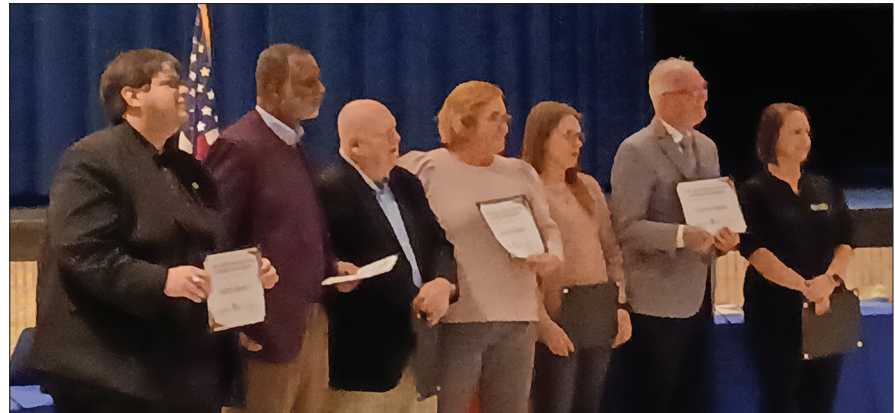


County Superintendent Steps In As Substitute Amid Flu Outbreak, School Board Addresses Safety And Budget Concerns



Members of the Henry County School Board were honored for their service at the meeting held during School Board Appreciation Month.

By Cole Hall
Henry County Schools Superintendent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis returned to the classroom recently as a substitute teacher. Teddy Martin II, chairman of the Henry County School Board, said Blake-Lewis spent most of February 3 substituting at Fieldale-Collinsville Middle

School for a 7th grade science class. He explained that 18 teachers and staff and more than 154 students in that one school were absent due to flu and flu-like illnesses. “There were more than 100 staff absences across the entire division, and additional student absences too,” Martin said. “The flu

was kicking us.” Martin, who represents the Reed Creek District, added the high number of absences were not confined to local schools. “I know Franklin County was about at the point of closing for deep cleaning” due to the number of cases in that division, he said after the (See School Board p. 2)



Kelly Williams is recognized as VFW Teacher of the Year.

Board addresses impact of snow days on calendar

By Jessica Dillon
The Martinsville City school board met on February 10 to discuss the upcoming to the school year calendar and learn about the school wellness plan to get in line with Virginia’s plan. The board addressed the recent snow days and noted it has extra days scheduled in case of snow. We “will have to make sure, especially at the high school level, that the students get their required hours,” Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley said. Unless the schools are closed two more weeks, students are still in “great shape,” he said, adding that means extra days will not be added to the school calendar to make up for the snow days that have already happened. Talley also said that he appreciated the efforts that he saw in the city schools for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. King’s “life and his legacy will live on,” Talley said, and encouraged anyone traveling to Atlanta to visit the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park to learn more about the historical figure’s (See Snow Days p. 2)

Rail photography thrives in Martinsville and Henry County



Some of the train photographs that were captured by Dean Steele, a local rail enthusiast.

By Jessica Dillon
For rail enthusiasts and hobbyists, Martinsville and Henry County have become a hub for capturing images of trains. With several active tracks crisscrossing the area, train photography is alive and well, drawing the attention of locals and visitors alike. Dean Steele, a local rail enthusiast, discovered his passion for photographing trains while working near a track in the southern part of the county. “I have an older brother who was always into trains, you know, model trains. He had layouts and stuff. He kind of influenced me,” Steele shared. Steele’s fascination grew after a passing train near his workplace prompted him to call his brother and ask about the numbers on the side of the locomotive. That curiosity led him to take a video of a train and share it on Facebook. Soon, he connected with the Norfolk Southern Winston-Salem District, a group of rail photography enthusiasts from southern Virginia and northern North Carolina.

“They kind of give a heads up of what trains are coming down,” Steele said, noting that the group’s members share a deep appreciation for the history of railroad photography. The group often focuses on locomotives with unique paint schemes, such as the heritage units painted to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the merger between smaller railroads that formed the Southern and Norfolk railroads. “That’s one of the things that you try to do, is get a picture of those engines,” Steele explained. **Variety of Trains in the Region** Steele highlighted the diversity of trains that pass through the area, including coal trains, grain trains, auto carriers, and tankers. However, passenger trains no longer operate in the region. The group uses train schedules to anticipate arrivals, but not every train is of interest. “If you get a train where the engine is a heritage unit, then those are the ones people go see and want to take pictures of,” Steele said. **Expanding the Hobby** Steele’s passion for rail photography has tak-

en him beyond Martinsville. He has traveled to capture unique locomotives and has visited the Virginia Museum of Transportation in Roanoke, home to several historic trains. Steele and his wife have also participated in excursions aboard the museum’s antique locomotives. “Sometimes we will go out of town and stay overnight to do some photography,” Steele said, emphasizing the lengths enthusiasts will go to capture the perfect shot. Steele invites others to explore the hobby and suggests joining the Norfolk Southern Winston-Salem District group to learn more. “Those interested can get tips and learn about the trains that are moving through the area,” he said. For those who enjoy trains and photography, Martinsville and Henry County offer a unique opportunity to connect with a vibrant and welcoming community of rail enthusiasts. Steele invites those who are interested to take part in the hobby, and check out the Norfolk Southern Winston-Salem District to get tips and learn about the trains that are moving through the area.

SPCA revamps volunteer programs, apologizes to former helpers

By Jessica Dillon
The SPCA of Martinsville and Henry County is restructuring its volunteer program to improve training and support for participants. The updated program aims to provide quicker education for volunteers, ensuring they feel prepared and supported while working with the shelter’s animals—an issue that staff previously encountered. The changes come as animal shelters nationwide face difficulties in securing adoption placements, increasing the need for well-trained volunteers to assist with daily operations. “We are completely revamping the volunteer program,” said Director of Development and Communications,



Farrah, the Martinsville Henry County SPCA’s longest resident, has had her adoption fee sponsored.

Caroline Cicilese. This change came after management and staff discussed their former program, and looked at staffing issues. “The intakes never

stop. I don’t have the staff to stop each volunteer that’s here and tell them, ‘Hey, we need your help with this or if you’re looking (See SPCA p. 2)

Fire Marshal Warns of Increased Fire Risk Amid Dry Conditions

By Cole Hall
With dry conditions, sporadic high winds, and low humidity increasing the risk of wildfires, Henry County Fire Marshal Kiah Cooper is urging residents to take precautions and comply with upcoming burn restrictions. Recently, a large brush fire, driven by high winds threatened parts of the county, highlighting the dangers posed by open-air burning. Cooper emphasized the importance of fire safety and burn bans in preventing destructive blazes. The recent fire began at the base of a mountain and moved toward a neighbor-

hood on Appalachian Drive. Volunteer crews from across the county and officials from the Henry County Department of Public Safety worked together to halt its spread, successfully protecting homes and ensuring no injuries. Firefighters from various volunteer agencies, along with officials from the Henry County Department of Public Safety, remained on the scene from 2 p.m. well into the evening. “Burning brush is something we’ve dealt with a lot, and it can cause large fires,” Cooper said, and stressed the dangers of unattended brush fires, especially in dry condi-

tions. With Virginia’s statewide burn ban taking effect on February 15 and running (See Fire Risk p. 2)

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School Board

(cont. from page 1)

February 6 school board meeting at Bassett High School.

During the meeting, board members recognized student achievements, discussed budget adjustments, and additional concerns.

Student safety emerged as a key topic of discussion throughout the meeting. During the public comment session, Mary Martin, a former school board member, discussed open communication between the board, administration and “anyone who has an issue.” She suggested “that perhaps if you have something you’re really unhappy with, get with your school board member” and Blake-Lewis to discuss issues and “address them directly. I’m very comfortable that Dr. Blake-Lewis is fair-minded and open-minded.”

Mary Martin said she is “honored to be part” of an effort called the Henry County Public Schools Foundation, which intends to provide “additional resources to support our teachers if they need something additional that’s not in the budget,” students and athletes.

She also encouraged the board to call state legislators and lobby for additional support for schools. “I’m hoping all of you call your legislators—you put them in office, you can vote them out of office,” Mary Martin said.

Mindy Mullins, a parent in the Ridgeway District, said the school division is failing students, who do not feel safe in school. She voiced concerns about potential security risks due to the distance between the parking lots and some school entrances.

“The core principles on your website says we value respect, we act



The Henry County School Board held its February meeting at Bassett High School.

with integrity, we strive for excellence, we promote equity, and we put students first. You have lied.” She also noted chronic bullying was distracting students in the classroom as well, and Mullins said she has discussed various issues with the teaching team and other school officials.

Mullins added that she is researching alternative educational options for her children.

Sherry Vestal announced she was running for the Blackberry District seat on the Henry County School Board in November. A former school nurse coordinator, though now retired, Vestal works part time as a nurse. “I have two granddaughters in elementary school, and I want to work with the board to ensure they have the best education possible.”

Also, Ray Reynolds announced he is seeking the Blackberry District seat on the Henry County Board of Supervisors currently held by incumbent Jim Adams in November.

“As a supervisor, I want Blackberry to be a better place for everyone to live and I will do all I can to support the schools,” Reynolds

said, adding he believes the schools should get more support from the county “to make sure the schools” have the funds “to get what they need.”

Curtis R. Millner, Sr., adjutant of the American Legion Homer Dillard Post #78, asked the school board for help finding candidates for leadership programs offered by the post. “We need help getting students for this. If you need someone to come to your school and talk to your students, I’m willing to do that.”

Additionally, a student poll conducted at Bassett High School ranked safety and security as the top concerns among respondents. In response, the board approved the purchase of additional metal detectors to enhance security at elementary schools, middle schools, and the central public school office.

Board member Champ Hardie, of the Ridgeway District, emphasized the importance of security measures, stating, “My number one problem is safety within our schools. I feel like this is a very good item for our elementary schools. I move to approve purchase of weapon detection systems.” The motion

passed unanimously.

The board also discussed significant changes to its budget following amendments proposed by Gov. Glenn Youngkin for the 2024-2026 fiscal years. These adjustments required revisions to initial financial projections.

Henry County is set to receive \$551,164, primarily from the Virginia Preschool Initiative fund. The board approved forwarding these funds to the Board of Supervisors for further review.

Bassett High School Principal Michael Minter noted that “many things were up in the air right now” as budget evaluations continue. Further discussions are expected after the Virginia State Senate meets later in the month. The board plans to revisit proposed budget changes at its next meeting.

The meeting began with a performance of “The Star-Spangled Banner” by the Bassett High School band. Board members then honored student-athletes, middle school and high school teachers, and various school personnel, including the board clerk. School Resource Officers (SROs), and career and technical educators were also recognized for their service.

The board also acknowledged Black History Month and highlighted the contributions of Black Virginians to the state’s history.

The board will continue touring Henry County schools, with its next meeting scheduled for March 6 at Fieldale-Collinsville Middle School. Additionally, further discussions with the school superintendent regarding budget allocations are set for Feb. 25.

Snow Days

(cont. from page 1)

life and his impact on modern day civil rights.

Yvonne Givens, board chairman, recognized Black History Month during her comments.

Talley also encouraged teachers to speak to the board “I encourage you to continue to send the hard questions,” and keep communication channels open.

He also encouraged school personnel to spend more time with students to help negate negative influences. “We need to spend more time counseling students.”

Joyce Staples, chairman of the Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI), gave a presentation on the new supply closet. The class of 1982 worked together with other alumni to create a supply closet kept at the FAHI museum for city school teachers.

“Teachers work tirelessly to support their students, often using their own funds to provide necessary supplies for the classroom,” Staples



Kelly Williams was named VFW Teacher of the Year.

said, adding the closet is designed to help support local teachers and ensure that all children have the supplies that they need.

Supplies will be packed into book bags and

distributed on a first come first serve basis to teachers who visit the museum after March 1. The goal is to distribute 100 backpacks. Organizers at FAHI also hope local students will volunteer to help pack the bags.

The supply closet is an ongoing initiative, with future pick-up dates announced at a later time.

In other matters, the board:

*Approved the 2025 and 2026 school calendar.

*Heard a reminder from the United Way of Martinsville Henry County about VITA, the free tax preparation program for those households which earn less than \$67,000. Last year, volunteer workers completed more than 1,800 returns. To enroll or make an appointment, call (276) 403-5976.

*Recognized VSBA School Board Appreciation Month.

*Recognized School Board Clerk and Deputy Clerk Appreciation Month.

SPCA

(cont. from page 1)

for something to do, here is an option,” she said. Going forward, “this will be hands-on training for volunteers. We have a lot of volunteers that come in and want to walk dogs, but we don’t have the staff to pull out the dog” from the cage.

Dogs will also be color coded to indicate how difficult it is to walk them, and volunteers will be given a key to access them.

The agency’s new training manual focuses on the body language of animals, which is a critical tool for volunteers to prevent injuries. Cicilese said that many times animal body language can be misinterpreted without proper training.

“We are going to teach them all the cues in dogs’ body ranges, and even cat language.” This helps with leashing and walking dogs, as well as helping the feline residents of the facility, she said.

“I think this overall is a great opportunity to bring in volunteers and repair old relationships with the old volunteers we lost over the years. We didn’t have time to give them, and they deserve time. Their time is important, and we value their time,” Cicilese said, adding the hope is to bring former volunteers back to the shelter, which needs help now more than ever.

Kitten season, a time when there is a large outbreak of kitten births, will be starting over the next few months. Canine adoptions, espe-

cially with larger breed dogs, are down on a national level. Cicilese said that the longer a dog stays, the more kennel crazed they become. This causes dogs to excitedly jump at the door driving away some prospective adopters.

“Little do they know if we were to get that dog out of the kennel, that dog’s personality completely changes, and it’s actually a really good dog on a leash,” she said.

Interaction from future volunteers can help to give the dogs at the facility more attention, helping them to stay happier. Volunteers can also help connect the right breeds to the right family by giving potential adopters helpful knowledge about each animal and breed.

“We really want to reach out to those old volunteers and say ‘we’re sorry. We want to fix this. We want to train you in whatever you need help with. We are forever grateful for our volunteers,” Cicilese said.

With many variables tossed into the shelter’s operations each day, it’s hard to keep up with everything, she said. “It’s not just you open the doors, you clean, you feed the animals, you close.”

Cicilese said the main concern with former volunteers was that they felt lost. “I think that was the main concern. We are very apologetic about that, we just don’t have the staffing.”

Rampant zoonotic disease outbreaks during the start of the year also made it harder for shelter staff to help volunteers. The shelter also experienced outbreaks of canine parvovirus (parvo), feline panleukopenia virus, and a rampant kennel cough that made its way through the building.

All of those issues made it harder for staff to find time to teach volunteers, especially those working in different areas due to a high risk of cross contamination.

“We kind of had to keep staff to their respective stations. We are sorry, but we are here for you now,” Cicilese said.

The SPCA is seeking several different types of volunteer positions, including furniture moving, fundraising, animal transport, community education, outreach, shelter helpers, cat companions, dog walking, socialization, and fostering.

If you are interested in volunteering with the SPCA, forms are available at the shelter or on its website. Once you have turned in your form, you will be emailed a time for your orientation.

In addition, all animals who were in the shelter by Tuesday February 4, have had their adoption sponsored by an unnamed donor. These animals are free to a good home with an approved adoption application.

Fire Risk

(cont. from page 1)

through April 30, residents must follow restrictions to reduce the risk of wildfires.

The ban prohibits open-air burning until after 4 p.m., and any fire must be fully extinguished by midnight the same day. Failure to comply can result in a \$500 fine and potential criminal charges.

Open-air burning in dry conditions can cause property destruction, disrupt utilities, block roads, and restrict travel. These fires spread rapidly, consuming acres of dry vegetation in minutes and often requiring multi-agency coordination—sometimes even cross-county aid—to contain.

Beyond brush fires, Cooper noted that recent emergency calls have been dominated by electrical fires.

“Mainly, the things we’ve seen this year have been electrical issues, dryers or heaters malfunctioning, HVAC systems not being maintained under extreme cold, and furnaces malfunctioning. This time of year, we see a lot of fires due to heating system failures. In the last few weeks, we’ve sent out units to electrical fires more than anything else,” he said.

Malfunctioning heaters, HVAC systems, furnaces, and other home appliances are common culprits. Cooper urged residents to conduct regular maintenance on heating systems and electrical equipment, as these issues tend to peak during extreme cold.

To further enhance fire safety, Henry County’s Department of Public Safety provides free smoke alarms to any county resident. The de-

partment also offers free installation services to ensure proper placement.

“Smoke alarms are the first step of defense against in-home fires,” Cooper said. “They can wake sleeping occupants, give time to escape before smoke builds up, and provide early warning.”

Cooper encouraged residents to have an emergency plan in place and to visit the Henry County Public Safety Department’s website for fire safety resources and programs.

Prevention, compliance with regulations, remaining alert to fire hazards in everyday spaces can save lives, property and ensure peace of mind, he said, adding additional information and updates are available on the department’s website.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Friday, February 14
Arts and Culture Committee Meeting, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., Municipal Building Council Chambers, 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville.

Wednesday, February 19
Planning Commission Meeting, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., Municipal Building Council Chambers, 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville.

Tuesday, February 18
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Municipal Building Council Chambers, 55 W. Church St., Martinsville.

Wednesday, February 19
Planning Commission Meeting, 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., Municipal Building Council Chambers, 55 W. Church St., Martinsville.

Monday, February 24
PSA Board of Directors Regular Meeting, 6 p.m., Henry County Administration Building 4th Floor Conference Room, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

Tuesday, February 25
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting, 3 p.m., Henry County Admin Building Summerlin Room, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

Events

Friday, February 14
Music Night: Smith River Ramblers, 5 p.m., 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., Spencer-Penn Center, 475 Spencer Penn Road, Spencer.

Saturday, February 15
The Southwestern Piedmont Master Naturalists and the Virginia Museum of Natural History, (VMNH) will present the latest installment of the “Education Station” series, in conjunction with the grand opening of The Age of Dinosaurs exhibit. Appropriate for all ages; it will be held at the museum, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and is included with museum admission. For more information and admission fees, visit <https://www.vmnh.net/plan-your-visit>.

Build & Fly with VMI, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., New College Institute, 191 Fayette St, Martinsville.

Piano Bar – The Un-Valentine Show, 7 to 10 p.m., BlackBox Theatre, 44 Franklin Street, Martinsville.

Sunday, February 16
“Readjusting the Old Dominion: The Forgotten Rise and Fall of Virginia’s Readjuster Movement,” 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., Martinsville Henry

County Historical Society, 1 East Main Street, Martinsville.

Tuesday, February 18
The regular monthly meeting of the Henry County--Martinsville Republican Committee will be held at 6:30 p.m. on the main floor, Summerlin meeting room of the Henry County Administration Building at 3300 Kings Mountain Highway, Martinsville. The public is encouraged to attend. There is a public question/answer time at the end. Regular meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, same time and place.

Thursday, February 20
Hands-Only CPR, 6 to 7 p.m., New College Institute, 191 Fayette St, Martinsville.

Wednesday, February 26
Culture and Soul Expo: African Americans and Labor, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., TAD Space, 20 East Church St Martinsville.

Saturday, March 1
Youth Bicycle Race, cross-country mountain bike race for middle and high school students, Smith River Sports Complex, 1000 Irisburg Road, Axton, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Online registration through Feb. 28. On site registration is available on the day of the event. Contact Brad Kinkema at brad@martinsvilleymca.com or (276) 632-6427.

Friday, March 7
Under The Big Top, 7 p.m., Piedmont Arts, 215 Starling Ave, Martinsville.

ONGOING

Through April 7
Strickland Brothers 10 Minute Oil Change (formerly known as Kwik Lube) locations at 700 Liberty St., Martinsville, and 6518 Greensboro Road, Ridgeway, are accepting monetary donations to support local school teachers in need of supplies, technology, snacks, etc. The goal is to raise \$50,000 that will be evenly distributed between school divisions in Henry County and Martinsville.

Martinsville High School’s spring musical program, Zombie Prom, show dates are February 16, 17, 19, 7 p.m., and February 18, 3 p.m. Ticket information will be released soon.

The Friends of the Blue Ridge Regional Library are hosting a book sale in the basement of the main branch, 310 E. Church St., Martinsville. “Members Only,” Friday, Feb. 14, 1-5 p.m.; sale on Saturday, Feb. 15, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m., is open to the public. All proceeds go back into the library system.

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, Mondays 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, 277 Philpott Dam Road, Bassett, hosts breakfast on the 2nd Saturday of each month, \$9 for adults, and \$4 for children under 12. All you can eat, sausage, fried bologna, eggs, cooked apples, sausage gravy, 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.

Book Bingo on the 4th Tuesday of the month at the Martinsville Branch of the Blue Ridge Regional Library, 11 a.m. to noon. Call (276) 403-5430 to register.

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 FIELDDALE 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.

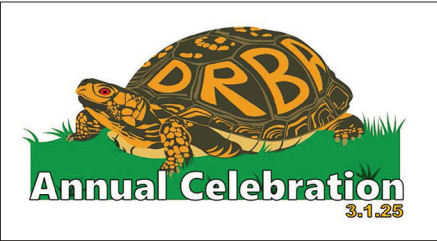
The Henry County Adult Learning Center offers free in-house and online classes to help prepare for college, career, or earn your high school equivalency or GED. Call (276) 647-9585.

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. Registration is not required.

DRBA’s Annual Celebration to be held in Critz

The Dan River Basin Association’s (DRBA’s) Annual Meeting will be held this year at the Reynolds Homestead in Critz. The event is free and open to the public. It will kick-off with food and refreshments at 9:30 a.m. followed by a special presentation by guest speaker Jerry Miller, Whitmire Professor of Environmental Science from the Department of Geosciences & Natural Resources at Western Carolina University. Mr. Miller will talk about microplastics in air, water, sediments and caddisflies in the headwater basins of the Southern Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina.

The Annual Celebration will also highlight DRBA’s successes in 2024, projects planned for 2025, volunteer awards, new DRBA items for sale and more.



Registration is encouraged, but not required. To register, visit <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdK7SiQuTC0fkTnuZQduOzcQlJMSvbnbWUZGos75xAXvUkUQw/viewform>.

After the event, guests are welcome to pack a bag lunch and picnic on the grounds of the Reynolds Homestead or visit a local restaurant in Patrick County.

The Homestead is located at 463 Homestead Lane, Critz. Follow event signs when you get to the parking lot.

Human trafficking charge issued, investigation ongoing

The Virginia State Police, Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Salem Field Office, arrested Earl Wayne Smith, 67, of Rockbridge County, on February 10, on charges of prostitution, transportation for prostitution, keeping or residing a bawdy place, and human trafficking, according to a release.

The charges were filed after a lengthy investigation, which led state authorities to an alleged extensive operation of human trafficking in the Roanoke Valley and Rockbridge County communities. Evidence was seized from several locations controlled by Smith, to include his residence, the release stated, and added that items seized included physical evidence of the charges,

narcotics and firearms.

State authorities continue to follow up on leads and interview witnesses involved in the investigation. The agency also is encouraging anyone with knowledge of Smith and the alleged activities to contact the Salem Field Office.

A texting tip-line and web form are available to receive anonymous tips to the VSP’s Human Trafficking Unit. Any witnesses or victims of Human Trafficking are encouraged to text 847411 on their phone and then type “VSP” followed by the tip.

Anonymous web tips can be submitted through the tip411 web portal featured on the Virginia State Police website at <https://www.tip411.com/tips/vastatepolice/new>.



Editor-in-Chief of The Iron Blade, Wins Fifth “Best of SNO” Award

Ferrum College Senior Kyle Markowitz, editor-in-chief of The Iron Blade, has won his fifth overall “Best of SNO” award and his third this academic year, from School Newspapers Online, for his story “Billy Wagner Enters MLB Hall of Fame.”

“Writing a story about Billy’s well-deserved accomplishments was an honor,” stated Markowitz. “Being able to have a conversation and create a relationship with a Hall of Famer is something I will cherish forever. Not only was I able to talk to Billy, but his coach and teammates here at Ferrum made the process of writing this story even better.”

Wagner was selected for the National Baseball Hall of Fame on January 21. In his tenth and final year on

the ballot, he received 82.5% of the total votes cast, surpassing the 75% minimum required for induction. He is the first Division III baseball player to achieve this honor and will travel to Cooperstown, New York, on July 27 for the induction ceremony.

“This latest award for Kyle is from a story he wrote about former Panther Billy Wagner being voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame,” said Assistant Professor of English and Journalism David Campbell. “To have the experience of interviewing a major league legend like Billy is no small feather in Kyle’s cap, and I know his ability to cover and write that story means quite a bit to him.”

The Iron Blade has now won four writing awards this academic year.

OPINION

Tariffs, Fentanyl, etc.

The tariff issue is complicated and not easily explained in a soundbite.

Tariffs are a tool that can be used to re-organize trade deals and remedy unfair dumping of semi-finished goods that harm American industry and jobs.

The American lumber and wood products industry is where unfair trade practices in Canada have led to hardship. American producers complain that they are at a competitive disadvantage because of Canada's timber pricing policies.

This in turn has hurt our American wood products and lumber producers - particularly those producing softwood products - costing American jobs.

Other tariff considerations include the European Union (EU).

The EU is heavily reliant on Russian natural gas and oil, and they are increasingly choosing Chinese goods over American products.

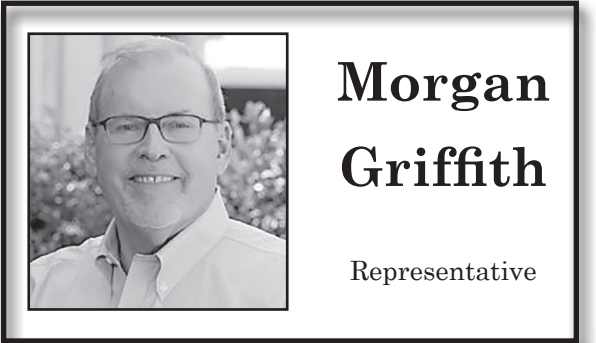
We are the EU's strongest allies and champions of Western values and freedoms. China, ruled by the Chinese Communist Party, and Putin's Russia are not the kind of nations that Europe would want to emulate.

President Trump had pundits' heads spinning over his recent announcement of tariffs. However, some of his goals were achieved, and most of the tariff issues have been resolved, at least temporarily.

More specifically, Trump ordered a 25% tariff levied against Mexico, a 25% tariff levied against Canadian goods, a lesser 10% tariff on Canadian energy, and a 10% tariff on China.

The White House cited the "extraordinary threat posed by illegal aliens and drugs" constituting a national emergency under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA).

We saw astronomi-



cal increases in the levels of illegal immigration over our southern and northern borders because of the Biden-Harris Administration's open border policies.

The Committee on Homeland Security notes that since the start of Fiscal Year 2021, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) reported more than 9 million encounters at the southern border, per CBP data.

During this period, the Mexican and Canadian governments did not take sufficient steps to impede the illegal immigration surge.

As a result, numerous illegal activities like human smuggling surged. The Mexican cartels flooded the U.S. with deadly fentanyl. The cartels were aided by China, who provided the precursor drugs for making fentanyl and its analogues.

To alleviate these significant national security concerns, which originate from the countries targeted by these proposed tariffs, stronger action is needed by Canada, Mexico and China.

Tariffs are meant to compel these partners to act in a positive way sooner rather than later.

As you know, it appears the strategy has worked so far. Within days of Trump's announcement, Mexico's president pledged to support our forces at the U.S.-Mexico border with 10,000 troops.

Soon afterward, Canada came to the table.

Prime Minister Trudeau assured Trump that Canada would implement a \$1.3 billion border security plan, commit 10,000 officers to the

U.S.-Canada border, and appoint a fentanyl czar.

Trump has put a one-month pause on the tariffs targeting Mexico and Canada. The tariffs on China went into effect, and as of this writing, remain in effect.

By addressing American concerns, Mexico and Canada appear to acknowledge they have a role in curbing illegal immigration and deadly fentanyl flowing into the United States.

Trump rightfully is concerned with deadly drugs flowing into our country. He has signed executive orders that enhance security on our southern border, better enforce U.S. immigration laws and designate some criminal cartel organizations as foreign terrorist organizations.

But Congress has a role in combatting the fentanyl crisis too.

On Day One of the 119th Congress, I reintroduced the Halt All Lethal Trafficking (HALT) of Fentanyl Act.

This critical measure targets lethal fentanyl-related substances and permanently classifies these substances as Schedule I drugs.

Moreover, my bill establishes a new streamlined registration process that facilitates medical research into the estimated 4,800 analogues of fentanyl.

The bill helps law enforcement keep deadly fentanyl-related substances off our streets, closes a loophole that illicit drug dealers could use to attempt to evade punishment, and strengthens our medical research into the medical viability of these substances.

Before my bill was put on the floor for a vote, the Trump Administration stated they strongly support enactment of the HALT Fentanyl Act.

HALT Fentanyl passed the House with broad bipartisan support.

I expect the Senate to swiftly pass my bill so we can send it to the President's desk and save American lives.

Communities throughout the U.S. have been upended by the open border policies of the Biden-Harris Administration.

I am hopeful that, after this recent tariff episode, our trading partners will better cooperate with the United States on border security and the ongoing fentanyl crisis.

Call the Abingdon office at (276) 525-1405, the Christiansburg office at (540) 381-5671, or email by visiting www.morgangriffith.house.gov with questions or comments.

But her emails

It has been nearly a decade since we first heard about Hillary Clinton's private email server.

Yes, it was in 2016 that Clinton's emails played a significant role in costing her the Presidency. In what many consider to be the most monstrous act in human history, Clinton used a private email server for official public communications as opposed to using State Department email accounts on federal servers, resulting in 100 emails out of about 30,000 that should have been designated "classified" at the time they were sent.

I think we can all agree that based on these actions alone, Satan should drag Hillary Clinton to the ninth circle of Hell and chew on her for eternity alongside Judas Iscariot, Brutus, and Gaius Cassius Longinus.

In seriousness, while I think Clinton's email server was obviously blown out of proportion, I do think cyber security is something that should be taken seriously. Our elected officials obviously should be held to a high standard and shouldn't risk compromising state secrets or private data.

And that is why I am as angry as I have ever been about our new President Elon Musk.

Make no mistake, Musk is the man in charge right now. Donald Trump may be President in name, but Musk is the one calling the shots. He has every right to be; he paid good money for Trump and he wants a return on his investment. Buying the election was probably the best business decision of his career.

If you have been following Elon Musk's actions over the last few weeks with any scrutiny whatsoever, you should be apoplectic. One man, the richest man in the world, is dismantling our federal government with no oversight whatsoever.

So what exactly has Musk and his "Department of Government Efficiency" (DOGE) been up to the last few weeks? Here's a brief overview:

-A DOGE team member gained access to the NOAA's IT system to search for staff related to diversity programs.

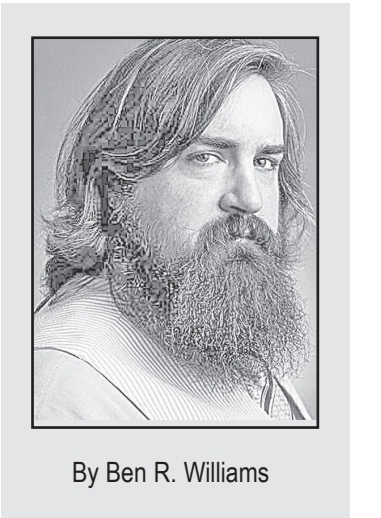
-The US Agency for International Development, responsible for humanitarian efforts around the world, will be completely dismantled by DOGE unless federal judges manage to block the effort.

-Musk has gained access to the Federal Aviation Administration in order to make "rapid safety upgrades," according to the man himself. This is the same guy who made a truck that will die if it gets wet.

-Musk is literally trying to dismantle the Department of Education. Just completely do away with it.

-Perhaps most importantly, Musk and his team of 19 year old hackers have seemingly unfettered access to the Treasury, including access to our Social Security numbers, our taxpayer records, and our bank account information.

Now riddle me this: why is some immigrant who was not elected to any office being allowed to take apart the federal government like a



cheap watch? There isn't even a name for the kind of crime Elon Musk is committing. "Treason" comes closest, but it does not fully encompass the scope and the scale of the corruption and fraud being committed here.

Trump, whom you might remember as the guy ostensibly elected to be President, said that Musk is "finding tremendous fraud and corruption and waste." The defense I keep hearing is that Musk's actions are necessary to root out wasteful federal spending.

To that I say three things. One, everyone knows that the federal government wastes a lot of money, and an argument could easily be made that some sort of duly-appointed investigative body should look into that issue. This isn't that. This is the richest man on Earth and his team of loyal incels hacking apart federal systems without even bothering to understand why they were created in the first place.

Two, when it comes to my list of worries, wasteful government spending is pretty low on the totem pole. I'd rather have a half penny of my tax dollars go toward a bunch of grad students studying whether sea cucumbers can experience ennui than military drones and subsidies for billionaires. While we're at it, I'd rather the government waste my money on dumb stuff than have it go toward Social Security. I'm 40 years old; it's not like I'm ever going to see a thin dime by the time I'm eligible to collect. And if you think for one second that rooting out government inefficiency will cause your taxes to go down, then I have the world's worst electric truck to sell you.

And three, what exactly does Elon Musk intend to do with our Social Security numbers and taxpayer records and bank account information? Sell the data for a profit? Make it so that you can't get a bank loan if you ever called Elon Musk a Nazi wiener on Twitter? I have absolutely no idea. No one does. That is terrifying.

Again, no one voted for any of this. No one asked for it. But Elon Musk, in his unchecked arrogance, decided to try and buy his way into being the leader of the free world, to dismantle our nation and rebuild it in his repellent image. So far, it's working.

If that doesn't make you angry as hell, I don't even know what to tell you.

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OPINION

Never Ever Give Up

By Bryan Golden

Persistence is the foundation of success. Although there are many ways to describe success, there is only one definition of failure – giving up. Whatever your meaning of success, you will only achieve it through persistence.

“Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.”

- Calvin Coolidge

Babe Ruth had more strike outs than anyone else in history. When asked about the key to his success he said, “I just keep swinging.”

In the mid 1960’s, Martin Cooper, an electrical engineer at Motorola, had a vision of a phone that could be carried around and powered by a battery. His concept was scoffed at by many of his fellow engineers. After 15 years in development, Motorola brought the cellular phone to market.

In 1864, he was born the son of slaves on a Missouri plantation. He grew up not knowing his parents. With persistence and determination, he put himself through college. To combat the racism he encountered, he excelled in everything he did. George Washington Carver became one of our nation’s leading scientists and revolutionized agriculture.

At 205 pounds and standing 5’10” tall he was below average size for a pro football player. To build his strength and endurance he ran up steep hills while playing high school football. As a professional player he ran up an 80-yard hill, set at a 45-degree angle, 25 times a day. Determined to be the best

he could be, he watched films of opponents until he could predict their moves. Football Hall of Famer, Walter Payton tied or beat seven NFL records during his 13-season career.

You are born without the concept of failure. How did you learn to walk? The first time you tried you immediately fell. But you didn’t know you couldn’t succeed and immediately tried again. And again, you fell down. But you never gave up. Hundreds of times you repeated this process until you learned to walk.

Persistence is getting up one more time than you fall down. Unfortunately, you are taught to give up and fail. How many times have you heard one or more of the following?

“Why bother, you’ll never be able to do that – it’ll never work”

“Don’t rock the boat, just do what you’re supposed to do”

“Why take chances?”

“You’ll never amount to anything”

“Stop dreaming -- come back to reality”

“Why don’t you give up already?”

“I tried that already, it doesn’t work”.

If you had believed any of the above when you were learning to walk you would still be crawling! You didn’t listen to bad advice then so why listen to it now?

When you feel like giving up, you must keep going. Only by continuing, when most others won’t, will you achieve your goals. Don’t join the ranks of those who have given up just around the corner from success. You never know where your corner is so you must never stop.

Bryan is the author of “Dare to Live Without Limits.” Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com Copyright 2025 Bryan Golden

Community Chronicles



The locked gates to the Fort Trial Quarry. (Photo taken by Jarred Marlowe)

By Jarred Marlowe

On the morning of May 15, 1951, Mrs. Lawrence began her day as usual at her home on Oak Road in Collinsville. She prepared breakfast and started a load of laundry, just as she had countless times before. But as she stepped outside to hang the clothes on the line, a sudden, deafening explosion shook the air. Moments later, a human leg landed in her yard—just a few feet away. Incredibly, history was repeating itself.

Mrs. Lawrence, along with many others, lived near the Fort Trial quarry, located just off Murphy Road in Collinsville. Like several other quarries in the region, it had been established to extract rock for processing into concrete used in the construction of the Philpott Dam. The site had been taken over in early 1949 by the Lambert Brothers, a company based in Knoxville, Tennessee.

To harvest the rock, miners—many of them local—drilled into the stone and inserted dynamite, using charges that contained anywhere from 5% to 60% gunpowder, depending on the force required. The shattered rock was then further broken down, ground into dust, and transported for use in building the Philpott Dam, located about six and a half miles away.

Tragically, the Fort Trial quarry was the site of two deadly explosions during its brief operation. The first occurred on the morning of November 1, 1950, around 9

A.M. The blast was so powerful that it shattered windows up to a mile away and was heard as far as Axton—15 miles away. Reports indicated that an unexpected surface detonation triggered a chain reaction with the underground explosives. The disaster left three dead and numerous others injured, with some people thrown 15 to 30 feet by the force of the blast.

The second explosion took place on May 15, 1951. Though not as intense as the first, it still rattled nearby homes and businesses and claimed three lives, including Fern Lambert, co-owner of the company. The exact cause of the explosion remains unknown, but investigators discovered unexploded dynamite at the scene containing 90% gunpowder—30% higher than what the Lambert Brothers had reportedly used in their operations.

The quarry ceased operations shortly thereafter, as the dam was completed in 1952. Though now privately owned and off-limits to the public, the site remains a significant part of local history—its brief yet tragic existence leaving a lasting mark on the community.

Jarred Marlowe is a local resident and historian. He is a member of the Col. George Waller Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, the Blue & Gray Education Society, and the committee chair for the Martinsville-Henry County 250 Committee. He may be reached at marloweja15@gmail.com.

Letter To The Editor

Communism and Black Lives

“We are trained Marxists.... And I think that what we really tried to do is build a movement that could be utilized by many, many black folk” (Patrisse Cullors, co-founder of BLM, in interview for The Real News Network, 2015).

Many people show support for a movement because they take at face value motives suggested by titles and slogans. And framing matters. Just remember back when “homeless” was a word that might be used to describe someone who was not able to secure stable shelter? Now the politically useful term is “unhoused.” Why? Because one—homeless—suggests that a person can’t meet a personal need, while the other—unhoused—suggests it is a failure of others to provide a service.

Allow me a second example by way of a quote from the founder of the largest “feminist” organization in America: “The complete destruction of traditional marriage and the nuclear family is the revolutionary or utopian goal of feminism.”—not so much FOR women as against men and families.

Black Lives Matter is one of these clever framings. Who would disagree with a group that is ostensibly advocating for the idea that people with black skin have worth? It appears, however, that the prescription that the organizers would like adopted by inexperienced, energetic youth is the philosophy of Marxism; an ideology of broken families and, ultimately, totalitarian slavery.

Besides BLM’s founder describing herself and her collaborators as feminist, gay Marxists, those same agendas were also plastered on their official website during the

heyday of its momentum, but were subsequently scrubbed when it was discovered that much of their target demographic wasn’t yet ready to hear it. This can still be found on Internet Archive:

“We disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and “villages” that collectively care for one another, especially our children, to the degree that mothers, parents, and children are comfortable. We foster a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking.”—To what degree are YOU comfortable with breaking up your family and handing your kids over for queer-affirming sessions?

I don’t like speaking of people according to racial group. I believe that as humans, the same principles either help or hurt us. But since political groups like BLM claim wisdom to advance “black lives” in particular, shall we ask, “how on earth did Marxist, feminist, and LGBT indoctrination become the path of deliverance for black folks, when the expressed goal is to convince them to break up their families and deliver their children to this?”

HUSBANDS, love your wives, YE FATHERS, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 5:25; 6:4).

Men and Women, is not the wisdom available in any Bible better than the confusion of power-hungry, money grubbing politicians and deceitful activist propaganda?

Ian Young,
Martinsville

Reynolds Homestead is site of First Saturday Outing

Join the Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) for a one-mile loop hike on March 1, at its First Saturday Outing (FSO), at the Reynolds Homestead in Critz. DRBA’s monthly outings are free and open to the public. There are also optional tours of the historic house and grounds available.

Participants will meet by 10 a.m. at the entrance to the Continuing Education Center at Reynolds Homestead to begin the day’s activities.

An outreach campus of Virginia Tech, Reynolds Homestead features the birthplace and boyhood home of tobacco magnate R.J. Reynolds and a Forest Resources Research Center in the midst of 780 acres of fields and woodlands.

“The Reynolds Homestead and forestry-practices hike is easily DRBA’s most popular and best attended hiking outing,” according to DRBA volunteer and outing coordinator, Wayne Kirkpatrick.

The Reynolds Homestead Forest Resources Research Center (FRRC) in Critz, Virginia, was created in 1969 to study forest biology, including genetics, physiology, and soils. Specific projects include harvesting to increase forest health and productivity, site preparation, forest fertilization, loblolly pine physiology, and forest herbicide testing.

Kyle Peer, Forestry Superintendent for the Reynolds Homestead, will provide insight about the forest projects underway at the Homestead during the hike.

Along the hike route, participants will see the historic spring that inspired the name, Rock Spring Plantation, of this eighteenth-century tobacco estate near the face of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Views from the trail include the nearest peak, the oddly named No Business Mountain, so called, according to tradition, because visitors had “no business” looking for the family’s still.

In 2010 two major improvements were made at the Homestead. The African American Cemetery was enhanced with plantings, grave markings, fencing, signage, and a walkway for visitors. A new gateway entrance was dedicated in October 2012 honoring the tobacco and aluminum foil legacy of the Reynolds family. Visitors to the Continuing Education Center can view drawings and a model of planned renovations to the Center.

In addition, a log tobacco barn was reconstructed near the trail from materials salvaged from three

Photo courtesy of DRBA

early barns, including the one on site. The barn will help interpret the history of tobacco growing and curing that formed the foundation of the Reynolds family fortune.

Participants in the hike should supply water and lunch, wear hiking boots and layers of water-shedding artificial fabric or wool, and be prepared for rain or wind. All participants will be asked to sign a waiver.

Find us on Meet Up!

Event Contact: Wayne Kirkpatrick, wynbtyk@embarqmail.com or (540) 570-3511

The Reynolds Homestead is offering afternoon tours of the state and national landmark historic site at a cost of \$4 per adult and \$2 per student, payable to the tour guide. Built in 1843, the two-story brick home was restored in 1970 to its nineteenth-century state and includes many of the original family furnishings. The son of Hardin and Nancy Reynolds, R. J. Reynolds was born here in 1853. In 1874 he moved to Winston, North Carolina and established a tobacco factory, which grew into a multi-million-dollar company. When he died in 1918 at the age of 65, he was the wealthiest man in North Carolina.

The grounds feature several outbuildings, including a log icehouse and log granary, a brick milk house, and a brick kitchen. In the kitchen hangs a picture of Kitty Reynolds, a slave who tradition says saved Hardin Reynolds’s life by distracting a raging bull. In 1880 a landmark U. S. Supreme Court decision resulting from the flawed murder trials of two of her sons guaranteed protection of legal rights of formerly enslaved persons.

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Candles, Cooking, and Caution: Fire safety tips to keep your Valentine's Day safe

This Valentine's Day, make sure your romantic gestures stay memorable for the right reasons. When lighting candles and cooking a special meal, the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) says to closely monitor food cooking on the stove or in the oven, and to use candles with caution.

"If you're celebrating Valentine's Day at home this year, your plans likely include a special meal and candles," said Lorraine Carli, vice president of Outreach and Advocacy at NFPA. "Our goal is to help ensure that everyone enjoys the holiday with fire safety in mind."

According to NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of reported home fires and home fire injuries year-round. Unattended cooking is a factor in over one-quarter (29 percent) of reported home cooking fires and half of the associated deaths.

Simple cooking safety tips include the following:

- *Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, or broiling food.
- *Have a "kid and pet-free zone" of at least 3 feet (1 meter) around the stove.
- *Keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.
- *Set a timer to remind you that you are cooking.

Candles are also a leading cause of home fires and must be used with caution and supervision. NFPA data shows that half of all candle fires started when a flammable object – such as furniture, bedding, curtains, home décor, or clothing – was too close to

a lit candle. In 21 percent of home candle fires, the candle was either left unattended, discarded, or otherwise misused. More than one-third of candle fires (36 percent) started in the bedroom.

Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which have a similar look and feel to real candles while eliminating the risk of fire.

If you plan to use real candles, NFPA recommends the following:

- *Don't use lit candles in bedrooms, bathrooms, and sleeping areas.
- *Use stable candle holders and place candles where they can't be easily knocked over.
- *Keep candles at least one foot away from anything that can burn.
- *Keep hair and loose clothing away from the flame.
- *Don't burn a candle all the way down --- put it out before it gets too close to the holder or container.
- *Store matches and lighters up high, out of children's reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- *Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- *Blow out candles when you leave the room or go to bed.

For more information about cooking and candle safety, visit our cooking safety and candle safety pages.

In addition, NFPA encourages working smoke alarms and the development and practice of a home escape plan.

Tobacco Commission Launches Latest Round Of Energy Ingenuity Fund

The Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission is now accepting applications for the latest round of its Energy Ingenuity Fund.

This round aims to build on the success of previous rounds of the program and continue to bring innovative energy projects, along with the jobs and investment that come with them, to Southern and Southwest Virginia.

"Providing our communities with the energy resources they need to attract top employers and seize opportunities as they arise is critical to the success of Southern and Southwest Virginia, and the Commonwealth as a whole," said Tobacco Commission Executive Director Hon. James Campos. "Governor Youngkin's energy plan makes it clear that an all-of-the-above approach is needed to meet Virginia's energy needs and I'm proud to see that this program is helping to meet those goals and move the Commonwealth forward."

Tobacco Commission Director of Regional Energy Development and Innovation, Jerry Silva added, "It has been a great experience working with our localities and their partners to develop innovative, impactful projects like the ones featured here and I look forward to continuing that work in this latest round of the program. To learn more about the program, I invite all those interested to join me on March 6th when I'll be speaking with the Dominion Innovation Center at the Energy Tech 2025 conference to highlight TRRC's Energy Innovation Fund and spotlight some of our recent projects."

The deadline for submitting an application to the Energy Ingenuity Fund Program is March 10. Review the program Guidelines & Request for Proposals before beginning an application. A pre-application is no longer required. To read more about the program, visit the Energy Ingenuity Fund page of our website, revitalizeva.org.

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COUNTY OF HENRY

REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, the Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the following application on **February 25, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearing. **Case R-25-02 Peggy K. Goard** The property is located at 340 Primrose Dr, in the Blackberry District. The property is shown on Tax Map 13.9/167A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 0.53-acre from Suburban Residential District S-R to Rural Residential District R-R. The original house was destroyed by fire, and the applicant wishes to replace it with a manufactured home. The application for this request may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Lee H. Clark, AICP Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

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Crossing the Lines

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

Cornbread Revival to headline PCMA show

Cornbread Revival will headline the Saturday, February 22 Patrick County Music Association (PCMA) show.

The event will be held at the Rotary Building in Stuart with doors opening at 5 p.m. and the music starting at 6 p.m.

PCMA President Denny Alley said the show will primarily be bluegrass music with a few gospel songs mixed in, and performed by what he believes are two of the best groups PCMA has hosted.

Cornbread Revival is composed of members who performed in different groups over the years, Alley said.

“They’re really good. They were there last June and tore the place down,” he said.

Tobacco Road, a group led by Ron Inscore of Ararat, will be the show’s special guest. Alley noted the group’s fiddle player and singer is a woman.

“Last year it was Ron Inscore and friends, but this year they’ve got a name. He’s a super picker and all-around nice guy,” he said.

For the March show, None of the Above and Johnny & Wendy Dearmon will take the stage. Alley is also lining up acts for the April-June shows.

In May, Alley plans to have another Songwriter’s Circle. He said Roger Handy, Barry Hutchens, Will Hutchens, Miller Hopkins, and Jerry Salley, a Nashville songwriter, are set to take the



Cornbread Revival (Contributed)

stage.

Salley “will probably do an hour, an hour-and-a-half,” he said.

Concessions will be available for purchase from the Patrick County Shooting

Education Team, with proceeds going to teach children in the area firearm safety.

For more information or to watch past music performances, visit Facebook.com/PatrickCountyMusicAssociation.

New counseling agency provides outpatient mental health services

MountainView Counseling, LLC, a private practice in the Patrick Springs area, offers outpatient mental health services for anxiety, depression, and trauma in Patrick County and surrounding areas. The practice, founded by Terry Catoe Hodges in November 2022, provides therapy for individuals and families, along with specialized services such as sex offender treatment and parenting support.

Hodges, a licensed professional counselor and Certified Sex Offender Treatment Provider, has more than 23 years of experience in the field. She is also certified in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) and trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Therapy, both of which are used to treat trauma. Her approach focuses on helping clients set and achieve their therapy goals so they can ultimately transition out of counseling with the skills they need to move forward.

While some clients may require longer-term treatment, Hodges strives to provide effective therapy that leads to eventual discharge. She emphasizes that clients can always return for additional support if needed.

For more information about MountainView Counseling, call (276) 358-1624 or (276) 693-



Terry Catoe Hodges

6165, or visit www.mountainviewcounseling.clientsecure.me.



Kristen Eaton

Park seeks to reestablish citizen support group

By Taylor Boyd

Fairy Stone State Park will hold a public information meeting on Saturday, February 22, to discuss the recently launched Friends of Fairy Stone initiative. The meeting will be held in Fayerdale Hall at 2 p.m.

Park Manager Adam Layman said the park hopes to restart its volunteer-based citizen support organization to assist with new projects, special events, and other ways to develop community support for the park.

“There used to be a friends group for the park, but it hasn’t been active for a while. We’re trying to revitalize that,” he said.

The initiative will assist Fairy Stone by hosting interpretive events and special entertainment events such as Music in the Park, planting and maintaining native gardens, and advocating and pro-

moting the park and its natural beauty.

“Any other projects in the park that people would have an interest in helping with like maintaining trails, litter cleanup, lakeshore cleanup - anything that folks would have an interest in giving us a hand with - we’d love to have that opportunity,” Layman said.

‘Friends’ groups in other parks across the state are able to provide support in ways the parks themselves can’t always do, Layman said.

“If we have issues with staffing or finding funding for projects like receiving grants and that sort of thing, the friends groups are able to help with that a lot and really support the park,” he said.

For more information, call Fairy Stone State Park at (276) 930-2424, or go to its website at www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/fairy-stone.

Breast Cancer Survivor Creates Support Group to Help Others Navigate Their Journey

To provide guidance and encouragement to fellow breast cancer survivors, Angela Owens has launched a local support group for those affected by the disease. The group, which began meeting earlier this year, gathers on the first Thursday of every month from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Therapy Direct in Stuart.

Owens, recognizing the need for a space where individuals can share their experiences, said the time and location may change depending on the group’s needs. If attendance grows, she is open to finding a larger meeting space.

“We can change the times to meet the needs if we need to do that. If we outgrow that building, we’ll go somewhere else bigger. Right now, that’s just where we’re starting,” she said.

The first meeting, held on Jan. 2, attracted five partici-

pants. Owens described the gathering as a relaxed, open discussion where individuals could ask questions and share their experiences.


“It was just people sitting down, talking, and asking questions. I think that’s very helpful,” she said.

To further connect members, Owens plans to create a Facebook group in the future. The meetings are open to anyone affected by breast cancer, regardless of when they were diagnosed.

“There’s no pressure for anyone to speak, but it’s an opportunity to talk about their experiences,” Owens said. “Whether someone was just diagnosed today or has been living with breast cancer for 20 years, it doesn’t matter. Everyone is welcome.”


Owens can be reached via Facebook Messenger or by email at owens2125@msn.com.

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




MUFASA
THE LION KING
DECEMBER 19

1-3-5-7-9PM




MOANA 2

1-3-5-7-9PM




KRAVEN
THE HUNTER

1-4-7-9:15PM



SONIC 3
THE MOVIE

1-3-5-7-9PM



RED ONE

1-4-7-9:15

\$5 tickets

HOLLYWOOD CINEMA beside WALMART
Martinsville 278-858-3458



Puzzle Time



FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

TSO
ENIFLE
BREEM
♥ALER
♥CUSREE
UCE
RTFE
RULME
MLE
♥CLESMA
♥TENIS
♥REUC

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

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Spatula is wider. 2. The is different. 3. Sleeve is longer. 4. Ear is larger. 5. Pancake is added. 6. Cap is larger.

MAGIC MAZE ● — NUTS

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: PASTRY WITH A MIDDLE HOLE

Beech	Cashew	Hickory	Safety
Bitter	Climbing	Macadamia	Square
Brazil	Coco	Pistachio	Wing
Butter	Hazel	Quandong	

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Super Crossword

ACROSS

1 Milk-Bone products

10 Legend-ary masked swordsman

15 "Getting out of it is not possible for me"

20 Stat for a baseball pitcher

21 Mountain nymph of Greek myth

22 Can't get out of it

23 Start of a riddle

25 Santa's little helpers

26 "Delicious!"

27 Insect snares

28 Told fibs

29 Attempts to hit, as a fly

31 Hair fixative

32 Ryder Cup org.

33 Manipulator

34 Prefix with angle

35 Felt concern

38 Riddle, part 2

43 Supreme Norse deity

44 California vineyard valley

45 Joust verbally

46 Words before "dream" or "be different"

47 Jazz pianist Allison

48 Loft

50 In a very uncordial way

52 City in Iowa

53 Riddle, part 3

57 Not docile

58 Serpentine fish

59 Above, in poetry

60 Gabrielle of volleyball

64 Vietnamese New Year

65 Grad's gala

68 Flop

70 Indian royal

72 Camera — (Cannes award)

73 Wear down

75 Actor DeLuise

77 Space

79 Big city in Ontario

81 Riddle, part 4

86 Utah winter vacation spot

89 From Tehran or Tabriz

90 Ladle, e.g.

91 Concerning

92 Iris coverer

94 With 108-Down, "Piece of cake!"

96 Memorable periods

97 Squint

98 End of the riddle

101 Cottage cheese bits

102 Hit the slopes

103 Alternatives to coffees

104 Part of LAPD

105 Perp catcher

106 Like fishes without appendages

108 Casino fixture

110 Holier-than- —

112 Rock's Reed

115 Make irate

116 Riddle's answer

120 Crouch down

121 Fill with panic

122 Vacant elected positions

123 1,000-kilo metric unit

124 Conical tent

125 Analyzed to detect the presence of

DOWN

1 Like a wet lawn at dawn

2 Waikiki locale

3 Protein unit

4 Blasting stuff

5 Kept in check

6 1950s Ford

7 "I smell —!"

8 Yanks

9 — -cone

10 Astrological diagrams

11 Writer Sarah — Jewett

12 Scan or skim

13 Aries animal

14 Ukraine port

15 "Tell me about it!"

16 Ale grain

17 Generalized rivalry situation

18 Zinc — (cosmetics ingredient)

19 Brand of tortilla chips

24 Gymnast Korbut

30 Competitor of McDonald's and Burger King

31 Big Swiss city

32 Extol

33 Toward a stream's source

35 Calculate

36 Ornament hanger, e.g.

37 Italian rice dish

40 Sheriff Andy Taylor's boy

41 PC shortcut code

42 Barter

44 Consumer advocate

49 Signaled, as an actor

51 Pre-euro Italian money

54 Bank of China Tower architect

55 Power connectors

56 One of the Muses

61 He played Santa in "Elf"

62 Recoiled in fear

63 Blackboard clearers

66 Baltic Sea feeder

67 Tile designs

69 Blocks up

71 — Hopkins University

74 Clog-clearing brand

76 Year division

78 Writing assignments

80 Cause to stumble

82 Keaton and Sawyer

83 Not yet final, in law

84 Folk stories

85 Bank offering

86 Gets on it right away

87 Investigate

88 Checking the fit of

93 One of the Muses

95 1984 comedy starring Steve Martin and Lily Tomlin

99 React to with a quick breath

100 Inflict upon

101 Meal division

105 Tally up

107 Boxer Spinks

108 See 94-Across

109 Apollo's instrument

110 Variety

111 Gardening tools

112 Bread unit

113 Film director

114 Khrushchev's fed.

117 Corrida cheer

118 Decay

119 Actor Danson

Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- Baby porcupines are known as porcupettes.
- In the early 20th century, California's Glass Beach was used as a trash dump. Decades of ocean tides have cleared the beach and polished discarded bottles and automobile tail lights into collectible pebbles of sea glass.
- In 1939, Hitler's nephew wrote an article titled "Why I Hate My Uncle." He came to America, served in the Navy and settled on Long Island.
- Continental plates drift as fast as fingernails grow.
- Nineteenth-century British surgeon George Merryweather believed leeches could predict the weather. Sadly, his "tempest prognosticator," displayed at the Great Exhibition in 1851, failed to catch on.
- Viking burials included board games.
- Child star Shirley Temple reportedly didn't love her famous curls, preferring instead the cropped 'do of her hero, Amelia Earhart.
- Remember this when you're attempting to settle a dispute with currency: When you flip a coin, there is a slightly greater chance that it will end up on the side it started.
- The NASA Vehicle Assembly Building in Florida is so huge it has its own weather.
- Women in traditional Rwandan societies avoid eating goat meat, as it's believed this will cause them to grow a beard.
- The record for the longest tire skid was set in 1964 at the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah.
- Walt Disney World is a surprisingly popular place for people to scatter the ashes of their deceased loved ones. Unsurprisingly, the "Happiest Place on Earth" takes a dim view of the practice, saying that anyone bringing human remains onto the property will be asked to leave.
- The modern popped collar originated as a way to keep tennis players' necks from getting sunburned.

Thought for the Day: "What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul." — *Joseph Addison*

Weekly SUDOKU

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

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: ♦♦

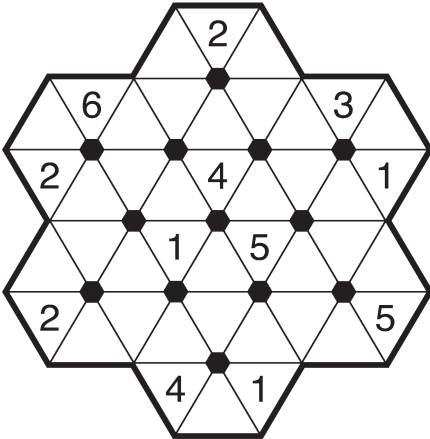
♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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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

DON'T BE OVER-CAUTIOUS FROM A GOOD LIE IN A FAIRWAY BUNKER.

ASSUMING ALSO A SHALLOW FRONT LIP, YOU CAN HIT THE BALL AS FAR FROM THE SAND AS YOU COULD FROM THE FAIRWAY.

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USING ONE MORE CLUB THAN YOU WOULD FROM GRASS, WRIGGLE YOUR FEET DOWN INTO THE SAND TO INSURE A SOLID BASE, KEEP YOUR HEAD VERY STEADY, AND SWING SMOOTHLY MOSTLY WITH YOUR ARMS, KEEPING YOUR BODY RELATIVELY STILL.

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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!

Awning			
ANYCOP			
Climb			
DANCES			
Stir			
OURSEA			
Delight			
TATER			

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Applications open for Piedmont Arts scholarships

Piedmont Arts is accepting applications for the Nicodemus Hufford Memorial Arts Scholarship and the Harold Knowlton Work Memorial Arts Scholarship. Applications are due at Piedmont Arts by 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 30. Applications are available at the museum and online at PiedmontArts.org.

The Nicodemus Hufford Memorial Arts Scholarship is available to graduating high school seniors in Martinsville and Henry County who plan to pursue a degree in visual or performing arts at an accredited four-year institution. Awardees can receive up to \$1,000.

The Harold Knowlton Work Memorial Arts Scholarship is available to rising college sophomores, juniors and seniors who graduated from a high school in Martinsville or Henry County and are currently pursuing a degree in visual or performing arts at an accredited four-year institution. Awardees can re-



ceive up to \$2,500.

Applicants for both scholarships are required to attend an interview and audition or portfolio review with the scholarship committee Wednesday, May 7 at Piedmont Arts.

For more information, contact Programs Coordinator Jennifer Gravely at jgravely@piedmontarts.org.

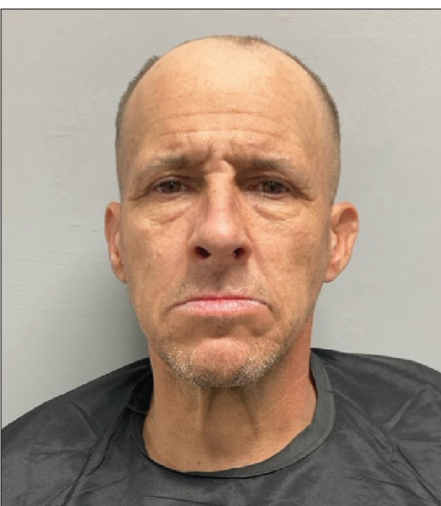
Arrest Made in Connection With alleged Bomb Threat

The Henry County Sheriff's Office responded to a bomb threat at the Dollar General store, located at 2662 Greensboro Road, around 8 p.m. on Sunday, February 9. Following an investigation, authorities identified and arrested Roger Phillip Amos Jr., 52, in connection with the threat.

Law enforcement secured the area, completed a search of the area with an explosive K-9, and no explosive devices were found. The situation was deemed safe, and the store has since resumed normal operations.

Amos was taken into custody without incident a short distance away, at 2034 Rives Road. He is currently being held at the Henry County Adult Detention Center on a \$4,500 secured bond, charged with threats to bomb.

The Henry County Sheriff's Office continues to investigate a bomb threat reported at the same address on Friday, February 7, at



Roger Phillip Amos, Jr.

approximately 7:30 p.m.

Authorities take all threats seriously and remain committed to ensuring public safety. Anyone with additional information regarding this incident is encouraged to contact the Sheriff's Office at (276) 638-8751 or Crimestoppers at 276-63-CRIME (276-632-7463).

GameStop robbery investigation results in arrest



Richard Franklin Rotunda

The Henry County Sheriff's Office, in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, successfully apprehended a man wanted in connection with the recent robbery at GameStop, located at 818 Commonwealth Blvd.

Deputies responded to reports of a robbery at GameStop on February 7, around 6:40 p.m. Through the course of the investigation, deputies gathered information indicating that the wanted man, Richard Rotunda, 39, had traveled to Danville. This information was promptly relayed to the Danville Police Department, who quickly Located Rotunda outside of Caesars Virginia.

Rotunda was taken into custody without incident, and upon search, officers discovered that he was in possession of U.S. currency and a fake handgun, believed to have been used during the robbery.

The sheriff's office extended its gratitude to the Martinsville Police



Department for their swift response at the scene of the robbery and to the Danville Police Department for successfully locating and arresting this dangerous individual. Additionally, the efforts of our media partners in helping to share important information with the community were appreciated.

Rotunda is currently being held at the Danville City Jail with no bond until his extradition back to Henry County. He was charged with robbery.

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



2024 Patrick & Henry Scholars display their award notices at Patrick County High School.

P&HCC Foundation Scholars Application Now Open

The Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Foundation is now accepting applications for the Patrick & Henry Scholars and Commonwealth Legacy scholarships. Each year, up to ten local high school graduates are chosen to become Patrick & Henry Scholars. These scholars receive a scholarship to cover tuition, textbooks, and fees for up to two academic years.

"Becoming a Patrick & Henry Scholar is a distinguished honor that is both an experience and an opportunity," said Tiffani Underwood, Director of the P&HCC Foundation, adding, "The application process is rigorous, but the reward of being P&H Scholars is invaluable both while on campus here at P&HCC and beyond."

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must have a high school grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. They must be graduates from an area high school or have completed a homeschool program of study. Scholars are chosen for their superior academic achievement, civic involvement, and leadership potential. Graduates of homeschool programs must be seventeen years of age or older at the time of the application and must reside in the P&HCC service region.

Once accepted, Patrick & Henry Scholars must maintain a 3.0 grade

point average and be full-time students (enrolled in at least 12 credit hours) at P&HCC. They also will be expected to participate in two extracurricular activities per semester and accrue ten volunteer service hours each semester.

Students who apply for the Patrick & Henry Scholars award will automatically be considered for the Commonwealth Legacy scholarship. One outstanding student from each community college in Virginia is selected to receive this award, which was created by the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) and is sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education.

The funds from this scholarship can be used for tuition, textbooks, and fees. Eligible students are full time, associate degree-seeking students attending college for the first time. As a merit-based scholarship, it will be awarded to a student who has demonstrated academic excellence and a commitment to develop leadership skills.

To apply, students should visit www.patrickhenry.edu/scholars.

For additional information, contact Letitia Pulliam in the Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation Office at (276) 656-0250 or lpulliam@patrickhenry.edu.

See more at
www.henrycountyenterprise.com

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Winner's will be published in
The Enterprise on April 30, 2025
& The Henry County Enterprise on May 3, 2025.

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Holy Cow Ice Cream Offers Homemade Treats, Comfort Food

By Jessica Dillon

A new ice cream shop with a heart for home-made flavors and down-home cooking has opened its doors in Martinsville. Holy Cow Ice Cream, founded by veteran restaurant owner Jay Irvin, offers small-batch, handcrafted ice cream along with classic comfort foods like pintos, chili, cornbread, and all-beef hot dogs.

In addition to ice cream, the shop serves cookies and cobblers, giving customers a variety of sweet treats to enjoy.

Irvin, the former owner of Hillbilly Diner in Bassett, decided to step away from the full-scale restaurant business to pursue a simpler operation. With a background in law enforcement as well, he is relatively new to the Martinsville-Henry County area but has quickly immersed himself in the local food scene.

Although he only began learning how to make ice cream a few months ago, Irvin has spent the past three months perfecting his craft.

“I do small batches because we’re in a small spot, so we don’t have 30 flavors,” Irvin said. “We don’t use a bunch of extra stuff that you don’t need.”

Each batch, made one and a half gallons at a time, focuses on fresh, natural ingredients. Even the pecans in Holy Cow’s butter pecan ice cream are toasted in-house by Irvin himself.

“If we can’t make it real, then we won’t make it,”



he said.

Because of this commitment, Irvin has found it challenging to create sugar-free options without adding artificial ingredients. However, he is researching natural alternatives, such as Monk Fruit, to develop a no-sugar-added option.

Creating an inviting atmosphere is a priority for Holy Cow.

“I learned a long time ago that if you treat people good, the food is good, the prices are fair, and you treat people well, then you’ll do well,” Irvin said.

Before opening, the building — which formerly housed the SPCA — required extensive renovations after sitting vacant for more than a decade. Irvin personally worked to transform the space, incorporating an eclectic collection of décor to give the shop a unique charm.

Holy Cow rotates a variety of flavors, including:

- *Black cherry (Irvin’s favorite)
- *Coconut
- *Butter pecan
- *Chocolate
- *Vanilla
- *Cookies and cream

The shop also offers waffle cones, bowls, and a selection of toppings. Customers are encouraged to sample flavors before making a selection.

Rather than competing with other sweet shops in the area, Irvin sees Holy Cow as simply adding another option to the community. He also plans to source ingredients locally whenever possible.

Beyond ice cream, Irvin has expressed interest in opening a non-denominational church in the other half of the building.

“It’s for those of us who got left out,” he said. “I believe this will give people a place to belong and feel at home.”

Holy Cow Ice Cream is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is located at 1420 Virginia Ave., Martinsville.

June opening set for new Sheetz location



The new Sheetz store and gas station, scheduled to open in June, is located at the intersection of Commonwealth Blvd. and Virginia Avenue, directly across from Walmart. (Photos by Ray Reynolds)

The Lester Group, in partnership with Sheetz, Inc., announced the new Sheetz store in Martinsville is slated to open in June. The new convenience store and gas station will be prominently located at the intersection of Commonwealth Blvd. and Virginia Avenue, directly across from Walmart.

This exciting new venture is the result of a collaborative effort initiated in Fall 2022 between The Lester Group and Sheetz, aimed at bringing enhanced convenience and service to the residents of Henry County. Andrew Palmer, Vice President of Lester Properties, expressed his enthusiasm about the partnership, stating, “The Lester Group is proud

to have worked closely with Sheetz to bring this project to fruition. Our commitment to enhancing the local infrastructure and community amenities is reflected in this new development.”

The upcoming Sheetz location will boast six fuel pumps, accommodating up to 12 cars simultaneously, and will feature a robust drive-thru service. Patrons will also enjoy the convenience of both indoor and outdoor seating, making it an ideal spot for both quick stops and relaxed visits.

Nick Ruffner, Public Affairs Manager at Sheetz, highlighted the store’s offerings and strategic placement, saying, “This new location not

only broadens our presence in Henry County, where our current store in Ridgeway has been very successful, but it also enhances our commitment to providing fast, friendly service. We are excited about the added convenience and the array of options this new store will offer to the community.”

Dale Wagoner, Henry County Administrator, played a crucial role by facilitating the necessary infrastructure resources to support this new development. His efforts have been instrumental to this project.

Construction is set to begin shortly, with a targeted completion date in June 2025. This development is expected to bring numerous employ-

ment opportunities to the area and contribute positively to the local economy.

Founded in 1896, The Lester Group has been a leader in real estate development and management, providing high-quality commercial and residential properties throughout Virginia. Committed to excellence and community development, The Lester Group continues to expand its portfolio while maintaining its dedication to the communities it serves.

For more information, visit www.sheetz.com or follow us on Twitter (@sheetz), Facebook (www.facebook.com/sheetz) and Instagram (www.instagram.com/sheetz).



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