



The March 6 Henry County School Board meeting marked the final session for Stephanie Brinegar, of the Horsepasture District. She is seated beside Ben Gravely (right), vice chairman, of the Iriswood District, and Champ Hardie (left) of the Ridgeway District.

# Board to fill vacant seat after member resigns

By Taylor Boyd

Stephanie Brinegar, who represented the Horsepasture District on the Henry County School Board, resigned, effective immediately, citing increasing career obligations as the reason for her departure.

“Every decision I made and every vote I cast was driven by a genuine desire to do what was best for Henry County Public Schools,” Brinegar said in a release dated March 11. “Although I am stepping down from my role, I will continue to keep Henry County Public Schools and our Board of Education in my thoughts and prayers.”

Board Chairman Teddy Martin II expressed gratitude for Brinegar’s service and wished her well.

“Mrs. Brinegar has a work ethic like no other. We understand this is a difficult personal decision, and we support her in continuing to improve our community’s wellness through her career, which has also been a priority during her tenure with the board. We thank Mrs. Brine-

gar and wish her well,” Martin said.

In accordance with the Code of Virginia, the board will appoint an interim school board member to fill the vacancy. The interim member will serve from April to November 2025, participating in all school board functions until a special election is held for the seat.

Candidates for the Horsepasture District interim seat will be interviewed by the school board following submission of a letter of interest and verification of registered voter status in the district.

A public hearing will be held on March 20 at 5:30 p.m. at the Henry County School Board Office, where candidates or other members of the public may present names for consideration.

Registered voters in the Horsepasture District interested in the interim role must submit a letter of interest and resume to Britney Meeks at britney.meeks@henry.k12.va.us or P.O. Box 8958, Collinsville, VA 24078 by Tuesday, March 18. In other matters at

its Thursday, March 6 meeting, the board:

\*Heard an update on the fiscal year (FY) 2025-2026 budget, which is expected to be presented later this month.

With the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) recently releasing its calculation tool for the FY2026 budget, Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Administrative Services Dr. Ben Boone said the division now has a line-by-line breakdown of state revenue sources, including basic aid and sales tax allocations.

“The total numbers match what we presented at the joint board meeting at the end of February,” Boone said. He and the finance staff are working to prepare and present the division’s budget at its March 20 board meeting.

Board Vice Chairman Ben Gravely, of the Iriswood District, said, “So, we’re not losing anything, but we’re not gaining much either.”

Later this month, Schools Superintendent

(See Board p. 2)

# City school officials discuss accreditation model, community gym



Members of the Martinsville School Board and staff recognized the accomplishments of the Swim Team, which competed at the state level. Sherman Dillard won the state title, Ben Puckett was awarded second place in the diving competition.

By Cole Hall

The Martinsville School Board reviewed a new state accreditation model at its March 10 meeting, a change that could impact how schools measure student performance and determine rankings for assistance.

Additionally, a long-discussed community gym project, first proposed more than 50 years ago, is now moving forward, with plans to seek architects and engineers for further development.

The proposed accreditation model focuses on individual student growth, tracking progress in academic courses over time. Schools would be ranked based on student growth and attendance, receiving ratings of either “excellent” (90 percent or above) or “needs attention” (70 percent or lower).

Schools Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley Jr. expressed concerns over the program’s political nature and potential impact on local

(See City School p. 2)



The New College Institute was the site of a recent statewide law enforcement accreditation ceremony. It marked the second time Martinsville hosted the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission.

# Statewide law enforcement accreditation ceremony held in city Martinsville sheriff’s office earns reaccreditation from VLEPSC

By Jessica Dillon

The Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC) held its monthly meeting at New College Institute on Thursday, March 5, where several sheriff’s offices awaited the verdict on their accreditation status.

Among those reviewed was the Martinsville Sheriff’s Office, which successfully earned reaccreditation. The agency has now been accredited more than half a dozen times and remains one of the oldest accredited departments in the state.

“I am very fortunate. I don’t know a member of my agency that is not sold on accreditation and will support anything they can for accreditation,” said Martinsville Sheriff Steve Draper, who also serves as vice chairman of the VLEPSC committee.

Accreditation is more than just a title—it ensures effective policing, enforces stringent policies, and helps build public confidence in law enforcement agencies. Departments that do not meet all standards are

not eligible to apply for accreditation.

“This process is so important for maintaining proper community and law enforcement relations,” said Martinsville Police Chief Robert Fincher, who attended the meeting. “It allows the public to know that our officers are doing the most professional job they possibly can.”

Fincher and Draper both expressed pride in hosting the meeting in Martinsville. Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis also attended.

Other law enforcement agencies approved for reaccreditation included:

- \*Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office
- \*Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office
- \*Purcellville Police Department
- \*Williamsburg-James City County Sheriff’s Office

All agencies received positive assessments and were praised for their commitment to excellence.

To achieve accreditation, departments must meet 197 rigorous standards, covering everything from weapons policies to officer conduct and professionalism.

“It’s great to have an accreditation team as talented as this come out,” said Loudoun County Sheriff Michael Chapman.

At the meeting, assessors summarized their reports, highlighting key areas such as officer attitudes and department professionalism to give the committee insight into each agency’s performance.

Accreditation is valid for four years, meaning the Martinsville Sheriff’s Office will undergo its next review in 2029. This marks the second time that the VLEPSC has met in Martinsville.

# Proposed solar farm project faces community opposition

By Jessica Dillon

A community meeting was held at the Galilean House of Worship in Axton on March 11, where Ameresco representatives discussed their plan to construct a 5 MW solar facility on Jones Ridge Road.

Many residents expressed concerns about the project’s impact on noise levels, aesthetics, and property values.

The proposed solar farm would be located in fields near an old airstrip, with thick foliage surrounding the site to provide screening. The solar panels would connect to a nearby power line, and the generated electricity would be sold through the Shared Solar Program.

Some of the residents that have property next to the location questioned the developers about acre-

age, and whether the Axton Solar Project negated plans to build due to the county’s limit for the number of acres available for solar farm development.

“It’s open, there’s not a ton of trees to clear, and it’s well-screened from the road,” said Project Manager Tom Holt, adding that Appalachian Power’s solar program was a key factor in Ameresco’s decision to pursue the project.

One resident expressed worry about possible contamination of local wells.

“I wonder if things will leak into our wells,” the resident said.

Senior Vice President Jonathan Mancini assured attendees that the facility would use vegetable oil, which reduces fire risks and is envi-

(See Solar Farm p. 2)

# Scammers impersonate law enforcement in jury duty hoax

By Jessica Dillon

A new phone scam is targeting local residents, with fraudsters impersonating law enforcement officers and claiming individuals have missed jury duty.

The scammers use caller ID spoofing, making it appear as though the call is coming from a legitimate sheriff’s office or police department. They even go so far as to use the real names of local officers found online, along with fake badge numbers, to convince

victims they are in legal trouble.

“This has actually become quite a common scam,” said Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis.

The calls typically begin with the scammer introducing themselves as an officer before claiming the recipient failed to appear for jury duty.

“If you have an actual summons for jury duty, you will be served by a deputy,” Davis emphasized.

Victims are then told they must re-

(See Scammers p. 2)

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UPDATES





# Board

(cont. from page 1)

dent Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis will attend a conference focusing on federal programming and potential funding cuts.

“We know that is something we are facing now with the potential dissolution of the U.S. Department of Education,” Blake-Lewis said. “In conferencing with the board chair, it seemed that this would be an appropriate conference for me to attend and bring back information on federal programming and funding.”

\*Heard from Mary Martin, who praised the division’s efforts in educating students and preparing future business owners and workers.

\*Recognized Bassett High School students who placed in the VA Beta Club Convention and received district certificates

for swimming.

\*Approved the consent agenda, except for the Henry County School Board governance norms and protocols.

\*Approved the Henry County School Board governance norms and protocols.

\*Heard a presentation on Fielddale-Collinsville Middle School.

\*Recognized March as Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) Equity in Education Month.

\*Recognized local businesses Lee’s Tire and Wheel, Adams’ Grocery, and Martinsville Family Practice as VSBA Business Honor Roll recipients.

\*Approved purchases for interactive technology, network cabling and accessories, technology devices and accessories for students and staff, cyberse-



An update on the upcoming fiscal year’s budget was presented to the school board during its March 6 meeting at Fielddale-Collinsville Middle School. Elizabeth Durden (left), of the Collinsville District; Champ Hardie (center) of the Ridgeway District, and Stephanie Brinegar (right), now former representative of the Horsepasture District, are pictured. Registered voters in the Horsepasture District who are interested in filling the interim role may submit a letter of interest and resume to Britney Meeks at britney.meeks@henry.k12.va.us or P.O. Box 8958, Collinsville, VA 24078 by Tuesday, March 18.

curity solutions and services.

\*Approved a contract for furniture at secondary and elementary schools, awarded to Bassett Office Supply.

\*Heard the superintendent’s report.

\*Heard committee reports and

board member comments.

\*Approved the personnel report and addendum.

Martin, of the Reed Creek District, attended the meeting virtually.

Member-at-Large Cherie Witlow did not attend the meeting.

# City School

(cont. from page 1)

schools.

“I don’t know anything that’s not political these days. Some want to stop the implementation of this, and they thought this was an attempt to grade all schools in Martinsville as needing assistance,” Talley said.

He also questioned the necessity of a statewide overhaul, given Virginia’s high education rankings.

“Virginia is rated the highest state for business, and the second most important component of that is education. So, if Virginia needed an entirely new system, then why are we ranked so high?” he said.

Talley noted that The Virginia Association of Teachers has raised concerns, advocating for at least three years of recorded data before implementation.

“Some schools love it, some think it’s basically entrapment. It’ll be interesting to see what the results are,” he added.

Concerns were raised about increased pressure on both teachers and students to perform well under the new system.

“If we do what’s best for students and take

care of our staff, I think things will work out for the best. I like that every student can show growth. This lets us keep moving students, which I like,” said Assistant Superintendent Dr. Angilee Downing.

However, she acknowledged potential drawbacks.

“There are positives and negatives, and the calculations are confusing,” she said.

Board members will hear additional data and discuss the accreditation model further at their next monthly meeting.

In other matters:

\*A long-discussed community gymnasium project, which has been in school board records since 1960, is gaining momentum.

Travis Clemmons, executive director of Administrative Services, presented an outline for the building and proposed forming a committee to seek architects and engineers for the next phase.

Last month, Clemmons received several proposals from interested companies.

“We do not know the final price estimate yet, but we will find out in the coming weeks,” he

said.

Talley emphasized the importance of providing young people with a dedicated space for sports and activities.

“It is very important that our young people have a gym, a place for the community. We will come up with a cost, and we have had separate entities that have promised support,” he said.

He expressed enthusiasm for the project, thanking those involved.

“We are excited for our kids; I am really excited for our people. We have a vision, and we’re going for it. I want to thank all of our sponsors.”

The board and attendees expressed optimism about the potential benefits of the gymnasium, with many highlighting how it would offer more activities for young people in Martinsville.

\* The school board recognized the Swim Team’s state level awards presented by Katrina Childress. This is the first time a student has won first place in a state level competition. Sherman Dillard won the state title, Ben Puckett was awarded second place in the diving competition.

# Solar Farm

(cont. from page 1)

ronmentally safer. He also stated that Ameresco would be liable for any contamination.

“We are a publicly traded company,” Mancini said.

Despite these assurances, residents remained opposed to the project.

“We are going to be against it,” one community member said.

Many expressed concerns about their health, privacy, and peace, and did not feel they would benefit from the project. The company proposed planting trees to block their potential neighbors’ view.

“It’s going to be an eyesore,” an adjacent landowner said.

The company committed to minimizing noise by placing inverters as far from residential areas as possible and hiring local electricians and vegetation experts for ongoing site maintenance.

“We try to pull from the local labor pool,” Holt said.

In an attempt to ease concerns, Ameresco proposed planting trees to block the view of the solar panels from neighboring properties.

Holt acknowledged that the project faces uncertain approval but emphasized that Ameresco is listening to public feedback.

“I have no idea what the chance of success is, but we are doing this to hear people’s feedback,” he said.

Even if opposition continues, the company plans to work with residents to address concerns through measures like landscaping plans and further community engagement.

Mancini defended the project, arguing that it would have minimal visual impact and provide economic benefits to the community.

“This is a very small installation. Visually, there is no impact, or if there is any, we are

happy to do a landscaping plan. We are set back 100 feet, and we think it’s a good project because it’s community solar, it benefits residents, and we will pay taxes to the economy,” Mancini said.

The 16-acre project will be the only solar installation in the area, as Ameresco holds exclusive development rights.

The site is zoned for agriculture, meaning the company will need a special use permit to proceed. Ameresco is leasing the land rather than purchasing it outright.

The solar farm would have an operational lifespan of 25 years. If the project is abandoned, Ameresco would be responsible for site cleanup.

If approved at a future Planning Commission meeting, construction is expected to take more than a year, with an estimated completion date in spring 2026.

# Scammers

(cont. from page 1)

port to the station to avoid arrest and that there is an active warrant for them. To seem more legitimate, the scammer may provide a badge number and even encourage the victim to research their name online, which often matches real law enforcement officers.

“They were using a retired deputy’s name, saying, ‘You need to come in,’” said Martinsville Police Chief Robert Fincher. “They’ve done it with ours, they’ve done it with the city’s sheriff’s office.”

The scammers pressure victims into resolving the matter immediately, often by asking for money over the phone.

“No one from the Henry County Sheriff’s Office will ever call your home and ask for payment of any type over the phone—whether it be from cash, credit card, or any type of payment app,” Davis said.

Once the victim is panicked, the scammer of-

fers a “solution”—paying a fine over the phone to “make the problem go away.”

While some legal matters do require fines, officers will never request payment by phone.

The fraudsters mask their real phone number using caller ID spoofing technology, making it appear as though the call is coming from a local law enforcement agency.

“If we or another agency have a warrant for you, we will come to you. You can never pay money and get out of a warrant—that is a scam,” Fincher said.

Because scammers route calls through multiple locations, often from overseas, tracking them down can be extremely difficult.

Local law enforcement urges anyone receiving a suspicious call to report it immediately.

“If you get one of these calls, contact your local law enforcement agency and let them know what

was said,” Fincher said.

Authorities are actively working to identify the scammers, but due to their complex phone routing techniques, it remains a challenge.

“We try to find out who’s doing it,” Fincher said. “Then we want to pay them a visit—with a real warrant.”

**Tips to Avoid Falling Victim to Scams:**

\*Never give out personal information over the phone.

\*Verify any claims by calling your local law enforcement agency directly.

\*Be cautious of urgent requests for payment or personal information.

\*Know that law enforcement will never demand payment by phone.

If you or someone you know receives a suspicious call, report it immediately to local law enforcement by calling (276) 638-8751.

# Cone Health Sagewell Health & Fitness Comes to Eden

**Personalized fitness meets community health needs**

Eden is getting a new fitness option. Cone Health Sagewell Health & Fitness is launching in the community, with presale sign-ups beginning March 11 at Kings Mill Coffee located at 729 S. Van Buren Road. The first 100 members will get 75 percent off the enrollment fee.

The Eden facility features state-of-the-art equipment, free weights, group exercise classes, and expert coaching in a supportive environment. It is scheduled to open in May. This facility is dedicated to promoting healthier lifestyles through education on nutrition, physical activity, and stress management. It

serves individuals at all fitness levels and offers valuable support for those aiming to prevent or manage chronic illnesses. Every member receives a one-on-one session with a fitness specialist to assess mobility, strength, and cardiovascular health – ensuring a customized workout plan.

Designed to meet people where they are, Sagewell will offer a welcoming and supportive environment where individuals of all fitness levels and health backgrounds can access expert guidance tailored to their needs.

Sagewell Health & Fitness is one of several services Cone Health will be opening in the coming months at 723 S. Van Buren Road. The

site is under construction and, in addition to fitness, will offer a variety of specialty services related to the medical needs of the community.

“Sagewell Health & Fitness truly supports people at every stage of their health journey,” says Jamie Athas, director of wellness at Cone Health. “We are thrilled to bring high-quality wellness and prevention services to the residents of Eden as part of Cone Health’s commitment to increase access to fitness and well-being services.”

Sign-ups happen in person at the presale office, on the lower level of Kings Mill Coffee. Visit sagewellfitness.com for more information.



# 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

### Friday, March 14

Arts and Cultural Committee Meeting, 1 p.m., Municipal Building Room 31, 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville.

### Monday, March 17

PSA Board of Directors Regular Meeting, 6 p.m., Administration Building Fourth Floor Conference Room, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

Patrick & Henry Community College Board meets at 12:30 p.m. in the Hooker Exhibit Hall, Frith Economic Development Center. This is a public meeting, but the board will not receive public comments.

### Tuesday, March 18

City Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Municipal Building Council Chambers, 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville.

### Thursday, March 20

Henry County School Board Special Meeting, FY26 Budget Approval, 5:30 p.m., 3rd Floor Boardroom County Administration Building, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

## Events

### Friday, March 14-Saturday, March 15

Beauty and The Beast. 7 p.m., Martinsville High School Auditorium, 351 Commonwealth Blvd E, Martinsville.

### Sunday, March 16

Beauty and The Beast. 3 p.m., Martinsville High School Auditorium, 351 Commonwealth Blvd E, Martinsville.

### Tuesday, March 18

The Martinsville -Henry County Republican Committee meets, 6:30 p.m., at the Henry County Administration Building, Summerlin Room, 3300 Kings Mountain Road Martinsville.

### Friday, March 21-Saturday March 22

Magna Vista Theatre presents Clue On Stage, 7 p.m., Magna Vista High School, 701 Magna Vista School Road, Ridgeway. Tickets \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door, at our show/getaclueMVHS.

### Saturday March 22

Waders & Waddlers Education Station at the Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville. One day only, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Highlights include Be a Science Sleuth - activity for kids; Meet a Philpott Lake Park Ranger; learn “Why we don’t feed crackers to ‘quackers’ and more. First public view of waterfowl specimens from the museum vault. Presented by the SW Piedmont Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalists, the Virginia Museum of Natural History and the Army Corps of Engineers.’ For more info: <https://www.vmnh.net/plan-your-visit>.

Pasta Night For The Fight, hosted by YMCA Early Learning Center, at YMCA 5 Points Program Center, 710 N Memorial Blvd., Martinsville. Proceeds to benefit a local family, 5-7:30 p.m. Cost \$15 for adults; \$10 for kids 10+, \$5 for kids 10 and under

### Sunday, March 23

Magna Vista Theatre presents Clue On Stage, 3 p.m., Magna Vista High School, 701 Magna Vista School Road, Ridgeway. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door, at our show/getaclueMVHS.

### Friday, April 4

First BIG BASEMENT SALE of 2025 at Fido’s Finds, 10 a.m. -5 p.m. Fido’s basement, located at 119 East Main Street, is loaded with treasures - furniture, home decor, books, collectibles and more. Every purchase supports the Martinsville-Henry County SPCA.

### Saturday, April 5

First BIG BASEMENT SALE of 2025 at Fido’s Finds, 9 a.m. -2 p.m. Fido’s basement, located at 119 East Main Street, is loaded with treasures - furniture, home decor, books, collectibles and more. Every purchase supports the Martinsville-Henry County SPCA.

## 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.

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.

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. Registration is not required.

# Get native trees for less with Throwing Shade Va

Are you looking to plant more native shrubs and trees this spring? Discounts are now available at participating retail nursery locations across Virginia. This year, the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) is expanding the Throwing Shade VA program to partner with even more nurseries.

From now through May 1, retail customers can receive a \$25 discount on eligible native trees and shrubs valued at \$50 or more from 15 participating nurseries (see list of locations below). Discounts are available through May 1 (while supplies last). Throwing Shade VA

incentivizes Virginians to plant native species of trees and shrubs, which provide water quality benefits, as well as a source of food and habitat for wildlife and pollinators. Not only can native species meet any landscaping objective, but they also often require less maintenance as they are already adapted to Virginia’s environment and climate.

To learn more about Throwing Shade VA and the importance of native species, visit DOF’s website at <https://dof.virginia.gov/urban-community-forestry/urban-forestry-community-assistance/throwing-shade-va>

program/.

“Since we launched in 2023, Throwing Shade VA has been a resounding success, with more than 5,500 discounted plants purchased last year alone,” said Urban and Community Forestry Partnership Coordinator Molly O’Liddy. “We are pleased to be expanding the program from 10 to 15 nurseries this year and are excited to continue working alongside our wonderful nursery partners across the state, who are happy to help you find the perfect native tree for your property or project.”

Support for this program comes from state water quality

improvement funds, which DOF uses to reimburse nurseries for the discounts. All trees planted through this program are reported as part of the state’s Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan. Customer surveys help DOF track progress towards the Commonwealth’s water quality improvement goals. This also helps inform DOF funding decisions for additional planting projects. Collected information is confidential and will not be displayed or given to outside parties.

## Getting Help After a Scam

Dealing with fraud in the aftermath can be fraught – not knowing where or if you should report (you should – it’s a crime), feelings of shame (even though it’s not your fault – blame the perpetrator), and an often-overwhelming emotional toll – let alone the financial impact.

One resource is the AARP Fraud Watch Network Helpline. Every weekday from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. EST, trained AARP volunteer fraud fighters are helping victims and their families understand what happened, report the crime, and plan next steps to put their lives back together. That number is 1-877-908-3360.

AARP also offers an online small group victim support pro-

gram to help address the emotional harm fraud victimization causes. These conversations are completely confidential and are a wonderful way to receive support from others. Sign up for a session today at [aarp.org/fraudsupport](http://aarp.org/fraudsupport).

Experiencing a scam can be devastating, but it doesn’t have to define you. If you or someone you know has been the victim of fraud, make sure to file a report with local police; among other things, this may be useful in the event restitution becomes possible down the line.

Report scams to local law enforcement. For help from AARP, call 1-877-908-3360 or visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at [www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork](http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork).

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# OPINION

## A Golden Speech and Examples of Rudeness

On March 4, I witnessed President Trump deliver his Joint Address to Congress.

This was his first speech at the U.S. Capitol since his inauguration.

In that inaugural speech, Trump proclaimed the Golden Age of America begins right now.

During his Joint Address, he struck a similar tune.

The Golden Age of America consists of numerous Administration policies and goals, some of which are already seeing success.

Trump touted the border security measures his Administration has implemented. In just six weeks, the number of encounters at the U.S.-Mexico border has dramatically plummeted.

According to CBS News, U.S. Customs and Border Protection recorded 8,450 apprehensions in February.

In February of 2024 under Biden, Border Patrol recorded more than 140,000 apprehensions!

Even U.S. Senator Mark Warner went on Fox Business to say that Trump made great progress to secure the border (though he would backtrack on MSN-BC).

Trump rightly proved that all we needed to secure the border was a new president.

A new president is also needed to reverse the inflationary policies of the Biden Administration.

As grocery prices, fuel costs and the cost of living skyrocketed, it was clear that Biden policies, including the “green new deal”, contributed to the economic pain in our homes and communities.

Such policies included halting the approval of new liquified natural gas licenses and even killing the Keystone XL Pipeline.

On Day One, Trump declared a national



Morgan Griffith

Representative

energy emergency to undo the damage done by Biden’s green new deal policies.

The impacts of these Trump energy policies will not be felt right away. In fact, it may take over a year for us to see the results. But Trump’s energy policy is aimed at restoring our economy and putting more money into your pocketbook.

Another major Trump talking point was rooting out waste, fraud and abuse in federal programs.

Look no further than the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The federal agency has been caught red-handed in funneling millions of dollars all over the world for leftist pet projects.

Some projects include:

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) scholarships in Burma (Even though the U.S. State Department continues to officially recognize the country as Burma, the country calls itself Myanmar, and according to the State Department’s website, the USAID mission in
- Burma closed in 1989. It’s a totalitarian regime that has little regard for its minority population. Having traveled there, I doubt any Christian Karen minority or Rohingya Muslim minority members ever saw a penny of this money.)
- Journalism efforts promoting non-binary language in Sri Lanka
- Male circumcision in Mozambique
- Election initiatives in India, Moldova and Liberia

• And the list goes on and on

While most American taxpayers do not mind helping starving children and communities, they did not consent their funds to be used for such outrageous programs.

Trump rightly discussed some of those programs in his Joint Address to Congress.

As I sat in the House chamber during Trump’s Address, I was surprised by the reaction of my Democratic colleagues.

To start the night, Texas Representative Al Green disrupted the beginning of Trump’s remarks by standing up and yelling at Trump.

Speaker Johnson repeatedly asked Representative Green to respect the decorum of the House. When it was clear Green wouldn’t relent, the Speaker instructed the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove Green from the floor.

I voted days later to censure Green for his intentional staged misconduct. Some of his Democratic colleagues joined Republicans in the censure vote.

Democratic disrespect did not end there.

When First Lady Melania Trump was recognized, I saw nobody from the Democratic side stand up and applaud.

It is a fairly standard practice for both parties to express respect to the first lady, regardless of political affiliation.

Other individuals who received a cold shoulder from Democrats were an American hostage returned home from Russia and a child survivor of brain cancer.

Additionally, the widow of a New York police officer killed by an illegal alien, the family of Laken Riley, and the mother of a 12-year-old girl killed by two illegal aliens did not receive much of a welcome reception either from Democrats.

The deaths of these individuals are all heartbreaking, and for Democrats to dismiss their tragic experiences is disappointing to see.

While I may vehemently disagree with Democratic tactics and policies, I will continue to celebrate policies that bring good to the American people and contribute to America’s Golden Age.

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

## The Lost Thrill of Cashing a Paycheck

In this age of technology, salary and wages are deposited directly into our bank accounts, for most or a lot of folks anyway.

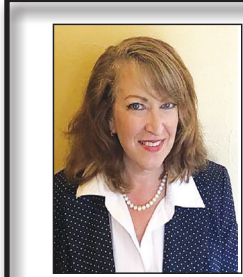
That being so, would today’s generation ever know the true joy of cashing a paycheck?

Oh, sure, they don’t have to rush to the bank on Fridays, or whenever payday is, then standing in line waiting. But there was a fun side to that, too.

There was an utter thrill to endorse your check, hand it over to the banker and, in return, get a handful of cash. Wow! Exciting – because in at least just that one moment, before it was time for groceries and bills, you had, and you felt, and you saw that money.

Many years ago, my friend’s little daughter was my goddaughter, and I opened for her a college savings account with a brokerage firm. If I simply wrote a check to deposit, she wouldn’t have that real experience of understanding money and setting aside some for the future. Instead, I went to my bank, took out the money in small bills, and we also gathered up some of her money as well – a full \$27, pretty impressive for a third grader back in the late 1990’s.

Though that was still in the days when people used cash regularly, it was the start of the cashless society, and the brokerage firm was one of the early ones with that rule. They did not accept cash. I explained quietly to the wealth manager, or whatever they like to call themselves – I just call her the lady at the counter – that I wanted



Holly Kozelsky

to pay in cash to help the child understand money. The lady at the counter was dubious and didn’t see how it could be done. I proposed a deal that she accepted skeptically – but in the end it worked: I wrote a check for the amount and slipped the lady the check when the little girl wasn’t looking. Then the three of us went through the official transaction of opening the account, and then, making the deposits with stacks \$1 bills. We’d hand over the money, which she accepted and wrote the receipt for, and then as we were leaving, the lady discreetly gave me back the cash, because she had my check.

I am writing this column on payday. Naturally, I feel a little jolt of pleasure and calm knowing that money is being deposited into my account and once again I resume the dance of pay and receive, pay and receive, pay and receive.

But what hit me today was the thought that though I feel a little pleasure and calm at payday, I don’t feel the thrill I once had.

The last time I received an actual paycheck, rather than direct deposit, was 2015.

Before the switch to digital in 2015, on Wednesdays around 11 a.m., a little buzz would go around the newsroom where I worked. It was pay-

day!

Sometime around or before noon, Tammy Foster, and later, Jennifer Prillaman, would come up to the newsroom and pass out our checks.

Anyone who was particularly hard up for money and couldn’t wait until noon would go down to Tammy’s office, or Jennifer’s office, to see if the checks were ready yet and if so, get our check out of the stack and rush off to the bank.

But definitely by noon, we’d all have our checks in hand, and we’d all rush off to the bank to deposit most of them and get out some cash – and then we’d all meet at some restaurant in town and have lunch together.

As journalists, we made as little money as one could make at a job which required a 4-year college degree, but we probably loved our jobs more than anyone on the planet. We had a true joy for our work, our community, our articles and our newsroom and, once a week, for those payday lunches.

By Friday perhaps, and definitely by Monday, we wouldn’t be able to afford to go out to lunch anymore, so it had to be Wednesday, and so we joined each other around the table cheerfully, buoyed by the short-lasting but predictably repeatable thrill of the paycheck.

## Letter To The Editor

### The Martinsville City Charter Review Committee

The Martinsville City Council approved five people to serve on a newly formed Charter Review Committee. The committee will review the City’s Charter, which grants certain specified rights, powers, privileges, or functions from the city’s sovereign control. This charter commission should conduct research, analyze potential changes, and make recommendations to the city council, but this is to be seen.

The individuals selected are a Prosecutor, General Attorney, Director of Human Resources, Director of Supply Chain Operations, and Chief of Nursing. All of these individuals have professional credentials. Absent from these selected individuals are local organizations, non-profits, and interest groups that can provide valuable insights and perspectives on specific issues that might warrant charter changes. Also, everyday residents or citizens whose engagement is vital, as the charter directly impacts their lives and the city’s operations.

The individual City Council

members selected their personal choices, an extension of themselves, of whom they wanted to serve on this committee. The city’s citizens don’t know which council members selected their individuals or why they selected them. In Newport News, Virginia, the city solicited all interested community members and asked them to apply to their Charter Review Committee.

The individuals who were selected for the Martinsville Charter Review Committee have past political alliances and future political aspirations. The citizens of Martinsville deserve a non-partisan group of people to set the direction for the future of Martinsville. It is up to the city’s citizens to observe and offer input to this new committee to ensure their concerns are addressed. Is this an actual charter review committee, or is this just an effort to position a selected group of individuals to position them to be influential in upcoming city elections?

Lawrence Mitchell,  
Martinsville

## Jones appointed to NCI board

In additional board appointments announced last week, Gov. Glenn Youngkin appointed Eric D. Jones to the New College Insti-

tute’s (NCI’s) Board Of Directors. Jones, of Annapolis, Maryland, is a principal in Booz Allen Hamilton in McLean, Va.

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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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# OPINION

## Fox News struggles with messaging after Trump attacks Transylvanian nomads

NEW YORK, NY — After President Donald Trump spent a large portion of a recent press conference railing against the Whummel, a small tribe of rural Transylvanian nomads, Fox News is reportedly scrambling to find a unifying message to broadcast to their base.

According to Wikipedia, the Whummel are a small population of nomadic Central European people who live in the shadows of Transylvania’s Apuseni Mountains. With a population of just 70 people, the Whummel are almost completely unknown outside of the small villages where they stop to trade their traditional mud dolls in exchange for food and dry goods.

It is currently unclear how Trump learned of their existence.

“The Whummels, folks,” Trump said at a Thursday evening press conference. “Can you believe these people? Totally ungrateful. They come to our country, they take our jobs, they flood our markets with their traditional mud dolls, which, by the way, are no match for the mud dolls our American workers are making. I can tell you that. We’re putting a stop to these vermin.”

“This is a tough one,” said one chain-smoking Fox News employee who spoke on condition of anonymity. “Getting Trump’s base to ignore decades of history and cozy up to Russia was a challenge. Getting the base to turn on Canada ... that one came out of left field, but we managed it. The Greenland thing was tough, but we got there. But we’re starting to worry that attacking the Whummel might be a bridge too far.”

“They don’t even have a presence in America,” he added. “They think airplanes are great birds that ferry the dead to a land made of marzipan and pipe tobacco. Convincing Americans that these folks are coming to take their jobs ... I just don’t know if we can do it.”

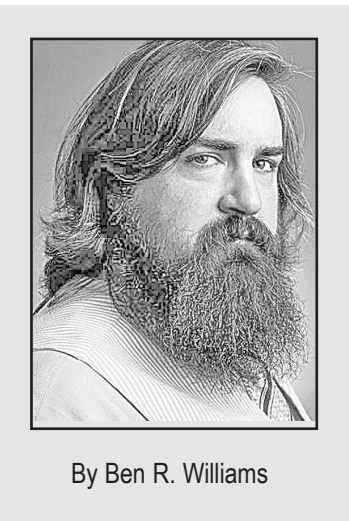
Trump directed particular attention to “Papa” Baraduke Solvalou, leader of the Whummel tribe.

“This Papa Solvalou, folks, what a piece of work,” Trump said at the press conference. “He has no respect for our nation, none. Can someone tell me why we’re sending \$80 billion a year to these people? The Second Amendment folks, maybe they can sort that one out, I don’t know.”

In an interview from his meadow hut, Papa Baraduke Solvalou said that his nomadic tribe receives no federal funding from any government, nor do they fully understand what money is.

“I have five goats,” Solvalou said. “They provide cheese which can be traded for fabric. Why trade pieces of paper? You cannot eat them.”

Solvalou said that he has not met



By Ben R. Williams

Trump nor did he know the man existed prior to last week.

“The Whummel, we keep to ourselves,” he said. “We do not understand why people are angry at us now. I asked our wise man Grobda the Unintelligible if he knew what force was behind this foul work, but his response was not easy to interpret. This is the worst thing to happen to the proud Whummel since the Hill People unleashed the Night of the Harriers.”

While finding the proper messaging to convince middle America that their grievances can be pinned upon a small faction of Central European nomads has been a challenge, early reports from the Southern Poverty Law Center indicate that both awareness of and hatred of the Whummel people is at an all-time high.

“They’re a bunch of socialists is what they are,” said Brad Hughes, slaughterhouse shift manager. “These Whummels think they’re so much better than us, with their mud dolls and their barter economy and their tall hats made from the soft winter grasses. I didn’t know they existed until last Thursday, but I’ve been hating them since long before that.”

“They want to take our jobs and our freedoms,” said Carol Allen, retired brake pad inspector. “I’ve been afraid and angry every moment of my life for the last 25 years, and I’m just glad to finally know who’s behind it.”

The Whummel could not be reached for further comment as they have taken to the Targ Plateau in anticipation of the Cloudy Season.

However, early reports indicate that the spotlight of outrage may soon drift to a new target.

“Trump just announced plans to impose tariffs against old-timey gold prospectors,” our anonymous Fox News source said as he poured Ancient Age bourbon into an Arby’s cup with a shaking hand.

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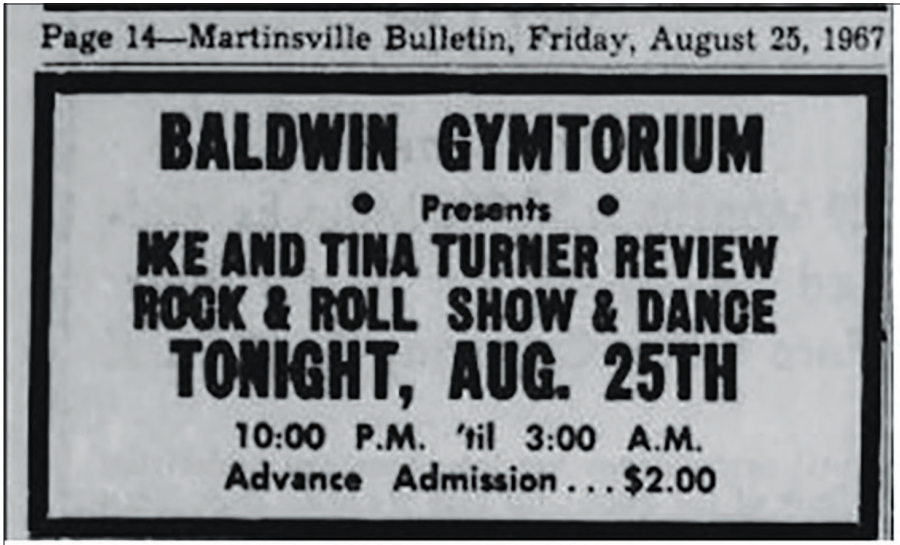
Henry County Sheriff’s Deputy Clayton Craig (center) is pictured with Capt. Tim Compton (left) and Michael Jarrett, of Jarrett Marketing LLC.

## Craig selected Deputy of the Month

Henry County Sheriff’s Deputy Clayton Craig was selected Deputy of the Month. The recognition is sponsored by Jarrett Marketing LLC, Papa’s Pizzeria Hollywood

Cinema, Livy’s ice cream shop, and McDonalds of Martinsville, which provide free meals, movie passes, and ice cream and the Certificate of Appreciation.

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An advertisement from the Martinsville Bulletin from August 25, 1967, promoting the Ike & Tina Turner Review coming to the Baldwin Gymtorium. (Photo courtesy of the Library of Virginia Newspaper Archives)

## Community Chronicles

**By Jarred Marlowe**

At 207 Fayette Street in Martinsville, Virginia, a vacant lot now occupies a space once teeming with life, music, and culture. This unassuming piece of land conceals a remarkable past—one deeply intertwined with the legacy of Baldwin’s Gymtorium. Once a shining beacon of Black culture and entertainment, this historic venue stood as a testament to the resilience, creativity, and unity of the community it served.

Baldwin’s Gymtorium was the brainchild of Dr. Dana Baldwin; a visionary physician, entrepreneur, and philanthropist. Situated just across from the renowned Baldwin Block, the Gymtorium was more than a building—it was a sanctuary for social and cultural expression. Constructed with meticulous attention to detail, the venue quickly became a hub for celebrations, performances, and gatherings that shaped the cultural landscape of Martinsville.

Within its walls, Baldwin’s Gymtorium hosted an array of events that enriched and uplifted the Black community. Church services filled the air with prayer and song, while local festivals and social events brought people together in joyous celebration. Among its most legendary occasions was the annual June German Ball—a dazzling affair that attracted people from far and wide, solidifying the Gymtorium’s reputation as a premier venue for elegance and festivity.

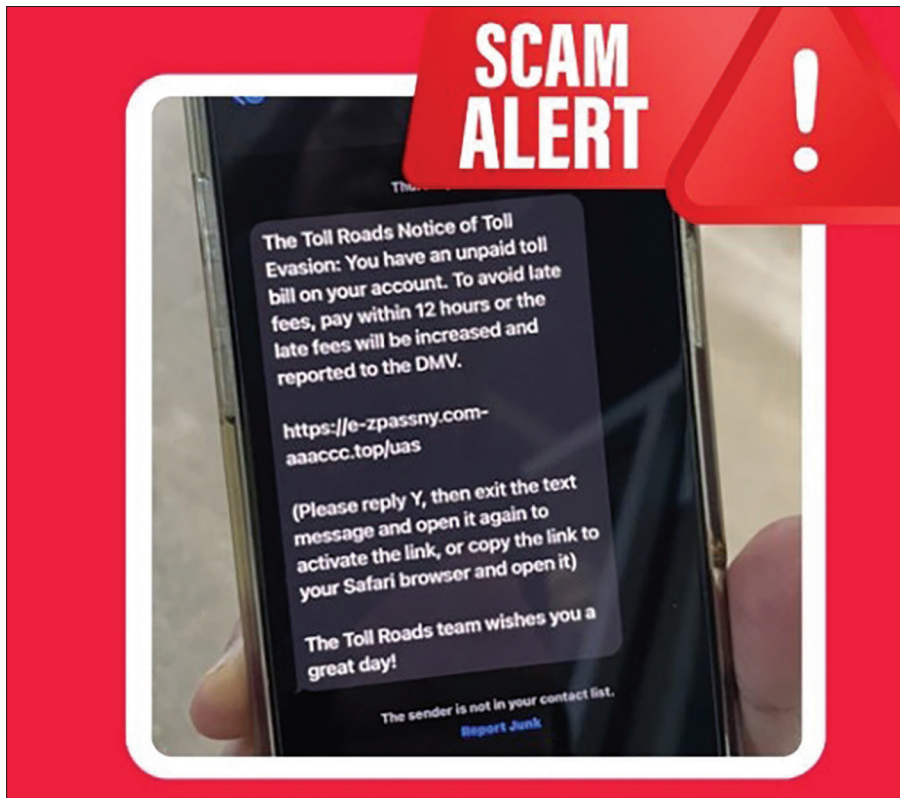
The Gymtorium’s stage welcomed some of the most influential musical artists of the 20th century. Legends such as Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Otis Redding, Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, Etta

James, James Brown, and Ike and Tina Turner were just a few names that graced its platform, captivating audiences with electrifying performances. These artists left an indelible mark on Martinsville, transforming the Gymtorium into a place where music history was made. The echoes of their melodies, though long faded from the physical structure, continue to resonate in the memories of those who experienced them firsthand.

Beyond music, Baldwin’s Gymtorium was a cornerstone of Black empowerment and progress. It provided a space where individuals could gather, exchange ideas, and celebrate their heritage in an era when segregation and racial inequality sought to diminish their voices. The Gymtorium was a place of resilience—a refuge where culture thrived against all odds.

Today, all that remains of this historic landmark is an empty lot. Yet, its legacy endures through the stories and memories of those who once walked through its doors. As we stand in the present, looking back on the past, I invite you to share your recollections of Baldwin’s Gymtorium, ensuring that its spirit lives on for generations to come. Please feel free to email me at the address below with any memories, stories, or recollections you may have of the Gymtorium.

*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.*



## DMV Warns Customers of Toll Charge Text Scam

Did you get a text about an overdue toll charge? It’s likely a scam. The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles is alerting customers about a new text scam where fraudsters pose as toll agencies and falsely claim you owe money for unpaid tolls.

In the text message, the scammers urgently tell you to pay a toll to avoid late fees and include a link in the message. Clicking that link could result in your personal information being stolen, making you a victim of this scam.

“The DMV will never send you text messages about toll bills,” said DMV Commissioner Gerald Lackey. “We urge our customers to be vigilant and avoid sending your personal information via text.”

Here are some tips from the Federal Trade Commission on how to

avoid falling for a text scam like this:

- Don’t click on any links in, or respond to, unexpected texts. Scammers want you to react quickly, but it’s best to stop and check it out.
- Check to see if the text is legit. Reach out to the state’s tolling agency using a phone number or website you know is real — not the info from the text.
- Report and delete unwanted text messages. Use your phone’s “report junk” option to report unwanted texts to your messaging app or forward them to 7726 (SPAM). Once you’ve checked it out and reported it, delete the text.

For more information about Virginia’s toll facilities, access to your E-ZPass account, or concerns regarding a text message about toll payment, visit <https://www.toll-roadsinvirginia.com/>.



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

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## LEGAL

### COUNTY OF HENRY REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, public hearings have been scheduled for **March 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia.

#### Case R-25-03 Brent D. Tucker

The property is located at 924 Trenthill Dr, in the Blackberry District. The property is shown on Tax Map 14.6/373,373A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 8.5-acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Agricultural District A-1. The applicant wishes to use the property for agricultural purposes.

#### Case R-25-04 Chris Lawless

The property is located at 1687 Stultz Rd, in the Collinsville District. The property is shown on Tax Map 41.2(2)/1A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 2.978-acres from Government and Special Use District G-S to Limited Industrial District I-2. The applicant wishes to use the property as a welding and fabrication business.

#### Case R-25-05 Kenneth T. Lewis

The property is located at 3975 Chatham Rd, in the Reed Creek District. The property is shown on Tax Map 32.4/17. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 0.19-acre from Agricultural District A-1 to Commercial District B-1. The applicant wishes to use the property for a commercial automobile repair garage.

The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Lee H. Clark, AICP

Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

## LEGAL

### PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE - COUNTY OF HENRY, VA PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PAYMENT AND DELINQUENT DATES FOR REAL PROPERTY AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES

Notice is hereby given pursuant to §15.2-1800, Code of Virginia, that the Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing during its regular meeting on Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of receiving comments on the proposed changes to the Personal Property and Real Estate Tax due dates and delinquent dates. The Board is considering moving the delinquent date for real property taxes from December 5 to November 1 of a tax year. The Board is considering moving the personal property tax due date from December 5 to December 1 of a tax year and moving the date on which personal property taxes would be delinquent from December 5 to December 15 of a tax year. A copy of the full text of the ordinance may be viewed in the County Administrator's Office in the Henry County Administration Building, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.



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## LEGAL

### HENRY COUNTY PUBLIC NOTICE INTENT TO REMOVE AN UNSAFE STRUCTURE

RECORD OWNER:  
Olivia Walker (Life Estate)

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

PROPERTY IDENTIFICATION - Unsafe structure  
OWNER - Landowner: Olivia Walker (Life Estate)  
PROPERTY LOCATION and TAX IDENTIFICATION NUMBER - 78 Summit Ridge Rd. - Ridgeway District  
Henry County, Virginia  
Tax Map: 72.2(016)000/005  
Account Number - 024020000

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

## LEGAL

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

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings have been scheduled for **March 26, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd., Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of a Special Use Permits for the following cases:

#### Case S-25-02 Sobrius at Bassett, LLC

A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a Substance Abuse Disorder Organization / halfway house. The facility intends to be licensed for up to 8 residents in each of the two dwellings. The property is located at 9940 and 9890 Virginia Ave in the Reed Creek District and is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 5.8/95A, 96,97,98 and 5.8/93. This request is adjacent to their existing facility licensed for 16 residents, at 9850 Virginia Ave.

#### Case S-25-03 Ameresco, Inc.

A request for a Special Use Permit has been received under Section 21-1801 through 21-1808; and 21-302 of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the construction of a Large Scale Solar Energy Facility. The property is located on the north side of Jones Ridge Rd, approximately 1.2-miles east of Stoney Mountain Rd, in the Iriswood District, and is zoned as Agricultural District A-1. The Tax Map is 45.5/65,66. The proposal is to develop a 4.98MW solar facility on 16.5 acres of a 154 acre tract. The project is intended to be developed as a "community solar" project under AEP's Sahred Solar Program.

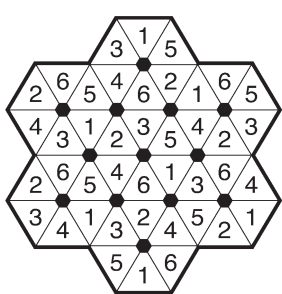
The applications for these requests may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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

# Puzzle Answers!

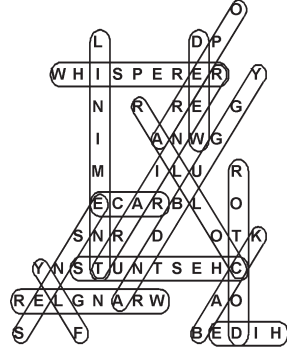
## SNOWFLAKES

solution



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

## HORSE



## SCRAMBLERS

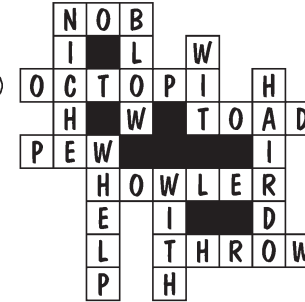
solution

1. Adapt 2. Attain;  
3. Scale; 4. Endure

Today's Word

**TARANTULA**

**FEAR A KNOT**  
answer



## Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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



Crossing the Lines

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

P&HCC opens Heavy Equipment Operator Lab in Patrick County



A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the opening of Patrick & Henry Community College's (P&HCC) Patrick County Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Lab. First row: Carlene Cassidy (Ratcliffe Foundation), Rebecca Corbin (NACCE), Quentyn Penn (P&HCC student), Dr. Greg Hodges (P&HCC president). Second row: P&HCC dual enrollment students and instructor Keith Newcomb.

The Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) Patrick County Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO) Lab officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Tuesday, March 4. Located at the Gerald L. Baliles and Richard S. Reynolds Sr. Learning Center, the lab features three CAT simulators equipped with the same controls as real excavators and bulldozers, allowing students to gain hands-on experience before operating actual machinery. P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges said the college is committed to investing in the community to ensure all residents have a pathway to economic mobility. “At Patrick & Henry, we have one goal, and that is the economic success of our students and the communities that we serve,” Hodges said. “Frankly, we have one way of moving that

needle of economic success, and that is by educating and training our students for good-paying jobs with family-sustaining wages.” While P&HCC offers various credentials, degrees, and certificates, Hodges emphasized that the most valuable credential is what he calls the “job degree.” “That ‘job degree’ is what we’re awarding today, and they’re the ones that indeed lead to critically important jobs in this community,” he said, citing the ongoing U.S. 58 construction project as an example of local opportunities for graduates. Hodges said the idea for the HEO Lab was first introduced during a regional superintendent meeting last year when Patrick County Schools Superintendent Jason Wood asked if P&HCC had considered expanding the HEO program to Patrick County.

Business Development Center Project nixed by EDA

The Patrick County Economic Development Authority (EDA) voted not to proceed with its Business Development Center project during its meeting on Wednesday, March 5. The site, formerly the Stuart True Value Hardware Store, is located at the intersection of Slusher Street and Rye Cove Road in Uptown Stuart. EDA Chairman Ron Haley said that while the center was

a viable and economically feasible project in 2021-2022, it is no longer practical in today’s financial environment. “We did not want to put the EDA or the county itself at financial risk by going forward with something that was projected to be a cost of \$1.5 million, and that’s north of \$2 million now. That’s a risk we didn’t want to put the county in,” he said.

Patrick Promise receives funding boost from EDA



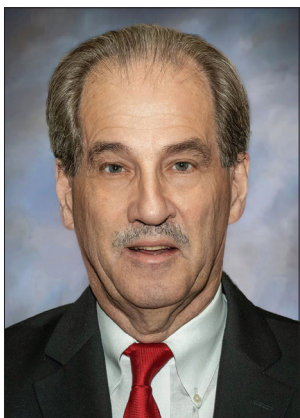
Dr. Greg Hodges, P&HCC President; James Houchins, Executive Director of Patrick County ED; Danny Foley, EDA Director; Tiffani Underwood, P&HCC Foundation Executive Director; Dr. Stewart Roberson, PCEF Chair; Noah Mabe, Small Business & Economic Development Coordinator.

In February, Patrick County Economic Development Authority responded to Patrick County Education Foundation’s (PCEF) challenge to support Patrick & Henry Community College’s (P&HCC) Patrick Promise with a donation of \$5,000 to future PCHS graduates. “We are so grateful to the EDA and members of the Patrick County community for supporting the future of Patrick County by providing this opportunity for graduating seniors,” said P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges, adding, “Donations like these are ensuring the financial stability and growth of these students and the commu-

nity as a whole.” Patrick Promise will extend support to provide free tuition to PCHS graduates attending Patrick & Henry Community College similar to The Harvest Foundation’s support for students in Martinsville and Henry County. To date, PCEF has raised the resources needed to fully fund the first two years of Patrick Promise. Once funds have been raised for year three, the board plans to launch the program. Donate to Patrick Promise at <https://bit.ly/phccgivenow> (designate Patrick Promise when donating).

A quorum of supervisors at EDA, WPPDC meetings raises transparency concerns

A quorum of Patrick County Board of Supervisors members attended the February Economic Development Authority (EDA) meeting on Feb. 26 and the West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) meeting on Feb. 27, raising concerns about potential Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) violations. Jonathan Wood, chairman and representative of the Peters Creek District, and Clayton Kendrick, of the Mayo River District, serve as Patrick County’s representatives on the WPPDC board. Steve Marshall, who represents the Blue Ridge District, is not a WPPDC board member and attended the public meeting on his own. Jim Adams, WPPDC chairman and Henry County Board of Supervisors chairman, said the meeting proceeded as usual. “No one at West Piedmont or no appointed member at West Piedmont did anything wrong. Our meetings



Jim Adams are open to the public, so absolutely anyone—public and press—can come to the meeting,” Adams said. Adams, who typically acknowledges attendees, introduced Wood as a new board member. “As part of our agenda, we have an open comment period. I had also met someone else attending the meeting that night, and that was Mr. Marshall, from the Patrick County Board of Supervisors, who is not a commissioner,” Adams said. Adams said no one knew or was told what Marshall’s purpose was in attending the meeting.

In the past, he noted that generally in those cases, people either state the reason or their interest in attending. “From my perspective, I didn’t know his purpose for being there,” Adams said. “That could be better answered by him than by me assuming. I’ve got more on my plate than to just take off and go to a meeting” that he has no reason to attend, he added. While he wasn’t privy to any potential conversations between Marshall and others before or after the meeting, Adams said there were no exchanges during the meeting involving Marshall. “Nothing was said to us about the reason for his presence. It seemed awkward, even to the appointed commissioners, that a third member from an elected body was there,” Adams said. “I think the Code of Virginia states that if (a quorum of) elected officials gather, the press needs to be notified that they’re going to gather.”

Building Trades class builds new gazebo for community



The Patrick County High School (PCHS) Building Trades II class, Patrick Building Supply employee Joe Aguilar, Building Trades II teacher Philip Steagall, and Parks & Recreation Director Luke Williams, attended Monday’s ribbon cutting on the new Hospice Memorial Garden Gazebo.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on Monday, March 10, to celebrate the completion of the new Hospice Memorial Garden gazebo at DeHart Park. The original gazebo was destroyed by fire in April 2024, part of an ongoing arson investigation. The new structure was built by students in the Patrick County High School (PCHS) Building Trades II course. Philip Steagall, teacher, said mem-

bers of the Stuart Park Board approached him about rebuilding the gazebo last year. “Actually, after it happened—because we built the other one that was here,” Steagall said. “It was a little late in the school year to start when they asked me, so I said, if you can wait until we start next year, we’d be glad to.” Work on the gazebo began in November and was completed by mid-January.

America’s 250th birthday celebration kicks off locally with Historian’s Roundtable



Local historians (left to right) John Reynolds, Beverly Woody and B.J. Nolan answered questions and discussed Patrick County’s long history.

Local celebrations for America’s upcoming 250th birthday in 2026 kicked off with a Historian’s Roundtable at the historic Star Theatre in Stuart on March 8. Attendees heard from Patrick County Historical Society President John Reynolds, historian and writer Beverly Woody, and Patrick County VA250 Chairman B.J. Nolan. The discussion was moderated by Patrick County Tourism and Economic Development Director James Houchins, who is also a local VA250 committee member.

The historians answered questions about Patrick County’s Revolutionary War-era history, covering topics such as the role of local militias and the county’s eventual split from Henry County. They also discussed the county’s divided loyalties during the war, noting that while some areas supported the British Crown (Tories), public sentiment gradually shifted in favor of the patriot cause. Visit the committee’s Facebook page at [facebook.com/PatrickCountyVA250](https://facebook.com/PatrickCountyVA250).

NOVOCALINE

1-3-5-7-9

PORKY PIG & DAFFY DUCK

1-3-5-7-9

THE MICKEY 17

1-4-7-9-15

LAST BREATH

1-3-5-7-9

MUFASA

1-3-5

HEART EYES

7-9PM

Hollywood Cinema  
beside Walmart  
Martinsville 276-656-3456





# Puzzle Time



## FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

TWILORLHEWHINEC♥LBWOHORDIAWEP♥TWHI♥HWRTO♥NBOPOCITOLWPHEADOT

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. Boy is moved. 2. Shirt is different. 3. Tail is moved. 4. Window is missing. 5. Bush is larger. 6. Dog's leg is moved.

## MAGIC MAZE • HORSE

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally. Unlisted clue hint: NAILED TO A HORSE'S HOOF

And buggy	Doctor	Opera	Weed
Back	Fly	Race	Whisperer
Chestnuts	Hide	Sense	Wrangler
Collar	Liniment	Trainer	

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## Super Crossword

INTELLECTUAL TREAT

**ACROSS**

1 Accord, Civic and Pilot

7 Blue toon

12 Hubbubs

16 Honorary deg. for a jurist

19 Unicellular organism

20 Subdued, with "down"

21 Receives a salary, say

23 Boston baseballers

24 Verb form in "I used to solve puzzles," e.g.

26 Position of advantage

28 Stuff in some viral genes

29 How- (manuals)

30 Detroit-to-Philly dir.

31 Job opening

33 Literary finale

36 War deity

40 Pre- (replace)

44 What's allotted in soccer when a player is hurt

46 Sell in stores

49 Thinned out

51 Bohemian lager

52 "Fathers and Sons" novelist

54 Notion, in Nice

55 Story

56 Lions' locale

57 L-Q linkup

58 "Little" co-star Rae

62 In the best-case scenario

65 Sibling who looks the same

68 Japanese menu item

69 Fall mo.

70 Suffix of superlatives

71 Korean, e.g.

72 Molar requiring extraction, maybe

76 Title for Gandhi

78 "Good Will Hunting" director Gus Van

79 Virtuosos

80 Screening airport org.

81 Oodles

82 Love deity

83 Dog with a reddish, wiry coat

88 Beirut's land

92 Barney Fife

93 Charred

94 Retreat in the clouds

96 Downs food

98 Good friends

99 River mouth features

100 From scratch

102 Horse's kin

105 San Francisco's Valley

106 Aged

107 Invention of Rorschach

115 Painful podiatric problem

119 Geronimo's people

120 2003-16 Cowboys quarterback

121 Large spoon

122 "Peanuts" girl

123 Former United rival

124 Has- —

125 Lectern, e.g.

126 Group of PC experts ... or what this puzzle's 10 theme answers are?

**DOWN**

1 Mata —

2 Boding sign

3 Signals "OK"

4 Lucy's Amaz House

5 Fuel efficiency stat

6 "Wailing" instruments

7 Rouse

8 NYC cultural center

9 Like many insensitive jokes

10 Smells awful

11 32nd prez

12 Will Smith's role in "Men in Black"

13 Ten: Prefix

14 Hitter Mel

15 Concorde, e.g., in brief

16 Ointment base

17 Thin, supple and graceful

18 34th prez

22 — fours (teacakes)

25 Fern leaf

27 Golf ball prop

32 "Salt" co-star

33 Part of Russia's parliament

34 TV's Gomer

35 Neighbor of Belg.

36 Grande of pop, to fans

37 Gun, as an engine

38 Greek vowel

39 Christmas party

41 Stein drinks

42 "Watermark" singer

43 Found on a radio dial

45 "What's —?" (Bugs Bunny's greeting)

47 Like tilted type

48 Break in the action

50 State bird of Hawaii

53 Marina del —

54 Beginning ltr.

57 Volcano in Calif.

58 "We're in danger here!"

59 Loretta of "M\*A\*S\*H"

60 Thailand, once

61 Noted visitor to 60-Down

62 Wife of Osiris

63 Part of

64 Fox Sports competitor

66 Webpage

67 Pakistani city

69 Lyric poems

73 Occult cards

74 Low-budget, in adspeak

75 Other, in Oviedo

76 Wrestling pad

82 "Apropos of

84 33rd prez

85 Radio host

86 Japanese menu item

87 Tpk., e.g.

88 Cornea cover

89 Still, at this late date

90 Salami alternative

91 Vein's cousin

92 Japanese fencing style

95 Sam of

97 Actor Mineo

101 Be

103 "Same goes for me"

104 Honoree on Mar. 17

106 "I'm buying"

108 Zilch

109 Potter's oven

110 Ran, as dye

111 Sharp-tasting

112 Brutus' "Behold!"

113 Actor

114 LaBeouf

115 Burst (with)

116 Hair sitcom

117 Celestial ball

118 Suffering

119 Golf's Ernie

## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• When Katherine Johnson was little, she loved to count things. By the age of 10, she was in high school. In 1961, she calculated the trajectory of NASA's first trip into space. She was so consistently accurate that when NASA began to use computers, they had her check the calculations to make sure they were correct.

• In Norse, the name Siri means "a beautiful woman that leads you to victory."

• And speaking of Siri ... she will flip a coin for you if you can't make a decision.

• Looney Tunes was created to promote the Warner Brothers music catalog in the 1930s, hence the name "Looney Tunes" instead of "Toons."

• James Vernor put the basic components of a new beverage into a barrel in 1861 before heading off to serve in the 4th Michigan Cavalry during the Civil War. When he returned four years later, he tasted the barrel's contents and, voila!, Vernor's Ginger Ale was born.

• Norway's Bouvet Island was discovered in 1739, then "lost" again for the next 69 years due to the original spotter's mislabeling its coordinates.

• Canada has a strategic maple syrup reserve to ensure global supply in case of emergency.

• When President Donald Trump asked the Guggenheim Museum to loan the White House an original Van Gogh painting, they responded with the counteroffer of a solid-gold toilet.

• Elvis Presley wore a cross, a Star of David and the Hebrew letter chai because he didn't want to "miss out on heaven due to a technicality."

• A single person's DNA contains as much information as 50 novels.

• Soccer player Mohammed Anas accidentally thanked both his wife and girlfriend in a post-match speech.

## Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

**T**AKE NOTHING FOR GRANTED ON WET GREENS. THE BALL WILL OFTEN ROLL DIFFERENTLY DEPENDING ON THE KIND OF MOISTURE, ESPECIALLY ON THE FINER-BLADED NORTHERN GRASSES.

WHEN MOISTURE HAS SOAKED DEEP INTO THE GREENS, PUTTS WILL USUALLY RUN SLOWER AND BREAK LESS. WHEN ONLY THE GRASS IS WET — AS AFTER BRIEF SHOWERS — THE BALL WILL GENERALLY ROLL ONLY SLIGHTLY SLOWER THAN NORMAL. CHECK THE SPEED ON THE PRACTICE PUTTING GREEN BEFORE YOU GO OUT ON THE COURSE.

## 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!

Comply

PATAD

Achieve

TATIAN

Climb

LACES

Brave

RUENED

**TODAY'S WORD**

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# Virginia War Memorial seeks applicants for 2025 Marocchi Scholarship

The Virginia War Memorial (VWM) in Richmond is seeking applicants for its RADM Marocchi Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded annually to Virginia high school seniors and college or university students who plan to enroll or are enrolled in ROTC at their prospective schools.

It provides two awards of \$2,500 each, one given to a graduating senior from a Virginia high school, and one given to a Virginia resident attending a college or university in Virginia. This scholarship is intended to reward Virginia students who plan to serve in the military and participate in ROTC at a Virginia college or university.

Each winner will receive a scholarship award and a certificate from the nonprofit Virginia War Memorial Foundation. They will also be invited to Richmond to be recognized for their work and commitment to serving the nation during the Commonwealth's Memorial Day Ceremony on Monday, May 26.

Application packages and all documents sent separately must be received by the VWM via email or USPS, on or before Monday, April 28, (11:59 pm E.T.) Applicants do not need to be JROTC participants in their high schools. All graduating seniors who meet the qualifications are welcome to apply. Detailed information regarding rules, guidelines and how to enter are available online at <https://vawarmemorial.org/learn/contests-scholarships/marocchi/>.

The scholarship is named for Rear Admiral John Marocchi, who served in the United States Navy for decades, with a career that spanned service in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Admiral Marocchi was one of very few Navy officers to complete Army Airborne training and was a recipient of the Purple Heart and Legion of Merit. He also served for over fifteen years as a member of the Board of Trustees



at the Virginia War Memorial. He was a person who used every opportunity to teach those around him, and all were able to benefit from his experience and perceptive view of the world. In his memory, a scholarship was created to encourage and enable motivated students who plan to enroll or who are already enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at a Virginia school of higher education.

For additional information or questions, please contact Elizabeth Oglesby, VWM's Education Outreach & Programs Manager, at [dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:dvs.virginia.gov) or by calling (804) 786-9700.

For more information about the Virginia War Memorial, the Commonwealth's tribute to Virginia's men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice from World War II to the present, visit [www.dvs.virginia.gov](http://www.dvs.virginia.gov).



# City receives CDBG grant for new YMCA feasibility study

The Martinsville-Henry County YMCA, located at 3 Starling Ave. in Martinsville, is slated to receive \$75,000 in CDBG funds for a planning grant to explore the feasibility of newly constructed YMCA in the Five Points community, located in the West End of the Martinsville.

The project was part of the 33 projects and more than \$23.6 million Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) across the Commonwealth announced in February by Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

This new facility in Martinsville has the potential to serve as a community revitalizer and the ability to fundamentally transform an underserved portion of the city that houses low- and moderate-income residents.

This proposed new facility is the culmination of community input and feedback on critical needs, such as child-care, expanded health and exercise options and other needed amenities, identified by local residents and community stakeholders, including the Harvest Foundation and Martinsville.

Similar to other projects announced by Youngkin, this local initiative will support projects that rehabilitate housing, revitalize downtown districts, and improve water and sewer infrastructure benefiting more than 10,000 low- and moderate-income Virginians.

"The foundation of every thriving community includes affordable homes, robust infrastructure, and an economy that works for everyone," said Youngkin. "CDBG continues to be an invaluable re-

source for addressing community-identified needs by filling in crucial funding gaps to build stronger communities across the Commonwealth."

The federally funded CDBG program has been administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development since 1982 and annually receives approximately \$19 million to distribute to small cities, counties and towns. With these funds, localities can provide new or improved water and sewer systems in rural areas, rehabilitate housing in declining neighborhoods, revitalize commercial districts and provide facilities for a variety of needed services, such as health care clinics in underserved areas.

"This planning grant will afford the City of Martinsville and our beloved YMCA with the capacity to determine the feasibility of a new community YMCA and ensure that community needs are met, particularly in Five Points," said Brad Kinkema, CEO of the Martinsville-Henry County YMCA.

"Five Points is an underserved community that so richly deserves our investments of funds, time and attention. When we contemplated where to build a new YMCA and how to maximize and leverage the construction to have the greatest impact on Martinsville, the West End and Five Points community was the clear choice for this multi-million dollar investment," he added.

The feasibility study will be completed this fall. Once finalized, the new YMCA is expected to be constructed and open in the fall 2028.

# Highly pathogenic avian influenza driving egg prices higher

To state the obvious: Eggs are expensive.

Consumers are feeling the pinch from the increasing cost of everyday expenses. But while inflation is causing goods and services to rise in general, the spike in egg prices has another culprit—highly pathogenic avian influenza.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, HPAI has affected more than 166 million birds across the U.S. since 2022. In January and February alone, the U.S. lost about 43 million birds to the disease.

These numbers include turkeys and poultry raised for meat, but egg layers have been the most impacted. Infected birds are depopulated to contain the virus, and the resulting production declines have tightened supply and sharply pushed up egg prices.

The USDA reports that prices in January were 53% higher compared to the same time last year.

"Egg supplies are tight right now due to avian influenza, but the U.S. is still producing enough total eggs to meet normal demand," said Tony Banks senior assistant director of agriculture, development and innovation for Virginia Farm Bureau Federation. "The market also experiences distribution challenges during the disease outbreak. Challenges like hauling eggs longer distances and other logistical issues, replacement hen availability, state mandates for cage-free egg production and panic buying all help drive higher egg prices."

The USDA recently announced a \$1 billion dollar comprehensive strategy to curb avian influenza, protect the U.S. poultry sector and lower egg prices.

Poultry and egg producers also are receiving assistance for flock losses.

In Virginia, there have been three cases of HPAI in commercial flocks since the recent outbreak began in 2022, out of more than 767 cases in commercial farms across the U.S. Two involved turkey farms in January 2023 and one in January this year at an Accomack County broiler chicken operation.

Hobey Bauhan, president of the Virginia Poultry Federation, said that although the broiler operation was a large farm with 441,000 infected birds, "that single case has not spread to other surrounding farms."

Additionally, while Virginia isn't a major table egg producing state—ranking 26th in the nation—so far the commonwealth "has had no HPAI cases in commercial table egg layer flocks," Bauhan said.

Like all poultry and egg producers, Bauhan said Virginia officials and farmers are taking proactive biosecurity measures to mitigate avian influenza. Initiatives like the Virginia Poultry Disease Task Force developed stringent prevention and rapid response plans including strict biosecurity to prevent transmission, surveillance protocols and resources for responding to outbreaks.

"We have worked hard to prevent exposure of commercial flocks to avian influenza and be ready for effective response should cases occur," he said.

While avian influenza's risk to people remains low, farmers, backyard chicken hobbyists and wildfowl hunters are urged to help limit its spread. To learn more about poultry biosecurity, visit USDA's Defend the Flock website at [bit.ly/4hbVaKy](http://bit.ly/4hbVaKy).

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

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[mountainmedianews.com/best-of/](http://mountainmedianews.com/best-of/)

Our ballot is super simple! Don't know much about the accounting firm in your region? Feel free to skip it and move on. Fill out the entire ballot if you're feeling ambitious, or pick and choose among our categories. Select from our drop down list, or if your favorite coffee shop or spa isn't listed, write in your own winner. And, take your time. Our voting platform saves your votes, so you don't have to feel rushed. That means you can return to the ballot to continue choosing your favorites without worrying about any of your votes being lost.

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



# Fuller Center opens preliminary application period for next home build

The Fuller Center for Housing of Martinsville-Henry County has officially opened applications for its homeownership program and next home build. The Fuller Center, which began in 1988 as the local Habitat for Humanity chapter, has built 40 homes through the years and currently services the mortgages for 11 families.

The Fuller Center for Housing’s program offers low-income families the opportunity of homeownership with no interest, no-profit-made mortgage on an affordable home. To qualify for the program there are three basic criteria the applicant must meet: the need for affordable housing, the willingness to partner with staff, board members, and volunteers on working on the house, and the ability to repay the mortgage.

The Fuller Center owns several lots in Henry County and the City Martinsville, and will work with the selected family to choose one of the available lots to build their new home in the coming months.

“I consider it a blessing to be a part of this organization and to be able to help a family in our community begin to reach their dreams,” said Beth

Stinnett, executive director of local center.

Preliminary applications are available for pick up at the Fuller Center for Housing’s office located at 932 Starling Avenue, Martinsville, can be downloaded on the Fuller Center’s Facebook page, or can be emailed by request.

The center relies on the financial support of private donors, businesses, civic groups, and churches to make homeownership a reality for deserving families in our community. If you are interested in making a monetary donation, checks made out to the Fuller Center for Housing may be mailed to 932 Starling Avenue, Martinsville, VA 24112. Any donation, large or small, will help with the next Fuller home.

For more information on the Fuller Center for Housing, contact Beth Stinnett at (276) 638-6484 or visit [www.facebook.com/FullerHousing-MartinsvilleHenryCounty](http://www.facebook.com/FullerHousing-MartinsvilleHenryCounty).

The center is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that seeks to eradicate poverty housing by promoting partnerships with individuals and community groups to build and rehabilitate homes for people in need.



## Historical Society’s Spring Tea fundraiser set for April 6

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society will host the “Spring Tea at the Old Courthouse” on Sunday, April 6, from 2-4:30 p.m., at the Historic Henry County Courthouse, 1 East Main Street, Uptown Martinsville.

Attendees will enjoy tea, music, and refreshments. Tickets are \$25 per person and must be purchased in advance by calling Ann Martin, chairman, at (276) 340-9638, or visiting the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Museum. Attendance is limited. All proceeds will benefit the Martinsville-

Henry County Historical Society. Spring tea harvests are celebrated worldwide symbolizing rebirth and rejuvenation. This season brings fresh tea buds and a sense of hope, making the delicate flavors and aromas of these teas even more cherished. The rituals surrounding this harvest enhance its significance, infusing the teas with rich cultural history and lore. According to Sitting Bull, “Behold, my friends, the spring is come; the earth has gladly received the embraces of the sun, and we shall soon see the results of their love.”

**PASTA NIGHT FOR THE FIGHT**

EASING THE FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR A LOVING FATHER

**Martinsville-Henry County Family YMCA**

**DOUGIE WESTMORELAND**

**REASON FOR THIS EVENT**

Dougie is just 13 years old, and he’s battling Burkitt Lymphoma. His father has been by his side since the devastating diagnosis, unable to work, while his younger son remains in our YMCA Early Learning Center. This family needs our help.

Join us March 22, 5:00 – 7:30 PM at the YMCA 5 Pts Program Center (710 N Memorial Blvd) to support this father during his son’s battle. Dinner includes homemade spaghetti, salad, bread, dessert, and a drink, plus a raffle to raise additional funds. Limited to go orders available.

If you can’t attend, monetary donations or gift cards (gas, grocery, restaurants) are greatly appreciated. Checks should be made payable to the YMCA, as all proceeds will go directly to the father.

Let’s come together to lift this family up. No parent should have to fight alone.

**WAYS TO REGISTER**

1. Scan the QR Code

2. In person (if you have cash or check)

3. By phone

4. Online at [www.martinsvilleymca.com](http://www.martinsvilleymca.com) My Account (top right of the home page) Programs Westmoreland Benefit Dinner

276-632-6427

[WWW.MARTINSVILLEYMCA.COM](http://WWW.MARTINSVILLEYMCA.COM)

**MARCH 22**

**5:00pm-7:30pm**

**YMCA 5 Points Program Center  
710 N Memorial Blvd  
Martinsville, VA 24112**

**\$15-Adults \$10-Kids 10+  
\$5 -Kids under 10**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Lisa Maxie**

[lisa@martinsvilleymca.com](mailto:lisa@martinsvilleymca.com)

**276-632-6427**

## Two found dead in Martinsville home after social media post

Martinsville Police officers conducted a well-being check at a residence located at 120 Park Street on Tuesday, March 11, around 7 p.m.

Officers responded based on a scheduled social media post from the resident indicating that he and his wife would be found deceased inside.

Upon entering the home, officers discovered the bodies of James Michael Tucker, 53, and Lisa Dawn Allred-Tucker, 52, lying in bed. Handwritten notes from both individuals were found, detailing their intentions and instructions regarding their possessions.

There were no signs of forced entry, no indications of a struggle, and no apparent in-

juries to the couple. Several medications were collected as part of the investigation. The state Medical Examiner will determine the exact cause of death.

While all indications suggest suicide, Martinsville detectives are conducting a thorough documentation and processing of the scene as a precaution.

Additional updates will not be provided unless evidence contradicting the preliminary findings is discovered. The case will remain under investigation until a final determination is made by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner.

“This is truly a sad situation, and our hearts go out to the families of those involved,” Police Chief Rob Fincher said.

## Arrest made in 2024 sports bar shooting

The U.S. Marshals Fugitive Task Force arrested Jalen Davon Pritchett, 24, on March 6 in Greensboro, North Carolina. Pritchett had been wanted by the Martinsville Police Department since May 17 in connection with a shooting at Tequila’s Sports Bar and Grill.

Pritchett is charged with three counts of destruction of property and one count each malicious wounding, use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, willfully discharging a firearm in a public place, possession of a firearm after an assault and battery of a family member, carrying a concealed weapon – second offense, possession of a firearm under a protective order.



Jalen Davon Pritchett

He is being held in North Carolina without bond, pending extradition to Martinsville. The incident remains under investigation.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Lt. Richard Barrow at (276) 403-5458 or Crime Stoppers at 276-63CRIME (276-632-7463). Crime Stoppers is an anonymous tip line, and callers may be eligible for a reward of up to \$2,500.

## Pasta Night For The Fight

Early Learning Center to host benefit dinner on March 22

YMCA Early Learning Center invites the community to a special Benefit Dinner on Friday, March 22, at 5 p.m. This event will be held at The YMCA 5 Points Program Center and aims to raise funds for Dougie Westmoreland, a 13 year old who is battling Burkitt Lymphoma. His father has been by his side since the devastating diagnosis, unable to work, while

his younger son remains in our YMCA Early Learning Center. This family needs our help.

Dinner guests will enjoy a delicious spaghetti dinner, salad, bread, dessert and drink to support a meaningful cause. The play area will also be available for children to experience during the dinner. If you cannot attend, monetary donations or gift cards (gas, groceries, restaurants) are greatly appreciated. Checks should be made payable to the YMCA, as all

proceeds will go directly to the father.

“This event is not just about raising funds—it’s about coming together to make a difference,” said Lisa Maxie.

Cost for the Benefit Dinner: \$15 for adults. \$10 for kids 10+ \$5 for kids 10 and under

For more information or to reserve your seat, please contact Lisa Maxie or Kelly Brown, (276) 632-6427.

## Initial unemployment filings increase

The 2,881 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims filed during the week ending March 01, 2025, were 16.5 percent higher than last week’s 2,473 claims and 32.5 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (2,174), according to Virginia Works.

Nearly 72 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (60 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (390); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (218); Retail Trade (217); Health Care and Social As-

sistance (176); and Manufacturing (162).

Continued weeks claims (17,671) were 2.8 percent lower than last week (18,179) and were 11.7 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (15,827). Nearly 92 percent of claimants self-reported an associated industry; of those reported, the top five industries (58 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (2,822); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,138); Construction (1,576); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,523); and

Manufacturing (1,354).

A person who has already filed an initial claim and who has experienced a week of unemployment files a continued claim to claim benefits for that week of unemployment. On a weekly basis, continued claims reflect a good approximation of the current number of insured unemployed workers filing for UI benefits, and are a good indicator of labor market conditions.

While continued claims are not a leading indicator, they provide confirming evidence of the direction of the economy.

Submit your community news and photos to [dhall@theenterprise.net](mailto:dhall@theenterprise.net)



# Fast Track 2025 booth winners announced



Martinsville City Public Schools won third place in the nonprofit category.



West Piedmont Planning District Commission placed second in the nonprofit category.



Henry County Public Schools took first place in the nonprofit category.



Lawless Welding placed third in the for-profit category.



Greg James Insurance took first place in the for-profit category.



Meeks Recycling and Pick & Pull won the Exhibitor's Choice Award.



The Lester Group won second place in the for-profit category.

**By Jessica Dillon**  
Fast Track 2025 wrapped up on March 5, with eight winners receiving awards from the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce for their booth designs. Brenell Thomas, president of the chamber, said selecting the winners was a “tough choice.” All booths followed the event’s



SOVAH Health received Best in Show for their Wizard of Oz-themed booth.

theme: “Cultivating Growth, Inspiring Success,” and were judged by an anonymous panel, she added. Awards were divided into two categories: nonprofit and for-profit, with the two biggest honors being Best in Show and Exhibitor’s Choice.

**Top Awards**  
Best in Show went to SOVAH Health, which embraced a Wizard of Oz theme. Employees dressed as Dorothy and the Tin Man, with their booth placed at the entrance of Fast Track to represent the theme “healthcare close to home.” The team took inspiration from the upcoming “Wicked” movie for their design.

“We want to see what’s happening, and ‘Wicked’ was the theme, so we went with ‘The Wizard of Oz’ and we are going to carry it throughout the year,” said Carole McGovern, director of physician recruitment. “We got more characters coming, we got more events coming—this is going to be our year of ‘there’s no place like home.’”

The Exhibitor’s Choice Award went to Meeks Recycling and Pick & Pull, which featured a can-crushing crane machine and a scrap metal throne with a wearable crown.

“It feels really good. We really appreciated the opportunity to come,” said Chris Meeks, who credited Josh Meek with assembling the throne.

**Nonprofit Category Winners**  
\*Third Place: Martinsville City Public Schools – Their booth featured a floral theme with a central tub. Visitors wrote messages on seed-infused paper hearts, which will be planted at the school to symbolize growth and success.

“The seeds in the paper will grow along with that good positive energy to really inspire growth and success in our students,” said Communications and Outreach Coordinator Callie Hietala.

\*Second Place: West Piedmont Planning District Commission – Their booth featured a plant ball game.

\*First Place: Henry County Public Schools – Their booth showcased a nature theme, including student-made floral arrangements raffled off to visitors.

“We want to really highlight our students with this booth. The artwork was from our students—the birds, the leaves, the 3D printing,” said Superintendent Amy Blake-Lewis.

**For-Profit Category Winners**  
\*Third Place: Lawless Welding – Their booth featured a Collinsville-themed sign with a moving windmill representing the Dutch Inn.

“I would like to do these as life-size letters one day—it’s really our sample,” said owner Chris Lawless.

\*Second Place: The Lester Group – Their booth displayed various tools, chairs, and windows.

\* First Place: Greg James Insurance – Their booth emphasized community growth.

“Our theme was that we are growing with the community, and that we can be successful and help our community succeed as well,” said Marketing and Office Manager Melanie Hampton.

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Eugene "Gene" F. Jackson, MPAS, PA-C has been NCCPA Board Certified Physician Assistant since 1979 after having graduated from Alderson Broaddus University with a Bachelor's Degree in Physician Assistant Studies. Prior to his degree, Gene was a Sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, completing his service in 1975. Gene then entered the U.S. Army National Guard from 1980 to 2005 as the Chief Physician Assistant and honorably discharged as a Colonel in 2005. During his service, Gene also completed his Masters of Physician Assisted Studies with a specialty in orthopedic surgery from the University of Nebraska in 2001. Recently, Gene re-joined our practice as a seasoned provider maintaining his passion of orthopedics and assisting our orthopedic doctors primarily in the clinic. Gene has lived locally in the Danville area for over 25 years and enjoys time outside the office with his wife and two children.

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