, and relations" in her campaign, aims to foster efficient city resource allocation.
Mei's campaign theme, "Moving Martinsville forward, respecting our past," focuses on honoring Martinsville's heritage while promoting forward-looking initiatives.
Gravely encourages residents to "be seen, be heard," seeking to amplify community voices in city decision-making.
Lawson's focus "for Martinsville has always been making this a great place for our citizens to live, work, and raise their families."
Wilson expressed a similar vision. "I want to do everything possible to make Martinsville a better place for everybody here."
Polling places are listed inside on page 8.
For additional voting information, residents may contact the registrar's office in Henry County or the City of Martinsville.



Dennis Bender recently started his third annual ruck walk to raise money and awareness for Stop Solider Suicide, a veteran-founded and led non-profit organization fighting to reduce military suicide.

Raising awareness, 2.2 miles at a time

By Taylor Boyd
A Martinsville resident and Army veteran is set to undertake his third annual "ruck walk" this November, aiming to raise awareness and funds for Stop Soldier Suicide, a veteran-founded nonprofit dedicated to reducing military suicide rates.
Dennis Bender, along with a few Army friends, will walk 2.2 miles each day to represent and raise awareness for the 2.2 veterans who take their own lives daily.
Stop Soldier Suicide is a national nonprofit that is focused solely on solving the issue of suicide among U.S. veterans and service members. Its goal is to reduce the military suicide rate by 40 percent no later than 2030.
"What they do is they want you to ruck march and to raise money for the organization. So, the organization really just helps with basically to stop soldier suicide," he said.
While the organization doesn't specify that the 2.2-mile ruck walk has to be done every day, Bender said he made an agreement with people on his social media page that he would ruck march every day if they donated.



"It kind of has morphed into we do a minimum of 2.2 miles with the 45-pound rucksack on. The 2.2 signifies the 2.2 soldiers that committee suicide a day, then the last day of the month," Saturday, November 30, "I do 22 miles," he said.
Bender said the 45-pound rucksack represents what soldiers would carry on a daily, routine mission.
"The water, ammo, food, the body armor - that just kind of signified that. I just want it to be a challenge doing it a couple years ago, so that's why I went with doing it with a 45-pound ruck," he said.
Bender said he's teamed up with the Henry County Parks and Recreation Department, which will help promote the November 30 walk and give him access to the Smith River Sports Complex.
He hopes people will go to the sports complex that day, "get a hotdog, and donate to the organization while we finish our ruck march up," he said.
The route will take Bender and his fellow marchers from the Sports Complex onto the
(See Raising Awareness p. 2)

YMCA Receives \$500,000 Donation for New Facility



Carter Bank & Trust has donated \$500,000 to the Martinsville-Henry County YMCA's Transforming Community capital campaign, aimed at constructing the new Lester Family YMCA facility.
The donation will contribute to building a brand new, state-of-the-art facility that will provide enhanced health and wellness services, expanded youth and family programming, and upgraded spaces to meet the evolving needs of the community and reinforces the bank's commitment to creating opportunities for more people to prosper.
"Our commitment to helping people live life to the fullest aligns perfectly with the Martinsville-Henry County YMCA's dedication to giving people of all walks of life the opportunity to reach their full potential," Carter Bank CEO Litz Van Dyke said. "By supporting the new facility, we're not making an investment in the building, we're making an investment into our community and increasing opportunities for people in Martinsville and

Henry County to prosper."
Carter Bank's financial support builds upon a long history of supporting the YMCA.
"We are fortunate to have organizations like Carter Bank here in Martinsville that believe in improving the quality of life for the people in our community," Brad Kinkema, Martinsville-Henry County YMCA Executive Director said. "We are grateful for this donation as it represents a critical investment in the future of our YMCA and the thousands of individuals who rely on our services and participate in our programs that promote mental and physical wellness, personal development, and social connections."
The Lester Family YMCA building will be located on a seven-acre site near the intersection of Memorial Boulevard and Fayette Street, in Martinsville. The new facility will include a large fitness center, three full-court gymnasiums, indoor aquatic center, indoor elevated walking track and group exercise spaces.
The Early Learning Center, community rooms and outdoor amenities also will be included.
To learn more about plans for the new YMCA, call Kinkema at 276-632-6427 or email him at brad@martinsvilleymca.com.

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UPDATES



Pickurel

(cont. from page 1)

“I liken him to the Petty name. He has done so much for NASCAR’s weekly type racing, you can’t even begin to talk about it,” Campbell said, adding that Clarence’s Steakhouse is a landmark in the community.

Peyton Sellers, who was the first rookie to ever drive for Pickurel and currently drives his car, recalled, “We had some hard times. But he stuck it out with me and was very good to me.

“If I wrecked a car, he was always there to say, ‘look, I’m going to build you another car, let’s go race, you know, let’s get ready,’ Because we’d be wrecking them. He was building the good stuff,” Sellers said.

“In later years, he’s been sponsoring, we didn’t keep them in Martinsville, we kept them in Danville,” Sellers said. “It’s been an ongoing relationship that’s just family for us.”

Chris Williams, CEO of the SMART Modified Tour Series, said Pickurel’s tribute was a long time coming.

“Getting these heroes that have forged short track racing for a long time to come and honor Clarence, who has been in this thing for over 60 years. He started racing in the ‘50s and ‘60s and quit, and started putting other drives in the car.

“To be perfectly honest with you, he’s gave



Martinsville Speedway President Clay Campbell and Chris Williams, CEO of the SMART Modified Tour Series, at the tribute in Ridgeway.

up a lot – sponsoring and owning racecars, but also, he’s forged these relationships with these drivers, who as you’ve seen, respect him a million times for it.”

In racing, Williams said it’s never about money, because “you’re not here to make money. You’re here to hoist trophies and building rela-



Clarence Pickurel (left), and Satch Whorley reminisce at a tribute held in Pickurel’s honor.

tionships, and that’s what these guys gave back to Clarence tonight, and it was really fun,” he said.

Pickurel said that racing, and the relationships he forged, has meant everything to him.

“It meant all of this to me - business wise and all,” he said of the event, which he would rank “right at the top with racing,” he said.

STEM Learning

(cont. from page 1)



Speedway President Clay Campbell, along with drivers Bayley Currey, Matt Mills, and Matt Gould, answer students’ questions.

ward, each student was given materials to construct a rubber band-powered car to race along the track.

Campbell said the Speedway fully sponsored the materials and the setup, giving students room near the starting line to build and test their cars. “Not many of them have the chance to see racing up close,” Campbell said. “It’s great to get them engaged with what goes on out here and give them a sense of the industry.”

Elizabeth Fulcher, the school’s Director of Technology and Education, explained that the event tied closely with the students’ curriculum on force, motion, and energy. “I collaborated with the Speedway to ensure the experience matched our lessons,” Fulcher said. “The timing worked perfectly with the drivers’ schedules, so the students could connect class-



Students race their rubber band cars at the famous Martinsville Speedway starting line.

room concepts with real-world applications in racing.”

Students, many of whom had never visited the Speedway, asked insightful questions about racing, car mechanics, and what it’s like to compete on the track. Fulcher noted how excited the students were to interact with the drivers and gain a unique perspective on motorsports.

Once the Q&A session concluded, students split into groups to construct their rubber band cars. Fulcher noted that the building process came with some challenges. “Our students are used to building things, but these cars were a bit tricky—some wheels came off, but that only motivated them to learn and problem-solve,” Fulcher said. With the help of their teachers, the groups persevered, making necessary ad-

justments before heading to the track.

At the starting line, students eagerly raced their creations, observing whose car traveled the fastest and furthest. Some cars lost wheels mid-race, but the students quickly repaired them for another try.

One highlight of the day, Fulcher added, was the bus ride around the track, which thrilled the 56 students in attendance. “They thought it was one of the coolest experiences,” she said. “The Speedway has always been supportive of our schools, providing one-of-a-kind opportunities.”

Fulcher expressed her gratitude for the partnership with the Martinsville Speedway, and added that she looks forward to future collaborations that will continue to inspire students through hands-on learning.

Raising Awareness

(cont. from page 1)



During the march, Dennis Bender will walk 2.2 miles every day, until Saturday, November 30, when he will walk 22 miles on.



Dennis Bender and some of his Army friends will walk from the Smith River Sports Complex and along the Dick & Willie Trail on Saturday, November 30, to help raise money and donations for Stop Soldier Suicide.



nearby Dick & Willie Trail, covering 11 miles in each direction. He hopes to gather supporters to walk the final stretch and make contributions.

He is “hoping to get people out to walk the last little bit with us and donate,” to the cause, he said.

Bender said he’s asked some of his family members to come and donate food for the event.

Last year, Bender raised the most donations for the cause and the sec-

ond most the year before that. He isn’t an official member of the organization.

“Stop Soldier Suicide began these ruck marches as a challenge on Facebook,” he explained. “Three years ago, I saw it and thought, ‘I really need to do something.’ I reached out to my friends, connected with a few of the organization’s team members, and have just stayed close to their mission since. Each month

they’d do something different.”

An Army veteran who served four years, including a 17-month deployment to Iraq, Bender is deeply connected to the cause. “I’ve known people who’ve committed suicide since returning from war, both within and outside the military,” he said. “One of the guys joining me has also lost friends he served with. It really touches a nerve.”

For more information or to donate

to the ruck march, visit stopsoldiersuicide.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.participant&participantID=2205&referrer=mf%3A2205%3Ayou-share.

Those wishing to donate should contact Bender on social media at Facebook.com/DennisBender.

If you’re a veteran or service member in crisis, please call 844-674-1060.

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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

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

Thursday, November 7
Henry County School Board meets, 5:30 p.m., 1st Floor, Summerlin Room County Admin Building, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

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

Friday, November 8- Saturday, November 9
LAST BIG BASEMENT SALE of 2024 and EVERYTHING is priced to go at Fido's Finds and Kitties Collectibles, 119 East Main Street in UpTown Martinsville on Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Events

Saturday, November 2
Upward Basketball and Cheerleading evaluation, 10 a.m. to noon, Fort Trial Baptist Church, 170 Oak Level Rd., Stanleystown.

Southside Survivor Response Center Gala, 5 p.m., New College Institute, 191 Fayette St, Martinsville.

Tuesday, November 5
Election Day

Tuesday, November 12
Local historian Jarred Marlowe, VMI Class of 2015, will recount the Battle of New Market at 10:30 a.m., in the Susan L. Adkins Memorial Meeting Room, Bassett Historical Society, 3964 Fairystone Park Hwy, Bassett. Free and open to the public.

Thursday, November 21
Henry County will hold a Comprehensive Plan Public Workshop #3, 6-7:30 p.m., Galilean House of Worship, 5078 A.L. Philpott Highway, Martinsville.

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.

Local Orthodontists Help Create Environmental Education Legacy

With a generous sponsorship from Jones and DeShon Orthodontics and Roanoke Valley Orthodontics, the Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) worked over the past twelve months with Meadowview Elementary, Patrick Henry Elementary and Martinsville Middle School to build lasting environmental education programs that align with Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) guidelines and provide authentic hands-on opportunities for students.

Dr. David Jones of Jones and DeShon Orthodontics said, "We are thankful that we have such a wonderful organization as DRBA! The work they do is incredible and so needed. We all need to think about leaving the world in better shape. We are thrilled that we are able to help create an environmental education legacy."

DRBA's education staff and their Volunteer Environmental Educators (VEEs) worked with Meadowview Elementary in Henry County to start a watershed education program for their fifth-grade students. Students learned about their local watershed and how pollution can impact waterways through in classroom presentations and investigating aquatic insects. An Enviroscape watershed model was also provided to the fifth-grade teachers through the sponsorship. The model can continue to be used to teach future fifth-grade students about the effects and sources of stormwater runoff.

Dr. David L. Jones of Roanoke Valley Orthodontics said, "I enjoy giving back to the wonderful community where I grew up. Having children has made me truly understand the importance of clean air, water and a healthy environment. DRBA has been instrumental in accomplishing these goals."

DRBA worked with Patrick Henry Elementary to build a nationally certified Monarch Waystation on school campus for all students to visit and learn about monarch butterflies. Monarch butterfly life cycle castle kits were provided for all second-grade students to learn about and witness their amazing life cycle. The Monarch Waystation will be cared for and investigated by the second-grade students year after year.



DRBA staff and VEEs with students at Patrick Henry Elementary planting Monarch Waystation over the summer. (Photos by DRBA)

Finally, Martinsville Middle School sixth grade students took an environmental awareness and cultural history field trip to Fairy Stone State Park this fall. This field trip included water quality testing, effects on stormwater runoff and pollution on our waterways from the Dan River Basin Association staff and a cultural history presentation from Fairy Stone State Park Ranger. Martinsville Middle School sixth grade students plan to continue to take this field trip annually, investing in the student's knowledge of our local state parks and natural science.

Krista Hodges, DRBA's Education Manager said, "DRBA is excited to be the community partner that helps to sustain and connect teachers with environmental education programming available to the schools. Students often benefit from environmental education in an



Martinsville Middle School sixth grade students learning about stormwater runoff and how pollution enters our waterways.

outdoor setting more than we realize, including greater enthusiasm, motivation and academic performance."

DRBA has provided hands-on programs such as Trout in the Classroom, Streamside Trees in the Classroom and other programs and presentations over the fifteen years for Martinsville City and Henry County Public Schools. The programs focus on improving academic success in STEAM, inspiring environmental awareness and teaching an appreciation of the natural world for pre-school through high school. DRBA's programs connect students to their local watershed and how they can make a difference in their own communities.

To learn more about DRBA's environmental education programs that reach 8,000 students throughout the Dan River basin annually and how to sign up for programs, visit danriver.org.



Hylton named Deputy of the Quarter

Henry County Sheriff's Deputy Brittany Hylton, of the Adult Detention Center, was named Employee of the Quarter for 2024. Hylton currently works in the Intake Division at the Adult Detention Center. She has been employed at the sheriff's office for 2 1/2 years. Hylton is pictured with Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis.

Carter Bank Unveils New, Customer-Focused Brand Identity

Carter Bank, a leading community bank with branches throughout Virginia and North Carolina, today unveiled a new brand identity centered entirely around the people who matter most—the customers and associates of Carter Bank and the communities it serves.

The comprehensive new brand comes as Carter Bank—which opened its first branch in Rocky Mount, Va. in 1974—celebrates 50 years in business. Completed by branding firm Strum, the new branding includes an entirely redesigned logo, color palette, messaging and foundational brand elements. It shortens the company name from "Carter Bank & Trust" to simply "Carter Bank," the name used colloquially by customers and associates alike. The new tagline, "Life Lived Full," denotes the importance Carter Bank places on helping its people fulfill their hopes and dreams no matter how big or small.

"Our refreshed identity showcases what Carter Bank has always stood for," Carter Bank CEO Litz Van Dyke said. "We are still, at our root, a local community bank. Our new brand helps us better tell that story and enhances our commitment as a relationship-focused bank and carries us forward to meet the goals of future generations."

Elements of the new Carter Bank brand, including a Brand Reveal Event for associates and customer notifications began surfacing the week of October 21. Digital rollout on the website, online and mobile banking, and social media pages will begin on November 4, 2024. The bank's new Bassett-Stanleystown location, scheduled to open November 12, will be the first branch location to feature the new brand. All other branch locations will be updated in the coming months.

"We are here to take care of customer financial needs so they can focus on what matters most to them—their business, their family, their home," said Chrystal Parnell, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer at Carter Bank. "That is the brand promise we will continue to stay true to: we are committed to helping the people in our Carter Bank community live life to the fullest."

For more information, visit carterbank.com/brand.

Celebrating 50 years in 2024 and headquartered in Martinsville, Va., Carter Bank is a \$4.5 billion, state-chartered community bank with branches in Virginia and North Carolina.

Look! Up There in the Sky!

As of this news-letter, two American astronauts are stranded at the International Space Station (ISS).

This June, astro-nauts Butch Whitmore and Suni Williams took part in a mission aboard Boe-ing’s Starliner cap-sule to go to the ISS.

The mission seemed to be going ok when they got to the ISS. But it was then discovered the Starliner’s thrusters failed during dock-ing, leaving Whitmore and Wil- liams stuck at the ISS.

In September, the Starliner re- turned to earth, but without the astronauts. The new plan is for the astronauts to wait at the ISS until 2025!

American airspace has also re- ported suspicious activity of late.

If you remember from last year, a reported Chinese spy balloon made its way to the United States. The balloon first flew over Alaska’s Aleutian Islands before moving into Canada, then re-entering the United States through Montana.

Despite some calling for the bal- loon to be shot down immediately, President Biden opted to let the balloon travel across the United States until it got to the Carolina coast.

The Chinese foreign ministry disputed accusations that the bal- loon was collecting intelligence, calling it a “completely accidental situation” and claiming the bal- loon was used for “research, main- ly meteorological purposes.”

Never mind that a similar bal- loon was caught flying across Lat- in America during the same time.

That’s what the Chinese gov- ernment says today. And the U.S. government claimed in 1947 that a United States Army Air Force’s high-altitude balloon crashed near Roswell, New Mexico. But many people believe that so-called bal- loon crash in Roswell was actually an unidentified flying object (UFO) and that aliens were on board.

I can’t say!
But Virginia’s Ninth District is no stranger to suspicious airspace activity.

In 1987, residents of Wythe County began noticing unusual ob- jects in the sky. The objects over- head featured peculiar patterns of lights and traveled without noise or sound. To some they looked like flying saucers.

Danny Gordon, a lifelong Wy- theville native and radio fixture in the community, regularly reported on these UFO sightings, whether they took place in Wytheville, Fort Chiswell or Rural Retreat.

Gordon’s reporting of these Wythe UFO sightings received a lot of publicity from across the country. Various newsrooms cov- ered these reports and television crews flocked to the area to cover the frenzy.

Gordon has a book dedicated to his lived experiences and report- ing. Don’t Look Up: The Real Story



Morgan Griffith

Representative

Behind the Virginia UFO Sight- ings provides a detailed account of the Wythe County UFO sightings.

You can likely get a copy when Wytheville holds their annual UFO festival. I was at their in- augural event in 2022 along with Gordon. There still is buzz about what exactly happened in 1987.

Also at the festival was Paul Dellinger. Dellinger, a Wytheville resident and reporter for the Roa- noke Times at one point, inter- viewed scores of people over their UFO accounts.

Our modern world is now captur- ing these unusual flying objects on tape and camera, validating what Gordon and Dellinger reported on.

Congress is currently investi- gating the activities of the federal government in its response to UFO sightings.

Last year, the House Oversight Subcommittee on National Secu- rity, the Border, and Foreign Affairs held a hearing titled “Un- identified Anomalous Phenomena: Implications in National Security, Public Safety, and Government Transparency.” A witness to the hearing, a former military intel- ligence official and whistleblower, asserted that officials within the Pentagon and other agencies were withholding information pertain- ing to unidentified aerial phenom- ena (UAP) sightings (the newest name for UFOs).

Three Defense Department of- ficials also admitted that UAP sightings posed national security threats.

Earlier this year, Congressman Tim Burchett of Tennessee’s Sec- ond Congressional District, which shares a border with Virginia’s Ninth Congressional District, in- troduced the UAP Transparency Act. The legislation seeks to de- classify all federal documents re- lated to UAPs.

Congressman Burchett, who leads the House UAP Caucus, has received classified briefings on the subject and thinks the government is engaged in a cover up of sorts.

Other notable government fig- ures, like former National Secu- rity Adviser H.R. McMaster, have highlighted witnesses to phenom- ena “that are just inexplicable by any kind of science available to us.”

While I think UFOs or UAPs are interesting to speculate about, and while I would like to see the clas- sified material, I am not yet a be- liever in the “little green men” or the “greys” or the “reptilians.”

But many people like fictional Agent Fox Mulder from the X Files believe “we are not alone.”

Happy Halloween!

OPINION

A waste of time

I’m writing this column on Tues- day, October 29, as I mentally pre- pare for the scariest day of the year: Election Day.

This is my last column that will run before the Presidential election, and I feel I should say something about it. But what else is there to be said? People have largely made up their minds, for better or worse. There’s not much point in me talk- ing about the candidates.

Instead, I’m going to tell you about a couple of guys I know.

As I’ve mentioned in this space before, I do freelance pinball ma- chine repairs. A couple of years ago, I got a call from a fellow who lived up in the mountains. He had two pinball machines that weren’t working properly, so I packed up my gear and went to pay him a visit.

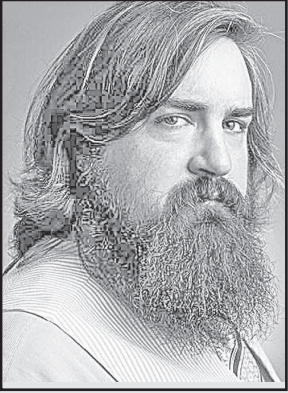
I really liked this guy. He was in his 60s, and he was one of those rare people who are effortlessly funny. He had dozens of well-rehearsed one-liners he would drop with tacti- cal precision. He led me out to his massive outbuilding, which he’d fashioned into a bar/arcade, and I started working on the machines.

Hanging from the ceiling of the outbuilding were several Trump flags, including a flag depicting a photoshopped Trump straddling a tank. I didn’t say a word, but as often happens, the conversation turned to politics soon enough. When we were shooting the breeze about pinball and old cars and bour- bon, we had a great time. When the conversation turned to Trump and the day of reckoning he would bring to the dread liberals, he grew dark and angry, like a different man al- together.

I didn’t argue with him; I was charging him a fair amount of money per hour and it seemed like a poor financial decision to reveal that I myself was one of those in- human liberal monsters. Instead, I just nodded occasionally and tried to steer the conversation back to happier topics whenever I could.

There’s another guy I think about pretty often. Without going into specifics, I met him through a friend. I really liked the guy, and I even ended up conducting his wed- ding ceremony (that’s right, I’m another one of those freelance wed- ding officiant/pinball repairmen; it’s the oldest story in the book).

At some point, this fellow boarded the MAGA train about as hard as



By Ben R. Williams

anyone I’ve ever seen. He slowly became a new man, someone un- recognizable from his previous self. His social media posts went from funny, light-hearted jokes to angry screeds about transgender people and our fallen nation and illegal im- migrants ruining our country. He was a wealthy guy — he seemingly had everything you could possibly want — but he wasn’t enjoying any of it. He was too busy wallowing in rage and fear.

Both of these men are dead now. The first died of natural causes; the second took his own life.

In the case of the second, I’m not going to claim that his suicide directly followed from his turn to- ward the MAGA movement. How- ever, I can’t imagine it helped his mental health.

I know a lot of people like these two men. They’re people who had something unlock inside them- selves during the Trump era, or even in the aftermath of 9/11. All the empathy and compassion and positivity they once possessed has been slowly leached away, replaced with rage and fear and acrimony. They’re glued to the news channels that reinforce their worst suspi- cions, addicted to the quick dopa- mine hits of moral outrage. In the process, they’ve not only pushed away friends and family, they’ve pushed away their own joy, all to worship at the altar of a man who doesn’t even know they’re alive and likely wouldn’t care if he did.

If the two men I mentioned were still alive, I’d ask them one ques- tion: was it worth it? If you had it to do over again, would you spend your final years on this planet crip- pled with anger?

It seems like a hell of a waste of time to me.

Letters To The Editor

Vote for Rayshaun Gravely and Kathy C. Lawson

This letter concerns Holly Kozelsky’s important opinion, “Martinsville elections have hit a new low,” published in The Henry County Enterprise on Oct. 26, 2024. Some individuals use this postcard tactic to influence the city council election, which is an act of desperation: to win at all costs, no matter who you hurt in the process.

Your vote for Rayshaun Gravely and Kathy C. Lawson can counter this Jim Crow campaigning. The postcard distribution targeted a specific community and individ- uals. Throughout this city council race, individuals have resorted to slandering Gravely and Lawson’s reputations. They feel that this is the best way to eliminate the op- position.

Julian Mei, LaNita Herlem, and John Wilson III have joined forc- es to position themselves as the best candidates for the council. They hope to reap the benefits of this underhanded campaigning. However, a closer look at their

platforms reveals a need for more substantial offerings. As voters, we deserve more than just buzz- words. Their campaign signs, re- sembling graffiti, represent their lack of substance, and we must de- mand more from our candidates.

The candidates referenced the word diversity during this coun- cil race. What is diverse of candi- dates, Mei, Herlem, and Wilson, who act like the three peas in a pod. One of their leading sup- porters, a sitting council member, wants them to sit by his side on the city council. A council seat is not a throne.

Let’s refocus on what’s best for our city. By voting for Rayshaun Gravely and Kathy C. Lawson, we can steer the city council back to its rightful state. This is not just a vote but a powerful step towards a more promising future for our city. Your vote matters, and it can make a significant difference in Martinsville’s direction.

Lawrence Mitchell,
Martinsville

Bassett Historical Center to Host Talk on “Battle of New Market”

The Bassett Historical Center will present a lecture on the Bat- tle of New Market, a pivotal 1864 engagement in the Civil War, on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 10:30 a.m.

The spring and summer of 1864 marked a critical period for the Confederate army, which sought to regain momentum following defeats at Gettysburg and Vicks- burg. The Battle of New Market in May of that year launched a vigorous campaign in the Shenandoah Valley. Known for

the heroism of Virginia Military Institute (VMI) cadets, the battle holds deeper historical signifi- cance and local connections often overlooked.

Local historian Jarred Mar- lowe, a 2015 VMI graduate, will explore the battle from a unique perspective, sharing insights that are not commonly discussed. The program, which is free and open to the public, will be held in the Susan L. Adkins Memorial Meeting Room.

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

Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publica- tion. 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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OPINION

New tricks for old hens



By Holly Kozelsky

Every morning, the hens in the coop stand on their perch looking expectantly out the window.

Every morning, I pick up one of the hens, carry her across the new chicken house and put her on the platform in front of the doorway of the new automatic chicken door.

If I'm in a hurry, I gently nudge her from behind, and she plops down to the ground.

If I'm not in a hurry, I wait for her to make her own decision and hope that this time she'll learn. In fact, rather than put her on the platform, I set her on the stepping stool in front of the platform and wait and wait while she looks around her, including up at the platform in front of her. The hope is that she will leap up onto the platform, then go outside by herself.

It's been a month, and so far, these two old hens haven't figured out how to go out the new chicken doorway by themselves. Thank goodness, at least they have figured out how to go back in through the chicken doorway at night.

Previously, we had the kind of chicken coop that is raised up a few feet off the ground. It used a double-hung window as a door for them to go in and out of, but I had to open that window-door in the morning and close it at night.

Since their previous window-door was a few feet off the ground, on the outside we had put a large, overturned flowerpot in front of it for them to leap up onto and go inside. That same overturned flowerpot is there outside as a platform for them to get into the new chicken doorway which is at the same height as the old one, which presumably is why they can figure it out.

We built them a new coop tall enough for us to walk into. That window which used to serve as a chicken door now is just a window, with another matching window across from it in the back wall. There's a regular people-sized door into the coop, and to the right of it there's also a little solar-powered chicken-sized door that opens and closes with the rising and setting of the sun. We were very excited to get that door. First, it's pretty cool; and second, what a relief to have that door open and close when it should,

whether or not we're at home to do it – or, frankly, if it's nasty weather and we just don't want to go out in the heavy rain or freezing cold to do it.

You can't teach old dogs new tricks, and that apparently goes for chickens too.

Yesterday for the first time two of the seven 8-week-old pullets went out the automatic chicken door by themselves and were exploring the great outdoors. It won't be long before the other youngsters do it themselves as well.

Will the two old ladies watch and learn? Or will they still be stumped, forever waiting for one of us to go to the coop and move them outside manually?

I have read in various sources that the label "free range" on eggs that are sold commercially doesn't mean what consumers hope it means.

In the category "free range," hens are kept in a large area instead of in tiny individual cages. However, there are so many birds densely kept in a building in that large area that they are stressed out and peck each other, so – in many cases at least – their beaks are clipped off to prevent pecking.

Their so-called access to the outdoors may be provided by mere holes in the perimeter. In other cases, the access doors to the outside are not ever even opened until the pullets reach a certain age. By then, they are so used to being inside the building that they do not figure out how to go out the access doors to the outside and don't go.

Seeing how my hens are behaving now – and they are used to spending all their days outdoors totally free, just not used to going through a new doorway to do it – I can believe that.

It's been a month, and the human teachers so far have not succeeded in teaching the old hens how to use the new doorway.

Our only hope now is that the old hens will watch and learn from the young pullets.

Sometimes, peer pressure does have its advantages.

"Now what?" After four weeks of gentle instruction, the hens still haven't figured out how to go out through their new doorway.

Letter To The Editor

Martinsville elections

In response to the recent piece about the upcoming local election - I don't believe Martinsville elections have hit a new low. Regardless of one's own opinions about the candidates, I appreciate a robust slate with some qualified candidates.

What HAS hit a new low is the rhetoric surrounding certain aspects of local campaigns. Smear tactics, "follow the money," perceived shady PAC practices, semantics, and blatant falsehoods are all presented in efforts to detract from real issues facing the city – current and future.

In short, a handful of folks are screaming for us to tend the garden while the house is on fire.

Let's talk facts.

Our city faces significant headwinds regarding affordable housing, affordable energy, improving safety, attracting business, and spurring growth. These challenges require a foundational understanding of basic economics and budgeting. Certainly more than, as one candidate called it, "some numbers on a page," I choose someone with a history of sound business practices and acumen.

Speaking of following the money – is anyone asking about salaries and benchmarking, additional positions, hiring practices, and the use of the city's capital fund to ensure we don't need to place city employees in other locations

outside the municipal building? I choose someone who can assess and prioritize based on effort and impact.

Finally – and as a female and a mother this can no longer be ignored – why are we endorsing a candidate who has a history of violence against women (and was fired as a deputy as a result)? Pleading no contest is not the same as "not guilty" (see the Martinsville Bulletin from January 5, 2023), which has been the consistent message when asked about this. Additionally – how can a current council member, candidate for re-election, and board member of the Southside Survivor Response Center endorse this? That, to me, says I cannot trust the intentions or loyalties of a candidate. I choose someone who demonstrates respect and does not demand it through violence.

I believe it's time we elevate Martinsville to an all time high!

I came to Martinsville for a job, but I have stayed because I believe in a promising future for this city and its citizens. I, for one, am exhausted with the attention to the garden, and will be casting my vote based on facts – those that support candidates who will build a solid foundation for the house of Martinsville for the next four years.

Barbara Seymour,
Martinsville

Letter to the Editor

As I am writing this letter, we are a week away from one of the most polarized and consequential elections in our country. There seem to be few undecided voters at this stage of the campaign, and to many of us, it is quite the mystery that anyone could be undecided this far into the process. Perhaps those who claim to be undecided simply do not wish to declare the candidate that they will be voting for, given the volatile state of affairs in the US today.

So this may be a fool's errand, to espouse my views this late in the game when there is little hope that anything I say can make a difference in the outcome. As a lifelong Democrat and supporter of progressive causes, anything I write will likely be dismissed by anyone in the other camp as liberal drivel. And so it seems to make more sense to quote others whose opinions may carry more weight.

"Trump certainly falls into the general definition of fascist... Certainly the former president is in the far-right area, he's certainly an authoritarian, admires people who are dictators – he has said that." John F. Kelly, retired four-star general, US Marine Corps, and former chief of staff in the Trump administration, as quoted in the New York Times

"(Trump) can never be trusted with power again...As citizens, we each have a duty to put country above partisanship to defend

our Constitution. That is why I will be casting my vote for Vice President Kamala Harris." Dick Cheney, former Vice President, as quoted in Politico

"Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American people—does not even pretend to try. Instead he tries to divide us... We can unite without him, drawing on the strengths inherent in our civil society. This will not be easy...but we owe it to our fellow citizens; to past generations that bled to defend our promise; and to our children." James Mattis, retired four-star Marine general and former Secretary of Defense in the Trump administration, in a statement obtained by CNN

There is a long list of distinguished Republicans who have distanced themselves from former President Trump and expressed concern over the future of our democracy if he becomes president again (Wikipedia, "List of Republicans who oppose the Donald Trump 2024 presidential campaign). Our country was founded on great ideals ("life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness") which we have attempted to put into practice over the last 250 years. It is now our duty to vote to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States by voting for Kamala Harris for President.

M. Martha Woody,
Martinsville

Local Student Performer Selected to Perform at Sydney Opera House

Bryson Broadnax, a student at Magna Vista High School, has been selected for The High School Honors Performance Series at Sydney Opera House. Bryson will perform Tenor in July 2025 with the Honor Performance Series. Participation in the Honors Ensembles is limited to the highest-rated young performers from across the world.

Bryson auditioned for the Honors Performance Series and was recently accepted after a review by the Honors Selection Board. Acceptance to the elite group is a direct result of the talent, dedication, and achievements demonstrated in their application and audition recording.

Bryson has studied music for 11 years and is a member of Bethel Way Church of Christ & Youth Choir and Magna Vista Show Choir. Bryson is a senior at Magna Vista High School - he performed at Carnegie Hall May 2024, 2nd alternate for State Choir 2023, All District Choir 2020-present, All Regional Choir 2020-pres-

ent, lead vocalist in Rock of Ages musical 2023, Ensemble in Chicago musical 2022, Stage hand in Mean Girls Musical 2024, Fix My Life One Act in 2021 regionals, One Act-How To Win A One Act 2022 state, Poppys Play House One Act 2023 regionals, Cross Country 2021-present, and Track 2021-2024. In response to their selection, Bryson said, "Oh, my God, I'm going to Australia."

Bryson will join performers from around the globe for a special performance at the world-famous Sydney Opera House, a venue that marks the pinnacle of musical achievement. The finalists will come together in Sydney, Australia where they will have the opportunity to learn from world-renowned conductors, work with other performers, and get a taste of Sydney Australia. The Honors Performance will take place July 7-12, 2025 and is open to the public. Tickets can be purchased beginning approximately 60 days prior to the performance through The Honors Performance

Series by WorldStrides box office.

"Being selected to the Honors Performance Series is something each Finalist should be extremely proud of accomplishing," said Marion Gomez, Music Director for the Honors Performance Series. "We processed nearly 10,000 nominations this year and have selected the most talented student performers from around the world. Working with these conductors and performing at these renowned music halls is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that these musicians will never forget."

The Honors Performance Series was created to showcase accomplished individual student performers on an international level by allowing them to study under master conductors and perform in world renowned venues. The Honors Performance Series is proudly presented by WorldStrides, the nation's leading educational travel organization. Learn more by visiting www.honorsperformance.org and www.worldstrides.com.



Bryson Broadnax

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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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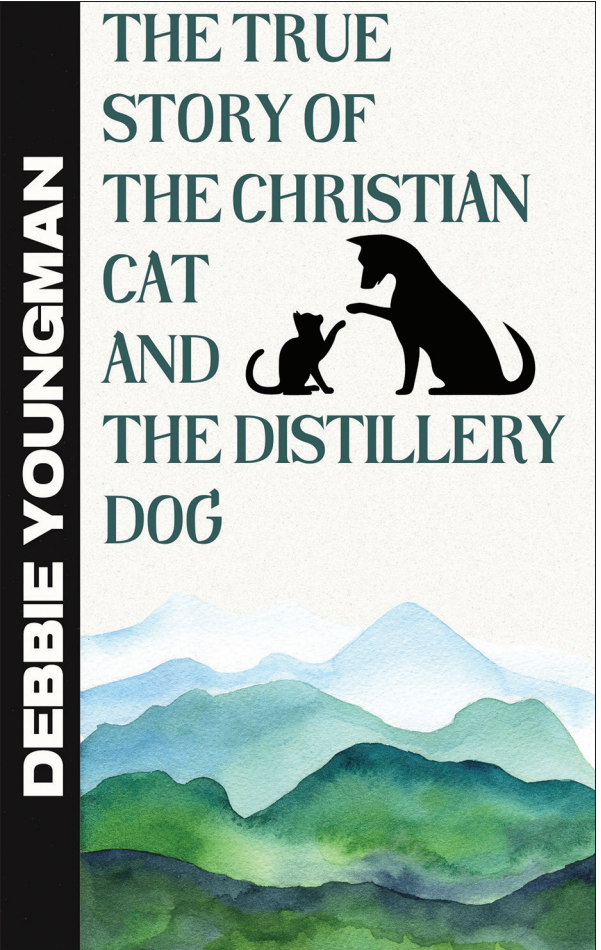
Release of new book, book signing set



Henry County Author Debbie Youngman released her second book – The True Story of the Christian Cat and the Distillery Dog. Her latest release is the story of a unique friendship between her cat, Sissy Cat, and the neighboring dog, Spirit.

Youngman will hold a book signing at Smith River Spirits, located in Ridgeway, on November 1 & 2, featuring an opportunity to meet the inspiring duo for her latest release.

Born, raised and educated in East Tennessee, and an avid fan of the University of Tennessee Volunteers, Youngman relocated to the Martinsville-Henry County area more than 45 years ago. After dedicating her life to educating youth in the City of Martinsville and Rockingham County, N.C. schools, she began writing



books in 2017 upon her retirement as a librarian. Her first book, Laughter in the Library, was released in 2019.

Youngman enjoys sharing light hearted, entertaining and faith-based human interest stories from her life 'living out in the country,' as she likes to say of Henry County.

For more information, visit Youngman's Facebook page. Additional information about her upcoming book signing can also be found on her Facebook page, as well as on Smith River Spirits' social media channels.

Community partnerships make handicap ramp a reality

The ANCHOR Commission's Lee Ford Camp recently now has a new handicap ramp at the Kiwanis Lodge, through community partnerships with the Martinsville Kiwanis Club, First Baptist Church of Collinsville, and Lester Building Supply. The 20-foot handicap ramp now allows easy access to the lodge at Lee Ford Camp for everyone, all members of the community, regardless of their abilities.

"The most requested need we receive from people who use Lee Ford Camp is a handicap ramp. ANCHOR is appreciative of the efforts of these community partners to work together to make this happen. We are incredibly thankful for their support," Ricky Walker, executive director of ANCHOR Commission, said.



Ricky Walker, executive director of the ANCHOR Commission (left) and Gene Clark, general manager of Lester Building Supply (right), stand on the new handicap ramp in front of the Lee Ford Camp Lodge.

The project, he noted, "was completed with the First Baptist Church of Collinsville providing the invaluable labor, 'being the hands and feet of Christ,' and Lester Building Supply has always been a supportive and community-centered business, and the ongoing support of the Martinsville Kiwanis Club for many years."

Lee Ford Camp is a 17-acre camp with a 1.5-acre lake, several picnic areas with tables, a large lodge, two bunkhouses, a small cabin, primitive camping spots and a climbing tower. The camp annually hosts groups from the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Peer Recovery Group, church youth groups. In 2023, nearly 2,500 people visited the camp for birthday parties, baby showers, family reunions and weddings. To inquire about use of the camp, call (276) 634-2910 or email info@anchorservices.org.

ANCHOR's mission is to provide a new chance for youth in our community. While they remain close to home, ANCHOR provides comprehensive care and individualized treatment to assist youth and their families in achieving optimal health and well-being.

LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **November 13, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following these public hearings, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the applications to the Board of Supervisors. The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct public hearings on the following applications on **November 26, 2024 at 6:00 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 input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearings.

Case R-24-12 Edwin and Iris Gillispie

The property is located on the south side of Valley Dr, between the addresses of 217 & 319 Valley Dr, in the Blackberry District. The property is shown on Tax Map 39.2(7)/12F. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 2.67-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant wishes to use the property for agricultural purposes.

Case R-24-13 John K. Adams

The property is located in the south east corner of the intersection of Stones Dairy Rd and Bittersweet Dr, in the Blackberry District. The property is shown on Tax Map 25.9(8A)/A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of this lot from Suburban Residential District S-R to Rural Residential District R-R. The applicant wished to place a manufactured home on the property.

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

Da Capo Virginia Celebrates a Decade of VIVO Programming in County Schools



Contributed photos

Da Capo Virginia marked the 10th anniversary of its innovative Vivo programming in Henry County Public Schools, dedicated to serving students with special needs, ages 2-22. This landmark initiative has transformed the educational landscape, providing exceptional music and arts instruction that empowers hundreds of students to communicate, express, and connect in meaningful ways.

Vivo has not only brought music and arts into the lives of students with disabilities but has also fostered purposeful inclusion with their neurotypical peers. Over the past decade, students have achieved remarkable milestones, often accomplishing things their families and teachers once thought impossible. Through collaborative concerts and artistic experiences, students have had the opportunity to perform, present, and captivate audiences, showcasing their talents alongside performers of all ability levels.

The program has hosted 16 large-scale collaborative concerts featuring contributions from a variety of partners within the community and the school district. Notable collaborators have included:

- Magna Vista High School Show Choir
- Laurel Park Middle School Choirs
- HCPS Elementary Music Staff
- Magna Vista High School Cheer Squads
- Visual Arts Departments at Laurel Park and Magna Vista High Schools
- Drama Department at Magna Vista High



School

- Bojangles Bluegrass Band
- Local musicians

Vivo employs an arts integration approach that aligns with the Virginia Standards of Learning, emphasizing both artistic and academic goals. Additionally, the program focuses on social-emotional learning, empowering students to understand their identities, find belonging, and develop agency within their communities.

“We are proud to advocate for special education staff across the district and to provide



essential support for families of students with disabilities,” said Tracee Prillaman, Executive Director and Vivo Program Lead. “Vivo is a testament to what can be achieved when we harness the power of music and the arts to uplift every student.”

As we celebrate this milestone, Da Capo Virginia looks forward to continuing to create inclusive and enriching experiences that inspire creativity and foster connections among all students. For more information about Vivo programming and upcoming events, please visit www.dacapova.org.

NCI, IALR to host event for 2024 National Apprenticeship Week

New College Institute (NCI) and The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) are excited to host “Beyond the Traditional: Expanding Apprenticeship Opportunities in Emerging Industries” on Tuesday, November 19, for National Apprenticeship Week (NAW). This event will be held from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at New College Institute’s Baldwin Building, located at 191 Fayette Street, Martinsville.

Employers will learn about opportunities for Registered Apprenticeship in emerging industries like hospitality and healthcare, as well as discover how virtual reality technology can enhance training by using the virtual reality training equipment available at NCI.

“Apprenticeship is increasingly being recognized as an effective workforce strategy across a variety of nontraditional sectors, including healthcare and hospitality,” said Natori Neal, Apprenticeship Coordinator, IALR. “This event aims to highlight how Registered Apprenticeship can open doors in

these industries, providing participants with an interactive look at how innovative training approaches like VR simulations can prepare them for success.”

The Piedmont Regional Criminal Justice Training Academy (PRCJTA) will demonstrate the MILO Range Theater simulator, which gives trainees a fully immersive and realistic training environment with its 180° field of view. Because of its size, trainees interact from all directions, allowing them to respond to multiple conflicts and apply proper tactics simultaneously. With just the click of a button from the instructor’s computer, each scenario can be played out in multiple different ways depending on the trainee’s responses.

NCI and PRCJTA allow employers to use the MILO Range Theater simulator for de-escalation training that can be incorporated into a Registered Apprenticeship program. For just \$100, groups of 4-10 trainees can participate in a four-hour training course where they will receive an overview of the scenario, receive hands-on

training, participate in simulation exercises, and debrief what they’ve learned. This simulator offers real-life training scenarios and provides the option to film and create your own scenarios.

“We partnered with the Piedmont Regional Criminal Justice Training Academy to bring the MILO Range Theater Simulator to NCI for law enforcement training, but other organizations can

greatly benefit from this training as well,” exclaimed Joe Sumner, Executive Director for NCI. “If there isn’t already a scenario uploaded into the system that fits an employer’s needs, we can create personalized scenarios for organizations who need particular training in a specific facility.”

Registration is required. Employers can register at <https://forms.office.com/r/3038txT8uc>.

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Martinsville High School earns state award

Martinsville High School was among 49 schools in Virginia to receive the 2024-2025 Board of Education Continuous Improvement Award. Schools recognized for continuous improvement met at least one of the following criteria based on performance from school years 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024.

The school demonstrates an increase: in the combined rate for math, reading, and science for each of the past three years, with a total increase across the three years of ten points or more; in the

combined rate for two or more student groups in reading and math for each of the past three years, with a total increase across the three years of ten points or more; or in the GCI for each of the past three years, with a total increase across the three years of four percent or more; and the school demonstrates a decrease in the dropout rate for each of the past three years with the total reduction across three years of fifteen percent or more of the first year's dropout rate.

Petty, family to serve as Grand Marshals for Xfinity 500 at Martinsville Speedway

More than 40 members of the Petty family, including the “King” himself Richard Petty, are set to give the command ahead of the second-to-last race of the 2024 NASCAR Cup Series season at Martinsville Speedway, calling for drivers to start their engines before the Xfinity 500 on Sunday, Nov. 3.

Three Xfinity Rewards members will also help serve as Grand Marshals and Honorary Starter for the race. Xfinity Rewards is a free program available to Xfinity customers, where members enjoy access to exclusive discounts, events, and virtual and live experiences that only Comcast NBCUniversal can make possible. Xfinity customers can sign up through the Xfinity App or online at [Xfinity.com/rewards](https://www.xfinity.com/rewards).

“Martinsville Speedway and NASCAR have a long history together that’s lasted since the early days of the sport, and the Petty family is a large part of that history,” said Martinsville Speedway President Clay Campbell. “Between the remarkable wins the family has captured here and their ties to the community, having grown up just an hour away from the track, the Petty family legacy is strong at Martinsville Speedway. We’re honored to have so many of them join us for Sunday’s race.”

2024 marks 75 years of the Petty family in NASCAR, a legacy that began with Hall of Famer Lee Petty, passed down to his sons Richard and Maurice, then on to their sons Kyle, Ritchie, Timmy and Mark. The Petty family makes up four generations of NASCAR Cup Series drivers, the first four generation family in sports. The Pettys have been celebrated across every track at which NASCAR has raced so far this season, honoring 75 years of history.

The Pettys have a longstanding legacy at Martinsville Speedway. In 1949, Lee Petty raced in – and won – his very first NASCAR race at the historic short track kick-starting their story. A decade later, Lee’s son Richard earned his first of many wins at Martinsville Speedway. Richard Petty currently holds the record for most wins at Martinsville Speedway at 15, with his first three wins taking place in the years before the coveted Grandfather Clock tradition began. The King has 12 Grandfather Clock trophies to represent his legendary status at the famed short track.

Earlier this year, Martinsville Speedway joined all other tracks on the NASCAR schedule in unveiling the King’s Hat exhibit, a statue shaped like Richard Petty’s famous cowboy hat, detailing the history of the Pettys at Martinsville and across NASCAR.

Fans can see the King’s Hat and much more during the upcoming NASCAR Playoffs race weekend at Martinsville Speedway, featuring the NASCAR CRAFTSMAN Truck Series Zip Buy Now, Pay Later 200 on Friday, Nov. 1.

On Saturday, Nov. 2, fans can witness the action of the NASCAR Xfinity Series National Debt Relief 250 as drivers take to the track for an intense battle. Then, on Sunday, Nov. 3, just after over 40 members of the Petty family give the command, drivers in the NASCAR Cup Series will compete for those final spots in the Championship 4 in the Xfinity 500, the penultimate race of the season.

For more details or to purchase tickets to the NASCAR Playoffs race weekend at Martinsville Speedway, please visit www.martinsvillespeedway.com.

Outstanding warrant served after search

On Oct. 23, deputies from the Henry County Sheriff’s Office arrested Ronald Dave Robinette III, 27, who was wanted on an outstanding warrant, at a residence on Log Manor Road in Spencer, according to authorities.

Deputies received information that Robinette was at 1349 Log Manor Road and attempted for an extended period to persuade him to surrender peacefully. After securing a search warrant, they entered the home and found Robinette allegedly hiding in a small, enclosed space beneath the stairs. He was taken into custody without incident.

During the search, deputies discovered items consistent with narcotics possession, prompting a second search warrant. The follow-up search led to the discovery of suspected methamphetamine, digital scales, a cell phone, and two firearms that authorities allege were illegally possessed. All evidence has been secured and will be sent to the Western Regional Lab for



Dave Robinette III

testing.

Robinette was charged with contempt of court and is being held without bond at the Henry County Adult Detention Center.

The investigation is ongoing, and anyone with information is encouraged 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 tips that aid crime investigations.

Polling places in Henry County, Martinsville

The polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day, which is Tuesday, Nov. 5.

Precincts in Henry County:

Bassett #2, Bassett Rescue Squad Training Center, 1946 Riverside Drive, Bassett.

Gunville, Bassett Ruritan Building, 277 Philpott Dam Road, Bassett.

Scott’s Tanyard, Sanville Elementary School, 19 Sanville School Road, Bassett.

Fieldale Victory Baptist Church, 1300 Dillon’s Fork Road, Fieldale.

Horsepasture #1, Horsepasture Fire Recreation Building, 17787 A L Philpott Highway, Ridgeway.

Horsepasture #2 Horsepasture Ruritan Building, 16209 A L Philpott Highway, Ridgeway.

Spencer, Spencer Ruritan Building (Lower Level), 150 George Taylor Road, Spencer.

Axton, Axton Elementary School, 1500 A L Philpott Highway, Axton.

Irisburg, Galilean House of Worship, 5078 A. L. Philpott Highway, Martinsville.

Mount Olivet, Mount Olivet Ruritan Building, 400 Ward Road, Martinsville.

Mountain Valley, MVL-Mountain Valley Leatherwood Club, 2485 North Fork Road, Martinsville.

Collinsville #1, FC Middle School B (LEFT SIDE), 645 Miles Road, Collinsville.

Daniels Creek, FC Middle School A (AUDITORIUM), 645 Miles Road, Collinsville.

Collinsville #2, Collinsville Primary/CCL, 15 Primary School Road, Collinsville.

Mountain View, Woodland

Heights Free Will Baptist Church, 1995 Old Chatham Road, Martinsville.

Bassett #1, Bassett Fire Station, 3735 Fairy Stone Park Hwy, Bassett.

Figsboro, Figsboro School/Career Academy, 340 Ridgedale Drive, Martinsville.

Stanleytown, Stanleytown Elementary School, 74 Edgewood Drive, Stanleytown.

Oak Level, Oak Level Ruritan Building, 7668 Oak Level Road, Bassett.

Dyers Store, Dyers Store Fire Department, 3230 Chatham Road, Martinsville.

Fontaine, Rich Acres Elementary School, 400 Rich Acres School Road, Martinsville.

Hillcrest, Rich Acres Fire Station, 1766 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville.

Ridgeway #1, Ridgeway Library, 900 Vista View Lane, Ridgeway.

Ridgeway #2, Ridgeway Baptist Church Social Hall, 15 Church Street, Ridgeway.

Precincts in Martinsville:

- Martinsville High School, 351 Commonwealth Boulevard, Martinsville.

- Martinsville Middle School, 30 Cleveland Avenue, Martinsville.

- Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Avenue, Martinsville.

- Albert Harris School, 710 Smith Street, Martinsville.

- Martinsville City Housing Office, 605 4th Street, Martinsville.

- Martinsville City Schools Administrative Offices, 746 Indian Trail, Martinsville.

Drivers Encouraged to Be Mindful of Deer on Roadways This Fall

Autumn means falling leaves and shorter periods of daylight. It also brings an increase in vehicle collisions with deer.

Deer mating and migration that typically occur this time of year contribute to an increase in vehicle-deer crashes. In fact, November is the peak month for insurance claims related to vehicle collisions with deer. The State Corporation Commission’s (SCC’s) Bureau of Insurance reminds motorists to stay alert for deer when driving on Virginia’s roadways.

“Even the most careful driver is at risk of colliding with a deer, which can leap into a roadway with no warning,” said Virginia Insurance Commissioner Scott White. “As fall arrives, ask your insurance agent or company to find out if your automobile policy provides coverage for claims involving a crash with deer or other wildlife.”


Insurance policies with liability-only coverage may not cover damage to your auto if it strikes a deer. Collisions with deer typically fall under optional “other-than-collision” (or “comprehensive”) coverage. In addition to deer crashes, other-than-collision coverage often

covers other types of damage to your vehicle such as damage resulting from theft, wind, hail, flood, fire or vandalism.

Eliminating distractions in your vehicle and lowering your travel speed may help prevent a crash with deer. If a deer runs out in the road, drivers should stay in their lane and brake as carefully as possible. While jarring, striking a deer is often safer for the driver and vehicle occupants than swerving sharply, which may cause loss of control, creating additional peril for you and your vehicle as well as putting surrounding vehicles and their occupants at risk.

If your vehicle strikes a deer, notify law enforcement as soon as possible. If you plan to file an insurance claim, notify your insurance company and take photos of the scene of the crash when safe to do so, as well as damage to the vehicle. If you notice fluids leaking from your vehicle, damaged tires, broken lights or other damage, call a tow truck.


For more information, call the Bureau at 1-877-310-6560 or in Richmond at 804-371-9741 or visit [scc.virginia.gov/pages/Insurance](https://www.scc.virginia.gov/pages/Insurance).



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@henrycountytva.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@henrycountytva.gov

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

Crossing the Lines

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

Pay reinstated for Station 8 employees, board discusses new position

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors approved reinstating the rate of hourly pay to Station 8 employees and changing their shift schedules to 24/72 at a meeting last week.

The pay was cut in the third quarter of this year.

The motion to reinstate the pay was approved in a 3-1-1 vote.

Jane Fulk, of the Dan River District made the motion that also was supported by Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, and vice chairman Jonathan Wood, of the Peters Creek District.

After the motion was made, Doug Perry, chairman and of the Smith River District, suggested that many of the concerns and issues among the board stem from past issues.,

“I know the way we’ve always done things just wasn’t working. The last time it worked, it only worked and was successful because our EMS Coordinator was literally working 15 to 20 hours a day, six and seven days a week,” Perry said.

Under the restructuring (that was not explained during the meeting), Perry said the county is better ‘structured,’ with assessments, and evaluations. “The deputy chief that would have their finger on the pulse, they can work with our employees and say, ‘this is the better mousetrap,’” he said.

Perry suggested the scheduling for Station 8 be changed as well. Without it, he noted some EMTs would be “making like \$70,000 a year,” and believes the chief and deputy chief should revisit the scheduling and come up with a more proper schedule for employees.

“I know personally, I’m not a fan of any 24-hour shift, but that’s my personal opinion, and I think there is something that would work better,” and not “put the cart before the horse,” he said.

“I’ve made a motion Mr. Chairman. Right now, BLS is making \$15.24” an hour, “they can go to



Steve Allen, former EMS Director Steve Allen, was among those to address the board Monday.

Walmart and do that. Actually, they can go to Walmart and make more, so you have a motion on the floor,” Fulk said.

“And I’m just saying along with the pay, that schedule needs to be looked at as well,” Perry said.

Steve Marshall, of the Blue Ridge District, failed to vote on the motion due to “radically misunderstood” changes.

“I think there’s a lot of work going on with this right now,” Marshall said. “The idea of moving forward is to pay these people more money, not less, and to expand Station 8 Fire and EMS. That’s certainly my goal. So, at this time I will abstain.”

Specific changes were not discussed or made public at the meeting, even after Perry also voted against the motion.

“Basically, similar to what Mr. Marshall was saying, I think this needs time to settle, look at it, and be more methodical and diligent to ensure that thing is correct,” Perry said.

The hourly rates and scheduling went into effect Monday, October 28 to allow work schedules to be changed to reflect the new working hours.

Chamber awarded EcoAmbassador Grant from DRBA

The Patrick County Chamber of Commerce is the recipient of one of the 2024 Dan River Basin Association’s (DRBA’s) EcoAmbassador Council Grants. The \$1,000 grant will go toward creating and installing the River Ranger supply box on the Mayo River Rail Trail.

The chamber recently installed a Free Little Library in the parking area adjacent to the river access point and would add a resource that provides tools for kids to explore the river. The idea is to have a container that consists of waterproof bug, bird, and animal identification sheets, seine nets, binoculars, magnifying containers for aquatic spe-



EcoAmbassador Logo

cies, a logbook for people to record what they find and other related items. Funds would be used to purchase some of the recommended books from the Start with a Book River Rangers program to be placed in the current Free Little Library.

Ararat Ruritan Club joins local hunters and Hunters for the Hungry to help those in need



Kevin Smith of the Ararat Ruritan Club shows the amount of space available in the cooler.

The Ararat Ruritan Club has become the area drop-off location for Hunters for the Hungry, an organization that processes deer to provide meals for those in need.

According to Hunters organization, it has provided 31.7 million servings since their founding in 1991. With an average deer producing between 36-84, ½ to 1 pound servings, local hunters are encouraged to donate their deer to provide much needed meals.

The program is a great way for hunters who will not eat the meat, or who have filled their freezers

to donate extra meat to help feed those in need.

Kevin Smith of the Ararat Ruritan Club, said, “This is something I’ve wanted to do the last three or four years, but we didn’t have a collection site.” Since there is not a processor in Patrick County, the Ararat club has stepped up to be the drop-off location for the area.

To drop off a deer, hunters can call Kevin Smith at (276) 229-6493. Those wishing to donate to Hunter for the Hungry can go to their website <https://h4hungry.org/>.

PCEF promotes Patrick Promise with business leaders

As part of their ongoing efforts to support the higher education pursuits of students living in Patrick County, Patrick County Education Foundation (PCEF) members held a community business leader’s meeting on October 10, at Patrick & Henry Community College’s (P&HCC) Baliles and Reynolds Learning Center in Stuart.

Attendees heard from PCEF Chairman Dr. Stewart Roberson and P&HCC President and PCEF Executive Director Dr. Greg Hodges on the status of Patrick Promise, the organization’s fund dedicated to providing free tuition to Patrick County students attending P&HCC.

“As of 2023, Patrick County ranked in the top 10 on-time high school graduation rates in the Commonwealth, but 105 of 133 counties/cities in Virginia for post-high school educational attainment rates,” said Hodges, adding, “We are dedicated to helping every community member obtain good paying jobs with fam-

ily sustaining wages in Patrick County.”

Based on current P&HCC enrollment, PCEF has established student tuition support Patrick Promise fund goals of \$45,000 for year 1, \$90,000 for year 2, and \$135,000 for year 3 (and each year thereafter). With a total of \$270,000 needed to launch Patrick Promise, PCEF is well on its way with a current balance of \$160,175.68.

“Patrick Promise will operate in the same way The SEED Fund supports P&HCC students living in Martinsville and Henry County. We believe that Patrick County students are well worth our investment, and we invite and encourage business and community members to join us in supporting their education so that they are equipped to support the continued growth of our area,” said PCEF Board Chair Dr. Stewart Roberson.

To donate to Patrick Promise, visit bit.ly/PCEFpatrickpromise.

PCHS Band Named Grand Champions

The Pride of Patrick County traveled to Richlands High School, on Saturday, October 26,

to compete in the Big Blue Classic, placing 1st out of 20 bands.



PCHS Band Grand Champions: 3A Best in Class, 1st in Class 3-4 A



Color Guard Superior Rating: 1st Place Color Guard, 1st Place General Effects, 1st Place Music, 1st Place Marching, 2nd Place Percussion, 2nd Place Drum Major

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

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

Lt. Gov. Earle-Sears Visits Henry County, Meets with Local Law Enforcement



Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears visited Henry County on Monday, Oct. 28, where she met with officers from the Henry County Sheriff’s Office, Martinsville Police Department, and Martinsville Sheriff’s Office. During the visit, she learned more about the work these agencies perform and their dedication to serving the community. Earle-Sears also toured the Henry County Adult Detention Center, where staff highlighted the facility’s operations and discussed ongoing efforts to ensure safety and security in the county.

Health Notes

From the West Piedmont Health District (WPHD):
Pneumonia cases on the rise

Virginia has observed an increase in pneumonia ED and UC visits, particularly among children 5–17 years of age. Outbreaks of pneumonia at K–12 schools and a university have identified a variety of causes including enterovirus, rhinovirus, and Mycoplasma pneumoniae, according to health officials at the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).

The number of weekly ED and urgent care (UC) visits with diagnosed pneumonia among 0–17 year olds in Virginia continues to rapidly increase. From October 13–19 there were 1,719 pneumonia visits, a 32% increase from the previous week. Of the visits, over 82% were

among 5–17 year olds, and 18% were among 0–4 year olds. This is more than triple the weekly peak observed in the past two years. There are also increases observed among 18–44 year olds.

Practice healthy respiratory habits, including routine and seasonal immunizations. This will help prevent respiratory infections that can lead to pneumonia. Additionally, promoting healthy habits (e.g., staying home when sick, using your elbow to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, and frequently washing hands) can help reduce the spread of respiratory illnesses.

New dashboards now live

The VDH’s Department of Disease Prevention has created two new dashboards to reformat the HIV annual report, which went live Tuesday, Oct. 29, on the VDH HIV data webpage Data and Reports - Disease Prevention (virginia.gov).

The new dashboards are an on-line interactive dashboard with visualizations that improve visibility and readability and highlighted points about the data visualizations. The dashboards contain 2017-2023 data from across Virginia. Data can be filtered by year, transmission risk, and age group.

Both dashboards include inter-

active maps with case counts and visualizations focused on health equity regarding HIV. The two dashboards represent new diagnoses and persons with HIV in Virginia.

The total population of Virginia is also presented in multiple visuals to demonstrate the health inequities in HIV diagnoses.

If HIV is left untreated it can lead to AIDS. People with AIDS living in Virginia are also represented in this dashboard.

Learn more at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/disease-prevention/disease-prevention/hiv-aids>.

Radon levels at home

According to health officials, one in 15 homes in the United States have elevated levels of radon. Learn more about radon and order

an at-home radon test kit for only \$4 from the VDH’s Radon page, at www.vdhradon.org/?utm_campaign=20241029

CHW participate in conference



Martinsville-Henry County Community Health Workers (CHW) Christa Moore, Karen Millner, and Loleader Valentine attended the 4th annual Conference of the Virginia Community Health Worker Association which convened October 24 in Richmond.

This event brought together rec-

ognized speakers; local, state, and federal dignitaries; nonprofit, philanthropic, and private-sector experts; and CHWs from all over the state to share and glean from each other. It was a chance to network, grow professionally, and celebrate the significant advances CHWs have made in our communities.

Enjoy upcoming holidays with safety tips in mind

As the year’s end draws closer, holiday celebrations, savory feasts and festive displays can be fully enjoyed with preventive safety measures.

“Just a few precautions to prevent fire and injury can keep your home and family safe during the upcoming holidays,” advised Scott DeNoon, vice president of underwriting and policy services for Virginia Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. “This includes testing smoke alarms, and ensuring flashlights, fire extinguishers and electrical decor are ready for use.”

To stay safe while trick-or-treating, the Virginia Department of Health advises families to wear reflective clothing, carry a fully charged flashlight, and make sure costumes don’t block vision or inhibit mobility. Use crosswalks, and stick to the sidewalks whenever possible. Or walk on the far edge of the road, facing traffic.

Motorists also should be extra vigilant on Halloween night by observing speed limits and limiting distractions during increased pedestrian activity.

The kitchen is the heart of the home, and the source of most home fires in the U.S. Thanksgiving is by far the leading day for home cooking fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Unattended cooking is the primary factor contributing to cooking fires and casualties.

Arlington County Fire Department advises:

- Always stay in the kitchen

while frying, boiling or broiling food.

- Check food regularly while simmering, baking or roasting, and use a timer.
- Keep flammable items and children away from the stovetop.
- Small grease fire: Smother it by sliding the lid over the pan and turn off the stovetop.
- Oven fire: Turn off the oven and keep the door closed.
- In case of a kitchen fire: Close the door to help contain the fire. Call 911 from a safe place outside.

Christmas trees account for hundreds of fires annually, with 33% of those occurring in January, according to National Fire Prevention Association. The longer a natural tree is kept after Christmas, the higher the fire risk.

Smyth County Public Safety advises placing trees away from heat sources, and using only nonflammable decorations. Inspect lights for frayed wires or defects before use, and do not leave lights on unattended. Keep the stand for a fresh-cut tree full of water, and discard a dry tree immediately.

When purchasing new lights designed for outdoor use, the American Safety Council recommends cool-burning LED lights from a reputable manufacturer. Plan lighting displays around available light sockets, plugged into a ground fault circuit interrupter, or GFCI, outlet. Do not overload sockets or connect more than three strands of incandescent lights.

Time is running out for small businesses to file beneficial ownership reports

American Farm Bureau Federation is reminding farmers that time is running out to file Beneficial Ownership Information with the federal government—or face fines or even jail time.

AFBF economists indicated more than 230,000 farms nationwide are required to file, but data indicates less than 11% of all eligible businesses have done so.

Virginia farmers who operate as a corporation, LLC or a limited partnership are required to report additional small business entities in which they have an ownership stake to the U.S. Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network by Jan. 1, 2025.

This requirement stems from the Corporate Transparency Act, a federal law passed in 2021 that was created to combat money laundering. Many farms are required to complete a BOI if they employ fewer than 20 employees or receive under \$5 million in cash receipts.

“It certainly creates more burdensome paperwork for farmers,” said Tony Banks, senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. “But thankfully there is no filing fee. We encourage our state’s farmers to get this done before the deadlines.”

Companies are now required to provide operational information, including details about each beneficial owner. A beneficial owner is anyone who owns at least 25% of the company or has “substantial control” over the business. The online registry will collect names, dates of birth, home addresses and photo IDs.

“Certain farms are among the businesses included in this law to report information about their beneficial owners,” explained Ben Rowe, VFBF director of national af-

fairs. “Congress’ intent was to try to make it harder to illegally hide assets and to prevent financial crimes, particularly through the use of shell companies. However, because of the additional regulatory burden the law would place on farmers, the American Farm Bureau Federation opposed the bill.”

Entities registered before Jan. 1, 2024, have one year to file their first BOI. Those created and registered after that must file their BOI within 90 days of receiving notice from the secretary of state. Entities created after Jan. 1, 2025, will have 30 days to upload reports.

The law’s 23 reporting exemptions generally apply to large businesses that already disclose that information. For example, banks and accounting firms are exempt, but farms are not. However, most tax-exempt entities are not required to file reports.

In March, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama held the CTA unconstitutional. Some relief was granted, only limited to the National Small Business Association—plaintiffs backed by AFBF.

The court’s decision could pave the way for further challenges to the CTA.

“It is advisable for agricultural enterprises to consult with their financial advisers to better understand how the CTA impacts their business,” Banks recommended.

Failure to report may result in civil and criminal penalties of up to \$10,000 and up to two years’ imprisonment. Visit the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network website portal at fincen.gov/boi to file reports and updates.

Farmers are encouraged to contact an accountant or attorney if unsure about filing a BOI.

FOR MORE, VISIT THE ENTERPRISE AT WWW.ENTERPRISE.NET

Three arrested in Oct. 23 searches

The Henry County Sheriff's Office Narcotics Interdiction Unit conducted a traffic stop on Oct. 23, that led to two arrests and the seizure of suspected fentanyl. The stop uncovered the suspected narcotics inside a vehicle occupied by Rhona Crutchfield, 60, and Amanda Spangler, 44, according to authorities.

Crutchfield was taken into custody on outstanding distribution charges in Henry County, while Spangler was charged with possession of a controlled substance.

Information gathered during the stop directed VICE investigators to a residence at 65 South Creek Court in Collinsville. Following the lead, the Henry County Sheriff's Office SWAT team executed a search warrant at the South Creek Court residence. The search resulted in the seizure of suspected fentanyl, methamphetamine, and digital scales, all of which will be analyzed by the Department of Forensic Science in Roanoke.

During the search, investigators located Tiwan Maurice Dillard, 49, of Bassett, inside the residence. Dillard was arrested on an outstanding charge from



Amanda Spangler

Martinsville City for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, and subsequently charged with possession of a controlled substance.

The investigation remains ongoing, and authorities urge anyone with information about this incident to contact the Henry County Sheriff's Office at (276) 638-8751 or Crimestoppers at 63-CRIME (632-7463). Crimestoppers offers rewards of up to \$2,500 for information related to crime investigations. The amount of any reward depends on the information provided.



South Creek Court



Rhona Crutchfield



Tiwan Dillard

Traffic Advisory Issued for Martinsville Race Weekend

Race fans headed to Martinsville Speedway for the weekend's events should expect heavy traffic around the area from Friday, Nov. 1 through Sunday, Nov. 3. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) advises fans to follow posted signs and recommended traffic routes to manage congestion near the speedway.

For Sunday's race on Nov. 3, VDOT will deploy signs and changeable message boards throughout the region to guide drivers. Both vehicle and pedestrian traffic are expected to

be dense. Traffic patterns will direct vehicles approaching the speedway in specific routes to alleviate congestion, and speed limits on the U.S. 220/58 Bypass will gradually decrease from 65 mph to 35 mph near the venue.

- From Roanoke, Stuart, and North/West Areas: Fans traveling south on U.S. 220 and east on U.S. 58 should continue on the U.S. 58/220 Bypass beyond the speedway interchange, turning right onto the access road one mile east of the U.S. 220 interchange for speedway entry.

- From Danville and East of Martinsville: Drivers on the U.S. 58 Bypass should follow signs directing them to use the back gate, located off the bypass east of the speedway.

- From Greensboro and South of Martinsville: Motorists should watch for electronic message boards and follow police instructions, with through-traffic advised to use the left lane.

Race attendees are encouraged to follow all posted signs, arrive early, and anticipate delays throughout the weekend.

Grant Funds Available to Protect Civil War Battlefield Lands

More than \$3.9 million in grant funds will be allocated to protect 621 acres of battlefield lands associated with the American Civil War throughout Virginia, Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced. The Department of Historic Resources (DHR) will administer the grant funds, which were awarded through the Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund (VBPF) program.

For the 2024 grant round, the Governor's Office has confirmed that a total of 10 projects will receive funding through the VBPF to acquire land for the purposes of permanent preservation and battlefield interpretation. The grants, to be distributed by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources through the Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund program, will help protect over 620 acres of battlefield lands across Virginia. Targeted tracts are in Rockingham, Frederick, Henrico, Dinwiddie, Shenandoah, and Spotsylvania counties.

Of the projects receiving

awards, seven will use the funds for fee-simple acquisitions of historic properties and three will use the funds toward the purchase of a historic preservation and open-space easement on a given property. To ensure that the properties will be accessible to the public, grant recipients will install interpretive signs and develop tours and pedestrian trails.

"Virginia has played a pivotal role in the history of our nation, and it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we preserve that history," said Youngkin. "By investing in these historic lands and making them accessible to the public, we are making sure the opportunity to experience Virginia's rich history is available for generations to come."

The General Assembly established the VBPF in 2010 under Virginia Code §10.1-2202.4, which, in part, authorizes the Department of Historic Resources to administer the award grants to private nonprofit or-

ganizations for the perpetual protection of Virginia battlefield lands associated with the Revolutionary War (1775- 1783), the War of 1812, and the Civil War (1861-1865). No applications for sites associated with the Revolutionary War or the War of 1812 were submitted in this grant round.

Three nonprofit organizations will be awarded the VBPF grants this year: the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, the American Battlefield Trust, and the Capital Region Land Conservancy. The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation is receiving a total of \$1,692,500 in grant funds to support four projects in Frederick, Rockingham, and Shenandoah Counties. The American Battlefield Trust

is receiving grant funds totaling \$1,266,500 to support five projects in Dinwiddie, Frederick, Henrico, and Spotsylvania Counties. The Capital Region Land Conservancy is receiving \$978,000 to support one project in Henrico County.

In accordance with VBPF stipulations, grant recipients must donate an easement to the Virginia Board of Historic Resources for any acreage acquired with the state grant funds. The perpetual easement restricts or prohibits subdivision and commercial development of the land, and contains provisions protecting historic, archaeological, and battlefield landscape resources on the property.

For more, visit dhr.virginia.gov.

Martinsville man arrested after incident in Patrick County

A Martinsville man is in custody in Patrick County after an alleged break-in and subsequent arrest early Monday, according to Sheriff Dan Smith.

The sheriff's office received a call reporting a door had been kicked in at a home on Cherry Creek Road in Vesta, where a lone woman was present, Smith said. Sgt. C.L. Elgin responded to the scene, and spoke to the woman. He subsequently noticed a man walking on Cherry Creek Road.

When Elgin attempted to arrest the man, later identified as Corey Adam "Goof" Martin, 36, of Martinsville, the suspect fled, according to the sheriff's release. Elgin pursued on foot, attempting again to take Martin into custody, as Senior Deputy Doug Perry arrived to assist. Smith said Martin continued to resist, leading Elgin to deploy a TASER and pepper spray.

The sheriff reported that Lt. Dustin Foley joined the officers, and they were able to subdue Martin, who allegedly appeared to be under the influence of methamphetamine. A suspected meth-smoking device was reportedly found on him and will be sent to the state forensic lab for analysis.



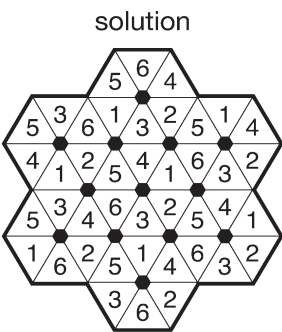
Corey Adam "Goof" Martin

Smith noted that Martin continued to be combative at the jail's intake area. "Every time we deal with him, he does this," Smith said. "It's just a matter of time before he seriously hurts someone."

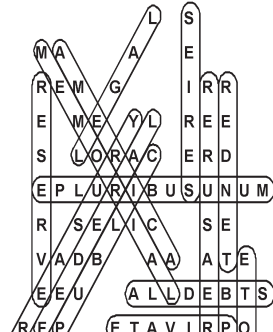
Martin, who has previous felony convictions and multiple probation violations, was charged with obstruction of justice, trespassing with intent to damage property, destruction of property, and public intoxication. He is being held without bond at Patrick County Jail, and additional charges may be pending.

Puzzle Answers!

SNOWFLAKES



WORDS FOUND ON A FIVE-DOLLAR BILL



SCRAMBLERS

solution
1. Tremor; 2. Plush;
3. Titles; 4. Lame
Today's Word
SMILE

FEAR KNIGHT

answer



Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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



FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

OWV
BORSIA
♥HERCO
PEWT
♥WRESOC
PLO
♥VEAR
♥RVEES
♥RWA
ASPREO
♥RWCES
♥ELVA

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 BOLTINGOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Spoon is longer. 2. Handle on pot is lower in door is lower. 3. Neckline is different. 4. Hair bun is smaller. 5. Window in

MAGIC MAZE

WORDS FOUND ON A FIVE-DOLLAR BILL

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: 16TH PRESIDENT

All debts America Federal
Legal Memorial Note Private
Public Reserve Series Tender
Treasurer Treasury United States

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Super Crossword

WHY A JAY?

ACROSS

1 Congo cousin
6 "Ho-hum" feeling
13 Old Toyota coupes
20 "Tosca" tunes, e.g.
21 Dodgy
22 Hat with the brim turned up on three sides
23 The choosing of cosmonaut Gagarin?
25 Its capital is Tallinn
26 Border of Utah and Idaho, e.g.
27 Primo pitcher
29 Of higher rank
30 Cooks in fat
31 Sign that an egg may have gone bad?
35 Listed from memory
38 Felt sorry for King-size tub
40 Santa — (hot desert winds)
41 Distributed, with "out"
42 Pamper

46 That guy over there with the famous signature?
50 Indian dress
51 Round figure
52 High trains
53 Real stunner
54 Writer known for twist endings
57 Chimney duct
58 Possible result of a computer crash
60 Key with no sharps or flats
61 Side street
62 Given "four years at a New Haven university" as punishment for a crime?
65 Painter Max
68 Frigid epoch
69 University near Fort Worth
73 Water, in Cuba
74 "Ars — artis" (MGM motto)
75 "I'll do it," in radiospeak
76 '16 Olympics city
77 Major conflict

DOWN

1 Articulates
2 In — (mired)
3 Hollywood's Sorvino
4 Angler's chum
5 Put forward
6 Proved false
7 Kilns, e.g.
8 Go really fast
9 Winter hrs. in Fla.
10 Twice CCLI
11 Lacto- — diet
12 Threatened
13 Sword metal
14 Surgery sites, in brief
15 Scholarly group
16 Devoted attendant
17 Many a sonata finale for "Lance Ito"
18 Disney mermaid
19 Sarcasm, informally
24 Writer Wiesel
28 North Atlantic catch
31 Pig's grunt
32 Bouquets-to-order co.
33 "Pshaw!"
34 Egg producer
35 Having light beams

36 — Gay (WWII plane)
37 Have the capacity to, to Shakespeare
38 Treaty
41 Indoor tabby
42 Tote bag
43 See 93-Down
44 Correct
45 Comply with
47 More skilled
48 Gas in lights
49 Strong alloy
50 In a snobbish way
54 Psi follower
55 Camouflage
56 Doc treating apnea
57 Hightail it away
59 Perplexed
60 Certain palm berry
61 Give the OK
63 Take-home
64 Former BP gas brand
65 H₂O, to a tot
66 "Yipes!"
67 — Khalifa (Dubai sky-scraper)
70 Overused theme
71 OPEC ship
72 Center points
74 Big ravine

75 Traveled
78 Undermines the power of
79 "Seize the day" acronym
80 Ship dining place
82 "Navel" fruits
83 Just missed parring
84 Suffix with fruit names
85 California's Marina del —
88 Do injury to
89 Rabbits
90 Elbow-to-wrist bone
91 Appear to be the case
92 Twyla of choreography
93 With 43-Down, list of superb students
94 Expunge
95 Singer LeAnn
96 "In case you — noticed ..."
99 Corp. money honchos
100 As to
101 Idyllic garden
102 IRS form IDs
104 Enjoyed food
106 St. crosser
107 First-aid —
108 Bullring cry

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• A California man who made a personalized license plate that said "No Plate" received more than 2,500 parking tickets.

• Omphalophobia is the fear of belly buttons.

• Avid readers won't be intimidated by a hefty novel, but they'll still surely be impressed by what's been deemed the largest book ever. Weighing more than 3,000 pounds and measuring 16.40 feet by 26.44 feet with 429 pages inside, the book, which is titled "This is Muhammad," was created in 2012 by 50 people working together in the United Arab Emirates.

• Prior to 1949, tennis court grass was kept at 2 inches long — that is, until a player was bitten by a snake. It's now typically maintained at a length of 8 mm.

• Scientists have found evidence of take-out restaurants in the remains of Pompeii.

• Japan has the highest density of vending machines worldwide, with approximately 5 million machines, or one machine for every 23 people. You can buy everything from live lobsters and bread in a can, to underwear and Buddhist amulets from a vending machine.

• The first European who learned to smoke from the natives was arrested back home because people thought he was possessed by the devil.

• Dolly Parton's parents paid the doctor who delivered her with a bag of cornmeal.

• The most expensive domain name ever sold was Voice.com, which was acquired for \$30 million in 2019.

• Caribbean sperm whales have their own accents.

• After an 8.0 magnitude earthquake hit Mexico City in 1985, nearly all newborn babies survived a collapsed hospital for seven days without nourishment, water, warmth or human contact.

• A flea can accelerate faster than a space shuttle.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

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

FLIER — GRASS INTERVENING BETWEEN CLUBFACE AND BALL AT IMPACT CAUSES THE BALL TO FLY LOWER AND ROLL FARTHER BY DECREASING BACK-SPIN.

ALLOW FOR THAT BY PLAYING MORE LOFTED CLUBS FROM "FLIER" LIES.

RECOGNIZE, TOO, THAT GRASS COMING BETWEEN CLUBFACE AND BALL MINIMIZES SIDESPIN, MAKING IT TOUGH TO FADE OR DRAW SHOTS PREDICTABLY.

SO PLAN AND PLAY FOR THE BALL TO FLY PRETTY STRAIGHT FROM ROUGH.

"I _____ every once in a while just to throw them off guard."

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!

Shake
MORTER _____

Lavish
SHLUP _____

Labels
LETTIS _____

Injured
MEAL _____

TODAY'S WORD

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Martinsville native honored during Speed Week



Martinsville Mayor LC Jones shakes hands with Dr. Capers “Beef” Zentmeyer, after presenting him with a resolution. State Sen. Bill Stanely (left) and Chris Williams also are pictured. (Photos by Ray Reynolds)

Local chiropractor, Martinsville native and race car driver Dr. Capers “Beef” Zentmeyer was honored with a resolution presented by Martinsville Mayor LC Jones.

The ceremony, held at the Speedway Service



State Sen. Bill Stanley (right) addressed those gathered at the ceremony as Chris Williams (left), looked on.

Center, was attended by Chris Williams, CEO of the SMART Modified Tour series, and State Sen. Bill Stanley, R-Moneta. Zentmeyer, 31, received the resolution ahead of his participation in the Mazda MX-5 Cup race.



Bill Stanley and Chris Williams

A graduate of Carlisle School and Martinsville High School, Zentmeyer studied biology at the University of Virginia’s College at Wise and later completed chiropractic school in Marietta, Georgia. He established Zentmeyer Chiropractic in 2023.

VA seniors urged to review Medicare plans during open enrollment

Trimmel Gomes
Virginia News Connection

Medicare’s open enrollment period through Dec. 7 allows Virginians covered by Medicare to reevaluate their health coverage options and select a plan for 2025.

As health care costs and personal needs change, experts stressed the importance of carefully reviewing the available plans.

Robbie Boyd, director of operations for the Local Office on Aging in Roanoke, encouraged seniors to visit their local office or consult a Virginia Insurance Counseling Assistance Program counselor for assistance. His key advice is to review your current medication regimen and enter it on the Medicare.gov website to ensure you are choosing the best plan.

“Put in your medications, you sign up for Medicare.gov, and it gives you the perfect list of what your pricing is going to be for the plans,” Boyd explained. “You really need to kind of dissect if your pricing is based on your pharmacy, it’s going to be higher, because it’s a preferred network, or if it’s out-of-network.”

Reducing health care costs involves more than focusing on monthly pre-

miums. Boyd encouraged people to explore resources like Medicare savings programs, which can help lower premiums and drug costs based on income. Also, do everything you can to stay healthy like exercising, eating a healthier diet and avoiding smoking.

Dr. Rhonda Randall, chief medical officer and executive vice president of UnitedHealthcare Employer and Individual, stressed the importance of getting a head start on the process because there might be surprises regarding what’s covered and what is not.

“Things like dental, vision and hearing,” Randall outlined. “Many Medicare beneficiaries might be surprised to know that original Medicare doesn’t cover most of those things but many Medicare Advantage plans do. I also recommend people to check for mental health coverage.”

She noted the increasing demand for mental health services is reflected in many Medicare Advantage plans, which now cover virtual mental health visits at no additional cost. As open enrollment season brings heightened activity, seniors should also be cautious of Medicare scams, in the form of calls or emails targeting their personal information.

SURPLUS AUCTION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2024 - GATE OPENS AT 8AM

Bidding starts at 10am (rain or shine)

Patrick County Schools - Maintenance Department

117 Via Avenue, Stuart, VA 24171

BUSES	CAR	LAWN MOWERS
#72 - 2005 Freightliner School Bus	2000 Cavalier	Snapper Riding
#20 - 2005 Blue Bird School Bus		Yard Man Riding
#74 - 2007 Freightliner School Bus		

MISCELLANEOUS

3-Door Freezer	2-Door Freezer	Shelves
Various Desks	Cafeteria Electric Griddle	Bard HVAC Units
Various Tables	Cafeteria Steam Kettle	Dry Erase Boards
Various Chairs	Cooler Milk Boxes	Small Safe
File Cabinets	Metal Surplus Items	Lockers

MANY OTHER ITEMS - TOO NUMEROUS TO LIST

These miscellaneous items are to be removed immediately after the sale. If these items remain on the lot longer than 5 days after day of sale, they will be removed and disposed of at new owner’s expense.

Haynes Auction Sales - Todd Haynes (VA License: 000968)

More extensive listing of items is located on the Patrick County Public Schools Website (www.patrick.k12va.us)

SOME ITEMS ARE SUBJECT TO BE ADDED OR REMOVED PRIOR TO DAY OF AUCTION. ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE DAY OF SALE TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER PRINTED MATTER. TERMS: CASH OR APPROVED CHECK WITH PROPER ID ON DAY OF SALE - 10% BUYER PREMIUM WILL BE ADDED TO BUYER’S TOTAL PURCHASE (note: correct name, address, and phone number must be on the check). The quality of the merchandise is not guaranteed. All items sold “as is-whereis”.

For more information, contact Chad Haynes, Maintenance Dept. (276-694-6981)

Neither Auction Company nor Seller Responsible for Accidents.

Food and drinks will be available during the auction.

SPECTRUM MEDICAL

A clinical research study for people with obesity or overweight and type 2 diabetes

LAA2 is a new clinical research study from Eli Lilly and Company. It is testing if an investigational medicine (a medicine being studied) may help treat people with obesity or overweight and type 2 diabetes.

Can I join this study?

Yes, you may be able to join the research study if you:

- Are aged 18 to 75 years
- Have a BMI of 27 kg/m2 or more
- Have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes for at least 6 months
- Have not taken part in a clinical research study for obesity or overweight in the past year

BMI stands for body mass index. It is a number that compares a person’s weight to their height. It can be used to tell if a person may be at risk of some health conditions.

For more information:

Scan the QR code below or visit:
<https://e.lilly/3VVoy0l>

Use the camera or QR code scanner app on your phone to scan the QR code

Savannah McNear
(434)793-4711 ext. 1115
109 Bridge Street
Danville, VA 24541
savannah.mcnear@spectrummed.com

CONTACT US

Six local organizations, volunteer groups received funding for projects and programs



Pictured are this year’s Project Hope grant winners.



Callie Hietala, a member of this year’s Project Hope Committee, spoke about her experience serving on the committee and offered encouragement to this year’s grant winners.



Susan King Sabin, executive director of the Spencer Penn Centre, spoke about her community garden project, funded in last year’s Project Hope grants cycle.



Nearly 50 people attended today’s celebration of this year’s Project Hope grants cycle at the Bassett Train Station Event Center.

The Harvest Foundation awarded nearly \$64,000 to fund six Project Hope grants at today’s grantee celebration, held at the Bassett Train Station Event Center.

Harvest President Kate Keller welcomed the crowd of nearly 50 people, remarking on the history of Project Hope, which began as a way for the foundation to celebrate its 20th anniversary with the community. However, since 2022, the program has grown to be a movement for volunteerism and community connectivity.

“Project Hope is about bringing energy and possibility to communities across Martinsville and Henry County,” Keller said. “These projects and programs funded today represent communities coming together and building meaningful connections. When everyone has a voice and support to create the positive change they want to see, we all begin to share in the hope of a brighter future. We’re excited to see the lasting impact this year’s Project Hope

grant recipients will create across MHC.”

Speakers included Susan King Sabin, executive director of the Spencer Penn Centre, and Callie Hietala, a member of the Project Hope Committee, and the Communications and Community Outreach Coordinator for Martinsville City Public Schools.

Sabin spoke about her community garden project at Spencer Penn, which received funding in the Project Hope 2023 grants cycle.

“I had known for several years that I wanted to put together a community garden and farmer’s market for our community,” she said. “I just wasn’t sure when or how we were going to do that. I kept hearing more and more of our older population share how they were giving up their garden. They just couldn’t do it anymore physically. When Harvest announced the Project Hope grants, something clicked. This could be our opportunity to put this desire into motion.”



Pictured (from left) are Callie Hietala, Teresa Fontaine, Tracey Shively, Beth Marshall, and Tekela Redd, members of this year’s Project Hope Committee

After research, surveys, and conversations with staff and volunteers, Sabin said her plan slotted into place. Even though she faced hurdles of not enough rain, too much rain, and changes in staff, she was able to call on many community partners and volunteers, including the Girl Scouts, Magna Vista’s Horticulture Department, local businesses, and the center’s board of directors.

Not only did the garden finally take off, but she said it produced a watermelon so big she couldn’t even lift it. And when it was harvested, that watermelon fed everyone who walked into the center that day, and everyone who came to the farmer’s market that evening.

To this year’s grantees, Sabin said, “Whatever your hope looks like, don’t give up on it. This process will challenge you and it will challenge those around you. Push to find the hope within it. Lean on those around you, like the Harvest staff, who will encourage you, problem-solve with you, and people who will travel the trenches with you. Because your project is going to make a difference here, and when one of us wins, we all win.”

Hietala spoke about her move to Martinsville-Henry County during the pandemic and how she gradually got to see the community in action. She congratulated this year’s grant recipients for choosing to “do something.”

“It’s easy to look around and see what’s wrong and give in to hopelessness,” Hietala said. “To say that this is the way it is and this is the way it’s going to be, and I just have to suffer through it. It’s easy to just sit there and complain and do nothing. It’s easy to say ‘Well someone needs to do this to make things better,’ but it’s hard to actually step up and be that someone.”

To this year’s grant recipients, she added, “The ideas you were bold enough to dream and brave enough to share with us, all born of a staunch refusal to give in to that feeling of hopelessness and from a certainty of purpose that you can do something to make this corner of the world we all share a better place. You all have given me hope.”

Danny Wulff, a member of The Harvest Foundation Board of Directors, emphasized the need for hope throughout Martinsville and Henry

County, thanking the speakers and offering encouragement for this year’s grant winners.

Project Hope is designed to fund small projects that involve volunteers to build hope in MHC communities. Grant awards are typically capped at \$15,000 and must be completed within a year. This year’s theme was Community Connections: Creating inclusive spaces, fostering meaningful interactions, and empowering community members to learn, grow, and connect.

A 13-member committee comprising local “hope builders” reviews grant applications and allocates funding for the program. Members of the 2024 Project Hope Committee include Maite Arroyo-Torres, Callie Hietala, Robbie Knight, Beth Marshall, Teresa Fontaine, Chloe Mayhew, Wayne Moore, Jonathan Martin, LaDonna Hairston, Tekela Redd, Sandy Hines, Tracey Shively, and Ron Morris.

The Harvest Foundation releases an RFP (request for proposals) annually for applicants to submit grant applications. The next application period will open in the summer of 2025. Call (276) 632-3329 or visit theharvestfoundation.org/project-hope for updates and to learn more.

List of Project Hope 2024 Grantees:

*\$4,800 to the MHC Pride Coalition for the “Pride All Year” project, implementing local pride community events and initiatives;

*\$5,025 to Smith Memorial United Methodist Church for the “Martinsville Henry County Social Club” program, offering support to individuals suffering from chronic mental illness;

*\$15,000 to the Salvation Army of Martinsville & Henry County for the “Community Garden, Mural, and Picnic Area” project;

*\$9,000 to Starling Avenue Baptist Church for the summer “Critter Camp” program;

*\$15,000 to the Preston Community Center for renovation and beautification projects at the center; and

*\$15,000 to the Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation for the “Horticulture Opportunities Promoting the Environment (HOPE): Growing Strong Communities” project, which will create a greenhouse for local organizations and community members to use for education and social opportunities.



Dr. Brockbank is here to Help You Smile.

Blake D. Brockbank, DDS, is now welcoming patients at Martinsville Smiles. He enjoys treating children and adults. **Dr. Brockbank** joins our Virginia trained dentists, **Dr. Crabtree, Dr. Jenkins, and Dr. Stafford**, all graduates of the VCU School of Dentistry. He is committed to the Martinsville Smiles philosophy of keeping your teeth healthy for a lifetime. **Fluent in Spanish**, he is happy to conduct visits in Spanish per patient request. For an appointment with Dr. Brockbank, call **276-632-9266** or visit **www.martinsvillesmiles.com**. You’ll have a new reason to smile.



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SENIOR LIVING 2024

Exercise lowers dementia risk, study shows

Three seconds go by in a flash, but that’s enough time for another person to join the masses already diagnosed with dementia. According to Alzheimer’s Disease International, every three seconds someone in the world develops dementia, a condition that more than 55 million people were living with in 2020.

The World Health Organization notes that various diseases and injuries that affect the brain can contribute to dementia. As menacing a threat as dementia presents, individuals are not helpless against it. In fact, exercise, which can help lower risk for heart disease, stroke and various other conditions, can be a valuable ally against dementia as well.

What is the link between exercise and dementia?

Dementia remains something of a mystery, but the Alzheimer’s Society notes that evidence is now strong enough to support the assertion that lack of physical exercise increases a person’s risk of developing dementia. The Alzheimer’s Society also notes that researchers have discovered improvements in thinking and memory and reduced rates of dementia among middle-aged and older adults who exercise compared to those that did not.

Is cardio the most effective exercise at lowering dementia risk?

Speaking with CNBC, Silky Singh Pahlajani, a clinical professor of behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine, noted that cardiovascular exercise, often referred to as cardio, can provide the biggest benefit for brain health of any form of exercise. Cardiovascular exercise can increase heart rate, which helps deliver oxygen cells to the brain. The National Institutes of Health notes that oxygen shortages prevent the brain from working as well as it should, and a 2023 study published in the journal Redox Biology found that oxygen abnormality plays a crucial role in the oc-



Exercise, which can help lower risk for heart disease, stroke and various other conditions, can be a valuable ally against dementia as well.

currence and progression of Alzheimer’s disease.

How should aging adults approach exercise if they have been largely sedentary?

Middle-aged and older adults who have not been physically active throughout their adult life but want to begin incorporating exercise into their daily routines are urged to speak with their physicians prior to beginning a fitness regimen. Pre-existing conditions may make it difficult, if not impossible, to engage in certain forms of exercise. A personal physician can consider a patient’s unique medical history and then recommend certain exercises that won’t put him or her in jeopardy of suffering an injury or illness. A

gradual approach to exercising is typically best for individuals who have lived a sedentary lifestyle. Starting off slowly with a short walk or light physical activity like gardening can help the body acclimate to physical activity at a safe pace. As adults’ bodies become more accustomed to exercise, men and women can then gradually increase the intensity of their workouts, switching from walking to jogging on a treadmill when possible.

There is no cure for dementia, but adults are not helpless against the various forms of the condition. Researchers have discovered that preventive measures like routine exercise can be an effective way to reduce dementia risk.

Volunteering is good for your health

Volunteering makes an immeasurable difference in the lives of volunteers and those they help. Many people may be surprised to learn how positive volunteering can be for volunteers. Indeed, studies show that volunteering leads to better physical and mental health, among other benefits.

According to an article published by the American Heart Association and Jeffrey Burr, a professor of gerontology at the University of Massachusetts Boston, “compared to non-volunteers, volunteers have less depression, less anxiety, higher self-esteem, greater happiness, and a greater sense of meaning in life.” Burr and the AHA note the health benefits of volunteering occur among all ages, and a deep look at how volunteer efforts are good for personal health shows just how profound giving back can be.

- Reduces stress: The Mayo Clinic reports that volunteering reduces stress and increases positive, relaxed feelings by releasing dopamine. When volunteers spend time in service to others, they report feeling a sense of meaning and appreciation, both of which can have stress-reducing effects.
- Lowers depression: Research has shown that volunteering leads to lower rates of depression and anxiety, particularly among people 65 and older.
- Provides a sense of purpose: AmeriCorps reports volunteering can provide a sense of purpose in older adults, which can help replace feelings of inadequacy due to loss of major role identities, such as wage earners or parent. This sense of purpose can improve life satisfaction and happiness.
- Reduces blood pressure: According to researchers at Carnegie Mellon University, older adults who volunteer for at least 200 hours annually decrease their risk of high blood pressure by 40 percent. This also may low-



Volunteering offers a number of benefits that can improve both physical and mental health for those who donate their time to help others. A deep look at how volunteer efforts are good for personal health shows just how profound giving back can be.

er the risk of heart disease and stroke.

- Eliminates feelings of isolation: Volunteers working together link people to others and their communities. This can help people overcome feelings of isolation, which may come from being new to a community or being a senior and having a smaller social circle.
- Increases happiness: Those who volunteer regularly tend to be happier and more empathetic towards others. Volunteering also instills a sense of pride that can make people happier.
- Keeps the mind active: Individuals who volunteer can improve their cognitive health. That’s because volunteering engages a person in new skills, requires them to solve problems and keeps them mentally stimulated through various activities.
- Improves physical health: Some volunteer activities will involve physical tasks that can contribute to improved physical health because they constitute moderate exercise.

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Aging individuals’ calorie needs affected by their activity levels

Healthy aging is a multifaceted process that involves an array of variables. Diet and exercise are two such variables, and each are intertwined. According to the National Institute on Aging, the amount of calories individuals over 60 need each day depends on their physical activity levels. Though all adults should aspire to be physically active each day, some aging adults may experience mobility issues that make it hard to move around. But activity levels can serve as a measuring stick for daily calorie intake. The NIA notes that the more active men and women over 60 are, the more calories they will need to consume.

- Inactive: The NIA recommends that women over 60 who are not physically active consume 1,600 calories per day. Men over 60 who are not physically active are urged to consume between 2,000 and 2,200 calories each day.
- Moderately active: What qualifies as moderate physical activity is best defined by an individual’s physician, who may recommend various exercises or activities based on each person’s condition. Daily walks may qualify as moderate physical activity, but ag-



Activity levels can serve as a measuring stick for daily calorie intake.

60 who qualify as very active should consume between 2,000 and 2,200 calories per day, while the NIA advises very active men to consume between 2,400 and 2,600 calories per day. Of course, it’s important that men and women over 60 choose the right foods each day as well. The NIA advises against choosing foods that have a lot of sugar, saturated fat and sodium. Fruits, vegetables and whole grains are examples of healthy foods that can help aging individuals reach recommended daily calorie intake without compromising their overall health.

ing adults are urged to keep track of the length and intensity of such walks so they can work with their physicians to determine how they might affect their daily caloric intake. Women over 60 who engage in moderate physical activity each day are urged to consume 1,800 calories per day, while men in that category should consume between 2,200 and 2,400 calories. · Very active: Aging men and women can probably determine on their own if their lifestyle can be described as very physically active. Women over

On passing the baton

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 handrail 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.



Holly Kozelsky



Older individuals affected by age-related hearing loss may be particularly in need of hearing aids, but data indicates usage of the devices is low among the aging population.

Options are available for hearing loss

Hearing aids can be a useful ally for individuals as they navigate and seek to overcome hearing loss, and there are many options for older individuals affected by age-related hearing loss. While some people may be particularly in need of hearing aids, data indicates usage of the devices is low among the aging population.

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, just three in 10 adults over 70 with hearing loss have ever used hearing aids. And it’s

not only the aging population that is reluctant to use hearing aids, as the NIDCD notes that just 16 percent of adults between the ages of 20 and 69 who could benefit from wearing hearing aids have ever used them.

Greater education regarding the efficacy of hearing aids and the range of user-friendly aids that are nothing like the bulky, often ill-fitting products of yesteryear could compel more individuals with hearing loss to turn to these devices in the years to come.

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Planning for long-term care



Long-term care (LTC) involves a variety of services that accommodate a person’s health or personal care needs when they can no longer perform everyday tasks on their own.

Long-term care is an important component of financial and personal wellness planning. Planning for long-term care can help aging individuals maintain their independence and quality of life into their golden years.

According to the National Institute on Aging, long-term care (LTC) involves a variety of services that accommodate a person’s health or personal care needs when they can no longer perform everyday tasks on their own. LTC can help people with chronic illnesses, disabilities or other conditions. LTC can be expensive, but planning for such needs can help families avoid financial strain and stress, and also provide peace of mind.

Types of care

One of the initial steps when planning for LTC is to identify the available options. LTC is multi-faceted and can come in a variety of forms. LTC can involve in-home care, with a care provider coming into an individual’s home to offer services like

housekeeping and assistance with personal care. In addition, LTC can take place in nursing homes or assisted living facilities. Adult daycare facilities also may be considered part of LTC.

Payment options

It’s important that families recognize that traditional health insurance does not cover the costs associated with LTC. In addition, Medicare cannot be used for LTC in most cases in the United States. It is essential to earmark funds or find alternatives to cover these costs.

According to Medicare.gov, some insurance companies will enable people to use life insurance policies to pay for LTC. Long-term care insurance also merits consideration. This insurance may cover LTC facilities or even home care and medical equipment. Families can explore all their options and find a policy that aligns with their needs and budgets.

Additional financial tools to consider are a Health Savings Account (HSA) or a Flex-

ible Spending Account (FSA), which allow for tax-advantaged savings specifically for health care expenses. Those with limited income can be eligible for Medicaid in the U.S., which can pay for nursing home care. However, it is important to research which homes accept Medicaid as a form of payment.

Further estate planning

People can work with licensed professionals to solidify long-term care and financial plans. An estate attorney can help create a durable power of attorney and a living will to ensure that health care and financial decisions are managed according to a person’s wishes if he or she becomes unable to do so. An irrevocable trust also could be beneficial in managing assets and potentially shielding families from LTC costs.

Families should discuss health care wishes and other financial plans as they pertain to long-term care. Early planning can help families navigate caring for aging individuals.

Thoughtful gifts for aging parents

It’s not too early to start Christmas shopping, and finding the perfect gift for your aging parents has never been easier.

According to The Wrap Up: Snappy’s 2022 Holiday Gift Report, the majority of Americans (64.2 percent) report they need help when it comes to holiday gifting. They may want to carefully consider a recipient’s interests, as the report also discovered more than half of all Americans want a gift that reflects their personal interests and hobbies. When shopping for elderly parents, it may not be as simple as identifying interests, particularly if Mom and Dad are experiencing age-related health issues. Consider these gift ideas that may be ideal for the aging adults in your life.

- Cozy blanket: Older adults may have trouble regulating their body temperatures, which can translate to feeling cold a lot of the time. A new blanket or throw for a bed or to cuddle up with in a favorite recliner might be the perfect gift.
- Family history book: Budding writers can interview their aging parents and jot down family stories. Those stories and anecdotes can be compiled into a book and combined with photos to make a family history log, which can be gifted back to the interviewee.
- Gripping slippers: Slips and falls can

injure aging adults and put them out of commission for quite some time. Sturdy and secure slippers with anti-slip soles are good for getting around the house and making quick trips to take out the trash or get the mail.

- Robotic vacuum: Keeping up with the household chores is easier with a robotic vacuum that automatically scours carpets

lize Bluetooth technology and can be paired to a smartphone.

- Magnifying light: Older parents who like to do puzzles or close-up work like knitting or stitching can benefit from an LED lamp that also has a magnifying glass built right in.
- E-reader: Avid readers may enjoy an e-reader because they don’t have to find

spots to store even more books in their homes. E-readers can be customized so the print is the right size for the reader’s needs. Also, the devices are lightweight and easy to stow in a bag.

- Automatic card shuffler: Parents who are known card sharks around the community can use an automatic card shuffler to make card play even easier.

Resistance bands: Resistance bands are like large rubber bands that exert force to strengthen muscles and improve flexibility. They can help aging adults stay in shape in a low-impact way.

- Dining gift cards: When parents do not want to spend additional time in

the kitchen, they may opt to visit a favorite restaurant. A combination of a gift card to a favorite establishment as well as pre-paid taxi or ride share service ensures a good meal and a safe ride home.



Although they seem to have everything, aging parents still can benefit from some thoughtful gifts.

and hard-surface floors. This eliminates having to wrestle with a cumbersome vacuum.

- Key finder: A key finder can help adults find their keys if they are misplaced. Some employ radio frequency, while others uti-

The link between sleep and healthy aging

A good night’s rest can be just what the body needs to feel revitalized and ready to tackle a new day. Indeed, rest is important for people of all ages, including seniors.

The National Council on Aging notes the brain needs sleep to regulate the body, restore energy and repair damage. Recognition of that is vital for aging men and women, some of whom may be more vulnerable to sleeping problems than they realize. In addition to being more vulnerable to age-related health problems that can interrupt their sleep, thus affecting its quality, aging men and women may find their sleep routines change over time. For example, a 2019 study published in the journal BMC Geriatrics found that active elderly people reported it took them longer to fall asleep as they got older.

The NCOA says it’s a misconception that older adults need more sleep than younger people, noting adults of all ages require the same amount of nightly rest. However, things may change for seniors in regard to how much time they need to spend in bed. The NCOA notes this is because adults may be more likely to experience poor sleep quality and continuity. When that occurs, adults still need the recommended minimum of seven hours of nightly sleep, but they may need to spend more time in bed since it’s taking them longer to fall asleep.

It’s important that aging adults recognize that they can spend too much time sleeping as well. A 2019 study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society found that too much sleep is linked to the same health problems as too little sleep, issues that include an elevated risk for heart disease and falls.

Sleep issues affecting older adults also may be a byproduct of various contributing factors. The NCOA notes that frequent contributors to sleep concerns include:



It’s a misconception that older adults need more sleep than younger people, noting adults of all ages require the same amount of nightly rest.

- Pain that affects the back, neck, or joints
 - Mental health issues, including anxiety and depression
 - Neurodegenerative disorders that are more frequent among aging populations, such as dementia and Alzheimer’s
 - Sleep apnea or disordered breathing at night
- Restless leg syndrome, a condition that tends to worsen with age and is characterized by an urge to move limbs often
- Nocturia, a condition marked by a need to urinate at night
 - Stimulating medications or medication interactions

- Decreased exposure to sunlight
 - Sedentary lifestyle
- Aging men and women who are experiencing difficulty sleeping should know that such issues are treatable and not something that needs to be accepted as a normal part of growing older. For example, individuals whose sleep is routinely interrupted by a need to urinate can avoid certain beverages, including alcohol and caffeinated drinks.
- Sleep and healthy aging go hand in hand. Aging adults experiencing difficulty sleeping can consult their physicians and visit [ncoa.org](https://www.ncoa.org) to learn more about overcoming sleep-related issues.

Estate Planning: A Critical Step for All, Not Just the Wealthy



Estate planning often conjures images of the ultra-wealthy managing vast fortunes, but that perception can be misleading—and potentially costly. Regardless of the size of one’s investment portfolio, estate planning is a crucial part of long-term financial planning for everyone.

Estate planning refers to a broad range of preparations, including how assets will be distributed after death, end-of-life healthcare decisions, and assigning power of attorney if a person becomes incapacitated. Key elements of an estate plan typically include a will, trusts, power of attorney, and healthcare directives. Despite the importance of these documents, many Americans are unprepared. According to a 2021 survey by Caring.com, only 33% of Americans have a will in place, with 60% of respondents saying they “don’t have enough assets” as a reason for not creating an estate plan.

Here are some basic steps to help you establish an estate plan:

1. Create a Will

A will is a legal document that dictates how your assets will be distributed after your death. While it’s possible to draft a will without an attorney, consulting a lawyer ensures the will is legally sound and accurately reflects your wishes. In a will, you can name an executor responsible for carrying out your plans. Without one, state intestacy laws will determine how your assets are distributed, which may not align with your preferences.

2. Establish Trusts

Trusts are tools that can protect your assets, minimize estate taxes, and ensure that beneficiaries are provided for. Trusts can be revocable or irrevocable, depending on the level of control and flexibility

desired. Special needs trusts can also be set up for individuals with disabilities. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, trusts can reduce estate taxes by up to 40%. They also help avoid probate, allowing assets to be transferred to beneficiaries more smoothly, and can protect assets from being counted when applying for skilled nursing care.

3. Assign Powers of Attorney and Healthcare Proxies

If someone becomes incapacitated, they need trusted individuals who can make decisions on their behalf. A financial or legal power of attorney allows someone to manage your finances, pay bills, and handle other legal matters if you’re unable to. A healthcare proxy, named in an advanced healthcare directive (or living will), will make medical decisions based on your stated wishes. These steps ensure that your financial and medical affairs are managed according to your preferences.

4. Update Regularly

Life events such as marriage, divorce, the birth of children, or the acquisition of new assets should trigger an update to your estate plan. Keeping your documents up to date helps ensure that your plans reflect your current wishes and that your loved ones are provided for as intended.

Estate planning is not just for the wealthy—it’s about ensuring that your assets and healthcare preferences are managed according to your wishes. Consulting with legal, medical, and tax professionals is essential in crafting a comprehensive and effective estate plan. Taking these steps now can avoid potential conflicts later and provide peace of mind for you and your loved ones.



Common Questions About Reverse Mortgages

Homeownership is a major milestone for many people, and it’s often seen as a pathway to financial security. According to the National Association of Realtors, real estate has historically shown long-term, stable growth in value. Unlike rent, which provides no return on investment, paying a mortgage allows homeowners to build equity—a valuable asset that can be leveraged in the future. One way for older homeowners to tap into that equity is through a reverse mortgage.

What Is a Reverse Mortgage, and Who Is Eligible?

A reverse mortgage is a specific type of loan designed for people near or in retirement. It allows homeowners to borrow against the equity in their homes without having to sell their property. This type of loan is typically available to individuals 62 years or older who own their home outright or have significant equity in it.

A reverse mortgage can be beneficial for those who may have difficulty keeping up with monthly mortgage payments or need access to a lump sum of money. However, to be eligible, the borrower must use the home as their primary residence and certify occupancy each year. According to Fannie Mae, the property must also be maintained in good condition throughout the life of the loan.

How Does a Reverse Mortgage Work?

Unlike a traditional mortgage, where homeowners make monthly payments to reduce their loan balance, a reverse mortgage works in reverse—there are no monthly payments. Instead, the loan balance grows over time as interest and fees are added each month.

The most common type of reverse mortgage is a Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM), insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), the loan is typically repaid when the borrower no longer lives in the home—either due to moving or passing away.

What Else Should Homeowners Know?

Even though borrowers don’t have to make monthly mortgage payments, they are still responsible for paying ongoing property-related expenses, such as real estate taxes, insurance premiums, homeowners association (HOA) fees, and utilities. Failing to stay current on these obligations could lead to foreclosure.

Reverse mortgages also come with various upfront and ongoing costs. Forbes notes that these costs can include origination fees, closing costs, and mortgage insurance premiums of up to 2.5% of the home’s appraised value. Additionally, most reverse mortgage interest rates are variable, meaning they could rise over time, increasing the overall cost of the loan. It’s important to note that, unlike traditional mortgages, the interest paid on a reverse mortgage is not tax-deductible.

How Is a Reverse Mortgage Paid Back?

A reverse mortgage is not free money. The loan must be repaid, typically when the borrower no longer lives in the home. This is most often accomplished by selling the home. If the loan balance is less than the sale price, the borrower or their heirs keep the difference.

If the loan balance exceeds the home’s sale price, homeowners can use the “95 percent rule,” which allows them to sell the home for at least 95% of its appraised value. In such cases, any remaining loan balance is covered by the mortgage insurance that has been paid throughout the life of the loan.

Is a Reverse Mortgage Right for You?

Reverse mortgages can be a useful tool for older homeowners looking to tap into the equity in their home, but it’s important to fully understand the costs and obligations involved. Consulting with financial advisors and getting all the facts is essential for making an informed decision that aligns with your long-term financial goals.

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