

# HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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## County board to focus on jobs, services, and growth in 2025

By Jessica Dillon

Members of the Henry County’s Board of Supervisors shared their priorities for the coming year, outlining a vision focused on job creation, infrastructure expansion, and enhanced support for essential services such as fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). With the 2025 budget process on the horizon, supervisors are optimistic about the county’s future but acknowledge challenges ahead.

Jim Adams, chairman, and of the Blackberry District, highlighted the county’s ongoing projects, including the grading at Commonwealth Crossing. The development is expected to attract new businesses and

generate jobs. “The county has multiple projects going on, and we hope the grading will bring more business to the area,” said Adams.

Vice Chairman Joe Bryant, of the Collinsville District, described the upcoming year as “a wait-and-see game” as the board evaluates budgetary constraints and opportunities. “After the budget is looked at, we can see what new things the county can allocate funds toward,” said Bryant.

Among Bryant’s top priorities is increasing funding for fire and rescue services. “Even though we give to the fire and rescue squads, funding is not where I want to see it at,”

(See County Board p. 2)

## FAHI Museum, Alumni Collaborate to Support City Teachers with Supply Closet



The Teacher’s Closet offers a variety of essential classroom items for educators.

By Jessica Dillon

The Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI) Museum has launched a new initiative in collaboration with alumni from several Martinsville High School graduating classes to support local teachers. The project, dubbed the “Teacher’s Closet,” aims to ease the financial burden teachers face when buying classroom supplies.

“Several graduating classes have chosen to come back home and give to the community,” said James Dallas, one of the organizers. The idea originated at a reunion when Martinsville Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley encouraged alumni to find ways to give back.

“Teachers continue to come out of their pockets for money for school supplies,” Dallas said, noting that schools often struggle to provide adequate resources. Teachers, he

added, frequently step up to ensure students have what they need for a quality education.

While some progress has been made in recent years, the alumni saw an opportunity to offer additional support. The Teacher’s Closet will officially open in January, just in time for the start of the second semester. Teachers will be able to access supplies to keep their classrooms running smoothly.

“We threw a lot of things on the wall,” said Dallas about brainstorming ideas for the project. Establishing a supply closet, he explained, was a simple yet impactful way to begin.

Faye Holland, vice-chairman of the FAHI board, helped get the ball rolling, and Bridgett Carter hopes local businesses will contrib-

(See FAHI Museum p.2)

## Martinsville seeks volunteers for new tree board

By Jessica Dillon

The City of Martinsville is calling on volunteers to join its newly established tree board, a group dedicated to the care, preservation, and management of trees in public spaces. The board held its first informational session on Dec. 5, outlining its mission and membership requirements.

Tree boards are typically composed of community volunteers committed to the stewardship, safety, and preservation of a city’s trees. “A group of members in the community charged with the welfare of trees,” is how Kendall Topping, with the Green Infrastructure Center, described such boards.

The Martinsville board will take on tasks including the care, pruning, planting, and removal of trees and shrubs in parks, along streets, and in other public areas, according to the city’s statement.

Members will also investigate and develop recommendations for tree-related projects and concerns.

Boards like Martinsville’s often work on public education and outreach, organize tree planting events, and assist cities in obtaining grants. “I’ve had several tree boards reach out to get a small grant, and then they will organize a tree planting in one of the public parks,” Topping explained.

The Martinsville tree board will consist of five members, each serving a three-year term. While members are not bound by a contract, those wishing to continue after their term will need to seek reappointment.

Board members will have the autonomy to determine their structure, distribute roles, and set meeting schedules based on the city’s needs. Meetings are expected to last about an hour.



Members of the clergy who attended the event.

## Community prayer event aims to inspire unity, healing in Martinsville

By Jessica Dillon

In a heartfelt gathering on Dec. 23, St. Paul High Street Baptist Church hosted a community prayer event designed to amplify voices from across Martinsville and Henry County. The Rev. Charles Whitfield presided over the event, which brought together local clergy, civic leaders, and residents to pray for peace and unity amid growing divisions within the community.

Other speakers included Martinsville Mayor LC Jones, Elder Arnold Bullock, Dr. Zebedee “Zeb” Talley, Jr., Pastor Avery Preston, Mallori

Lowe, Dr. Greg Hodges, Bishop Alan Preston, Rev. Faith Weedling, Elder Tremayne King, Spencer Koger and others.

An estimated more than 200 people attended the hour-long service, available for viewing on the church’s Facebook page. The event featured impassioned speeches and prayers from community leaders. Jones set the tone for the evening with a call for togetherness.

“I want you to understand that tonight is about us as a community,” Jones said, emphasizing the impor-

(See Community Prayer p.2)

## Young Pianist Finds Harmony in Rare Talent and Faith



Dylan Chappell poses with the grand piano at First Assembly of God in Martinsville, Va.

By Jessica Dillon

At just 18, Dylan Chappell demonstrates an extraordinary gift for the piano, capturing the attention of the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center & Museum. In a recently shared video, Chappell plays the historic 1886 Steinway piano with a level of skill that belies his three years of experience. Remarkably, he cannot read treble clef but learns songs by observing others perform.

Chappell, a lifelong attendee of First Assembly of God, credits church pianist Chris Nunley as his inspiration. “I’ve been watching Chris, the piano player here, my entire life,” Chappell said. While always interested in music, he never imagined he would play the piano.

Currently enrolled in the electrical program at Patrick & Community College, Chappell applies his technical skills to improve his

(See Young Pianist p.2)

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# County Board

(cont. from page 1)

he said. He also noted potential increases for libraries and other public amenities.

Bryant expressed satisfaction with recent wage increases in the county but emphasized the need for continued focus on job retention and quality. “How do we keep the people we got here working and not going to other places? What can we do to improve the work environment?” he asked.

Debra Buchanan, of the Horsepasture District, underscored the importance of public service expansion, particularly water and sewer services through the PSA (Public Service Authority). “I hope the board will keep working together to create new job opportunities for the citizens of Henry County,” said Buchanan, who also emphasized the need for PSA expansions along U.S. 58 West.

Garrett Dillard, of the Iriswood District, noted that updating the county’s comprehensive plan — a

roadmap for future growth and development — is a key priority. “The biggest thing we have right now is getting ready to start our joint comprehensive plan meetings,” said Dillard.

The plan will integrate community input. “Where do the citizens see growth? What do they want to see in a comprehensive plan?” added Adams. The current plan has not been updated in years.

Dillard also addressed the housing shortage, advocating for innovative solutions. “We are looking at creative ways to reduce the housing shortage. We have to incite people to remodel, rebuild, or build new housing,” he said.

While supervisors celebrated the county’s progress, they acknowledged ongoing challenges. Mental health, poverty, and drug-related issues remain areas of concern. “We have a lot of good things in Henry County,” said Dillard, adding, “but there’s

work to be done.”

Travis Pruitt, of the Ridgeway District, highlighted the importance of continued collaboration with schools and improving property conditions in his district. “I think continuing my clean-up of the Ridgeway District,” he said, outlining one of his key goals.

Despite the challenges, Bryant expressed confidence in the county’s trajectory. “Overall, Henry County is in great shape right now,” he said, commending the collaborative efforts of various county departments.

The board, which is set to hold its organizational meeting at 1 p.m. on Monday, January 6, will finalize its budget in May, solidifying plans for the year ahead.

Pam Cobbler, of the Reed Creek District, could not be reached for comment.

# FAHI Museum

(cont. from page 1)

ute donations to sustain the project.

“We are going to try to get some community partners,” she added.

To determine what teachers needed most, the alumni collected school supply lists from the district. “We had one composite list and then we had donations. We had thousands of dollars of donations,” Carter said, noting that the initial funding came from alumni contributions. Talley will help notify teachers about the new resource.

The alumni group also has ambitions beyond the Teacher’s Closet. “We’re looking at the possibility of getting a community center off the ground,” said Dallas. He envisions naming the center after his father, Bruce H.T. Dallas, Sr., to honor his legacy.

The senior Dallas served two terms on Martinsville City Council, and was a dedicated community activist until his death in 2007. “We want that name and that legacy to live on,” James Dallas said.

Because alumni now live in different areas, FAHI stepped in as a central location to house the closet and receive donations. Supplies have been collected through Amazon deliveries and direct donations at the museum.

“This allows us to meet the needs of city



James Dallas stands beside a photo of his father, Bruce H.T. Dallas, Sr., whose legacy he hopes to honor with future projects.

teachers and also bring more people into the museum to see the displays and exhibits we have,” said Joyce Staples, chairman of the FAHI board. Staples emphasized the importance of showcasing African American history in both the city and county.

As a former public school teacher with 24 years of experience, Staples also challenged alumni of George Washington Carver High School to consider ways to support the coun-



Alumni deliver school supplies to FAHI for the Teacher's Closet.

ty’s schools.

# Community Prayer

(cont. from page 1)



Martinsville Mayor LC Jones was among those who spoke on division and connection in the Martinsville-Henry County community during the prayer event, which served as a reminder of the strength found in collaboration and faith, and offered a hopeful vision for Martinsville’s future. (Photos by Ray Reynolds)



Dr. Zebedee “Zeb” Talley, Jr., a member of the clergy, gave the benediction at the prayer event.



Dr. Greg Hodges, president of Patrick & Henry Community College, offered a prayer for peace.



Spencer Koger, executive director of Uptown Partnership, was among the speakers.

stance of fostering connections despite differences. “It’s a thought of, we are all citizens of Martinsville Henry County.” He stressed that the focus of the night was not on political or council issues but on the broader goal of healing and unity.

The event comes during a time of heightened tension in the city, following contentious election cycles, disputes among council members, and recent remarks by Vice Mayor Aaron Rawls. Against this backdrop, clergy and community leaders took to the pulpit to address the need for cooperation and understanding.

Spencer Koger, executive director of Uptown Partnership, encouraged attendees to embrace their ability to enact change. “No matter what people want to change, they have the opportu-

nity to do that,” Koger said. He added that Martinsville, known as the “City Without Limits,” provides space for individuals to make a difference regardless of their background.

Martinsville Schools Superintendent Zeb Talley, also a member of the clergy, urged the community to rise above negativity. “You can’t afford to listen to folks who tell us what we can’t do,” Talley said, emphasizing faith and perseverance. “We serve a God that can do anything.”

Rev. Whitfield closed the evening with a powerful call to action, reminding attendees that unity is essential for progress. “We have to leave from here tonight and let the naysayers, those who would indict and incite, know that we are victorious,” Whitfield said. He encouraged the community to focus on God’s purposes and

work collaboratively toward a brighter future.

“We are not going to allow any level of division to keep us from achieving the purposes in which God has intended for us,” Whitfield said, adding his belief that city hall and the community will see positive change. He also expressed gratitude for the participation of county residents, summarizing the evening’s message with the phrase: “Peace plus partnership equals progress.”

Jones echoed these sentiments, urging citizens to carry the spirit of unity beyond the event. “Let prayer unite us as a community,” Jones said. In a social media comment, he reinforced the evening’s theme: “The power of prayer will keep propelling this city forward in unity. Together, we are better.”

# Young Pianist

(cont. from page 1)

church’s equipment, which started with a fascination with the church’s unique ceiling fans. “I have a lot of weird hobbies,” he said, though music remains his passion.

Chappell’s piano journey began unexpectedly during the COVID-19 pandemic while staying with his grandmother. “She has this really old piano in the basement, and I started tinkering with it,” he said. His mother, Amanda Bennett, is another source of inspiration, pushing him to explore his talents.

Nunley’s performances became Chappell’s classroom. “I won’t say that I’m a good piano player, I’d say I’m a good mimicker,” Chappell said, emphasizing his belief that his talent is a divine gift. “I know that I’ve got to keep serving Him and doing my part, so He will keep blessing me with this great talent to play for people.”

Chappell has been going to First



Dylan Chappell stands beside the grand piano he equipped with music-reactive lighting.

Assembly of God his whole life, but he also attends Faith Fellowship in Bassett where he plays the piano.

The video of Chappell’s performance on the 1886 Steinway came about through a friend’s introduction to Holly Kozelsky at the Heritage Center & Museum. His talent prompted the museum to record

and share his music on Facebook, further cementing his local renown.

Chappell struggled for over a year to master his first song. “It felt like the longest year and a half of my life trying to learn, and then I just got it.” The first song he felt he “clicked on” was with Alan Jackson’s rendition of “I’ll Fly Away.”

“Everyone knows me for that song, it’s my absolute favorite song,” he said. The song has taken on greater significance since the passing of his grandmother in June. “She did fly away to her heavenly home.”

Chappell’s faith, inspired by Philippians 4:13 — “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”— guides his musical journey. He envisions a future as a traveling musician but plans to wait until his 30s, after further honing his skills and building a stable life.

For now, Chappell plays for joy and inspiration. If he encounters a piano, he can’t resist playing. He encourages others to reach for the stars and follow their passion.

“If you want to do it, just try and don’t give up,” he advises. “It’s very much worth the wait when you learn to do it.”



# 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](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net).)

## Meetings

**Monday, January 6**  
The Henry County Board of Supervisors’ organizational meeting, 1 p.m., County Administration Building.

**Thursday, January 9**  
Henry County School Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Followed by Closed Session, 1st Floor, Summerlin Room, County Administration Building, 3300 Kings Mountain Road Martinsville.

## Events

**Saturday, January 4**  
Storytime at Spencer-Penn Centre, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., Spencer-Penn Center, 475 Spencer Penn Rd, Spencer.

Crafty Saturday at the Collinsville Branch Library, 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., Collinsville Branch Library, 2540 Virginia Ave, Collinsville.

**Friday, January 10**  
Music Night at Spencer-Penn, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Spencer-Penn Center, 475 Spencer Penn Rd, Spencer.

Reading & Discussion with Naomi Hodge-Muse, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., Blackbox Theatre, 44 Franklin Street, Martinsville.

**Saturday, January 11**  
Reading & Discussion with Naomi Hodge-Muse, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., Blackbox Theatre, 44 Franklin Street, Martinsville.

## ONGOING

A series of four classes on genealogical research will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Bassett Historical Center on each Tuesday in February (4, 11, 18, 25). There is no charge for the classes, but a reservation is needed. When you sign up for the first class, you will automatically be signed up for the other three classes. The classes are limited to 12. Call the center now (276) 629-9191 to reserve a spot.

Uptown Pub Run, every Monday at 6.p.m., meets at Renewal Brewing 32 Franklin St, Martinsville.

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](http://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.

Neighbors in the Know. Join staff and volunteers in the Hylton Library at the Spencer Penn Centre for activities and socializing on the first and third Monday of each month. A different presentation and activity weekly, followed by a way to get you moving. The program is an hour long and activities for children will be provided. Every third Monday, 10-11 a.m., a music program will be provided. This free program is perfect for all ages. No registration is required.



Jarred Marlowe, Andy Doss, Beverly Woody, and Pete Lovell are pictured.

## Woody Honored with SAR Bronze Good Citizenship Medal

Beverly Belcher Woody, an accomplished educator and historian, was awarded the prestigious Bronze Good Citizenship Medal by the Colonel George Waller Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). This is the highest honor the chapter can bestow upon a non-member, recognizing Woody’s significant contributions to her community.

Known for her tireless dedication to preserving local history, Woody serves as Regent of the Patrick Henry National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She is also an active board member of both the Patrick County Historical Society & Museum and the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society. Her efforts in education, particularly as a U.S. History teacher at Martinsville Middle School, have inspired count-

less students. Additionally, her book, “Patrick Pioneers Part One,” and her popular column in The Enterprise newspaper highlight her passion for documenting the stories and heritage of Patrick County.

Chapter President Jarred Marlowe, who has served since 2021, presided over the event and announced the transition of leadership to Andy Doss. Beginning his fourth cumulative term as Chapter President, Doss will also continue in his role as Chapter Registrar. Pete Lovell was elected Vice President and will represent the chapter as part of the Virginia SAR Color Guard and Chapter Ambassador to SAR events.

The ceremony underscored the SAR’s commitment to honoring individuals whose work exemplifies patriotism, leadership, and service.

## Martinsville Speedway hosts festive races and toy drive

**By Jessica Dillon**  
The Martinsville Speedway celebrated the holiday season on Dec. 7 with its annual Holiday Fun Festival and Track Laps for Charity, offering fans a unique blend of fitness, fun, and philanthropy.

The day began with the Martinsville Mile’s Holiday Fun Festival, featuring a 5K, 10K, and a special 15K race for participants eager for a challenge. Race promoter Joe Philpott praised the turnout and weather. “We had approximately 300 registrants with maybe 150 kids in the Youth in Motion program,” Philpott said.

**Race Results**  
In the 5K race, male winners were: David Kiser, first place, 19:14.11 Jackson Gunter, second place, 20:17.14 Colby Favero-Wyle, third place, 20:23.32  
For the women’s division: Alicia Rider, first place, 21:20.35 Buffie Hill, second place, 22:31.11 Megan Chilton, third place, 22:44.66  
In the 10K race, male winners were: Carson Riley, first place, 35:02.70 David Kiser, second place, 41:58.72 Matthew Wells, third place, 44:10.87  
Women’s Division: Kate Ryan, first place, 42:31.58 Alicia Rider, second place, 45:40.64

Buffie Hill, third place, 47:41.04  
In the combined 15K race, male winners were: David Kiser, first place, 1:01:13.0 RJ Scott, second place, 1:07:33.0 Dalton Chandler, third place, 1:08:37.0  
Women’s Division: Alicia Rider, first place, 1:07:02.0 Buffie Hill, second place, 1:10:14.0 Megan Chilton, third place, 1:12:06.0  
The race began with a nod to the track’s racing heritage. “Clay Campbell drove the pace car, leading runners off the starting line, and Karen waved the traditional green flag to start the race as well as the checkered flag for 1st place finishers,” said Philpott.

After the races, participants shifted gears as the speedway opened its gates for Track Laps for Charity. Drivers could take their cars for a lap around the iconic oval in exchange for an unwrapped toy or a \$25 donation.

The community responded enthusiastically, with over \$12,000 raised and more than 4,500 toys collected by the event’s conclusion, according to a post on the Martinsville Speedway Facebook page.

The Martinsville Mile’s racing events will resume with the new Dick & Willie Challenge, a flexible race that participants can complete on their own schedule.

## Creatives invited to share talents at open mic night on Jan. 9

The Make Some Noise: Open Mic Series returns to Piedmont Arts at 7 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 9.

Open to poets, comedians and songwriters, open mic nights are designed to share the unique voices and perspectives of the Martinsville-Henry County community. Taye the Truth will be the guest emcee of the event. A lyricist from Roanoke, Va., he is hailed for his uplifting and relatable performances and his ability to inspire audiences through the spoken word.

Open mic nights are free to the performers and the audience. Performers may sign up



for a five-minute spot upon arrival. Beverages will be available for purchase. The next event in the series will be held at 7 p.m., Thursday, April 10. The guest emcee will be Anna Wheeler. For more information on exhibits and events, visit [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org).

## Martinsville among newly designated Virginia Main Street Communities

The City of Martinsville is among the nine new organizations for the Advancing Virginia Main Street Designation, according to a recent announcement from Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

The newly designated communities will receive intensive services to help strengthen their downtowns, including market analysis, marketplace development, capacity building, design assistance, organization development, economic strategies, and façade renderings for redevelopment projects.

“The Virginia Main Street program has been instrumental in nurturing small businesses, growing local economies, and preserving historic downtowns for nearly 40 years,” said Youngkin. “I applaud these newly designated Virginia Main Street communities for their commitment to revitalization, and

I look forward to your community’s continued success.”

Since 1985, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has been providing assistance to localities engaged in downtown commercial district revitalization through the Virginia Main Street program. Virginia uses the National Main Street Center’s® comprehensive, incremental Main Street Approach® to downtown revitalization, which is built around a community’s unique heritage, culture, and historic building attributes.

Since 1985, Virginia Main Street communities have generated more than \$2.6 billion in public and private investment. New businesses locating, expanding, or relocating to Virginia Main Street communities have created more than 27,000 jobs.

## Recreation fee changes coming to Philpott Lake in 2025

Starting Jan. 1, day use fees at Philpott Lake will increase from \$5 to \$7, according to officials with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

The price adjustment applies only to areas that currently charge a day use fee, while parks that do not require a fee will remain free for visitors.

USACE Annual Pass fees will remain unchanged at \$40. Addi-

tionally, all America the Beautiful Passes—including the Annual Pass, Senior Pass, Access Pass, and others—will continue to be honored without any changes to pricing or issuance requirements.

For more details about the updated recreation fees or pass programs, visitors can contact the Philpott Lake Visitor Assistance Center at (276) 629-2703.



# OPINION

## Congressional subcommittee formed to investigate gravity

WASHINGTON D.C. — A newly-formed bipartisan Congressional subcommittee has been formed to investigate gravity — specifically, why its effects seem to be increasing in recent years with more devastating results.

According to recent Associated Press reports, the subcommittee represents an almost unprecedented collaborative effort between Senator Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, and Representative Nancy Pelosi, D-California.

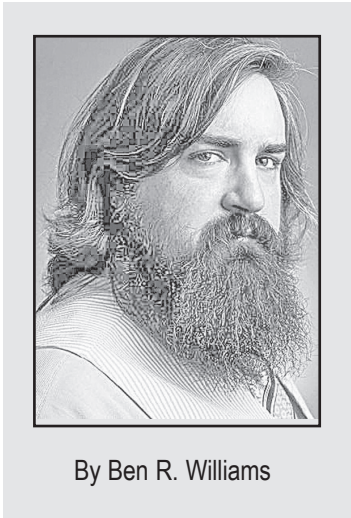
Both McConnell and Pelosi suffered painful falls last month due to the pernicious effects of gravity. McConnell, 82, sprained his wrist and injured his face after taking a tumble while leaving a closed-door GOP luncheon at the Capitol, while Pelosi, 84, required a hip replacement after falling down a staircase while in Luxembourg.

In an exclusive interview, Pelosi stressed that gravity affects all Americans and something must be done.

“Gravity seems to be more powerful and dangerous than it was 20, 15, even ten years ago,” she said. “If I could be grievously injured after falling down the exquisite marble staircase at The Grand Ducal Palace of Luxembourg following a meal of foie gras avec hawthorn puree with Grand Duke Henri, it could happen to any American.”

McConnell agreed. “Representative Pelosi and I disagree on a great many things,” McConnell said, “but over the last few years, I’ve spent more time on my bathroom floor than the Senate floor. Something must be done about this terrible and mysterious force that gets stronger by the day.” McConnell and Pelosi aren’t the only members of Congress concerned about gravity. Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, 91, said that the issue weighs heavily on his mind.

“I’ve seen what gravity has done to so many of colleagues, many of them taken down in the prime of their lives,” he said. “This isn’t just an American issue. It affects every



By Ben R. Williams

country, from Sardinia to Prussia to the Tokugawa Shogunate.”

Many members of Congress, McConnell said, still remember when the late Sen. Strom Thurmond died in 2003 at the age of 100 after taking a hard fall at the Nathan Bedford Forrest Memorial Dinner at the former South Carolina banquet hall Clotilda’s Schooner.

“He exploded into dust, centipedes, and a gray slime that made you racist if you got any on you,” McConnell said, before staring into space and falling silent for three and a half minutes.

Pelosi said that it’s imperative that this Congressional subcommittee get to the bottom of the gravity issue before it’s too late.

“Right now,” she said, “gravity only seems to be affecting specific members of Congress. Try as we might, we can’t figure out what commonality we share. Some of us are Republican, some are Democrat. Some are from cities, some from rural areas. Some of us are wealthy, some are merely affluent. It’s a complete mystery at this point.”

After being informed that New York Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, 35, had requested a spot on the subcommittee, Pelosi frowned, removed her cell phone from her purse, and quietly began making phone calls.

## Bell’s photos winners in calendar contest

Four photos captured by Nancy Bell, Population Health Manager of the West Piedmont Health District (WPHD), were winners in the 2025 Virginia State Office of Rural Health digital calendar photo con-

test. Bell’s photos, along with the other winning photographs, will appear each month throughout the next year. To see all of the photos, visit <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/.../state-office-of-rural>.

## Historical Society to host annual Epiphany music program

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society will present its annual Christmas music program on Sunday, Jan. 5, at 3 p.m., celebrating the Day of Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day. This holiday

commemorates the arrival of the Three Wise Men to visit the Baby Jesus.

The event will feature performances by local musicians and singers, including John Fulcher, Baxter Jennings, Amy Stuart, Joann Linscott, Lynn Pritchett, Valeria Edwards, Davis Scott, Virginia King, Dylan Chappell, and Allie Broadway.

The program will take place at the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Museum, located at 1 E. Main St. in Martinsville. Admission is free and open to the public.

Looking ahead, the museum’s next program, “Founders Day: MHC Civic Groups,” is scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3 p.m.

See more at  
[www.henrycountyenterprise.com](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)

## Make a New Year’s Resolution to embrace your true self and the rest will fall into place.

By J. Basil Dannebohm  
We live in a hyper-competitive society. Many of us tirelessly strive to keep up with the Joneses. As one year draws to a close and a new one begins, what do we have to show for it? Copious amounts of debt, lack of self-esteem, lifestyles of absurd excess, and mental health issues in abundance. Even the New Year’s resolutions we make are often rooted in competition and keeping up with the Joneses. Granted, weight loss goals are great if they are truly aimed at being a healthier you; but if the motive is just to look like somebody else, the effort is in vain. Likewise, saving up for a new home is admirable; but not if the intention is to live outside your means in order to impress others.

Oscar Wilde observed, “Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else’s opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation.” Therein lies the problem.

When we make goals and resolutions that contradict our authentic self, we’re bound to fail and sink lower into an abyss of our own creation. To be a better version of ourselves, we first have to truly know, love, and accept ourselves. Unfortunately, as Wilde notes, most of us haven’t the slightest clue who we are anymore. It’s as though we graduated high school, but never left the cafeteria drama and peer pressure behind. We have to learn to walk again before we can run. Self-improvement is a step-by-step process, the first of which is self-acceptance. Once we have mastered self-acceptance, addictions become easier to overcome, diets become less of a chore, saving becomes a habit. Why? Because our goals aren’t a competition. Rather, they are rooted in a genuine love and concern for our personal wellbeing. When you’re comfortable in your own skin, another step in balanced transformation occurs: a healthier, happier outlook on the world.

Ralph Waldo Emerson keenly observed, “People do not seem to realize that their opinion of the world is also a confession of their character.”

Miserable people project their misery on their surroundings. When you love yourself, petty things don’t matter. Suddenly political arguments, religious debates, and the need to constantly interject your self-perceived expertise begin to subside. It’s as though the veil has been lifted

and you suddenly see what truly matters in life and what is simply a distraction. In a sort of butterfly effect, the world becomes a better place simply because you’ve become a better person.

In this age of relentless noise, to love yourself you must also learn to be comfortable in silence. Only in silence can we hear things that aren’t spoken - meaningful things that give us a clearer understanding of ourselves, the world around us, and how the two should interact. Loving your neighbor and maintaining that goodwill of the holiday season becomes easier when you love yourself and your place in the world. In the words of Benjamin Franklin, “Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every New Year find you a better man.”

Letting every new year find you a better person means letting every new year be a bright new step in your journey toward contentment. Don’t fool yourself though. The road to contentment can at times be just as bumpy as the road paved with good intentions. It takes patience that will only come once you have mastered that first pivotal step. From that point on your stumbling blocks can more easily be transformed into stepping-stones. A path that is lined with gratitude for small blessings and little victories can be inspiration for the journey to a better you. You’re going to fall; but it’s a great deal easier to get back up when you’re doing it for yourself and not to impress others.

Don’t beat yourself up. Don’t overthink it. Sometimes the best we can do is just get by, and that’s okay. Resolve to discover and love yourself this year. Learn to appreciate what you have and to recognize life’s little blessings and accomplishments.

Tecumseh wrote, “When you rise in the morning, give thanks for the light, for your life, for your strength. Give thanks for your food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason to give thanks, the fault lies in yourself.”

Let that be enough for you and the rest will fall into place. Life is complicated enough. Create a simple haven for yourself and dwell therein.

J. Basil Dannebohm is a writer, speaker, consultant, former legislator and intelligencer. His website is [www.dannebohm.com](http://www.dannebohm.com). He writes from the Washington DC metro in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## Transitioning Into 2025

Dr. Glenn Mollette  
A new year is transition. The date changes. Some of us will mess up writing a check a time or two because we’ll write 2024 until it finally sinks in that we are in a new year.

The new year means change. It always has and this year will not be any different. We will see a changing of the guard in our Presidency. President Biden is exiting after an unbelievable 50 or so years in national politics. President Trump is coming back and he has done what no other human has done before. I’m not simply referring to not being elected a second time after sitting out a term because that has happened. What I mean is no one has been vilified and harassed as he has been and even survived let alone ascend to the highest office in the world. January will bring immediate change upon his inauguration. However, it remains to be seen what will change and what won’t.

Life is always transitioning but we sometimes have difficulty making the transition. Some men never get over their high school sports career. They live in the past when they were star athletes, but that may have been 20 – 40 years ago. We often have great difficulty overcoming a failed relationship or marriage. It happened ten years ago but the impact of it still troubles us. We often still grieve over the loss of a loved one who died 20 years ago. We still miss them and the joy they

brought into our lives. We often cannot transition from our jobs or careers. We remember those 20 to 40 years that we worked a certain job or business. We look back to those days often as great days that we would like to go back to.

It’s not easy to transition. The college freshman often misses their senior year of high school. Even as adults we remember those wonderful, wasted days of childhood. The 35-year-old misses their teen years, the 80-year-old would like to bra fifty again.

Often, we dread birthdays. The actual birthdate brings a new number. The 15-year-old loves that 16 number because it means freedom to drive. The 64-year-old anticipates 65 and Medicare and the Social Security check soon to come.

Our hope must be to transition as well as we can because transition is coming for us all.

An old preacher friend said, “At every level there is a new devil.” At every stage and age of life there are joys and obstacles. There are new struggles and also new opportunities.

Let’s make 2025 the best year we’ve ever had. That may not be easy but it’s worth a try and even if it’s not our best year, keep in mind, it’s the only year we have at this time. The life we have today is the only life we have. We don’t have yesterday or even tomorrow. Let’s give 2025 our best effort and do our best to be here at this same time and place next year.

Your Community, Your Voice

Serving Henry County, Martinsville, and Surrounding Area

# HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

[www.henrycountyenterprise.com](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)

*Published Each Saturday*

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

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

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

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# CLASSIFIED

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[blueridgeaquaculture.com](http://blueridgeaquaculture.com), or call 276-632-9440 to make an appointment to apply in person at 555 Industrial Park Drive, Ridgeway, VA 24148 during office hours (M - F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm). Pay: \$90,000.00 - \$105,000.00 per year based on number of trips.



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### LIVESTOCK SALES

BCIA CULPEPER SENIOR BULL SALE, Saturday, De-

## Sports Schedule

The following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of Jan. 6-11:

1/6	6:30pm Boys Basketball Blue Ridge at Carlisle
1/7	7pm Girls Basketball Martinsville at Bassett 7pm Girls Basketball Tunstall at Magna Vista 7pm Boys Basketball Bassett at Martinsville 7pm Boys Basketball Magna Vista at Tunstall
1/8	5pm Wrestling Bassett - Match at Halifax County 7pm Girls Basketball Martinsville at Dan River 7pm Boys Basketball Bassett at Morehead 7pm Boys Basketball Dan River at Martinsville
1/9	5:30pm Girls Basketball Carlisle at North Cross 6pm Boys Basketball North Cross at Carlisle 7pm Girls Basketball Abingdon at Magna Vista
1/10	5pm Swim & Dive George Washington at Bassett (Martinsville YMCA) 5pm Swim & Dive Martinsville at Halifax County (South Boston YMCA)

6pm Girls Basketball Carlisle at George Washington
7pm Girls Basketball Tunstall at Bassett
7pm Girls Basketball Mecklenburg County at Magna Vista
7pm Girls Basketball Halifax County at Martinsville
7pm Boys Basketball Bassett at Tunstall
7pm Boys Basketball Magna Vista at Mecklenburg County
7pm Boys Basketball Martinsville at Halifax County
1/11 9am Indoor Track Bassett - Meet at Roanoke College
9am Wrestling Bassett - Tournament at Carroll County
9am Wrestling Magna Vista - Tournament at Carroll County
5:30pm Girls Basketball Dudley at Carlisle
7:30pm Boys Basketball Dudley at Carlisle

## Nelson Toyota Supports Community with Donations to Local Organizations

Nelson Toyota is giving back to the Martinsville-Henry County community with donations to four local organizations.

Recently, Dealer Principal Barry Nelson presented donations totaling \$6,000 to leaders of The Salvation Army of Martinsville VA, Service Center, the Martinsville Henry County SPCA, the Southside Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and the Grace Network of Martinsville & Henry County.

A \$1,000 donation to the Salvation Army Service Center will bolster the organization's family service programs, including utility assistance, feeding programs, and hotel assistance for families in need.

"This will continue to go into our family service programs," said Lieutenant Antonio Hodges, Commanding Officer of the Salvation Army Service Center. "We are thankful to Nelson for providing funding to help us continue to help families that are in need."

"We have been supporting the Salvation Army

for a long time, and we want to continue that work," Nelson said. "I am glad that we can support their efforts to help families with gifts and meals this Christmas, but also all year round."

The dealership also donated \$1,500 to the Martinsville Henry County SPCA which will support its largest annual Fur Ball fundraiser in February.

"This sponsorship helps cover the cost of general daily care for the animals, as well as spay and neuter services and vaccines," said Catherine Gupton, Chief Operations Officer of the SPCA. "We love Nelson Automotive—they have supported us in a lot of different ways."

"Everyone has a pet, and we understand the importance of supporting those who care for them," Nelson said. "We've done this for many years, and we're not stopping now."

Nelson Toyota's \$2,000 donation to the Southside Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) will fund ministry efforts, including providing Bibles, sending youth to camp, and supporting sports programs in the region.

"They are invaluable. Mr. Nelson and the employees—everyone here—they are some of our biggest supporters," said Tyler Cotner, Director of FCA Southside Va. "Mr. Nelson prays as much as he gives. It means a lot to have him help us out like this."

"This organization is a great place to reach young people," Nelson said. "This may be the only place where they get to see the Lord or the Word. It means a lot to me to grow the ministry, and this is a good place to grow it."

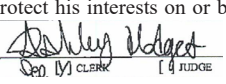
The dealership contributed \$1,500 to Grace Network for Richard's Dinner, which provides meals to the community on Christmas Day.

"We feed the community. All comers, no questions asked. If you need a place to be at Christmas, this is about not being alone," said Scott Norman, organizer of the dinner and an Autos By Nelson employee. "It means everything to be supported by my peers, as well as my boss."

"We've been doing this over 10 years and are glad to do it," Nelson said. "Scott is a good representative of our company, and we just want to back him. This helps at a needy time."

Through these donations, Nelson Toyota reinforces its commitment to making a positive impact in Martinsville-Henry County and beyond.

## LEGAL

**ORDER OF PUBLICATION** Case No. JJ017611-13-00  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
VA. CODE § 8.01-316  
HENRY COUNTY J & DR - JUVENILE  
Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court  
Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* STOKES, LATRELL  
HENRY MARTINSVILLE DSS v. UNKNOWN FATHER  
The object of this suit is to:  
PURSUANT TO VA CODE SECTION 16.1-283, TERMINATE THE RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS OF THE UNKNOWN FATHER OF LATRELL STOKES, A CHILD BORN MAY 29, 2020 TO LOLITA STOKES.  
IT IS ORDERED that the defendant UNKNOWN FATHER appear at the above-named Court and protect his interests on or before 02/05/2025 at 3:00 p.m.  
12/17/2024  
  
Gen. [ ] clerk [ ] judge



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# Crossing the Lines

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

## Meadowpoint Dahlias: A Story of History, Family, and Blossoming Beauty



Scenes from Meadowpoint Dahlias.

It is only fitting that a colorful bouquet of dahlias from Meadowpoint Dahlias adorned Mayberry Presbyterian Church recently for their Sunday morning service. Dahlias, symbolic of elegance, creativity, positivity, and growth, flourish in a delightful farm situated just a few miles from Mayberry Church. The history of both the church and the farm is deeply intertwined.

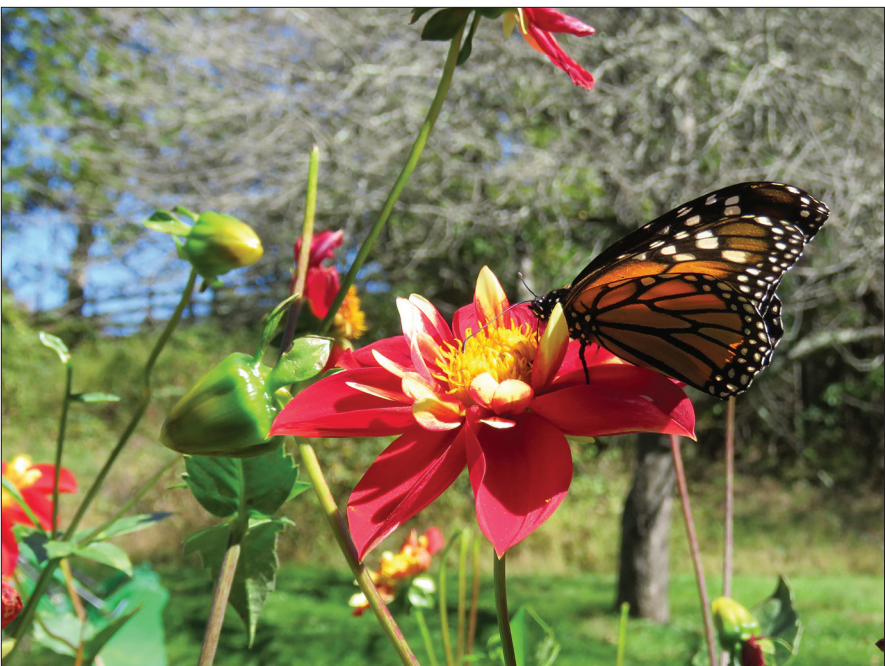
Mayberry Presbyterian Church is one of the rock churches built by Bob Childress, the inspiration for the book “The Man Who Moved a Moun-

tain.” The dahlia farm is located in the yard of the former Charles Langhorne “Tump” Spangler, the first representative from Patrick County to the Virginia House of Delegates, where he served for five years. The current owner of the farm, Debra Spangler Shelor, and her husband, Rob, are continuing the family legacy. Debra is the granddaughter of the elder Spangler.

After retiring from thirty-one years of service with Tri-Area Community Health Clinic, Debra found more time to indulge in her passion for

planting and growing dahlias. Her son, Aaron Shelor, soon discovered his own joy in flower gardening, planting a few dahlias at his house. Aaron, a Virginia Tech graduate and the manager of Meadowpoint Cattle Company, became so involved in growing dahlias that he explored online sales.

For more information, visit their website at Meadowpoint-dahlias.square.site or their Facebook page, Meadowpoint Dahlias.



## Fourth Grader Raises Over \$2,400 for Patrick County Animal Shelter



Noah Beasley gives his thanks to those who donated during his November give back month for the Patrick County Animal Shelter.

Noah Beasley, a local fourth-grade student at Woolwine Elementary School, raised over \$2,400 for the Patrick County Animal Shelter in November.

Kirsten Beasley, Noah’s mother, said the GoFundMe fundraiser began as part of a new family tradition. “So, we were using the month of November as our give back month. He was given three options as give back projects, and the first option I gave him was

you know we could raise money for the animals at the animal shelter. Immediately he knew he wanted to do that,” she said.

Beasley said Noah is a huge animal lover who adores all creatures, even the ones she finds less appealing, such as “creepy crawlies, the earthworms, and the bugs.”

The GoFundMe campaign raised \$2,410 from 60 donors.



The Virginia Department of Transportation determined that a stoplight is not warranted at the intersection of U.S. 58 and Virginia 680 (Spring Road – right/South Mayo Drive-left) in Patrick Springs.

## VDOT: Stoplight ‘Not Warranted’ for Patrick Springs Intersection

A recent analysis by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) concluded that a traffic signal is not warranted at the intersection of U.S. 58 and Virginia 680 (Spring Road/South Mayo Drive) in Patrick Springs. The decision, outlined in an April traffic engineering work order, was based on an evaluation of traffic volumes, turning movements, and crash data.

Lisa Price-Hughes, VDOT’s resident engineer, explained the criteria used to determine the need for a traffic signal.

“There are certain requirements for hourly volumes of traffic on the main line, which would be (U.S.) 58, traffic volume on the intersection, which would be Spring Road” and South Mayo Drive — “all four legs,” Price-Hughes said.

The study reviewed traffic patterns during peak hours, which

are between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. The highest volume of traffic was recorded from 4-5 p.m., with 640 vehicles traveling east and west on U.S. 58. Meanwhile, Virginia 680 experienced a peak of 117 vehicles from 10-11 a.m. The lowest volumes were 408 vehicles on U.S. 58 and 78 vehicles on Virginia 680, both recorded between 11 a.m. and 12 p.m.

The intersection is classified as a rural arterial for U.S. 58 and a rural major collector for Virginia 680. In 2022, U.S. 58’s average annual daily traffic (AADT) was 8,621 vehicles west of the intersection and 5,196 east of it. South Mayo Drive’s AADT was 461, while Spring Road saw 3,513 vehicles per day.

A radar speed sample found the 85th percentile speeds on U.S. 58 were 53 mph westbound and 52 mph eastbound.

## Patrick County Supervisors to elect new officers at January 6 meeting

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors is set to hold its re-organizational meeting on January 6 at 6 p.m. in the third-floor meeting room of the Patrick County Administration Building. During this session, the board will elect a new chairman and vice-chairman. Additionally, the board will consider adopting its Rules of Procedure and a proposed meeting schedule for the

upcoming year.

In other business, the board will appoint members to various committees. The county attorney is also scheduled to discuss Conflict of Interest forms.

The board will consider meeting in closed session, however, proposed items of discussion were not included on the draft agenda.

*To read more about these and other stories, check out*

*The Enterprise, [www.theenterprise.net](http://www.theenterprise.net).*



1-3-5-7-9PM



1-3-5-7-9PM



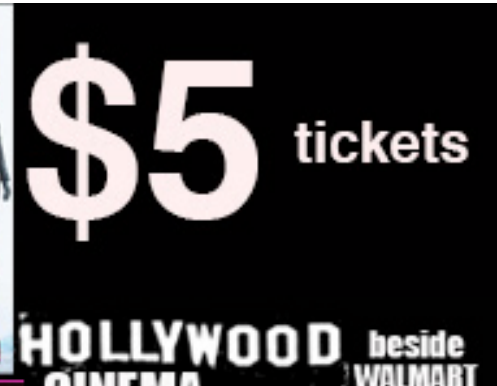
1-4-7-9:15PM



1-3-5-7-9PM



1-4-7-9:15



HOLLYWOOD CINEMA beside WALMART Martinsville 278-858-3456





## Law enforcement agencies to share proceeds of fall ride

Greater Bassett's Hwy. 57 Cruise In and B 99.9 raised \$2,100 to be split between the three law enforcement groups during the Back the Blue Ride held in September. A special Thank You to Courtney and Chris Gauldin for their efforts in organizing this successful event! From left: Allen Aldermen, Hwy. 57 Cruise In Chairman; Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis; Courtney Gauldin, Back the Blue Co-Chair; Martinsville Sheriff Steve Draper; Martinsville Police Chief Rob Fincher; & Santa's helper Matt Davis, Greater Bassett President.

## City officer recognized by MADD



Martinsville Police Officer Austin Vernon was recognized by MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) at a Dec. 12 ceremony in Richmond. Every year MADD honors law enforcement officers from across the Commonwealth for their efforts in removing impaired drivers from the streets of our communities. Vernon is pictured (left) being presented the award by Lt. Robbie Jones.

## Cline joins P&HCC College Board

The Patrick & Henry Community College Board welcomes its newest member, Carl Cline, Jr.

A Registered Nurse, Cline serves as Vice President/Administrator for Carilion Clinic/Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital. He is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives, the Virginia Organization of Nurse Executives, the American Nurses Association, and the Virginia Nurses Association.

Cline currently serves on the SW Chapter Board of the American RedCross (Roanoke, VA) as the board chair, Franklin County Free Clinic Board of Directors, Ferrum College Board of Directors, Roanoke Valley Speech and Hearing Board of Directors, and was selected by the Governor of Virginia to serve on the Virginia Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board.



Carl Cline, Jr. was appointed by Franklin County to represent the locality on P&HCC's board for a four-year term.

He is also a member of the Rocky Mount Rotary Club.

## MADD recognizes county deputy



Lt. M. Duffy (left) presents the award to Justin Jones.

Henry County Sheriff's Deputy Justin Jones was recently recognized by MADD Virginia (Mothers Against Drunk Driving), along with other outstanding officers



from across Virginia.

Annually, MADD honors law enforcement officers who go above and beyond to keep our streets safe from impaired drivers.

## MPD's Summers among recent grads



Martinsville Police Chief Rob Fincher was among those to congratulate graduates of the Piedmont Regional Criminal Justice Training Academy's Option Six Law Enforcement Session #1.



The department was especially pleased with the graduation of Martinsville Police Officer Cody Summers, who is pictured with Fincher.

## Local events among those to gain funding boost

Events in Patrick County and Martinsville to receive a portion of more than \$812,139 in matching grant funds awarded to 81 special events and festivals as part of the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)'s Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program (SEF), Gov. Glenn Youngkin said in a release.

Local events include:

- Stuart Rotary Club (SRC) Productions were awarded \$5,000 for a total match of \$26,382 for the Beach Music Festival, slated to be held June 12-14.

- One Family Productions received \$5,000 for a total match of \$39,050 for the Front Porch Fest, set for August 28-31.

- Rooster Walk Inc. was awarded \$10,000 for a total match of \$41,880 for Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival, set for May 22-25.

This funding program is designed to leverage local marketing and event production dollars with matching state funds to increase overnight visitation, improve the visitor experience, and increase traveler spending at Virginia special events and festivals. This funding cycle, local partners will commit more than \$4.8 million in private-public sector funds to match the VTC funding, providing more than \$5.62 million in new marketing and event production activity focused on increasing overnight visitation to Virginia in 2025. The funding will be awarded to 81 special events and festivals, ultimately impacting 324 combined partners.

"Special events and festivals are vital to Virginia's thriving visitor economy, supporting our musicians, artisans, hotels, and restaurants. This year's grant recipients have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to growing their event

footprint, increasing visitation, and enhancing the visitor experience in 2025," said Youngkin. "By leveraging these funds, we aim to attract even more visitors, showcase the unique charm of our communities, and reinforce Virginia's reputation as a premier destination for memorable events and festivals."

The VTC Special Events & Festivals Sponsorship Program is designed to increase visitor spending by leveraging limited marketing and event production dollars to stimulate overnight visitation through new tourism marketing and event expansion partnerships. The program also extends the Virginia is for Lovers brand to drive special events and festival visitation. Each Go Virginia region is limited to 20 percent of available funds creating a matrix of sponsored special events and festivals statewide.

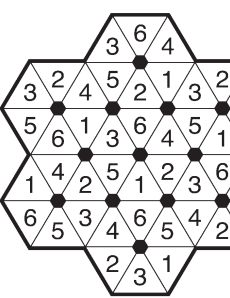
Using the hub and spoke tourism model to create multi-day itineraries, four Virginia entities partner financially to apply for funding. Partners may consist of Virginia cities, towns, counties, destination marketing organizations, restaurants, museums, attractions, and other tourism-related businesses. With the special event or festival as the main lure, the program is designed to encourage visitors to extend their stay to experience Virginia Main Streets, boutique shopping, unique restaurants, and historic sites creating significant economic impact driven by the special event or festival.

The VTC will have additional grant and sponsorship rounds opening throughout 2025. Organizations and businesses that are interested in applying may visit [vatec.org/grants](http://vatec.org/grants) for more information.

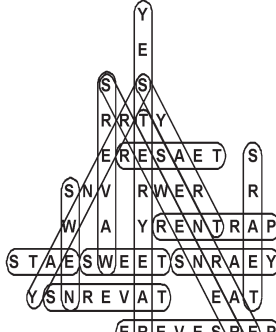
## Puzzle Answers!

### SNOWFLAKES

solution



### WORDS FOUND IN "NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY"



### SCRAMBLERS

solution  
1. Ration 2. Smart;  
3. Rotate; 4. Spite  
Today's Word  
**TERMITES**

### FEAR KNIGHT



### Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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





# FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

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♥ERSIA

♥RGE0

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

## HOCUS - FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

## MAGIC MAZE

WORDS FOUND IN "NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY"

O

Z

W

T

Q

N

K

H

D

A

X

U

R

P

M

J

G

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A

X

V

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U

S

R

Q

E

R

E

V

E

S

R

E

P

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: A CLOSET FOR FOOD

Earnest Eats News Partner

Persevere Renewers Sweet Taverns

Tears Teaser Trays Wavers

Yawners Years Yesteryear

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## Super Crossword

JANUARY 1 FUN

ACROSS

1 Drag race vehicle

8 Schuss, e.g.

11 Stinging flier

15 Contributed

19 Halloween mask feature

20 Hoodwink

21 Falco of TV

22 Leave off

23 Tendancy toward chaos

24 Fido's noise

25 \* Star of the 1950s TV series "China Smith"

27 BLT seller

28 Naval forces

30 — Field (Mr. Met's home)

31 \* Getting tired

34 Baby bird

38 Evergreen with red arils

39 Actress Polo

40 Stephen of "V for Vendetta"

42 Young moray, e.g.

43 Cowl wearer

45 \* Hope when the situation is desperate

51 Mosque official

54 Scrooge portrayer

Alastair

55 Minerals in thin sheets

56 \* "Vanity Fair" novelist

61 "One World" musician

65 Holders of frozen cubes

66 Girl in the fam

67 "Insecure" actress

69 — Hawkins dance

70 Astonishment

73 E'en if

75 Actor Bridges

76 Fathers

79 Auditing gp.

81 Was disgusting to

84 Deep desires

85 \* Period superseded by auto-mobiles

89 Ragtime pianist Blake

90 Aficionado

91 Large cut

92 \* Three-part novel by Gertrude Stein

98 Green-light

102 Removal of restrictions, for short

103 RV refuge org.

104 Six-legged marchers

107 Suffix with Carol

108 How Alaska is populated

111 \* Town crier's cry

116 Cab cost

117 "It takes two" dances

118 Agents, in brief

119 \* "The Price Is Right" host

123 Happy dance

124 Net, as earnings

127 Ames' state

128 Saturate

129 Bullfight yell

130 Dissimilar

131 Legal equal

132 Brontë's Jane

133 Despite this

134 What the last four letters of eight key answers in this puzzle might be considered, cryptically

DOWN

1 Honorarium

2 Writer Rand

3 Lay in place

4 Tossed

5 "Relax!"

6 Of Swiss mountains

7 Playa del —

8 Climb up

9 Divided

10 Get by logic

11 Joins closely

12 Org. for cavity fixers

13 Thereafter

14 Counterparts of manis

15 Cousin of a chimpanzee

16 Poehler of "Baby Mama"

17 Fight (for)

18 Zeta follower

26 Pronounces

28 "Just my opinion," in a text

29 Supermodel Banks

31 Fitness locale

32 Early auto

33 Award for U2

34 All-time low

35 Creeping vine

36 Once called

37 Fido's threat

41 Intertwine

44 Tartan skirt wearers

46 Suffix with owl or wolf

47 Vardalos of Hollywood

48 Sierra, Yukon and Acadia

49 Trendy berry

50 Shells out

52 Boggy areas

53 Motorists' gp.

56 Very thin, as clouds

57 "It matters to me"

58 Escorted from outside

59 Org. with bag screeners

60 The whole — and caboodle

61 Fox-sighting cry

62 Jagged, as a leaf's edge

63 "When I Need You" singer Leo

64 Hopper of old gossip

68 Fake coins

71 Not fooled by

72 Previous to

74 Globe

77 Ergo

78 Japanese noodle type

80 In no danger

82 Playwright O'Neill

83 Links letters

86 Dangerous

87 Vetoing vote

126 Boomer's kid

## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• Jim Cummings, who voices Winnie the Pooh, calls sick children in hospitals and talks to them in the character's voice. He once phoned a little girl who was fighting cancer, and her mother told him it was the first time the child had smiled in six months.

• The odds of giving birth to a baby at 12:01 a.m. on Jan. 1 are around 1 in 526,000 — roughly the same as the odds of getting struck by lightning.

• In ancient Greece, throwing an apple at a woman was considered a marriage proposal.

• Iceland has one of the largest gun ownership rates in the world, but one of the lowest crime rates in the world.

• The dragon tree of the Canary Islands is famous for its thick, deep-red sap. Called dragon's blood, the resin might be responsible for the intense hue of the famous Stradivarius violins built in the 17th and 18th centuries.

• All telephone service in the U.S. and Canada was silenced for one minute on Aug. 4, 1922, to mark the funeral of Alexander Graham Bell.

• Lawyer James Thornton successfully sued the U.K. government to admit that it was breaching legal limits for air pollution.

• The East China Sea parts annually and exposes a narrow 2.9 km-long strip of land, allowing thousands of people to cross from Jindo Island to Modo Island of Korea. This land is exposed about an hour each day for approximately four days every year.

\*\*\*

**Thought for the Day:** "If you want evidence that the world is a terrible place, watch the news and surf the web. But if you want to remember how incredible this planet is, go out into nature. Unlike social media and the news, nature has no incentive to keep us agitated, angry and anxious." — *Austin Perlmutter*

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## Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

ALL OF US HAVE ENCOUNTERED MATCH-PLAY OPPONENTS WHO, ALTHOUGH ONLY AVERAGE STRIKERS FROM TEE TO GREEN, ARE HIGHLY SKILLED AROUND AND ON THE GREENS.

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## KEEP YOUR COOL IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

HAVING TO CONSTANTLY RELY ON RECOVERY SHOTS IS MIGHTY STRESSFUL, THUS CHANCES ARE THAT THE MAGIC WON'T LAST FOR ALL 18 HOLES.

JUST HANG IN THERE!

UNBELIEVABLE!

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## SCRAMBLERS

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

Share

ORIENT

Astute

MRATS

Pivot

TOATER

Grudge

PESTI

"I won't get a wink of sleep until we find those two \_\_\_\_\_."

**TODAY'S WORD**

\_\_\_\_\_

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# Dawson wins Best In Show in photography exhibit

Rick Dawson of Bassett, won best in show for his black-and-white piece, “Timeless Beauty,” on Nov. 17 at the Virginia Tech Reynolds Homestead’s Nancy Susan Reynolds photography exhibit. Laine Errichetti was named best in show in the youth division for his entry, “God’s Beauty.”

About 40 people attended the awards ceremony and exhibit opening, including 15 of the artists, their guests, and the public.

Photography has not been exhibited at the Reynolds Homestead since 2019, and the show marked the return of this exhibit with nearly three dozen submissions across seven categories. The show is open to participants in Patrick County and the surrounding counties in both Virginia and North Carolina.

Sarah Wray, community engagement, partnerships, and programs manager at the Reynolds Homestead, opened the ceremony with remarks about the history of the Nancy Susan Reynolds photography exhibit. Exhibit judge Lisa Carter of Danville, Virginia spoke to attendees about the judging criteria, her affiliation with various photography organizations, and the high quality of work submitted for exhibition.

The Reynolds Homestead, a university outreach center in Critz, Virginia, is located on the former Rock Spring Plantation where R.J. Reynolds was born. It now acts as part museum, part community gathering place, and part educational and cultural center.

- Youth**  
1st: Laine Errichetti, God’s Beauty  
2nd: Laine Errichetti, Farm Friends
- Portrait**  
1st: Katie Joanne Hill, Storyteller  
2nd: Joan Norman, LOVE  
3rd: Jessica Moricle, The Ancient Giant



The exhibit is open weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. through Dec. 18. The Reynolds Homestead Community Engagement Center will close for the holidays on Dec. 19. (Photos by Kristin Hylton for Virginia Tech)

- Macro Photography**  
1st: Joan Lawson, Just Bee  
2nd: Nancy Long, Spotted Cucumber Beetle  
3rd: Richard Joyce, Lines & Circles
- Honorable Mention:** Rick Dawson, Forest Secrets
- Landscape**  
1st: Bruce Arnold, Reflections of Venice  
2nd: Patty Young, Pilot Mountain Poppies  
3rd: Nancy Long, Northern Lights 2024-10-11
- Honorable Mention:** Richard Joyce, Warm Springs Creek



- Event**  
1st: Y’dell Lynch, Grenadine Dream  
2nd: Katie Joanne Hill, Deserted  
3rd: Jan Atkins, The Lapping of Luxury
- Digital Enhancement**  
1st: Joan Lawson, Nature’s Lady  
2nd: Michael Williamson, Excellence Noir  
3rd: Ben Dawson, The Supervisor
- Black & White**  
1st: Rick Dawson, Timeless Beauty  
2nd: Patty Young, Monochrome Swallowtail

# Piedmont Arts educational programs reach more than 1,300 students in December



Piedmont Arts brought five educational outreach programs to area students in December. The programs served more than 1,300 students.

Brass 5 performed the program “Why Music?” for 890 students at Patrick Henry and Meadow View elementary schools on Dec. 3. The quintet played Christmas-themed songs, including a reading of “The Night Before Christmas” with musical accompaniment, and led students in a holiday sing-along. The group performed for students at six schools in Martinsville and Henry County this year, serving a total of 1,940 students.

Preschoolers from Happy Feet Early Learning and Child Center in Martinsville helped deck the halls at the museum on Dec. 3. With help from Mr. and Mrs. Claus — played by Gale Buck and his wife Christy — five students decorated the Christmas tree in the museum’s lobby. The preschoolers also enjoyed cookies and hot chocolate with Santa.

Roscoe Burnems led poetry workshops for seventh and ninth grade students Dec. 9-12 in Martinsville City Public Schools. Burnems is the first poet laureate of Richmond, Va. He taught students the components of poetry and encour-



aged them to write poetry with deep personal meaning. Participating students shared their finished work at a poetry showcase Dec. 12 at New College Institute. This program was made possible through a partnership between Martinsville City Public Schools and Piedmont Arts.

Buck, again dressed as Santa, entertained 170 preschoolers with Christmas stories on Dec. 12 at Preschool in the Galleries. Smith River Singers performed Christmas songs during the event and led the children in a sing-along.

Fourth grade students from Albert Harris, Axton, Carver and Patrick Henry elementary schools took a field trip to see a performance of “The Nutcracker” by Southwest Virginia Ballet on Dec. 13 in Roanoke, Va. More than 240 students experienced the famed holiday ballet that has become a staple of Southwest Virginia Ballet’s holiday season. Students who participated in the in-school program Dance Español earlier this year and those who will participate in the



program in the spring received a special invitation from Southwest Virginia Ballet to attend the event. This trip was made possible through a partnership between Southwest Virginia Ballet and Piedmont Arts.

Piedmont Arts’ educational outreach programs are presented free of charge to students and schools. The museum reaches more than 5,000 students per year with its programming. To make a donation to the museum’s Kay Smith Education Fund, visit [PiedmontArts.org/secure/donate.cfm](https://PiedmontArts.org/secure/donate.cfm).

For more information on educational outreach, exhibits and events, visit [PiedmontArts.org](https://PiedmontArts.org).

# Hospice agency receives \$25,000 grant

Mountain Valley, a local hospice and palliative care organization, received a \$25,000 grant awarded by the Hospice Fund of the Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia. The funds will directly support hospice care for residents of Patrick and Henry counties and the City of Martinsville.

This latest grant brings the Foundation’s lifetime support for Mountain Valley to more than \$110,000 during their six-year partnership with the foundation, reflecting a shared commitment to compassionate end-of-life care.

“The Foundation’s ongoing generosity enables us to serve our Virginia communities with dignity and excellence, ensuring families receive vital care when they need it most,” said Tracey Dobson, president and CEO of Mountain Valley.

“Mountain Valley never turns anyone away due to their inability to pay. Grants like this one help us sustain our mission,” said Leigh Anne Groves, senior VP of philanthropy. “This contribution will fund charity hospice care and services for patients in need, which, on average, amounts to over \$400,000 a year.”

Mountain Valley’s services include specialized hospice care, serious illness (palliative) care, grief support, pediatric hospice care and grief support for kids and teens, Al-

zheimer’s and dementia care, and Veteran-centered programs. The organization focuses on support for the entire family, with a mission to create the best experience possible for every patient, every family, every time.

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VAAR 433/028



# Martinsville Teams Shine at State Robotics Competition

Two teams from Martinsville City Public Schools (MCPS) earned top honors last month at the VA+DC FIRST LEGO League Challenge state championship, hosted at James Madison University on December 7-8. The event featured more than 100 teams from across Virginia and Washington, D.C.

In Division 2, Absolute Zero from Martinsville Middle School earned first place in Core Values, while Patrick Henry Elementary's Scuba Squad took home third place in Division 1 Robot Design.

Two additional MCPS teams, the Wasteland Warriors and the Wave Wobblers, also competed at the state championship. All four teams qualified for the event through a regional tournament in November.

"Our students continue to excel in robotics and engineering," said superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley. "We are incredibly grateful for strong parental and community support and look forward to competing again at the next level! Go MCPS!"

FIRST LEGO League is a STEM-based competition that encourages students to develop technical and collaborative skills. Participants design and program robots to complete timed tasks in the Robot Game, while also presenting their robot design, mission strategy, and coding process to a panel of judges.

Beyond robotics, teams research and solve real-world problems related to the competition's annual theme and are evaluated on their demonstration of Core Values, including discovery, innovation, inclusion, and teamwork.

These challenges help students sharpen technical skills like programming and engineering, along with soft skills like communication and teamwork. The program also helps build self-confidence and prepares students for public speaking and problem-solving in future careers.

Adelaide Brent, a 5th grader and member of the Wave Wobblers, made a second trip to the state competition this year. "It's really fun because you get to see other teams' projects and have fun with your team," she said. "It was fun being on a college campus too—that was really cool."

Brent, who wants to be an architect when she grows up, said her favorite part of robotics is getting to code the robot. "I like it best because I like challenges," she said.

Many students who participate in LEGO Robotics are inspired to pursue studies and careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), laying a foundation for future success in these fields. At least eight for-



The Scuba Squad from Patrick Henry Elementary.

mer robotics team members who have graduated from Martinsville in recent years have gone on to pursue engineering degrees in college.

"We were beyond proud to have four teams from our district qualify for the state robotics tournament," said MCPS Coordinator of STEM, Math, and Science Tammy Allen. "Competing against the best in the state, it was an incredible honor to see two of our teams bring home trophies—a testament to their hard work and dedication. We can't wait to build on this success and see even more teams qualify next year!"

The following students and coaches represented MCPS at the state championship:

**Wave Wobblers:** Mercy Moore, Adelaide Brent, Elanz Lozano, Espen Troncoso, CaNadria Waller, Mason Rea, Jacob Ratliff, Emeilia Blankenbaker, Naryah Williams, Sophia Olberg. Coaches: Elizabeth Lynch, Elizabeth Fulcher, Megan Gualdin.

**Wasteland Warriors:** Amyrah Dillard, Aiden Boaz, Aubrey Kirby, Kim Quach, Amreen Narula, Nate Butcher, Emersyn Crockett, Grayson Hawks, Faith Dandridge. They are coached by Erica Crockett and Brooke Holyfield and mentored by Martinsville High School students Veronica Smith, Hudson Grant, and Aileen Nolasco.

**Scuba Squad:** Jane Venable, Margo Sharp, Wesley Walker, Emery Taylor, Hailey Turner,



Absolute Zero from Martinsville Middle School.



The Wave Wobblers from Patrick Henry Elementary.



The Wasteland Warriors from Patrick Henry Elementary.

Sebastian LaPrade, Kavanny Flores, Adelyn McKenzie, Kalia Dillard, Aubree Stone. Coaches: Emily Harrell and Jemeisha Childress.

**Absolute Zero:** Brooklyn DeShazo, Katie Wall, Kendrick Moyer, Jade Holland Dallas, Kyla Stewert, Hazel Moore, Bridgette Brent. Coaches: Elizabeth Lynch and Elizabeth Fulcher.

See more at [www.henrycountyenterprise.com](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)



Dr. Ruberte Thiele initially pursued a career as a biomedical engineer in the medical device industry and academia. Interested in directly impacting patients' quality of life, he applied to medical school with the singular goal of becoming an orthopedic surgeon. After completing additional training in robotics and navigation for partial and total joint replacement as well as revision arthroplasty, returns to the area eager to help patients get back to doing what makes them happy. When not attending one of his kid's swim meets or soccer games, he enjoys outdoor activities like biking and hiking as well as recreational basketball.

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