

# City Manager disputes key claims in Rawls lawsuit, cites immunity

**By Staff Reports**  
Martinsville City Manager Areatha Ferrell-Benavides agrees with some claims and disputes others incorporated in a lawsuit filed by City Council member Aaron Rawls. In a five-page response filed late last month and prepared by her attorney, Jim H. Guynn Jr. of Guynn Waddell, P.C., Ferrell-Benavides argued that Rawls failed to state a claim “upon which relief can be granted,” and that she cannot be held liable “by virtue of the doctrines of sovereign, qualified, and/or governmental immunity.”

In his June 2 filing, Rawls alleged violations of his First, Fourth and 14th Amendment rights. He requested judgment against Ferrell-Benavides and Martinsville Sheriff’s Deputy Reva Keen, seeking compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial and/or alternative damages. The filing

also requests attorney fees and costs incurred by Rawls and demands a jury trial. Rawls alleged in the suit that Ferrell-Benavides used nonverbal signals to instruct Keen to “seize and remove” him from his seat on the dais during the March 25 City Council meeting in the suit filed in U.S. District Court in Danville by Rawls’ attorney, William H. Hurd of the firm Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott. “On information and belief, Keen and Ferrell-Benavides acted in concert as part of a pre-conceived plan for Keen to seize and remove Rawls if Ferrell-Benavides signaled for her to do so,” the suit alleges in paragraph 43. Ferrell-Benavides denied that allegation, along with many others in the complaint. However, she did agree with certain statements, including paragraph 23, which states: “Consistent with custom and prac-



Aretha Ferrell-Benavides

tice, during the March 25 Meeting, the Mayor granted Rawls the floor for comments of his choosing during the segment listed on the agenda as ‘Comments by City Council Members.’” In her response, Ferrell-Benavides alleged that Rawls “went beyond the reasonable stance of courtesy in

his remarks,” and that Mayor LC Jones took the floor from Rawls after directing him to “fall in order.” Rawls’ attorney later requested an entry of default judgment against Keen, who did not respond to the lawsuit by the June 27 deadline. The court granted the default judgment on July 1.



Henry County Public Safety Director Matt Tatum is set to retire on Aug. 1.

## Tatum reflects on career, accomplishments ahead of retirement

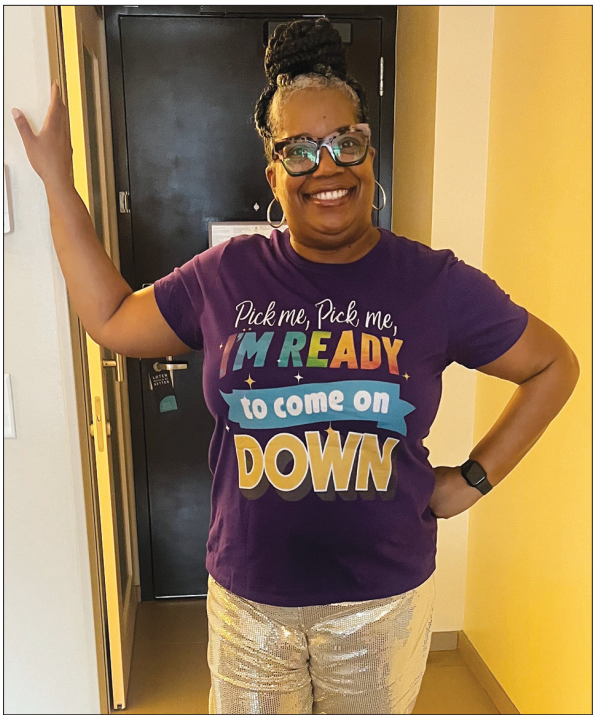
**By Taylor Boyd**  
After 33 years serving Henry County, including nearly 10 as its public safety director, Matt Tatum is set to retire Friday, Aug. 1. Tatum joined the Department of Public Safety in 2002. Thirteen years later, in June 2015, he was named its director. Before joining the department, Tatum began volunteering with the Bassett Volunteer Rescue Squad in 1992. He also volunteered with the Horsepasture Volunteer Rescue Squad and (See Tatum p. 9)

## ‘Christmas in July’ Blood Drive Returns to Stanleytown

**By Jessica Dillon**  
The 11th Annual Brenda Riggins Christmas in July Memorial Blood Drop will be held Saturday, July 12, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Stanleytown Elementary School. The event honors Brenda Riggins, a local woman who donated an extraordinary 16 gallons of blood during her lifetime. It is organized by local school board member Teddy Martin, who represents the Reed Creek District. Riggins was an adoptive grandmother to Martin and a passionate advocate for blood donation in the region. “One fact—when she was first told that she had cancer, the first thing she said was, ‘I’m not able to give blood anymore now,’” Martin said. Riggins had a deep bond with Martin and his siblings, and one of her last wishes was to encourage him to become a blood donor. “I’d always called her Granny Brenda. In fact, she went by that title even though she was not my grandmother. She listed me as her grandson, as well as my brothers and sisters, in her obituary,” he said. “She loved Christmas. She knew she wasn’t gonna make it to Christmas. She wanted to celebrate Christmas one more time,” Martin said. “So, Christmas in July—and then we do one in December, and it’s also a Christmas theme.” The donation site is decorated with Christmas (See Christmas p. 10)

# Local worship leader wins big on The Price Is Right

**By Jessica Dillon**  
Julia Campbell, the wife of a local pastor, saw her life take a surprising turn when a spontaneous decision to attend The Price Is Right led to a once-in-a-lifetime game show win—and a prize package worth more than \$41,000. What started as a fun vacation quickly escalated when Campbell was selected as a contestant, played her way into the Showcase Showdown, and walked away with a six-figure smile and a suite of prizes. “I was just sitting in the basement, watching the buses go by,”



Julia Campbell in her hotel room before winning the showcase on The Price Is Right. (Courtesy photo)

Campbell recalled of the moment her journey began on Jan. 22. “And I said out loud, ‘I should go to The Price Is Right.’” She ended up with free tickets to the show and called her friend Cheryl Williams to join her before heading to Miami. “Everything just fell into place,” she said of the trip, which took place on Feb. 12. “It felt like the Lord was making a way.” Once inside the studio, Campbell didn’t have to wait long for her chance. “I was the first person picked!” she said. (See Price Is Right p. 3)

# Fieldale Parade blends patriotism and community pride



Parade entries make their way through the heart of Fieldale, bringing music, flags, and festive flair to the July 4 celebration. Photos courtesy Skill Wave Media.

**By Jessica Dillon**  
Red, white, and blue lined the streets of Fieldale on July 4 as the community turned out for a lively Independence Day parade

celebrating the summer’s biggest local project: the renovation of the historic Fieldale Pools. With flags waving, horns honking, and the theme “Splash

Out” inspiring waterskiing, whimsical floats, the parade brought out civic pride and a healthy dose of holiday spirit. The event was spon-

sored by Star News and the Martinsville-Henry County Historic Collective, with organizational support from Autos By Nelson. It was co-hosted by

Luis Romero of RBS News and Charles Roark of Star News. The parade route wound through the heart of Fieldale and concluded near the recreation building, which is undergoing its own transformation as part of the broader pool renovations. Former Congressman Virgil H. Goode, Jr., served as parade marshal. He was introduced by former Martinsville Mayor Danny Turner. The opening included a bell-ringing ceremony steeped in patriotic symbolism. Adams rang the bell after each of the 13 original colonies was read by W.C. Fowlkes. If you don’t remember much of anything else from today, remember the name I called off first. Virginia. And we need to be proud of our historic background,” Fowlkes said. “This is the 249th

anniversary of America’s Declaration of Independence,” Goode said. “This is a great event. I commend you and everyone affiliated with this.” The holiday spirit was echoed by Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis, who led the parade. “This is the freest country on Earth,” (See Fieldale p. 2)

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UPDATES





# Colonel George Waller Chapter participates in “Patriots on the Square” celebration



Andy Doss, Mark Leviner, Mike Bass, Gene Reamey, and Gary Hollandsworth attended the Patriots on the Square event Friday. Photo courtesy of Daydream Photography.

The Colonel George Waller Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) proudly participated in “Patriots on the Square,” an Independence Day celebration hosted by the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society on Friday, July 4, at the Heritage Museum in Uptown Martinsville.

The evening event, held from 6 to 9 p.m., featured historical reenactments, live music, food and drink, and was well attended by the local community. Chapter members in attendance included Chapter President Andy Doss, Chaplain and Treasurer Gary Hollandsworth, and living history compatriots Mike Bass, Gene Reamey, and Mark Leviner.

President Doss opened part of

the ceremony with a musket firing demonstration, and later read powerful excerpts from the Declaration of Independence. Gary Hollandsworth participated with a stirring reading from George Mason’s 1776 Virginia Declaration of Rights, an essential influence on the U.S. Bill of Rights and a cornerstone of American liberty.

Throughout the evening, the chapter’s living history team showcased their 18th-century tent setup, complete with an authentic display of Revolutionary-era gear and accoutrements. Guests were encouraged to take photos and engage with the reenactors, who answered questions and shared insights into the lives of American patriots.

the

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- Tug of War
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- Smash and Paint Splatter
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Friday, 6 PM – Till 9 PM

July 18th

Food Trucks On-Site – Enjoy local vendors!

Free Entry

1000 Irisburg Rd, Axton VA 24054

## YMCA to host free Summer Bash for families

The YMCA will host Summer Bash 2025 on Friday, July 18, from 6 to 9 p.m. at 1000 Irisburg Road in Axton.

The event is free and open to all ages.

Activities will include family field day games, bicycle races, tug of war, Gaga ball, smash and paint splatter, and more. Local food trucks and vendors will also be on site.

Organizers say the event is designed to bring the community together for an evening of fun, sunshine and connection.

For more information, see the event flyer or contact the YMCA.

Email submissions@theenterprise.net

## Fieldale

(cont. from page 1)



Local beauty queens and their entourages wave to the crowd as part of the Fieldale Fourth of July tradition.



Bassett Furniture’s 1942 GMC CCKW military truck—nicknamed “the Deuce and a Half”—was a nostalgic favorite among paradegoers.

Davis said. “Regardless of what side of the political aisle you fall on, we are the greatest country on Earth.”

A variety of community leaders joined the procession, including Henry County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jim Adams and Vice-chairman Joe Bryant as well as Martinsville Mayor L.C. Jones and Vice Mayor Kathy Lawson.

Jones and Lawson shared a ride and a message of regional unity.

Jones said it was an honor to help celebrate “the day that freedom actually started. It is an honor and a privilege to celebrate with everybody today.”

“It’s a wonderful day to be in Fieldale,” Lawson said. “As Charles (Roark) has reiterated many times, what’s good for the county is good for the city. ... It’s great to be here this morning.”

Bryant added his own signature flair, cruising the route in a go-kart and offering a cheerful plug for his campaign: “Vote for me. Why not? I’m the guy. I’m the man with the plan.”

Chris Lawless—Bryant’s political opponent—took a different approach. Wearing a Trash Panda shirt in honor of a local volunteer clean-up group, he used his float to collect litter along



Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis leads the Fieldale Independence Day Parade on July 4. He is interviewed along the route by Charles Roark of Star News. (Photos courtesy of Skill Wave Media.)



The Warming Center drew strong support during the parade, with volunteers and advocates riding together on a community float. (Photos courtesy of Skill Wave Media.)

the parade route while showcasing a homemade water wheel. “We wanted to show our appreciation,” he said. “The theme is ‘Make A Splash,’ so we made it splash.”

Among the standout entries was Bassett Furniture’s 1942 GMC CCKW military truck, known as the “Deuce and a Half,” as well as a float from the MHC Warming Center, Laurel Park Tires, and a debut appearance by the Mustang Charity League, a new car club that added horsepower and shine to the celebration.

Lawless brought engineering flair with his functional water wheel, while the S.T.A.G.S. robotics competition team marched to encourage local youth to get involved in STEM. “It’s free to join,” said instructor Trevor Martin, inviting students ages 14 to 18 to sign up.

Ariel Johnson represented both the Warming Center and the Trash Pandas, highlighting the efforts of Nancy McMillian, crowned queen of the Warming Center float. “Ms. Nancy took it



Charles Roark of Star News and Luis Romero of Star News and RBS News Now emceed the festivities from an area used as a main stage.



Chris Lawless makes a splash with a working water wheel on his float, echoing the parade’s splash theme.

upon herself to go out into the community and feed all of our unhoused neighbors,” Johnson said.

The celebration lasted just under an hour but left a strong impression of community, collaboration and patriotism in the heart of the county. Organizers plan to bring the parade back next year.

In the meantime, residents can mark their calendars for the next big event — the Martinsville Christmas Parade, scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 22.



# 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

### Wednesday, July 16

Library Board Meeting, 12 p.m., Martinsville Library, 310 Church St E., Martinsville.

### Tuesday, July 22

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

## Events

### Friday, July 11

Music Night, Ben & Eric Marshall will play in the Alumni Hall. Gate opens at 5 p.m., music begins at 6:30 p.m. Admission is a \$5 cash donation. Concessions will be sold. Spencer-Penn Center, 475 Spencer Penn Road, Spencer.

### Saturday, July 12

The 11th Annual Brenda Riggins Memorial Christmas in July Blood Drive with the American Red Cross, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Stanleytown Elementary School Gymnasium, 74 Edgewood Drive, Stanleytown. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments have priority. Schedule an appointment by contacting the American Red Cross at 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or online at [www.red-crossblood.org](http://www.red-crossblood.org), Sponsor Code: Brenda, or in the Red Cross Blood Donor App.

Registration for the 2025 Back2School program, 9 a.m. to noon at several locations in Henry County, including The Community Fellowship in Collinsville, Fairway Baptist Church in Bassett, First Baptist Church Ridgeway, Hillcrest Baptist Church in Ridgeway, and Stanleytown Amazing Grace Baptist Church. In Martinsville, registration will be held at the Uptown Ministry Center from noon to 3 p.m. Those who sign up will receive a free new pair of shoes, socks, a backpack, and school supplies on August 2. For more information, contact 276-565-8234, visit [www.gob2s.com](http://www.gob2s.com), or email [back2school@gmail.com](mailto:back2school@gmail.com).

### Friday, July 18

TGIF Concert Series, sponsored by Rotary Club of Martinsville and Henry County. Doors open at 6 p.m., music begins at 7 with Turn It Up Band, Bridge Street parking lot, uptown Martinsville. Concessions available. Free event.

Franks + Dranks, 6-9 p.m., Gravely-Lester Art Garden, annual summer cookout. Jake Earles will bring a mix of country, Americana, folk and soul to the stage. Enjoy a meal of hot dogs and fixings whipped up by local all-star chefs Shane Pinkston and Will Gravely, as well as chips, cookies, soft drinks and water. Beer and wine will be available for purchase at the cash bar. Guests should bring a lawn chair or blanket for seating. In the event of inclement weather, Franks + Dranks will be held at Piedmont Arts. Admission is \$20 per person and includes food. Tickets available at [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org). Sponsored by Burton & Company. Support provided by Food Lion on Greensboro Road.

YMCA Summer Bash, 6 - 9 p.m., 1000 Irisburg Road, Axton. Free entry. All ages welcome.

### Saturday, July 19

Country breakfast, Rangeley Ruritan Club, 134 Calloway Drive, Fieldale, 7-10 a.m. Eat in or take out. Donations accepted, with proceeds used for community projects.

### Tuesday, July 22

Registration for the 2025 Back2School program at all sites listed above, 6-8 p.m. The program is open to all students from Pre-K through 12th grade, and students must be present to register. Those who sign up will receive a free new pair of shoes, socks, a backpack, and school supplies on August 2. For more information, contact 276-565-8234, visit [www.gob2s.com](http://www.gob2s.com), or email [back2school@](mailto:back2school@)

## Price Is Right

(cont. from page 1)

“I ran down to contestant row, played for a Nissan Versa, and lost. I was disappointed, but I wasn’t done.”

She remained in the game and spun the iconic big wheel. “I had the highest spin of the round, and that’s what got me into the Showcase Showdown. And that’s when it all changed.”

Campbell won her final showcase, which included a six-night trip to both Chicago and Mexico, a 2025 model car ready for cruise season, an electric scooter, a full bedroom set, and a massage chair. Altogether, the winnings totaled more than \$41,000.

The experience, she said, felt like a blur.

“I didn’t have time to get nervous. I felt like I was just walking through something that had already been set up for me.”

When the episode aired in June, it made a splash on local social media.

“I wasn’t allowed to talk about it until after the show aired, so it was hard to keep it to myself,” she said. “People were asking all kinds of questions, especially about the taxes.”

[gmail.com](mailto:).

### Friday, July 25 - Saturday, July 26

Dino Festival, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Ave, Martinsville.

### Saturday, August 2

The Bassett Branch Library Expansion Committee and the Blue Ridge Library Foundation are hosting a BINGO Fundraising Event, to benefit the Bassett Branch Library Expansion Project, at the Historic J.D. Bassett Event Center, 3289 Riverside Dr. Doors open at 4 p.m.; BINGO starts at 6 p.m. Packets include 3 games per play; 20 games per packet. The first packet is \$20; \$10 for each extra. Prizes per game, pull tabs, door prizes, raffle and 50/50. Cash only. Concessions will be available for purchase. Check the Bassett Branch Library Expansion Project Facebook page.

### Sunday, August 3

The Virginia 250 Symposium will celebrate the 250th anniversary of Virginia with three speakers: VA250 Executive Director Cheryl Wilson, Jeff Briggs, and Hunter Haskins. It will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, August 3, at the MHC Heritage Museum, 1 E. Main St., Martinsville. This program is part of the Sunday Afternoon Lecture Series.

## ONGOING

A series of four classes on genealogy research will be held on the first four Tuesdays in September (2, 9, 16, 23), from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Bassett Historical Center. There is no charge for the classes. When you sign up for the first class, you will automatically be signed up for the other three classes. The classes are limited to 12 people, so please call the Bassett Historical Center at 276-629-9191 to reserve your spot.

Summer Camps at Spencer-Penn Centre - through July 24; morning and afternoon sessions with snacks provided. After camp care available until 6 p.m. at no additional cost. Campers must register in advance. Call or email (276) 957-5757, [spencerpenn04@gmail.com](mailto:spencerpenn04@gmail.com) for the registration link.

Monday Market at Fairy Stone State Park, Mondays, rain or shine, through Labor Day, 5-7 p.m., at Shelters #3 & #4. Cash only market. Free parking.

BINGO on Mondays, Horsepasture Volunteer Fire Department, 17815 A.L. Philpott Highway, Ridgeway. Doors open at 5 p.m., games start at 7 p.m. Concessions are available.

Uptown Pub Run, Mondays at 6 p.m., meets at The Ground Floor, 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. Free to the public, but donations will be used by the club to pay for electricity etc.

She confirmed the taxes were already taken care of, allowing her to fully enjoy her winnings. “It was so fast,” she said. “One moment I was watching buses. Then I was on a flight. Then I was standing on that stage. But I’ll never forget it.”

Campbell is a wife, a mother, and a new grandmother of three. She serves as worship leader and first lady at Damascus Road Christian Fellowship, where she is deeply involved in both ministry and community outreach.

“Our relationship with the Lord is everything,” she said. “I do whatever needs to be done—whether it’s worship, prayer, Sunday service, or helping people during the week.”

For Campbell, her game show victory wasn’t just about luck or prizes. It was about obedience, timing, and faith.

“It looked like I lost in the beginning. But I kept going. That’s how life is—you have to keep going, even when it looks like it’s not going your way,” she said. “If you stop, you miss the blessing.”

The Fontaine Ruritan Club hosts Bingo every Tuesday, 1903 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and games begin at 7. Money from Bingo supports community service awards, scholarships, and other community efforts.

Bingocize at Spencer-Penn Centre. Play Bingo and prevent falls with simple exercises. This free class is offered Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

Chair Aerobics at Spencer Penn Centre, Tuesdays at 9 a.m. with Judi Perrin; \$5 fee, 45 minutes of exercise, strength building and fun.

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, 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.

The Martinsville-Henry County Democratic Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at New College Institute on Fayette Street (park on Moss St.). RSVP at [mhcd-cva.org/meeting-rsvp](http://mhcd-cva.org/meeting-rsvp) for Zoom link.

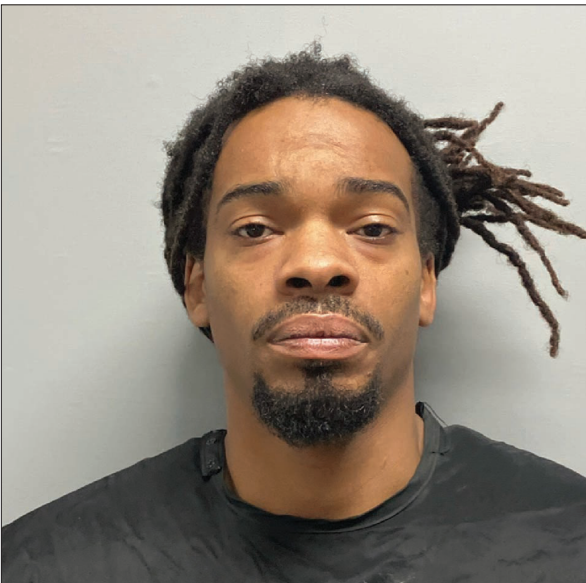
The Martinsville -Henry County Republican Committee meets on its summer schedule. Watch online at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2041797322550450>.

Farmers’ Market at Spencer Penn Centre, Thursdays 4-6 p.m. under the pavilion.

Chair Aerobics, Tuesdays at 9 a.m. with Judi Perrin. 45 minutes of exercise, strength building, \$5 fee, Spencer Penn Centre.

Bingocize, Tuesdays at 10 a.m., help prevent falls with simple exercises. Free at Spencer Penn Centre.

Neighbors in the Know. Join staff and volunteers in the Hylton Library at the Spencer Penn Centre for activities and socializing on the third Monday of each month, 10-11 a.m. This free program is perfect for all ages. Registration is not required.



Darren Earl Bacon Jr.

## Barricade incident ends peacefully after three-hour standoff

The Henry County Sheriff’s deputies responded to 91 Camp Branch Road around 7:40 p.m. on July 7 to serve five outstanding warrants on Darren Earl Bacon Jr., who was wanted by the City of Martinsville. The warrants included two felony and three misdemeanor charges.

Upon arrival, deputies heard a television playing and detected movement inside the residence. After repeated attempts to make contact were unsuccessful, a search warrant was obtained. To ensure a peaceful resolution, the Henry County Sheriff’s Office deployed its SWAT Team, including crisis negotiators and the Drone Team.

Following a breach of the front door, a drone was flown into the residence and located Bacon in a bedroom. Shortly thereafter, Bacon exited the residence and peacefully surrendered to law enforcement. The standoff ended without incident after nearly three hours of negotiations.

Bacon is currently being held without bond at the Henry County Adult Detention Center on charges that include two counts of simple assault and one count intentionally damaging property (misdemeanors). He also is charged with entering a dwelling with intent to commit larceny, assault and battery, or other felony, larceny of certain animals (felony). Those charges are in Martinsville.

In Henry County, he is charged with a misdemeanor count of resisting arrest/obstructing justice.

The Henry County Sheriff’s Office thanks the Virginia State Police and Henry County Public Safety for their assistance in safely resolving the incident.

Anyone with additional information related to this case is encouraged to contact the Henry County Sheriff’s Office at (276) 638-8751 or through the Crimestoppers Program at 63-CRIME (632-7463). Crimestoppers offers rewards of up to \$2,500 for information related to crimes. The reward amount is based on the nature and substance of the information provided.

Be sure to like the Henry County Enterprise on Facebook



OPINION

Iran

Since the 1990s, one of the greatest U.S. foreign policy challenges has been Iran.

Iran is a leading state sponsor of terrorism, funding proxy wars and supporting Islamic terrorist groups like Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen.

Despite different approaches to the Iranian regime, the Clinton, Bush, Obama, Trump and Biden Administrations all recognized the inherent threat posed by Iran if it obtained the ability to create a nuclear weapon.

Recently, Israel’s bombing campaign, designed to damage Iran’s ballistic missile and nuclear capabilities, cut into Iran’s defensive capabilities.

It should be no wonder then that President Trump acted quickly in an attempt to eliminate the immediate and significant threat posed by Iran potentially possessing nuclear weapons.

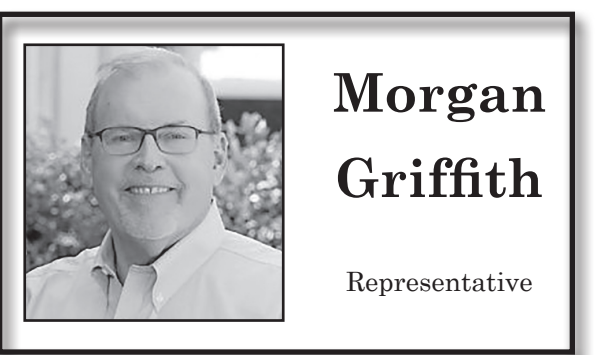
President Trump authorized the deployment of B-2 stealth bombers to drop bunker buster bombs on the nuclear facilities of Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan. It should be noted that only the United States of America has this type of massive ordinance penetrator (MOP) bunker busting bomb and the aircraft to deliver it.

Nicknamed “Operation Midnight Hammer”, we continue to monitor reports of the level of damage to Iran.

However, some in Congress are challenging the President’s power to authorize such a strike.

The Executive Branch’s powers related to military action date back to the country’s founding.

President Thomas Jefferson is one of the first who authorized armed forces to



Morgan Griffith

Representative

protect U.S. assets without Congressional authorization.

Jefferson deployed a squadron of naval forces under Commodore Richard Dale, a Norfolk-based naval officer.

Barbary pirates terrorizing the Mediterranean Sea were an immediate and present threat to safe passage of American vessels, commerce and goods.

Because Jefferson did not have all the information about the threats to American shipping, he instructed Dale to take necessary actions to protect American ships and citizens against potential aggression.

Unbeknownst to Jefferson, one of the Barbary States, Tripoli, had even declared war on the United States!

Dale’s squadron blocked Tripolitan corsairs in Gibraltar, blockaded Tripoli harbor and ensured the protection of American merchant ships.

On August 1, 1801, the USS Enterprise defeated a Tripolitan corsair in battle.

It made sense for Jefferson to act without consulting Congress. But he did not endorse unilateral war power authority.

Later in 1801 in his annual address to Congress, Jefferson asked for formal and expanded powers.

Congress heeded Jefferson’s request, allowing naval commanders to seize Tripolitan goods and vessels.

U.S. Marine Corps action against Tripoli and the other Barbary states during this period is forever immortalized in

the Marines’ Hymn, which begins:

“From the Halls of Moctezuma to the shores of Tripoli;

We fight our country’s battles on the land as on the sea...” \*\*\*

Some might say presidential military directives and consequent congressional action during the First Barbary War could serve as a parallel to today.

As I stated to multiple groups before the U.S. strikes on Iranian nuclear targets, I believed that if the President determined there was an opportunity to eliminate an immediate and significant threat to the United States, the President’s powers as Commander-in-Chief allow him to dispose of such threat.

In this case, the threat was Iran’s nuclear program.

Trump’s limited action consisted of no military presence on Iranian ground, and U.S. strikes were limited to the three nuclear facility targets.

Going forward, Congress has a role in working with the President on addressing more broad military action, as Congress did in the First Barbary War.

Since the U.S. strikes, Iran’s parliament voted to close the Strait of Hormuz. This move could pin U.S. Navy ships in the Persian Gulf with no exit.

Iran also launched retaliatory strikes at a U.S. base in Qatar.

While Congress continues to monitor Iran’s military actions, it is essential that our legislative body exercises its authority to assess what, if any, future U.S. action is needed.

If there is a U.S. mission that is more broad in scope and expands from an imminent threat action, I believe the President must come to Congress for a Declaration of War or an Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF).

I pray for the safety of our troops and their families.

But because it has long been the policy of this country to not allow Iran to have nuclear weapons, I stand by Trump’s decision to target Iran’s nuclear weapons sites.

\*\*\* Language was changed in 1942 to include “air.”



Charity, laughter, and a gold-toned lion bank

Is it charity? Or is it fun?

For Martinsville-Henry County Lions, it’s both, and that’s OK.

Jack Stewart and I were the Lions’ guest speakers during their meeting on Tuesday. As usual when I’m with the local Lions, I had a ball. Their meetings are full of cheer and laughter, even as they talk about their charitable endeavors.

The Lions Club works on projects to help people in need, especially (but not only) when it comes to vision and hearing.

Treasurer Eddie Fields said civic organizations such as the Lions Club fill in the gaps where there is no official or government-based way for people to get help. For 20 years he has gotten eyeglasses for people who couldn’t otherwise get them, and he’s also gotten people hearing aids. There is no greater feeling, he said, than seeing how much the recipients appreciate those things.

The group also recently raised “a couple hundred grand to build a playground for kids in wheelchairs,” he said. Lori Flood reported that the playground equipment is being purchased, and installation should be done around August.

The Lions talked easily and cheerfully together about those projects over dinner during their meeting at Pacific Bay restaurant.

“The fellowship is the thing, and being able to get out and meet the public,” said chapter president F. Woods Carter Jr. “You see some of the other needs that some of the other individuals in the area have.”

“The social contacts and business contacts you make” through civic organizations also is good, Fields added.

“In this community years ago, this was a big thing,” Carter agreed.

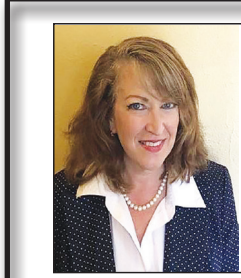
“The movers and the shakers get together” in civic and charitable groups, Fields said.

Then our conversation came to a stop because everyone had finished eating and it was time for Jack and me to talk about the MHC Heritage Museum, which is at 1 E. Main St. We were good and full as Jack had just finished a bacon cheeseburger, and I had some popcorn shrimp.

After our talks, the Lions got a little crazy (in a good way). Jenny Toney, a new member who recently moved here from Iowa - she particularly loves being near the Martinsville Speedway - did the Tail Twister. She held up a gold-colored coin bank in the shape of a lion and went about looking for ways to fine people 25 cents or a dollar.

Most of them had worn red, white and blue since it was near the Fourth of July, but Mack Evans didn’t, so “you have to pay me a quarter,” she told him. John Floyd nearly got fined a quarter too, until he showed a teeny tiny hat pin on his baseball cap which had those colors.

That hat pin which saved him 25 cents



Holly Kozelsky



Jenny Toney demonstrates a pair of eyeglasses designed for a specific use: putting on makeup. Each lens flips down, so you can put makeup on one eye while seeing properly with the other eye.



John Floyd good-naturedly puts a quarter, his fine for talking when he was supposed to be listening, into the Tail Twister coin bank.



MHC Lions Club President J. Woods Carter Jr. dismisses the meeting Tuesday evening.

wasn’t John’s only luck of the night; he also won a whopping \$3.50 in the 50/50 raffle. “Have I been fined \$3 for anything lately?” he asked.

A few minutes later, he and Mack Evans were talking with each other when they were supposed to be listening to the club president talk at the podium. “You guys each owe us a quarter!” demanded Jenny, holding up the bank.

“Well, I’m already losing my money,” said John as he reached for the gold-toned lion, and it was laughter all around.

Jenny recently had been to the Lions Club eyeglasses recycling center in Roanoke, one of just three in the country. When loads of used eyeglasses are received, they are washed in one of the three Maytag dishwashers. Our local Lions go there every now and then to read the eyeglass prescriptions and mark them.

Then she did a little show-and-tell with three pairs of unusual eyeglasses she had borrowed from that center. We had to guess what they were. The pair that was mostly solid black except for a little boxy part coming out in front of each eye was a special pair for

plumbers to be able to see in awkward places. I tried them on: When I turned my head up to look at the ceiling, what I saw was my pile of papers on the table. There were two neat pairs that are meant to be used for putting on makeup: With one, you could flip each lens down. The other had just one lens, and you’d flip it to be in front of one eye and then the other.

A great time to get in the fun as well as to learn how you could participate in helping the community through the Lions is at their special membership recruitment dinner, to be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, July 24, at New College Institute, 191 Fayette St. It will be a social event over a big dinner prepared by Brenda’s Catering, and the Lions will talk a bit about their mission and projects.

RSVP to Lori Floyd at 276-252-3632 or floyd1632@yahoo.com so that she can let Brenda know to fix you a plate, too.

And remember: When you have a pair of glasses you don’t need anymore, drop them off in the Lions Club box near the entryway of the Martinsville Branch Library, and these fine folks will see that the glasses get to someone who really needs them.

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# OPINION

## What makes you happy?

**By Dr. Glenn Mollette**  
Peace and happiness have many variables.  
We aren't happy when we feel we do not have enough and then burdened if we have too much. We fret over not enough money or worry about what we will do if we have too much money. Most of us don't have the latter problem.  
We fret over not enough space or how we care for too much space. We accumulate and store up in our barns and build bigger barns to store up more stuff. We then don't know what we will do with all the stuff.  
How much does it take to bring you peace and make you happy? Can you be happy in a one room dwelling place? Does it take a 25-room house to make you feel good? How many cars do you need to make you feel satisfied? Or, is satisfaction only a remotely impossible concept? Many years ago, one popular song lamented, "I can't get no satisfaction."  
Satisfaction and happiness may be claimed for a season. Possibly you are satisfied with your vocation, athletic accomplishments, family life, parenting success, fulfillment of life goals and ambitions? Often, we are but then those seasons pass. Careers end, athletic contests become history, retirement comes with memories that fade further and further into the past.  
Too often most of us can look back and wonder, "what if?" we may say. The problem with "what if?" is that it doesn't change anything. If it is in the past, you can't relive it or

change it regardless of how great you were or how bad you were.  
All we have for certain, is today. Even today is iffy. Since today is all we really have then it's best to not mess it up by constantly looking over our shoulders. You can't go forward always looking back. In the Bible there was a man named Lot. He and his wife were told not to look back at Sodom and Gomera. She did and turned into a pillar of salt. Looking back has a way of doing that to all us as we become immobilized in time.  
What does it take to make you happy? Someone to love and someone who loves you? A few family members to care for who also care for you? Enough money to pay the light bill and keep food on the table? Something to do during the day that you enjoy? The only person who can answer these questions is you because only you know what it really takes to make you happy.  
Happiness is very much happenstance. Things change every day. Health, sickness, the stock market, families, jobs and hobbies. Friends and loved ones move away or die. Life is always changing.  
God never changes. Happiness may vary throughout the day or week, but your joy and peace that comes with faith in God and focusing on Him is something the world cannot give or take away.  
Keep this verse in mind this day regardless of whether you feel happy or if you are down and blue. "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you." Isaiah 26:3.

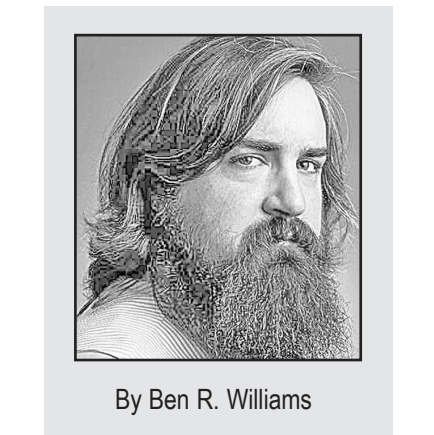
## New laws target road safety, alcohol regulation

From stricter seat belt requirements to expanded alcohol service and training mandates, several new laws took effect in Virginia on July 1 aimed at improving public safety on the roads and in licensed establishments.  
Virginians hitting the road or visiting bars this summer should be aware of major legal changes that took effect July 1. These include a new seat belt requirement for all vehicle occupants and updated laws affecting the operation of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (ABC) and its licensees.  
**Seat Belt Law Now Covers All Passengers**  
House Bill 2475, passed during the 2025 General Assembly session and signed by Gov. Glenn Youngkin, now requires all occupants of a vehicle—regardless of age or seating position—to wear a seat belt. Previously, only front-seat passengers and drivers were legally required to buckle up.  
"Too many lives are lost on our roads due to poor decisions, and one of those poor decisions is choosing not to wear a seat belt," said Virginia Secretary of Transportation W. Sheppard Miller III. "This is a common-sense law that will have a life-saving impact."  
The law is being referred to by supporters as the Christopher King Law, honoring 18-year-old Christopher King, who died in a crash in 2020 while riding unbuckled in the back seat. His mother, Christy King, has spent five years advocating for stronger seat belt legislation.  
"The assumption that the back seat is safer without a seat belt, or that a short drive doesn't warrant one, has proven untrue," she said.  
According to the Virginia DMV's Highway Safety Office, 67% of back-seat passengers killed in

crashes in 2024 were not wearing seat belts. The new law remains a secondary enforcement law, meaning police can only issue a \$25 fine for violations if the vehicle is stopped for another reason. The law also applies to rideshare drivers and passengers.  
**Alcohol Legislation Expands Service and Safety Measures**  
Five new laws affecting Virginia ABC also took effect July 1, aimed at expanding service flexibility and enhancing public safety:  
**Cocktails-To-Go Made Permanent:** HB 2058 and SB 811 remove the sunset clause for third-party delivery of wine, beer, and cocktails-to-go. Existing packaging and labeling requirements remain in place.  
**Canned Cocktails Allowed:** SB 868 allows licensed establishments to serve canned cocktails to patrons, provided the container is 16 ounces or less and contains no more than 15% alcohol by volume.  
**Human Trafficking Training Required:** HB 2033 mandates that ABC include a human trafficking awareness module—created by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services—in its Responsible Sellers & Servers: Virginia's Program (RSVP).  
**Youth Access to Tobacco and Hemp:** HB 1946 and SB 1060 establish a working group to study enforcement of underage sales laws related to tobacco, liquid nicotine, and hemp. ABC's law enforcement division will take part in the effort.  
**Tied House Exceptions Clarified:** HB 1703 and SB 834 clarify that a manufacturer, bottler, or wholesaler may hold a retail license as long as they do not supply alcohol or merchandise to that business.  
For more information about these and other laws, visit [dmv.virginia.gov](http://dmv.virginia.gov) or [abc.virginia.gov](http://abc.virginia.gov).

## White House announces Jeffrey Epstein never existed

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Just days after announcing that incriminating files belonging to the late financier and child sex offender Jeffrey Epstein did not exist, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt announced Tuesday that Epstein himself never actually existed.  
According to Leavitt, Attorney General Pam Bondi has determined that Epstein, who died in 2019 in police custody in what was ruled a suicide but many believe to be a murder, was actually a figment of the collective American imagination.  
"The liberal media would have you believe that this so-called 'Jeffrey Epstein' was a magical millionaire who flew wealthy elites all over the globe so that they could commit sex crimes against children," Leavitt said. "It just shows how sick the left is to even imagine such a thing."  
When asked about the dozens of photos of President Donald Trump interacting with Epstein at parties, Leavitt said the man pictured was not Epstein but actually a Presbyterian minister named Amity Goodfellow who was helping Trump attain a deeper understanding of his faith through lectures and quiet meditation.  
"Yeah, yeah, that's the ticket," Leavitt said. "But you wouldn't know him, he goes to a different school three towns over."  
United States Secretary of Health and Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr. described Epstein as a "mass hallucination" triggered by additives and processed food.  
"This is what happens when you put fluoride in the water supply, stop eating horse organs, and go to the doctor occasionally," Kennedy said. "I walk down the street every day and see so many deeply unhealthy people. Their faces are smooth and unlined, not haggard and creviced with good health. Their voices lack the reedy warble



that comes from balanced humors in the bloodstream. Seldom do I ever see them eating a raw pig bladder. It's enough to make me wonder if I'm the crazy one. But that seems unlikely."  
Vice-President JD Vance, who had previously said on record that he couldn't wait to "clean up D.C." by "releasing the Epstein client list," said Tuesday that Epstein never existed and that this was a classic example of the media twisting his words.  
"I'm so tired of the liberal media constantly taking statements I have made in the past and comparing them to statements I make in the present," he said. "These people will stop at nothing to make it seem as though I'm a hypocrite. It's a classic example of reverse hypocrisy, and if you ask me to elaborate on that, I WILL be deeply condescending in my response."  
A small number of voices on the left have also thrown their weight behind the revelation that Epstein was fictitious.  
"All's well that ends well," said former President Bill Clinton, wiping a handkerchief across his sweating brow. "Now, let us never speak of this again."  
Meanwhile, former socialite and Epstein associate Ghislaine Maxwell continues to serve a 20 year prison sentence for trafficking no one to nobody.

Column Sponsored by: Dr. Mensink

## FSIS warns of plastic in jerky products

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has issued a public health alert for certain ready-to-eat (RTE) beef jerky stick products that may be contaminated with extraneous materials, specifically plastic.  
FSIS did not request a recall because the affected products are no longer available for purchase. However, consumers are urged to check their pantries and discard any of the affected items if still in possession.  
The RTE beef jerky stick products were produced on May 27, 2025 and have an 18-month shelf life. The products subject to the

public health alert are:  
\*6.9 oz. bags containing six 1.15-oz. vacuum-sealed packages containing of "RIVERBEND RANCH Original Beef Stick" with a "Best By date of 11/27/2026"  
\*6.9 oz. bags containing six 1.15 oz. vacuum-sealed packages containing of "RIVERBEND RANCH Jalapeño Beef Stick" with a "Best By date of 11/27/2026"  
The products bear "EST. 47282" on the back of the label. These items were shipped to a company that further distributed the products online and to locations nationwide, including Puerto Rico.  
For more information, visit [fsis.usda.gov](http://fsis.usda.gov).

## Oscar Mayer Turkey Bacon recalled

Kraft Heinz Foods Company is recalling approximately 367,812 pounds of fully cooked turkey bacon products due to possible contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes* (Lm), according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).  
The affected products were produced between April 24 and June 11, 2025. They were shipped to retail locations nationwide, as well as to the British Virgin Islands and Hong Kong.  
The recalled items include:  
• 12-oz. packages of "Oscar Mayer Turkey BACON ORIGINAL" with UPC 071871548601, "use by" dates from July 18 to Aug. 2, 2025, and lot code RS40.  
• 36-oz. packages containing three 12-oz. packs with UPC 071871548748, "use by" dates from July 23 to Sept. 4, 2025, and lot codes RS19, RS40, or RS42.  
• 48-oz. packages containing four 12-oz. packs with UPC 071871548793, "use by" dates from July 18 to Sept. 4, 2025, and lot codes RS19, RS40, or RS42.  
All products bear the USDA inspection mark on the front label.  
The potential contamination was

identified through the company's internal laboratory testing. No confirmed reports of illness have been linked to the recalled products at this time.  
Consumption of food contaminated with *Listeria* can cause listeriosis, a potentially serious infection. It primarily affects older adults, pregnant women and their newborns, and individuals with weakened immune systems. Symptoms can include fever, muscle aches, headache, stiff neck, confusion, loss of balance, and convulsions. In pregnant women, the infection can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, or premature delivery.  
Consumers are urged not to eat the recalled products. Items should be thrown away or returned to the place of purchase.  
For questions, call the Kraft Heinz consumer hotline at 1-800-280-7185 or email [consumerrelations@kraftheinz.com](mailto:consumerrelations@kraftheinz.com).  
For food safety questions, contact the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 888-MPHotline (888-674-6854) or visit [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov). Complaints can be filed through the Electronic Consumer Complaint Monitoring System at [foodcomplaint.fsis.usda.gov/eCCF](http://foodcomplaint.fsis.usda.gov/eCCF).

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Record-level funding allocated for conservation practices in fourth consecutive year of increases

A dollar amount cannot be placed on the value of clean water and healthy soil, but a \$16 million increase to the fully funded Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share program is a welcome budgetary consideration among farmers and conservationists alike. This is the fourth consecutive year of increased funding for the program, with \$223 million allocated to the VACS program for fiscal year 2026. This marks a \$16 mil-

lion increase over last year's funding threshold of \$207 million. The VACS program helps farmers offset the cost of implementing a wide range of eligible best management practices with reimbursement up to 100%. Farmers can receive up to \$300,000 in state cost-share reimbursement for over 60 best management practices. BMPs include cover cropping, nutrient management, livestock stream exclusion, forested or herbaceous buffers or rotational grazing. These voluntary practices are intended to minimize undesirable effects of agricultural activity on the local environment and water resources. "These practices are the gold standard in protecting water quality, improving soil health and supporting the long-term sustainability of agriculture and forestry—Virginia's largest private industry," said Martha Moore, Vir-

ginia Farm Bureau Federation senior vice president of governmental relations. Local soil and water conservation districts facilitate the program, working directly with farmers to distribute funding and provide technical assistance, administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. "With the new allocations effective July 1, we're encouraging farmers to reach out to their local SWCD and ask about eligible practices," Moore added. The program has distributed hundreds of millions to farmers and landowners since its inception in 1984. Projects must: Be approved in advance by the local SWCD board. Meet technical specifications of the VACS program. Pass a field inspection, if required, prior to receiving payment. Be subject to spot checks throughout the project's lifespan. "Virginia's soil and water conservation

districts are ready to engage with producers, deliver technical support, and ensure that these funds translate into tangible improvements on the ground," said Kendall Tyree, executive director of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Districts. "We applaud the governor and the general assembly for their historic support of voluntary conservation initiatives and look forward to supporting Virginia's agricultural community through our district offices." Farm Bureau leaders already are strategizing ahead of future general assembly sessions. VFBF's 2025 policies support fully funding \$319.34 million needed for FY 2027 and FY 2028 for the VACS program to help the commonwealth meet its water quality goals. Visit [dcr.virginia.gov/soil-and-water/swcds](http://dcr.virginia.gov/soil-and-water/swcds) to find your local SWCD office, and [dcr.virginia.gov/cost-share](http://dcr.virginia.gov/cost-share) for more information about the VACS program.

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SCRAMBLERS

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1. Dismal 2. Enjoy;  
3. Cringe; 4. Swipe

Today's Word

NOISIER

FEAR & KNIGHT

answer

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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9	3	2	6	1	8	4	7	5
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Henry County Enterprise welcomes letters to the editor and/or reader viewpoints of 500 words or less. Submissions may be edited for clarity, length, legal ramifications or general taste at the editor's discretion. We reserve the right to refuse to publish submitted letters for the same reasons. All letters must be signed by an individual and include community. Letters that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered for publication. Viewpoints and opinions expressed in letters selected for publication are the opinions of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Henry County Enterprise.



# Crossing the Lines

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

### Crowds flock to Stuart for annual fireworks extravaganza



The traditional fireworks event is made possible by a team of dedicated volunteers. It attracts visitors from neighboring counties and beyond.

The skies over Stuart exploded in a dazzling display of red, white and blue Friday night as the Town of Stuart, Patrick County and county departments sponsored the annual Independence Day fireworks celebration.

The event drew a massive

crowd, with thousands of residents and visitors gathering at DeHart Park and nearby areas to enjoy the festivities. Families set up lawn chairs, blankets, picnics and truck tailgates well before nightfall, enjoying fellowship as anticipation built.

### Fiddles, flatfooting, and first-place finishes at Vesta Community Center



A new Tractor Show was unveiled this year.

The sounds of strings and the rhythm of dancing feet filled the air during the 2025 Old-Time and Bluegrass Music Competition held July 4 at the Vesta Community Center.

Patrick County VFW Post 8467 conducted the opening ceremony at the event where musicians of all ages gathered to showcase

their talents at the annual Independence Day celebration.

In addition to the new Tractor Show, the annual event included contests in guitar, fiddle, mandolin, banjo, vocals, band performance, and flatfoot dancing, with local performers earning top honors across multiple categories.

### Planning Commission to weigh solar proposals

The Patrick County Planning Commission will meet on Tuesday, July 15, to determine which proposed solar ordinance amendment to forward to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

The meeting begins at 6 p.m. in the Community Room of the Patrick & Henry Community College Stuart site.

Commission Chairman Kurt Bozenmayer said the meeting will begin as a joint session with the Economic Development Authority (EDA).

“Once we get done with the EDA, we’re going to move into the regular business, which will be the consideration of the amendments for the solar ordinance,” he said.

The commission is currently reviewing two separate amendments, one developed by The Berkley Group, a consulting firm, and the other written by At-Large member Ed Pool.

Bozenmayer said the Berkley Group’s version is a condensed draft that states any consideration of commercial solar fa-

cilities must adhere to the Virginia law, which “essentially says that since we don’t have zoning here, we can’t specifically regulate a use other than what’s included in that ... rule, which does have a special exemption for regulating solar facilities,” he said.

Pool’s amendment, Bozenmayer said, is currently 28 pages and growing.

“It includes everything from financial considerations to a big amount of it concerns de-commissioning, and a lot of the financial surety stuff that goes along with it. It goes down to as far as the construction workers — whether they have a 10-hour OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) card or a 30-hour OSHA card,” he said.

Bozenmayer said he does not believe it is the county’s role to regulate that kind of detail, but rather the responsibility of the employer.

Commission members are currently submitting edits and suggestions for Pool’s draft.

### New traffic patterns coming on Lovers Leap Project in July

Beginning in mid-July, drivers can expect traffic pattern changes as part of the ongoing road widening project on U.S. 58 over Lovers Leap Mountain in Patrick County.

Weather permitting, starting July 9, U.S. 58 traffic will be shifted onto a new 1.25-mile section roadway starting 0.5

mile east of Virginia 640 (Central Academy Road). Two-way traffic will be routed onto the newly constructed eastbound lanes. As part of this shift, a new connection between Virginia 8 and U.S. 58 will be opened just west of the current Virginia 8 and U.S. 58 intersection.

### Volunteers tackle cleanup after celebration at DeHart Park



Thousands of people celebrated Independence Day with fireworks at DeHart Park on July 4. The

next morning, a dedicated group of park board members and volunteers returned to clean up.

To read more about these and other stories,

check out

Henry County Enterprise at

www.henrycountyenterprise.com.

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



1-3-5-7-9



1-4-7-9:15



1-3-5-7-9



1-3-5-7-9



1-4-7-9:15

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# FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

NIO

NUVIAC

UFALO

ARFI

FUNGLE

FOF

♥DAEI

♥RENUI

RIF

FIXNUL

LEVIA

EXNO

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. Foot is moved. 2. Tree is moved. 3. Rock is moved. 4. Mountain is different. 5. Ear is larger. 6. Fingers are different.

## MAGIC MAZE

● CONTAINS A NUMBER

K B Y W U R P N K I G D B 0 Z

0 X V S Q O M K 0 2 I G E 0 0

C 0 2 A Y W U S 1 3 Q P R 1 9

N L 5 J H F E B 8 C W E P Q D

A Y B E X V N E U S L O Q A U

P N M K N I R J H E T F D D O

E C B 3 M U S K E T E E R S L

Z Y 5 A G 7 T H 2 2 H C T A C

X V T I / U W R 0 0 5 Y D N I

T I F 4 M 8 R Q O M E G A 3 P

V O 2 M I Y L U J F O H T 4 L

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally  
Unlisted clue hint: BRITISH SECURITY SERVICE

18-wheeler  
24/7  
3 Musketeers  
4th of July

B-52  
Catch-22  
Cloud 9  
Dow 30

Figure 8  
Fortune 500  
Indy 500  
Nasdaq 100

Omega-3  
Top 10  
Vitamin B12

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## Super Crossword

THE VIEW

ACROSS

1 Short leaps

5 "No — español"

10 Crammed

16 — Paulo

19 Milky gem

20 Like much pond scum

21 Shoelace tips

22 Feeling sick

23 Luciano

Pavarotti had a famous one

25 Verity or falsity of a proposition

27 Gershwin or Glass

28 Physics

Nobelists Niels

29 Maine city

30 Camera part

31 Choosing a "lesser evil"

candidate at the polls

35 Central rd. through town

37 Moral climate

38 Bana of "Troy"

39 Scary ghost, say

40 Encounter

41 Any of 12 spinal bones

46 Couple

47 Advocate of a lawless state, archaically

48 Document

allowing passage through a country

55 Phillies' div.

56 Astrologer

Sydney

61 Clevelandler, e.g.

62 Faux pas at a dinner table

64 "My Baby" rapper of 2001

66 Fisher's lure

67 Creeper in the bignonia family

71 Football player

Junior

72 Types, as data

74 Ample, in dialect

75 Cooling appliance, in brief

77 Singer

Lewis

78 E. Coast ocean

80 Amount of seawater that periodically rises

83 One feeling sympathy

86 Bank claim

87 Fastest

speed of a freely falling object

94 Twirl

98 Six Nations members

99 Festive party

100 School, in Somme

101 Finally

102 Central cavity of the brain

107 Did pool laps

108 Black-and-white cookies

109 Alternative to Levi's

110 Large Brit. lexicon

111 Lower-leg blood vessel

114 10 things featured in this puzzle?

117 Dir. from Ariz. to Ky.

118 "Burnt" color

24 MLB stats

119 Cries loudly

120 Castle trench

121 Playa — Rey

122 Paper Mate competitor

123 Amtrak train

124 Norway port

DOWN

1 Huge seller

2 Function

3 Spirited style

4 — pitch

5 Ruination

6 Hawaii "hi"

7 Female rap fan

8 Fond du —

9 Heady quaff

10 "Hud"

actress

Neal

11 "Glee"

actress

Dianna

12 Held tightly

13 Like a very low-carb diet

14 Archaic verb ending

15 "seaQuest —" (1990s series)

16 Feature of the word "thumb"

17 Father or son auto-racing star

18 Fake fat

26 Flared skirt

29 Of the ear

32 Little tyke

33 Edition: Abbr.

34 "... cup — cone?"

35 Podcaster

Maron

36 Writer

39 Found on this page

41 Sullies

42 Huge seller

43 Redenbacher

of popcorn, for short

44 Erin Burnett's channel

45 Frankie with a falsetto

46 Ad Council

ad, e.g.

48 Sauna wear

49 Arles' river

50 — surface missile

51 All-female club's policy

52 Classic PC

53 Apartment building VIP

54 "— we all?"

57 City in Iraq

58 "Would you like to see —?" (waiter's question)

59 Draw a better bead on

60 Path

63 Spitting sound

65 "Megan —" (2017 biopic)

68 Lassos

69 Up to such time as

70 Hook-and-ladder co.

73 Canoeist's challenge

76 Scam

79 Bible book after Exod.

81 Foe of Liston

82 Enkindled

84 — the finish

85 Wider than local

87 Saluted prior to drinking

88 Interweave

89 Tag anew

90 Florida port

91 Filmmaker — von Trier

92 Antiquated

93 Cleveland hoopster

94 Chem., e.g.

95 Pennsylvania resort range

96 Not lawful

97 Really must

100 Once, once

102 Ex-senator

Lott

103 Poet

Heinrich

104 Kemper of "The Office"

105 Sam of "Dead Calm"

106 Thompson of "Selma"

108 Broiler, e.g.

112 African viper

113 False story

114 Bygone

Pan Am rival

115 Wet/dry —

116 "As I see it," to a texter

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## Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• The first staplers were invented in the 18th century for King Louis XV of France, though the word "stapler" wasn't commonly used until 1901. These early devices were cumbersome and often required force to operate, with some even needing a hammer or mallet.

• Animals with smaller bodies and faster metabolism see in slow motion.

• Occupational therapy techniques date to 100 B.C., when a Greek physician named Asclepiades used them to treat mental illness.

• The tradition of playing loud music at an Irish wake originated with the belief that it would ward off evil spirits. Wakes also provided the opportunity to watch over the deceased to see if they would awaken.

• The Firefox logo isn't a fox, but a red panda.

• If your hat falls off during a tennis match, your opponent has the option to declare it a "hindrance" and redo the stroke.

• The temperature of a shooting star is around 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

• In 2019, a British woman married her dog. Her motive? After four failed engagements, 220 dates and a general range of unsatisfying experiences in the search for Mr. Right, she had given up on men but felt she and her dog had saved each other.

• "Crab mentality" refers to the "If I can't have it, neither can you" line of thinking, due to the fact that when a crab in a bucket attempts to escape, its fellow crabs pull it down.

• Trypophobia is the fear of closely packed holes.

• A flute is technically any open tube that one blows into to produce sound — even, for example, an empty Coke bottle!

\*\*\*

Thought for the Day: "I don't believe you have to be better than everybody else. I believe you have to be better than you ever thought you could be." — Ken Venturi

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## Weekly SUDOKU

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

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

**F**IGURE IN WIND HOW THE BALL WILL LAND AS WELL AS HOW IT WILL FLY.

BECAUSE WIND DRIES THE COURSE, SHOTS WILL BOUNCE MUCH HARDER AND FARTHER.

A MORE LOFTED CLUB FROM THE TEE SUCH AS A 3-WOOD INSTEAD OF A DRIVER, CAN BE GOOD STRATEGY IN SUCH CONDITIONS, SO CAN PLAYING FOR THE FRONTS OF GREENS WITH LOW RUN-UP APPROACH SHOTS WHENEVER CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOW.

0628

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## SCRAMBLERS

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

Bleak

SLIMAD

Relish

JONEY

Recoil

RECING

Pilfer

WIPES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

TODAY'S WORD

\_\_\_\_\_

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# Drowning prevention tips to stay afloat this summer

In Virginia, nearly 500 people have accidentally drowned over the last five years. In fact, drowning is a leading cause of death in children. Whether you are celebrating the holiday weekend at the pool, the beach, the river or the lake, West Piedmont Health District (WPHD) offers drowning prevention tips to keep you healthy and safe while swimming.

“We want all residents of our community to enjoy the summer safely, especially all water recreational activities,” said WPHD Health Director Penny Hall, MAHS. We encourage everyone to ensure that they are swimming in safe places and follow drowning prevention tips, and to actively supervise children.”

Drowning often occurs quickly and silently. Unlike the movies, drowning doesn’t usually involve thrashing and shouting. The signs of drowning are more subtle and last only 20-60 seconds before the person goes under.

West Piedmont Health District offers these preventions tips:

\*Provide active supervision for all children in the water. A responsible adult should watch children closely when they are in or around

water. Adults should not be distracted or engaged in other activities, even if lifeguards are present. For preschool-aged children, “touch supervision” is recommended, where the supervising adult is within arm’s reach of the child.

\*Learn to swim. Knowing how to swim can reduce the risk of drowning.

\*Learn CPR. Make sure we know what to do if someone needs help in the water.

\*Always swim with a buddy. Never swim alone.

\*Avoid swimming after dark. Signs of drowning are harder to see.

\*Watch for swimming hazards like rip currents and rough waters.

\*Observe any advisories and listen to lifeguards.

\*“Floaties,” arm bands, water wings are toys, not safety devices. When these toys are in use, the caregiver must still provide active supervision. Wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets.

\*Make sure pools have the proper safety features in place to help reduce the risk of injury.

Stay vigilant this summer. Visit swimhealthyva.com for more information.

# OBITUARIES

## Barbara “Bobbie” Allen White



Barbara “Bobbie” Allen White, 73, of Bassett, Virginia, passed away peacefully at her home on Tuesday, July 8, 2025. She was born on August 9, 1951, in Pocahontas, West Virginia, to the late Clinton Lawson and Anna Ray Lawson. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Jimmy White, and three sisters: Jewell Trail, Patty Wilson, and Yvonne Kelly.

Bobbie spent many years working in building supply sales. She had a special fondness for yellow

roses and found great joy in traveling and reading.

She is survived by her two sons, Brian Craig (Wendi) and Eric Craig (Erin); four stepchildren, Jeffery White, Scott White, Kevin White, and Melanie Rippey; her beloved grandchildren, Trevor Craig,

Samantha Flint, Chelsey Riggins, Brit-tany Massey, Wyatt Craig, Caroline Craig, and Anna Kate Craig; one brother, Skip Lawson (Debra); two sisters, Vickie Lawson and Lisa Gann (Anthony); nine great-grandchildren; as well as a host of other loving relatives and friends.

All services will be private.

Online condolences may be expressed at [www.bassettfuneralservice.com](http://www.bassettfuneralservice.com).

Bassett Funeral Service is honored to serve the White family.

# Collinsville resident among Shenandoah University grads

Anna Finley, of Collinsville, was among the 1,369 graduates who received their degrees and/or certificates from Shenandoah University during the 2024-25 academic year.

Finley earned a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy.

Shenandoah had 239 August 2024 graduates, 366 December 2024 graduates, and 764 May 2025 graduates. Shenandoah’s 2025 University Commencement took place on May 24 in the James R. Wilkins, Jr. Athletics and Events Center.

# Tatum

(cont. from page 1)

Horsepasture Volunteer Fire Department, and worked as a Virginia State Trooper for five years.

Tatum said he decided to retire now after having two heart stents placed about a year and a half ago.

“I’ve been wrestling with that for about a year

trying to get back physically. Even though it’s rare that I do it, my job description requires that I be a firefighter, and with my heart condition I can’t fight fires,” he said.

While he loves his job and doesn’t often respond to fires, Tatum said he didn’t think it was right to continue in the role with no hope of ever being cleared by a doctor to fight fires again.

“Therefore, I’m not able to do my job. Even though the county hasn’t said a word to me about it, pressured me at all, I just didn’t think it was right,” he said.

Noting he’s been the director for nearly a decade, Tatum also felt it was time for a change—for both him and the department.

“I’ve been the director for 10 years and I’m a firm believer in term limits. I believe that someone can be in a leadership role for too long, and

they come to the point where if they’re not careful, they will start holding advancement back. I don’t think I do that, but I don’t want to ever get to that point,” he said.

Also a firm believer in helping the community, whether through county employment or volunteering, Tatum plans to continue supporting local efforts in retirement, even if he likely won’t be able to run calls.

“Ninety-nine out of 100 calls, I’d probably be perfect without any problem whatsoever. I don’t want to end up being the firefighter inside a burning building that should have never been there to begin with and that another firefighter gets hurt trying to rescue,” he said.

Instead, Tatum believes he can be more helpful on the administrative side—supporting volunteer organizations with grant writing and similar efforts.

To pursue something a little less stressful, Tatum will begin teaching criminal justice at Ferrum College in the fall.

“I think being able to teach criminal justice will allow me to somewhat stay engaged with the subject and with the material,” he said.

Tatum said Henry County has been good to him throughout his career.

“I tried to give them an honest day’s work, and they’ve given me an honest day’s pay my entire career, so I don’t know what else you could argue with,” he said.

During his retirement, he said he’ll miss his career staff and volunteer coworkers the most.

“The organization as a whole is a good organization from the top down. From the county administrator and the board of supervisors down. We don’t always see eye to eye, but we work together as a team and get through it,” he said.

During his tenure, Tatum said the county became the first locality in the region to introduce Emergency Medical Services (EMS) certification in the high school setting in 2003.

“That was one of my first major projects after I came to work for the county that I’m very proud of. Unfortunately, it went away for a little while, but we’re starting back again this fall,” he said.

Tatum said the Department of Public Safety also helped launch Patrick & Henry Community College’s paramedic program in 2006–2007.

“That has continued to be a very successful program,” he said.

Like many jurisdictions nationwide that are seeing a decline in volunteerism, Tatum said Henry County implemented career EMS providers in 2010 to support the volunteers.

“Yes, there’s been some bumps in the road over the past 15 years since that has launched, but overall, I think our career providers and our volunteer providers work well together. I’m proud that they’ve been able to keep a team mindset and continue putting the citizens first, putting their personal biases or personal desires to the side and putting the citizens first and working together. That’s a huge accomplishment that I’m very proud of,” he said.

He’s also proud of the fact that Henry County’s fire and EMS system likely has some of the best quality equipment in the region—if not the state.

“Now do they have every toy they want? No. But the quality of fire and EMS equipment that Henry County has is something that I’m proud to have been part of over the past 20 years,” he said.

As of July 2, Tatum’s replacement had not yet been named.

“I hope they accept it as big of an honor as it has been for me... to lead it and be a part of it,” he said.

# LEGAL

**ORDER OF PUBLICATION** Case No. CL25000858-00  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104  
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT  
3160 KINGS MOUNTAIN ROAD, 3RD FL, MARTINSVILLE, VA 24112  
MEREDITH HADEN LOVELL v. TERRY MARSHALL LOVELL  
61 STANLEY MAIN ST,  
STANLEYTOWN, VA 24168

The object of this suit is to:  
TO OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINCULO MATRIMONII  
It is ORDERED that TERRY MARSHALL LOVELL appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before AUGUST 19, 2025.  
June 20, 2025

*[Signature]*  
[ ] JUDGE [ ] CLERK

# LEGAL

**ORDER OF PUBLICATION** Case No. CJ25-16  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
VA. CODE §8.01-316  
HENRY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT  
3160 Kings Mountain Rd, 3rd Floor, Martinsville, VA 24112  
Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* MIA MAY BOWDEN  
HENRY-MARTINSVILLE v. ALISHA M. BOWDEN  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
The object of this suit is to:  
TERMINATE THE RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS OF ALISHA M. BOWDEN TO HER DAUGHTER MIA MAY BOWDEN, BORN FEB. 27, 2024, PURSUANT TO VA CODE SECTION 16-1-283.  
IT IS ORDERED that the defendant ALISHA M. BOWDEN appear at the above-named Court and protect her interests on or before July 24, 2025 at 11 a.m.  
JUNE 23, 2025

*[Signature]*  
[ ] CLERK [ ] JUDGE

# LEGAL

**COUNTY OF HENRY  
REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**  
Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, the Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct a public hearing on the following application of **July 22, 2025 at 6 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia.  
The purpose of this public hearing is to receive input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearing.  
**Case R-25-10 Mark Brogan; Smith River Rentals, LLC**  
The property is located at 3775 Fairystone Park Hwy, in the Reed Creek District. The property is shown on Tax Map 15.7/59. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 0.22-acre from Commercial District B-1 to Neighborhood Commercial District B-2. The upstairs of this building already contains two grandfathered apartments. The applicant wishes to rezone the property, which will enable him to apply for the required Special Use Permit, to allow for the conversion of the downstairs into an AirBNB apartment.  
The application for this request may be viewed in the Department of Planning, Zoning & Inspection between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.  
Lee H. Clark, AICP  
Director of Planning, Zoning & Inspection

# LEGAL

**Notice of Public Hearing**  
Martinsville City Council will hold a public hearing on July 22, 2025, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the City of Martinsville Municipal Building located at 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville, VA, 24112, for those parties in interest to the following request(s):  
1) **REQUEST for STREET ABANDONMENT** - Application of Broadway 400, LLC, requesting the city’s abandonment of an approximate (150) foot right-of-way that is adjacent to property located at 1009 E. Church Street. The abandonment of streets, alleyways, or rights-of-way are a request that require review of the Martinsville Planning Commission and review and approval of Martinsville City Council.  
2) **REQUEST for REZONE** - Application of First Presbyterian Church, Applicant and Owner, requesting to rezone property located at 1901 Patrick Henry Avenue from R-N, Neighborhood Residential, to R-T, Residential Transitional. The rezoning of property is a request that requires review by the Martinsville Planning Commission and review and approval of Martinsville City Council.

Questions or comments regarding this matter can be directed to Hannah Powell at [hpowell@martinsvilleva.gov](mailto:hpowell@martinsvilleva.gov) or (276) 403-5156.  
Notice Submitted By:  
Hannah L. Powell, CZA  
Community Development Specialist

# LEGAL

**ORDER OF PUBLICATION** Case No. CJ25-15  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
VA. CODE §8.01-316  
HENRY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT  
3160 Kings Mountain Rd, 3rd Floor, Martinsville, VA 24112  
Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* AVA MAY BOWDEN  
HENRY-MARTINSVILLE v. ALISHA M. BOWDEN  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
The object of this suit is to:  
TERMINATE THE RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS OF ALISHA M. BOWDEN TO HER DAUGHTER AVA MAY BOWDEN, BORN DEC. 28, 2020, PURSUANT TO VA CODE SECTION 16-1-283.  
IT IS ORDERED that the defendant ALISHA M. BOWDEN appear at the above-named Court and protect her interests on or before July 24, 2025 at 11 a.m.  
JUNE 23, 2025

*[Signature]*  
[ ] CLERK [ ] JUDGE

# LEGAL

**COUNTY OF HENRY  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS  
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**  
Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **July 23, 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 Variance and a Special Use Permit for the following cases.  
**Case S-25-10 Smith River Rentals, LLC / Mark Brogan**  
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-802 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for addition of one apartment unit to an existing two unit apartment building. The property is located at 3775 Fairystone Park Hwy in the Reed Creek District, and is shown on Tax Map 15.7/59. The Board of Supervisors has scheduled a public hearing for July 22, 2025 to consider rezoning the property to Neighborhood Commercial District B-2.  
**Case S-25-11 Philisty O. Ziegler**  
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-902 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a business as an innovative children’s playhouse. The property is located at 2424 Virginia Ave Suite 7, in the Collinsville District, and is shown on Tax Map 29.7(51)/1,3,5,7,9,11, and is zoned as Commercial District B-1. 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

**ORDER OF PUBLICATION** Case No. CL25000155-00  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104  
Martinsville Circuit Court, 55 W Church Street, Martinsville, VA 24112  
VALLIE W. HYLTON v. JOHN DOE, JANE DOE, UNKNOWN HEIRS  
The object of this suit is to:  
FOR THE COURT TO DETERMINE WHO IS THE OWNER OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 411 FAYETTE ST., CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA. THE DESCENDANTS OF JAMES WILLIAM HODGE, JR., DECEASED, AND JAMES CHRISTOPHER HODGE MAY OWN AN INTEREST IN THIS PROPERTY. TO DETERMINE WHO OWNS THIS PROPERTY THE PLAINTIFF IN THIS CASE IS ASKING THE COURT TO RENDER AN INTERPRETATION OF THE WILL OF LUCILLE HODGE, DECEASED. IN ORDER TO ASSERT AND PROTECT THEIR POTENTIAL RIGHTS OF INHERITANCE, ANY PERSON WHO BELIEVES HE IS SHE IS AN HEIR OF JAMES WILLIAM HODGE, JR. AND/OR JAMES CHRISTOPHER HODGE. It is ORDERED that JOHN DOE, JANE DOE & UNKNOWN HEIRS OF JAMES W HODGE appear at the above-named court and protect his/her interests on or before August 5, 2025.  
June 5, 2025

*[Signature]*  
[ ] JUDGE [ ] CLERK



# Christmas

(cont. from page 1)

items Riggins collected during her years of giving.

Over the past decade, the drive has helped dozens of people begin lifelong donation routines. Martin, who had never donated before the first event, is now up to four gallons.

This year, donors will receive a pair of sunglasses and may have a chance to win gift cards.

“They told me to plug the sunglasses,” Martin laughed. “So, come on down and get you a pair. But really, every donation can save up to three lives. That’s the real reason.”

The July and December drives

are especially important, Martin noted, because they fall during months when donations typically drop.

“People are on vacation or busy with holidays,” he said. “But the need doesn’t stop. That’s why we’re proud we’ve made this work—and that people keep showing up.”

In 10 years, the drive has collected more than 1,000 donations.

“We don’t have cadets or a student body,” Martin said. “It’s just regular people. A lot of first timers. A lot of folks heard the story and decided to help.”

While the July 12 drive is the cur-

rent focus, Martin said the larger goal is building a habit of giving.

“It’s not just about that Saturday,” he said. “You can give six times a year if you’re doing singles, three if you’re doing doubles.”

Some longtime supporters won’t make it this time—they’ll be returning from vacation too late—but Martin said they still plan to give later.

“That’s what matters,” he said.

Still, turnout is important. In order for the Red Cross to continue bringing a team out on a Saturday, appointments need to be filled.

“They’re probably paying over-

time to do this,” Martin said. “We’ve got to show them it’s worth it.”

Thanks to the Red Cross Blood Donor App, participants can even track where their donations go. Martin said he has seen his blood used in Martinsville, Danville and Roanoke—and even as far away as Pennsylvania and Texas.

“They’ll send it wherever it’s needed,” he said.

To sign up, visit [www.redcross-blood.org](http://www.redcross-blood.org) and search for Stanleytown Elementary. Walk-ins are welcome as space allows. The blood drive will be held at 74 Edgewood Drive, Stanleytown, Virginia.



## Smith Mountain Lake State Park names new manager

Smith Mountain Lake State Park has named James Wright as its new park manager. He succeeds Chris Fritze, who was recently promoted to district manager for Virginia State Parks.

A Maryland native, Wright brings 10 years of experience in park operations, natural resource management and public service. He previously served as chief ranger at Westmoreland State Park, assistant park manager at Shenandoah River State Park and most recently, park manager at Staunton River State Park.

“We’re excited to welcome James to Smith Mountain Lake,” said District Manager Andrew Philpot. “He brings a positive leadership style, a deep respect for the environment and a commitment to enhancing visitor experiences. We’re confident he will do great things for the park and surrounding community.”

As park manager, Wright will oversee daily operations, staff management and long-range planning for the 1,250-acre park, which features hiking trails, educational programs, campsites and cabins, boat access, and one of the top-ranked lake beaches in the country.

“I’m honored to step into this role,” Wright said. “Smith Mountain Lake is a true gem, and I’m excited to work alongside a great team to protect its natural beauty and provide exceptional opportunities for visitors to connect with nature.”

The park will host an open house from 2 to 4 p.m. Wednesday, July 16, at the Discovery Center to give the community a chance to meet Wright. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information, call 540-297-6066 or visit [www.virginiastateparks.gov/smith-mountain-lake](http://www.virginiastateparks.gov/smith-mountain-lake).

## Report shows Virginia ranks high for child well-being

**By Zamone Perez**  
*Virginia News Connection*

New data show Virginia ranked 13th in the nation for overall child well-being and while the quality of Virginia children’s families and communities improved, the state’s education numbers are down.

The Annie E Casey Foundation’s Kids Count Data Book compiled and compared data from 2019 to 2023 on economic well-being, education, health and family dynamics of children in the state.

Emily Moore, senior policy analyst at Voices for Virginia’s Children, noted the rate of low-birth weight babies, one of the earliest indicators of a child’s trajectory, remained the same at a little more than 8 percent. The number of Virginia children who live in high-poverty areas gave her pause.

“We know the impacts, the environmental impacts, the impacts on education and health and

## Veteran educator returns to city schools

Martinsville City Public Schools has announced that Jill Collins has been named assistant principal at Martinsville High School.

Collins is no stranger to the division, having previously served as MCPS coordinator for math, science, and STEM. In her new role, she joins Assistant Principal Bobby Dalton and Principal Dr. Aji Dixon to form the school’s leadership team for the 2025–26 school year.

Collins holds a Master of Education from Averett University. With nearly three decades of experience in education, she brings a wealth of knowledge and versatility to her new role at MHS. Her background includes positions as a special education teacher, science teacher, coach, STEM



Jill Collins has been named assistant principal at Martinsville High School. instructor, and curriculum developer. Most recently, she served as assistant principal at Tunstall High School in

Pittsylvania County.

“I’m incredibly excited to begin my new role as assistant principal at Martinsville High School and rejoin Martinsville City Public Schools—a community dedicated to inspiring and empowering every student,” Collins said. “I look forward to working alongside our dedicated staff, students, and families to help every Bulldog succeed!”

“Our MCPS family is excited to have Jill Collins return to our school division,” said Superintendent Dr. Zebedee Talley. “Jill possesses excellent instructional skills and will have a huge impact on student learning at Martinsville High School. I know she will make great contributions to our continued academic growth.”



## Law eases transit rules for small school districts

Recently, Gov. Youngkin signed HB 2720, patroned by Del. Terry Austin, allowing rural school districts with fewer than 4,500 students to explore alternative student transportation methods. Virginia is now one of ten states to allow this level of flexibility in small school divisions.

“Today we’re breaking down barriers that have limited our communities for far too long,” Youngkin said at the ceremony in Botetourt County. “House Bill 2720 represents the innovative thinking Virginia needs to ensure every student, regardless of where they live, has access to quality education and extracurricular opportunities. By empowering our local school boards with flexibility and choice, we’re putting students first and allowing communities to find transportation solutions that work best for them.”

This legislation allows qualifying school boards to enter

partnerships with community colleges, contract private transportation providers, and utilize ride sharing and carpooling services to supplement traditional school bus routes. These options are crucial for rural districts like Botetourt County, which serves 4,424 students across an expansive and geographically diverse area.

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“Better transportation options mean better access to education,” Youngkin added. “When we remove barriers and empower local decision making, we create opportunities for every Virginia student to succeed. That’s what House Bill 2720 is all about: putting students first.”

well-being that come from being in areas that are under-resourced and areas where children might be exposed to community violence and things of that nature,” Moore observed. “Having 71,000 children living in high poverty areas is something that is very concerning for us.”

Virginia ranked 18th among states in health, as the rate of childhood obesity declined by nearly 20 percent. The state ranked near the top at 12th in its economic well-being of children. All metrics remained level, with only a slight uptick in teens who are neither in school nor working.

Moore argued Virginia can improve the rankings by passing a state level child tax credit, which would affect the economic, health, educa-

tional and family well-being of children in the Commonwealth.

“When our families have cash resources, their own cash put back into their pockets through our tax process, when they are able to have cash resources, they are able to support their families through giving them better, nutritious food, through getting them the health care that they need, getting them the additional education,” Moore explained.

The percentage of fourth graders who cannot read at grade level was up 10 percent, and the number of eighth graders who cannot do math proficiently was up 15 percent. The negative education trends, Moore added, likely stem from setbacks during pandemic-era online learning.



# Weather cancels fireworks but not the spirit at Mount Hermon

**By Jessica Dillon**

Mount Hermon Church of the Brethren hosted its Fourth of July celebration on Sunday, July 6. Due to heavy rain, the fireworks portion of the event was canceled, but food and entertainment continued indoors, drawing many community members whose outdoor plans were washed out by the weather.

The event featured free hot dogs, ice cream, a performance by a local all-women gospel group called The Branches, and a heartfelt testimony from the Worley family, whose daughter Lauren survived a devastating drunk driving accident. Organizers said the purpose was to inspire the community and demonstrate love in action.

“Now, we don’t wanna preach to them, we wanna serve them and show them what love is,” said Pastor Noel Naff.

What started as a small fireworks gathering of about 20 people has grown into a full-scale event. Organizer Junior King said this year was expected to be the biggest yet.

“We’ve always had some fireworks, but not by a professional. But we’re rescheduling it—we’ll have that later on this summer,” King said.

In 2024, Mount Hermon also hosted a Christmas light walk-through.

“We always have something going on, being her side or our side,” said King. “You know, it’s stuff going on. We’re not gonna sit back and not have something. We’ve been accused of doing too much. But I don’t listen to that. I follow my heart. If it’s in my heart, we gotta do it somehow.”

The church recently merged with the Bassett Church of the Brethren. Leaders said they shared the same vision and wanted to better serve the community. A daycare program is now in development at the Bassett campus.

Mount Hermon also proudly offers Spanish-language services, led by Lupita Cruz-Ortiz.

“Our church is Monte Hermón, and we are one church—it is not two,” Cruz-Ortiz said. “We have been working together, and the vision is to be one church. We’re reaching out



The Branches perform a compelling set during the indoor celebration.



Junior King helps organize and bring to life many events at Mount Hermon Church of the Brethren.



Junior King prepared a dazzling outdoor light display before the rain moved festivities inside.

to the Hispanic and Spanish community.”

Spanish-language services are held Sundays at 2 p.m.

“We have people from Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, Venezuela, [and] Guatemala. So, it’s a very, very diverse community,” Cruz-Ortiz said.

English-language services are held Sundays at 10 a.m. Bible study is held Wednes-

days at 7 p.m. for both English and Spanish speakers. The church also partners with The Redeemed, a bikers’ church, to help reach a broader audience.

“This is a place where we have people like Junior,” Naff said. “Pastors can only lead, but the people must do something and further the kingdom of God, turning the world upside down. You start with community.”

# Trailblazer Challenge encourages exploration of county parks



Henry County Parks and Recreation has launched the Trailblazer Challenge, a new initiative designed to get residents and visitors outdoors while promoting local parks through a series of photo-based activities.

The challenge invites participants to visit 10 designated park locations across the county, each featuring a unique photo prompt. From posing for a volleyball-themed shot at Jack Dalton Park to lounging on the dock at Philpott Marina, the prompts are intended to be both fun and interactive.

Participants who complete all 10 photo prompts, post them on Facebook or Instagram using the hashtag #TrailblazerChallengeHC, and tag Henry County, Virginia, will receive a free Trailblazer Challenge T-shirt.

“This is a fun way for people to get outside, explore our incredible public spaces, and maybe even discover a few places they haven’t been before,” said County Administrator Dale Wagoner. “We hope this challenge helps people feel more connected to their community, to the outdoors, and to each other.”

To be eligible for a T-shirt, participants must post all 10 photos with the appropriate hashtag and tag. By joining the challenge, individuals grant Henry County permission to use the submitted photos for promotional purposes.

The featured parks include:

- Jack Dalton Park
- Collinsville Jaycee Park
- Jordan Creek Park
- Doe Run Park
- Fieldale Park
- Gravely Nature Preserve

## Henry County TRAILBLAZER CHALLENGE

- Visit all **10** Parks
- Take the Challenge Photo
- Tag us on Social Media
- Win a T-Shirt

For more information, visit [www.henrycountyva.gov/trailblazerchallenge](http://www.henrycountyva.gov/trailblazerchallenge)

- 1. Jack Dalton Park**  
Take a photo on or beside the volleyball court with your best spike or team cheer pose.
- 2. Collinsville Jaycee Park**  
Lean casually against the pickleball net and smile for the camera.
- 3. Jordan Creek Park**  
Snap a photo in front of the baseball scoreboard in your best game-day pose.
- 4. Doe Run Park**  
Take a scenic photo while standing on the bridge crossing the stream.
- 5. Fieldale Park**  
Pose beside the historic iron bridge segment and give a nod to the past.
- 6. Gravely Nature Preserve**  
Snap a photo next to one of the old tobacco barns along the trail.
- 7. Textile Heritage Trail**  
Take a picture on the wooden boardwalk—action shot or peaceful stroll.
- 8. Dick & Willie Trail (Ally's Alley)**  
Capture a moment with the rockface or the Smith River in the background.
- 9. Monogram Foods Smith River Sports Complex**  
Pose at the outdoor fitness court—show off a stretch or strength move!
- 10. Philpott Marina**  
Take a serene or adventurous photo on the dock leading to the boat slips.

## HENRY COUNTY TRAILBLAZER MAP

- Fieldale Walking Trail
- Dick & Willie Trail (Ally's Alley)
- Smith River Sports Complex
- Philpott Marina

The Trailblazer Challenge is already underway. Full details, including park locations and rules, are available online at [www.henrycountyva.gov/trailblazerchallenge](http://www.henrycountyva.gov/trailblazerchallenge). For more information, call Public Information Officer Brandon Martin at (276) 634-2573.



# First \$100 gift card awarded in ‘Paths & Paddles’ campaign



Henry County has awarded the first \$100 gift card in its “Paths & Paddles” promotional campaign to Rachel Hunsicker, who shared a heartfelt video describing how the local trail system has transformed her life. Her story underscores the deep connection residents feel to the trails and waterways throughout Martinsville and Henry County.

Launched in partnership with the Harvest Foundation and the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation, “Paths & Paddles” invites residents to submit short videos describing how they use and enjoy the region’s

trails. The videos are part of a broader marketing effort to showcase the community’s passion for outdoor recreation and to demonstrate public support as local leaders seek funding to expand the trail network.

“Our trails do more than connect places. They connect people,” said Brandon Martin, the county’s public information officer. “Rachel’s story is a moving reminder of the physical, emotional, and social benefits of these outdoor spaces.”

Up to 12 additional \$100 gift cards are available for trail users who submit approved videos by July 31. Selected videos will be featured in future pro-

motions that highlight how the community embraces outdoor living. Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis until the deadline or until all prizes are claimed.

The campaign is part of a broader two-year initiative known as the Campaign to Build Trail Love (C2BTL), developed through Henry County’s participation in the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Thriving Communities Program. That national program helps communities launch infrastructure projects that improve mobility, reduce pollution, and enhance access to affordable transportation.

As one of the first communities selected for the program, Henry County received a \$90,000 subgrant to develop an Active Transportation Plan and to launch a communications campaign aimed at elevating community voices and building pride in local trails.

That campaign became “Paths & Paddles,” a lasting brand identity for regional trail and waterway promotion. Anchored by the Dick & Willie Passage Rail Trail — which stretches 11 miles through neigh-

borhoods, parks, and business hubs — the campaign reflects the community’s belief that

outdoor access is essential to a thriving, connected life.

For more informa-

tion or to submit a video, visit [www.henrycountyva.gov/pathsandpaddles](http://www.henrycountyva.gov/pathsandpaddles).



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A large, rectangular granite headstone for the Johnson family. It features a central plaque with the name "JOHNSON" and two smaller plaques on either side. The left plaque is for Martin L. Johnson, born Feb. 13, 1927, and died Jan. 4, 2006. The right plaque is for Ruth D. Johnson, born Jan. 8, 1929, and died Aug. 22, 2010. Between the two plaques is a heart-shaped plaque with the dates "APR. 14 1949" and the words "TOGETHER FOREVER".



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