



Supervisors looked on as Ashley Norton, recipient of the Henry County Headliner Award, signed copies of her Ferrum College athletic card in recognition of her induction to the Ferrum Sports Hall of Fame for 2025.

Board approves adding P&HCC takeover of New College Institute to legislative agenda

By Taylor Boyd

The Henry County Board of Supervisors voted Tuesday, Sept. 23, to support a resolution that endorses Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) to take over operations of the New College Institute (NCI) and convert it into the Patrick & Henry Workforce Economic Development Building. The item was added to the county's 2026 legislative agenda that will be forwarded to the upcoming General Assembly.

County Administrator Dale Wagoner said the

request came from NCI Board of Directors member Dr. Mark Crabtree.

Crabtree "and two other members of the board have taken up an aggressive approach, a proactive approach, to decide the direction of the New College Institute. As you know, over the past two General Assembly budgets, funding for the New College was stricken from the Governor's budget on both occasions and had to be handed back by the new General Assembly," Wagoner

(See Board p. 10)

Council hears update on ARPA funding

By Taylor Boyd

The Martinsville City Council heard an update on its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and discussed how remaining funds could be used at its Sept. 16 meeting.

Grant Manager Sita Conde said the city received about \$15,473,451 in 2021 when Congress passed ARPA. These funds were obligated or encumbered by Dec. 31, 2024, and must be fully expended by Dec. 31, 2026.

"We are at the stage of our timeline in which we're still working to spend all awarded funds while also abiding by the recordkeeping requirement, which calls for staff to hold onto all documentation through December 31, 2031," she said.

After the city used the revenue loss option, Conde said Martinsville still has \$2,153,752.02 to allocate internally toward unfinished ARPA projects or to address capital needs.

"City council had previously committed funding to demolition, a career exploration program, the SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system, the comprehensive land use plan, Martinsville Middle School generator, and the amphitheater project," she said.

After completing these projects, Conde said the city will be left with \$975,500.74 in ARPA funding.

"Our next steps are fulfilling our remain-

ing obligations, submitting payments to our vendors, and working with department directors to determine how to spend that remaining \$975,501," Conde said.

Interim City Manager Rob Fincher said one reason for the deep dive into the city's ARPA funds is to dispel a rumor that the city lost its money.

"The city did not lose any ARPA money," Fincher said. "What we are looking at when we say that we're looking for what we're going to do with that remaining money — this was money that was due to projects coming in under budget and projects being completed requiring less funds. That's what opened up this money."

Fincher said some projects will require additional funding, including the new SCADA system for the water department, which came in over budget.

"So, some of these funds will be utilized to pay for that overage that came in. Some of the other funds may end up coming in slightly under, which, for instance, the middle school generator, we're anticipating that actually being less than what we actually listed here as being committed," he said.

Noting the city didn't have a direct budget for capital projects this year, Fincher said the remaining ARPA funds will be used for various

(See Council p. 3)

City supports record-breaking Dodge Charger for 250th celebration



Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Museum Executive Director Holly Kozelsky and former Martinsville Mayor Danny Turner discuss plans to break the stock car speed record with a vehicle celebrating the 250th anniversary of U.S. independence.

By Taylor Boyd

The Martinsville City Council committed \$5,000 to the Virginia 250 Dodge Charger project during its Tuesday, Sept. 23 meeting as part of the statewide celebration of 250 years of American independence.

Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Museum Executive Director Holly Kozelsky said Joey Arrington plans to try to beat the current stock car world speed record of 244.9 mph, set in 2007, with a vehicle designed to reach 250 mph. The attempt is scheduled for Jan. 2 at Cape Canaveral, Florida.

"It's 250 because it's in honor of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

(See City p. 11)

Community leaders take the floor in Dancing For The Arts

By Jessica Dillon

Martinsville-Henry County's favorite dance-off is back. Piedmont Arts has announced pairings for the seventh Dancing For The Arts, a biennial fundraiser modeled after Dancing with the Stars.

In the past six programs, the event has raised nearly \$400,000 and featured 96 dancers, all community leaders stepping out of

boardrooms and into ballroom shoes.

"These vital funds were used to bring impactful exhibitions, educational arts programming to schools, and performing arts to the community," said Executive Director Heidi Pinkston. "Admission into the museum and all in-school programming is free. Piedmont Arts is an arts organization (See Community p. 10)

'Friday the 13th' actor C.J. Graham to visit Camp Lee Ford

By Jessica Dillon

C.J. Graham, an American actor best known for playing Jason Vorhees in "Friday the 13th Part VI: Jason Lives," will attend Jason Lives Fan Day at Camp Lee Ford in Ridgeway on Saturday, Sept. 27, from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet Graham and celebrate the iconic horror franchise.

Graham has not visited the area before but has attended conventions in Ra-



leigh, North Carolina.

"I've never been there before. I'm sure I've been with-

in a 500 to 600 mile radius, but I've never been specifically, so it's going to be excit-

ing," he said.

He has looked up the location in advance to familiarize himself with the area and praised event promoter Corey Agee for generating local excitement.

"He's done a great job his whole team has as far as exposure and getting us on the market. I mean, done anything from wrapping his own truck to billboards, radio. I mean, I'm like wow, you know, for a one-day visit, tre-

(See Friday p. 3)

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Day of Action mobilizes volunteers across community



By Jessica Dillon
The United Way of Henry County & Martinsville held its Day of Action event Friday, Sept. 12, bringing volunteers together for a full day of community service. The event began with a catered breakfast at New College Institute, followed by the 2025-26 Campaign Kickoff Ceremony, which included awards for several local businesses.

“Our Day of Action mobilizes our community to take action while celebrating those who are

Bassett’s long-eared mystery: Who let the rabbits out?



Snowball, a white domestic rabbit, has been spotted wandering parking lots in Bassett for more than two years.

By Jessica Dillon
The roaming days of a pair of domesticated rabbits in Bassett may finally be numbered, with Henry County animal control officers preparing to step in.

For more than two years, residents have been charmed — and puzzled — by the sight of two unusually friendly rabbits, a white one named Snowball and a calico named Spunky, hopping through parking lots and lawns.

They’re bigger than an average wild rabbit, and clearly used to be somebody’s pets, one local said, noting that the pair seems to appear wherever people least expect them.

The rabbits are not recent ‘escapees’ from Riverwalk, which has a petting zoo. though the facility has received calls about them over the years. “The rabbits in the picture do not belong, and have not belonged, to Riverwalk,” said Sharon Mills, who has fielded more than a few calls about them.

Bassett historian Andrew Doss said he only recently learned about the wandering duo. “The locals have chimed in that these bunnies appear quite regularly,” he said. “It’s likely they were tame at one point — I mean, a white bunny is not something you find around here in the wild.”

Employees at Bassett Furniture Industries headquarters, one of the rabbits’ favorite haunts, said the pair still seem surprisingly sociable. “You could probably lure the white one over and catch it with food,” one worker said.

But while the rabbits’ story has amused many, wildlife experts warn that domestic bunnies are poorly equipped for survival. Unlike their wild cousins, they face starvation, predators, traffic and cold weather.

Releasing pet animals is illegal in Henry County, and it leaves both the animals and the ecosystem at risk. Still, finding homes for rabbits isn’t easy. Most local rescues are focused on dogs and cats, leaving Snowball and Spunky in limbo.

Catching rabbits is no small task, even when they’re used to humans — quick feet and twitching noses make them tricky to trap. Animal control plans to set traps soon, hoping to get Snowball and Spunky safely into the shelter and, with a little “hop-ful” luck, into a forever home.

dedicated to help overcome our area’s greatest challenges,” said Communications & Outreach Coordinator Elizabeth Carter Bailey. “Partnered organizations stand with United Way of Henry County and Martinsville in servicing community needs in the areas of health, youth opportunity, and financial security.”

The United Way’s campaign goal for the 2025-26 season is \$480,000, of which \$146,935.67, or 30.6%, has already been raised. Volunteers participating in the Day of Action contributed more than 450 hours of service in a single day.

Projects completed by volunteers included:

- *Meal Preparation with the Salvation Army: Volunteers prepared meals for visitors and helped sort goods in the kitchen.
- *School Supply Organization at Boys & Girls Clubs of the Blue Ridge: Volunteers organized materials for local club members.
- *Community Spruce-Up with the MHC Historical Society: Volunteers detailed and cleaned the interior of the MHC Heritage Museum and spruced up exterior flowerbeds.
- *Fresh Space & Full Hearts at Henry County Food Pantry: Volunteers sorted and organized donated goods.
- *Sports Complex Spruce-Up with Henry County Parks & Recreation: Volunteers focused on weeding and laying mulch.
- *Pollinator Garden Pick-Up at Piedmont Arts: Volunteers planted 50 trees, installed signage, and mulched along the Pollinator Path.
- *Property Maintenance for Piedmont Com-

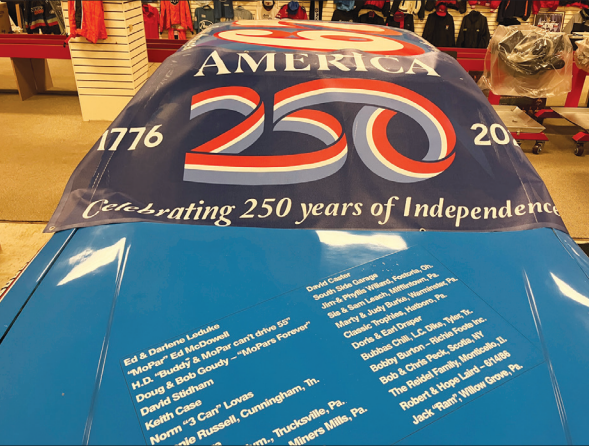
munity Services: Volunteers pressure-washed and cleared gutters at PCS recovery residences.

- *Goods Transport with Begins With You: Volunteers transported non-perishable food items to the Henry County Food Pantry and assisted with sorting.
- *Library Clean-Up at Blue Ridge Regional Library: Volunteers detail-cleaned and organized bookshelves, tables, toys, and electronics.
- *Gardening at Spencer Penn Centre: Volunteers prepared the community garden for fall planting.
- *Paint Refresh at Preston Community Center: Volunteers brightened community spaces with fresh coats of paint.
- *Letter Preparation at United Way of Henry County and Martinsville: Volunteers prepared 140 letters by hand for distribution to current supporters.

This year’s Day of Action efforts benefited the P&HCC Patriot Pantry (supported by ValleyStar Credit Union, Bassett Office Supply, and Henry County), the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Blue Ridge (supported by ValleyStar Credit Union), and the Patrick County Food Bank (supported by the Martinsville-Henry & Patrick County Association of Realtors).

Those interested in supporting local efforts, including the annual Day of Action, can pledge at www.UnitedWayofHCM.org and select “Donate.” For updates, follow United Way on Facebook and Instagram.

MHC Historical Society partners on Virginia 250 Car Project



VA 250 banner.

The MHC Historical Society announced its partnership with the Virginia 250 Car Project, with VA250 and Arrington Engines.

Celebrating the 250th anniversary of Virginia, the American Revolution and the nation, the Virginia 250 car will set a new world record - a NASCAR-spec Dodge Charger race car to go 250 miles per hour at NASA’s 15,000-foot runway at Space Florida’s Launch and Landing Facility on Jan. 2, 2026.

The car and engine are designed and developed by Joey Arrington of Arrington Manufacturing, who built the engine which set the standing record of 244.9 mph as confirmed by Guinness World Records in Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah in 2007.

A film crew and helicopter will record this monumental event as the driver attempts to cross the 250 mph mark to honor and kick off the 250th year celebration of America. This event also will give a nod to Virginia’s history in racing and demonstrates that some of the best equipment in the world still originates in Virginia, sealing its rightful place in racing today.

The project team is Joey Arrington, owner of Arrington Manufacturing and Arrington Engines; Danny Turner, a former Martinsville city councilman and mayor; Dr. Pam Cobler, consultant with Cobler Consultants LLC, community advocate for Disability Rights and Resource Center and Reed Creek Supervisor; Roman Draper



This is the record-breaking engine.

of Thrive Mind; and Holly Kozelsky, executive director of the Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society. Alexir Hairston of Streettribe Designs designed and is producing a graphics wrap for the car.

“We are thrilled to be the fiscal agent and partner with the Virginia 250 Car Project, which connects Southside’s rich motorsports history to what Southern Virginia offers today,” said Kozelsky.

“We want to bring Southside Virginia to the world’s attention. What better showcase than the 250th anniversary of the declaration of independence and the 1969 Dodge Daytona, the most iconic muscle car ever built in Detroit.

The Virginia 250 Car will get the world’s attention and it’s up to us to market Southside’s wonderful economic opportunities and tourism offering, which include eight museums, while they’re hooked.”

Follow the car’s progress on www.mhchistorysociety.org with articles under the “Va. 250 Car” tab.

Be sure to like the Henry County Enterprise on Facebook

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Thursday, October 2

Henry County School Board meets at 5:30 p.m. at Sanville Elementary School, 19 Sanville School Road, Bassett. Closed session follows the meeting.

Events

Friday, September 26

Savory September: Wild, Wild West at Piedmont Arts. Wild West-themed fundraiser for the arts from 6:30-9:30 p.m., with live country and western music by Matt Boswell. Admission tickets are \$50 per person and include food and drinks. Raffle tickets are \$20 each or \$100 for six. Tickets available at PiedmontArts.org. Sponsored by Diversified Trust, VisitMartinsville, Alliance Bee, Ameristaff, Bassett Office Supply, Children First Pediatrics of Virginia, P.C., Martinsville Eyecare, Sandy River Equestrian Center, Collinsville Printing Co. and Draper Flowers & Gifts.

Saturday September 27

Learn to make bows with Melaine Barrow at the Spencer Penn Centre, 10 a.m. to noon; \$30 non-member \$25 member.

Tuesday, September 30

The Blood Connection Blood Drive, Rangeley Ruritans, 134 Calloway Drive, Fieldale, 2-7 p.m. Sponsor code is 13820. Receive \$30 in rewards and TBC will donate \$10 per donation to the organization.

Saturday, October 4

Storytime, 10 a.m. in the Hylton Library at Spencer Penn, 475 Spencer Penn Road, Spencer. Free program, fit for all ages. No registration needed.

Oktoberfest, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Uptown Martinsville.

Rooted In Martinsville Tree Festival, 11 a.m. -2 p.m., at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, 21 Starling Ave, Martinsville. Free museum admission. Education Stations hosted by Fairy Stone and Philpott Lake Park Rangers, Southwestern Piedmont Virginia Master Naturalists, Friends of Fairy Stone State Park, Virginia Department of

Forestry, and museum staff.

Friday, October 10

Music Night at Spencer Penn. Twin Creek Stringband will play in the Alumni Hall. Gate opens at 5 p.m., and the band starts at 6:30 p.m. Admission is a \$5 cash donation. Concessions will be sold.

Tuesday, October 14

Beekeeping program in the Susan L. Adkins Memorial Meeting Room at the Bassett Historical Center, 10:30 a.m. Presenter Jay Hudson is a third generation beekeeper with 16 years of experience in beekeeping.

Saturday, October 18

Hamburger Steak Dinner, 4 -7 p.m. at Bassett Volunteer Fire Department, 3735 Fairystone Park Hwy., Bassett. Meal includes hamburger steak, fries, baked beans, slaw, roll and a drink for \$12 per plate. Eat in or to-go plates available. All proceeds benefit the fire department.

Ongoing

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.

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 mhed-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.

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.

Council

(cont. from page 1)

capital needs.

“We are in the process of reviewing the capital requests. We are forming a capital committee that will be meeting to assess the needs of the city, and that way as a group we can look at what capital funds need to be spent,” he said.

The committee will report back to council on how the ARPA funds should be allocated. Fincher said the city has no plans for new outside projects.

“Our capital needs are to the point where it’s going to be necessary to use all of those available funds for those projects,” he said.

Council member Aaron Rawls asked if a list of all projects that used ARPA funds could be provided.

“I would need three hands to finger-count the number of times we’ve approved the spending of this money, and it doesn’t match. I just want to

understand what we actually did or didn’t. We probably all got a call from someone who’s like, ‘Where’s the money?’ I’m just trying to figure out exactly what went out and who’s still waiting,” Rawls said.

Fincher said projects still waiting for ARPA funding are being worked through and noted that the career exploration program was completed and signed off that day.

“So, it’s a process of going through and looking at” them, he said.

In other matters, the council:

*Approved a resolution allowing the city to move forward with financing through the Virginia Resources Authority (VRA) for an electric substation repair, estimated at \$2.4 million.

*Held a public hearing for citizen input on city and United Way Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications.

*Approved transferring ownership of 932 Biden St. to the West Piedmont Planning District Commission for the purpose of building a single-family home through the Martinsville Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

*Approved the adoption of Public-Private Education Act (PPEA) of 2002 guidelines for city requests for proposals (RFPs).

*Heard public works and water resources department updates during a work session.

*Approved proclamations honoring Constitution Week (Sept. 17-23), Adult Education and Family Literacy Week (Sept. 18-22), and National Recovery Month (Sept.).

*Heard an update from the Martinsville project of the Blue Ridge Library system.

*Approved the consent agenda, including meeting minutes and bills.

*Heard comments from council members.

Friday

(cont. from page 1)

mendous effort,” Graham said.

A Vietnam War veteran, Graham accidentally entered acting. While at a club, he was cast to wear the Jason costume by the Reel Effects company for a promotional video.

“Since we’re recording this for the hypnotist, he’s trying to make up promotional tape. Let’s take CJ the GM. He’s the right size, because we have Ted White’s wardrobe,” Graham said.

“They kept saying, ‘Wow, wow, ‘you know, we’re gonna cast you for Jason?’ Yeah, right, we’ve all heard that one, and guess what? We’re talking about those 39 years later. Next year, August 1st will be 40 years since 1986.”

Graham said he stayed in Los Angeles for about eight years, acting in the movie “Highway to Hell” as Hell Cop and appearing in national commercials for AT&T, Colgate, Gatorade, and Miller Beer.

He described his size as a factor in his casting. He said he’s 6-feet, three inches tall and weighs 250 pounds. In comparison, “I think Tom Cruise” is 5-feet, 8 or 9 inches tall, “so I went back to the casino in Las Vegas, where I remained for about 20, 21 years.”

Graham eventually became general manager of two casino resorts. He now lives on a ranch with several animals, including chickens, alpacas, and horses.

“It’s fun, but I enjoy doing about 12 to 15 events” annually, Graham said. He records the events he participates in to make them more enjoyable.

Graham described his favorite scene from his acting career.

“My very, very favorite scene is the very, very first scene I ever shot in a movie, in wardrobe or any other thing in my life. There’s a scene where Jason comes into side profile, and the motor home is behind. It’s

moving and I turn, look at it. I tilt my head lightly and all you see is my shoulders going out towards a motor home,” he said.

He said filming movies out of sequence made the work challenging but fun. “One, two, three, four. It could be three, four, one, two, but I will tell you that it was fun. I had a great time,” Graham said.

He noted the challenges of playing a character without facial expressions.

“The interesting fact is though I have no words. I challenge anybody to look in the mirror, show anger, happiness, sadness, whatever you want to show, but you can’t give one expression in your face. Basically, you might as well just put a hood over your face because everything is body language, 100 percent.

Sports Schedule

The following are the dates and times of local high school teams and their games for the week of September 29-October 4:

9/29	7pm	Volleyball	Christiansburg at Magna Vista
	7pm	Volleyball	Martinsville at William Fleming
9/30	5:45pm	Volleyball	Carlisle at Chatham Hall
	6pm	Boys Soccer	New Covenant at Carlisle
	7pm	Volleyball	Tunstall at Bassett
	7pm	Volleyball	Magna Vista at Halifax County
	7pm	Volleyball	Martinsville at Radford
10/1	5pm	Cross Country	Bassett at George Washington (Anglers Park)
	5pm	Cross Country	Magna Vista at George Washington (Anglers Park)
10/2	5pm	Boys Soccer	Timberlake Christian at Carlisle
	7pm	Volleyball	Halifax County at Bassett
	7pm	Volleyball	Magna Vista at George Washington
	7pm	Volleyball	Glenvar at Martinsville
10/3	5:30pm	Volleyball	MSA at Carlisle
	7pm	Football	Tunstall at Bassett
	7:30pm	Football	Martinsville at James River
10/4	10am	Cross Country	Bassett at Cave Spring (Green Hill Park)
	TBD	Volleyball	Magna Vista - Invitational at Lord Botetourt HS

OPINION

Democrats: Affordable Care Act Is Unaffordable as Originally Passed

Once again, Obamacare has entered Congressional debate. It is failing to deliver affordable health insurance!

This time, it is the Democrats making the argument.

Now, I confess to you that I was shocked to hear a Democratic Member of Congress say recently in a hearing: “if these credits expire and premiums rising by hundreds of dollars each month and thousands each year, putting affordable coverage out of reach.”

Many Democrats made similar arguments: that without a renewal of the “enhanced” premium tax credits originally passed as a temporary measure in 2021, health insurance in the Obamacare exchanges isn’t affordable!

I confess to the reader that I don’t think they meant to say that, but it is what they said.

Let me give you the background.

Democrats created the temporary “enhanced” premium tax credits during the COVID-19 crisis that put millions of Americans out of work,

It was understandable to create this policy. People needed help due to economic pains. So the temporary “enhanced” credit helped Americans pay their premiums.

As part of the Inflation Reduction Act, Democrats set an expiration for these temporary COVID-era credits. The credits were meant to be a temporary fix, not a permanent health insurance solution. They reasoned as the job market rebounded, so would economic outlooks.

Democrats designated their expiration for December 31st, 2025.

However, the program’s tentative end creates a situation where people could



Morgan Griffith

Representative

face significant premium cost increases within Obamacare exchanges.

This Democratic Party policy created a financial cliff, which will cause stress to a lot of American families.

I believe we need a phase-out of the program instead of the steep cliff.

Shockingly, because Republicans have not yet addressed the policy expiration that Democrats created, progressive Democrats are demanding the upcoming government funding bill feature a permanent extension of these originally temporary COVID-era “enhanced” premium tax credits.

It made me scratch my head in wonderment as I listened to arguments made by Democrats.

As the Democratic logic went, without the special program designed to account for the COVID-19 pandemic, President Obama’s signature health achievement didn’t deliver affordable health insurance for Americans as promised.

They argued insurance in the Obamacare exchanges needs to be subsidized even more than called for in the original bill! Therefore, Obamacare failed in its mission to make health insurance affordable.

It could be a mere rhetorical device to push their current agenda, but Democrats are trampling all over their legacy program from the Obama era to do so.

Democratic lawmak-

ers appear to acknowledge that Obamacare is broken.

I was an early and outspoken opponent of Obamacare. My predecessor in Congress voted against it because he saw there were problems in the bill for a rural, aging population like the Ninth District.

But given current circumstances, I believe we need to establish a glide path for these temporary COVID-era “enhanced” premium tax credits.

If not addressed, enrollees in Obamacare exchange plans may run up against a cliff and face major financial challenges.

One possible solution is to grandfather the program so that the credits don’t apply to those who are not currently enrolled.

Another compromise on the policy could be setting an income cap, because lower-income, more vulnerable folks are most in need of relief.

A third one is some combination of the two.

What the ultimate compromise will look like? I don’t know, we will see! But a negotiated compromise is needed.

However, Senate Democrats shutting down the government while those negotiations are happening does not help millions of Americans and only divides those seeking a solution.

It appears Democrats are admitting they were wrong about Obamacare insurance exchanges being affordable.

And I will admit that I was originally wrong about the cost-sharing program for Obamacare Bronze plans. The cost-sharing program with Bronze plans helps enrollees transition from Medicaid Expansion programs into the more traditional plans offered in the Obamacare exchanges.

The shift from Medicaid Expansion to Obamacare exchanges can be so costly, we even hear stories of people declining or resigning from jobs where they received promotions. They do so because despite a boosted salary, such promotions fail to compensate for the rise in health care costs as a result of shifting from Medicaid Expansion.

Thus, I am pushing for a return to the cost-sharing program.

As a compromise on the “enhanced” premiums is debated, I will continue to push solutions that deliver affordable, quality health insurance.

Owning Her Look, Owning Her Message

Nijera Jones is apologizing to no one.

Instead, she flaunts.

“I love to be different every day,” she said. “I love to try out different styles and wear different things. Either I’m very dressed down, or I’m going to be full glam.”

Her sense of style and flair came from the women in her family, who always dressed elegantly, she said.

“My favorite things to wear are metallic suits like satin white with little gold spots on it, or dresses, and I have all kinds of dresses – and I’m building my gown wardrobe.”

Her wardrobe also includes a beautiful hand-embroidered sash and a heavy quality crown embellished with crystals.

Jones is the Miss Voluptuous USA South titleholder with the platform “Unapologetically Desirable.” Her message has three tiers: “plus-sized women, Black women and ... plus-sized black women.”

She uses her title and platform to bring her experiences to the forefront, she said, with a key one being to challenge “fat-phobia.”

Fat-phobia is rooted in “a lot of racism,” she said. “A lot of what happened to my ancestors we are still seeing today,” such as the enduring stereotypes: “Mammy, a nurturing figure who is sexless, with no desire, there to take care of people” and also the opposite image: “plus-sized women being oversexualized – the jezebel stereotype; they expect us to have sex anywhere, with no standards.”

Many of her patients have had to deal with those issues, she said, and “Of course, I’ve grown up around Black women. I’ve seen them go through it, my mom and grandma sure to present themselves in a certain way so they are not stereotyped: extremely polite and soft-spoken” so that people would not treat them badly.

People continue to make the mistake of acting as if sex is taboo and “something we need to keep completely private and not talk about it at all,” she said. That attitude causes teen pregnancies, assault and women putting up with not being sexually satisfied with their long-term partners.

“What I wish people would know about Black women and weight is that beauty is definitely more than skin deep,” she said.

And a preference for thin may just be from conditioning rather from the heart, she said.

“A lot of preferences we have for certain people – certain body types – are rooted in a lot of the judgement that different groups received back in history. A lot is also rooted in the medicalization of Black women,” she said.

Though society has a long way to go in with acceptance, things are a lot better than they were. Part of that came from ground-breaking television shows of the 1980s and 1990s which showed chubby and fat characters in a respectable manner for practically the first time, with shows such as “Roseanne” and “Living Single.”



Holly Kozelsky



“We are not waiting to be chosen—we are choosing ourselves. In every curve, every word, every truth, we are already enough.” ~ Nijera Jones

She anticipates views on body positivity and stereotypes to “go back and forth” in the foreseeable future. There continue to be both positive and negative and harmful attitudes.

Negative stereotypes have reined for so long “that it takes time for people to be body positive. We have to get to body-neutrality first before they can be celebrated.”

Even though her focus is on Black women, “it’s important for women in general to be loving themselves and feeling beautiful without someone telling them they’re beautiful You are who you are, period,” she said.

Jones grew up in the Meadow Gardens area off Chatham Road. It was a great childhood, playing with all of her cousins and seven siblings and a “multitude of great aunts and uncles,” she said. Her parents are Cathy Martin and Alfred Jones.

She went to Mt. Olivet Elementary School, Laurel Park Middle School, Magna Vista High School and Carlisle School, always busy with tennis, volleyball, Spanish Club, drama class and other afterschool activities. She was the senior class secretary and graduated in 2012.

She started college at Old Dominion University and graduated from Radford with bachelor’s degrees in psychology and sociology and a master’s degree in clinical mental health counseling, then went through the internships and residencies to get a counseling license, as well as another master’s degree, this one from Arizona State University online, specializing in gender, religion and race.

She worked in a few capacities as a counselor in other cities, then returned to Martinsville 3 years ago. Now, she supervises clinical students who are trying to get their licenses. She also is working toward her PhD through the California Institute of

Integral Studies. Her dissertation is how plus-sized Black women in the South view themselves.

Her practices is called SEXhale Service, a somatic sex therapy which is regular sex therapy with body movement with it, such as yoga meditation, “to really help people get in tune with their body,” she said. “It is really good for sexual trauma victims or religious hang-ups.”

Meanwhile, she has participated in a variety of pageants through the years, starting with winning a baby pageant, and on up.

The thought of pageants came back to her recently, she said, so she started looking up possibilities and found the Miss Voluptuous pageant online. She followed it for a year or so before applying and interviewing to participate. It is “an extremely long application process,” with only eight titles in the United States available, she said.

She won for this region.

She will compete in the pageant Oct. 26-31 in England, at Rosington Hall in South Yorkshire. Her website is www.unapologeticallydesirable.com, and her email address is mypusa-south25@gmail.com.

The other participants are more like friends than competition, though. They talk once a month over Zoom, where the past queen and director teach them “tips and tricks.” They follow each other on social media. It is a competition, but we actually really do love each other.”

They also prepare for their own pageant by being in the audience at any pageant around them locally, and making public appearances in their capacity as Miss Voluptuous.

Her trip to the Miss Voluptuous pageant will be her first time abroad, and she is looking forward to meeting her new friends who come from all over the world, she said.

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Published Each Saturday

USPS - 6

PUBLISHER
Michael Showell

EDITOR
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(276) 694-3101

ADVERTISING MANAGER
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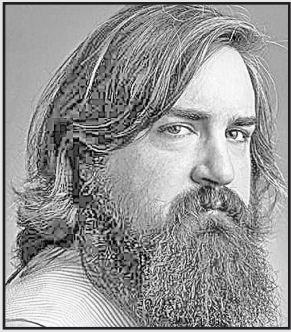
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The Henry County Enterprise (USPS-6) is published weekly for \$52 per year in state, \$53 per year out of state, by Virginia Media, Inc., P.O. Box 429, Lewisburg, WV 24901. Periodical postage paid at Martinsville, VA.

OPINION

Regarding the First Amendment



By Ben R. Williams

The other day I hopped on Google to see whatever happened to that guy who used to host “Win Ben Stein’s Money,” and boy oh boy, things are not looking good for our nation.

Yes, Jimmy Kimmel, host of Jimmy Kimmel Live! on ABC, has had his TV show “indefinitely suspended” by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). (NOTE: Shortly before I submitted this column, ABC owner Disney relented and announced Kimmel would return to the airwaves on Sept. 23. This, however, does not change the point of the column.) So what did Kimmel say that provoked the wrath of FCC Chairman Brendan Carr?

On Sept. 15, in his opening monologue regarding the shooting death of conservative commentator Charlie Kirk, Kimmel said the following:

“We hit some new lows over the weekend with the MAGA gang trying to characterize this kid who killed Charlie Kirk as anything other than one of them and doing everything they can to score political points from it,” Kimmel said. “In between the finger-pointing, the White House flew the flag at half-staff, which got some criticism, but on a human level, you can see how hard the president was taking this.”

Kimmel then cut to a clip of President Donald Trump being interviewed by a reporter outside the White House just days after Kirk was killed. When the reporter asked how Trump was holding up following the murder, Trump said “I think very good” before immediately jumping to the topic of the renovations being done to the

White House ballroom.

This is what was deemed too offensive for Kimmel to continue airing his show.

First off, Kimmel definitely isn’t making light of Kirk’s death in this clip; if anything, by pointing out that a large portion of the outpouring of grief seems performative, he’s suggesting the shooting should be taken more seriously.

Is it offensive to make that observation? Wherever you fall on it, Kimmel’s not wrong. Just look at Charlie Kirk’s memorial service that took place this past weekend, which Trump somehow made about himself and the axes he has to grind with his many enemies in a display that even the late Richard Nixon would have described as “a bit much.”

But whether you agree with Kimmel’s sentiment or not, the fact remains that Kimmel’s First Amendment rights were violated.

“But wait!” some say. “Roseanne Barr was kicked off her show for her political commentary! It’s the same situation!”

These two situations are wildly different in an important way. It’s true that ABC cancelled Roseanne’s titular show after she tweeted a racist joke, but ABC made the call of their own volition. While they probably felt some pressure from advertisers and viewers, they did not receive pressure from the United States government, and that’s an important distinction. The First Amendment states that the government cannot infringe upon religion, free speech, freedom of the press, or the right of the people to peaceably assemble.

Before Kimmel’s Sept. 15 show, FCC Chairman Brendan Carr made some comments about Kimmel that can only be read as a threat.

“Look, we can do this the easy way or the hard way,” Carr said. “These companies can find ways to change conduct and take action, frankly, on Kimmel, or you know, there’s going to be additional work for the FCC ahead.”

Carr was essentially saying that if Kimmel didn’t fall in line with the

official government talking points, he would pull ABC’s license. On top of that, after CBS announced weeks earlier that it was cancelling The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, Trump took to Truth Social to call for Kimmel to be the next late night host fired for insufficient fealty. And after Kimmel’s show was suspended, Trump had this to say:

“Congratulations to ABC for finally having the courage to do what had to be done,” Trump wrote. “Kimmel has ZERO talent, and worse ratings than even Colbert, if that’s possible. That leaves Jimmy (Fallon) and Seth (Meyers), two total losers, on Fake News NBC. Their ratings are also horrible. Do it NBC!!!!”

It’s one thing for a show to get cancelled or suspended because the host said something offensive and the network is concerned advertisers will pull their support. Freedom of speech does not mean freedom from consequences.

However, it’s another thing entirely when a show is cancelled or suspended because the United States government is threatening the network. That is a deeply concerning precedent and absolutely in violation of the First Amendment.

But hey, you don’t have to take my word for it. A whole lot of folks agree with me.

Take Republican Sen. Ted Cruz. In the aftermath of Kimmel’s firing, Cruz said he was thrilled that Kimmel was fired and said that Carr was “a good guy,” but he also said this:

“But what (Carr) said there is dangerous as hell,” Cruz said. “He says we can do this the easy way, or we could do this the hard way, yeah. And I got to say that’s right out of Goodfellas. That’s right out of a mafioso coming into a bar going, nice bar you have here, it’d be a shame if something happened to it.”

Added Cruz, “I think it is unbelievably dangerous for government to put itself in the position of saying, ‘We’re going to decide what speech we like and what we don’t, and we’re going to threaten to take you off air if we don’t like what you’re saying.’ And it might

feel good right now to threaten Jimmy Kimmel, but when it is used to silence every conservative in America, we will regret it.”

Who else agrees with me? How about conservative commentator Tucker Carlson. After U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi floated the idea of using the Department of Justice to target anyone who spoke ill of Kirk, Carlson spoke out against the Trump administration using Kirk’s murder as an excuse to crush civil liberties.

“You hope that a year from now, the turmoil we’re seeing in the aftermath of (Kirk’s) murder won’t be leveraged to bring hate speech laws to this country,” Carlson said. “And trust me, if it is, if that does happen, there is never a more justified moment for civil disobedience than that, ever. Because if they can tell you what to say, they’re telling you what to think. ... There is nothing they can’t do to you because they don’t consider you human.”

Chilling! And speaking of chilling, here are a few words from conservative commentator Ben Shapiro.

“The FCC should not be threatening action against ABC or its affiliates or Disney,” Shapiro said. “Social censure is perfectly appropriate. The blowback from the public is totally natural and in fact good because Jimmy Kimmel is in fact a schmuck who should have been taken off the air 10 years ago. ... The question is... whether these local affiliates canceled Kimmel because they were upset with Kimmel or whether they canceled Kimmel because they came under pressure from the FCC.”

And, last but not least, here’s what Charlie Kirk himself thought about government censorship:

“Hate speech does not exist legally in America,” Kirk tweeted last year. “There’s ugly speech. There’s gross speech. There’s evil speech. And ALL of it is protected by the First Amendment. Keep America free.”

I never thought I’d find myself in agreement with Charlie Kirk, Ben Shapiro, Tucker Carlson, and Ted Cruz, but as the old saying goes, a nation’s rapid slide into authoritarian rule makes strange bedfellows.

Column Sponsored by: Dr. Mensink

First graduates of P&HCC/HCADC Program honored

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC), Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis, and staff at Henry County’s Adult Detention Center (HCADC) celebrated the graduation of two students today following their completion of the Greenlee Industrial Wiring program instituted by an agreement between P&HCC and Henry County Sheriff’s Office (HCSO) in November 2024.

Joseph Dillon Jr. and Brandon Hayden were celebrated as the first graduates of the program, earning eleven Greenlee certifications and additional AC/DC certifications. The pilot class included four students: Dillon Jr, Hayden, Chirstopher Ayers and Derek Lide (these students completed nine of the 11 Greenlee certifications in the program prior to transfers to other facilities).

Instructor Tim Forbes, who



P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges and Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis congratulate Brandon Hayden and Joseph Dillon Jr. on their graduation.

worked with the students at HCADC over the course of the summer in P&HCC’s mobile lab, shared a message with the graduates prior to the award of their certificates: “We are not just gathered to recognize a class

completed or certifications earned - we are here to witness a victory. A victory over limitation. A victory over doubt. A victory over the voice that says ‘you can’t.’”

P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges

es presented the graduates with certificates and congratulated them on their accomplishment saying, “We are so proud to celebrate this achievement with you and know that you will use the skills you have acquired as you move forward.”

Dillon Jr. and Hayden now possess certifications in Hand Bending, Bending Basics, Advanced Bending, 3 Phase Testing, Wire Pathways - Knockouts, Wire Pathways - Rotary, Conductor- Fishing, Conductor- Pulling, Branch and Series level Termination, Service Level Termination, and Insulation & Ground Rod Testing. Additionally, they are completing training in fundamentals of electricity - AC/DC.

“We appreciate what you put into it and hope you get a lot more out of it for many years to come,” Davis told them.



Law enforcement agencies honor retired Martinsville assistant police chief

Law enforcement officers from several agencies were among those gathering Tuesday to honor Charles Edward Long Sr., a Marine Corps veteran and former assistant chief of police for the City of Martinsville, who died Sept. 15 at age 76.

A funeral service was held at Bassett Funeral Service Chapel, followed by a procession and burial at Roselawn Burial Park. Police vehicles escorted the hearse as fellow officers paid tribute to

Long’s decades of service.

Long served 25 years with the Martinsville Police Department, retiring as assistant chief, and later worked 14 years as the executive director of the Piedmont Criminal Justice Training Academy. He also co-founded C.C. Rider Automotive and was a member of Mount Bethel United Methodist Church.

Survivors include his son, Charles “Chad” Long Jr., and daughter, Yolanda Smallwood.

Meet the Author event to feature former supervisor



J. David Martin, EdD, a former member of the Henry County Board of Supervisors and Henry County school superintendent, will discuss his new book, “A Fairy Stone Adventure,” at a Meet the Author event at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 27, at the Henry County Administration Building, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

The story follows Karen, who discovers the legend of fairy

stones while spending the summer at her grandparents’ home. With help from Pete, a friendly cat from the local country store, she sets out to find the mystical stones, believed to bring good luck. Along the way, Karen and Pete explore scenic landscapes, face surprises and challenges, and learn lessons about teamwork, perseverance, and the joy of exploration.

Fairy Stone State Park, the real-life home of these unique stones, provides inspiration for young readers to embark on their own adventures. The legend, said to have been carried by historical figures, adds to the intrigue of Karen’s quest. “Fairy stones are more than just beautiful rocks; they symbolize hope and friendship,” Martin said.

“A Fairy Stone Adventure” is aimed at elementary and middle school readers and celebrates friendship, exploration, and the magic of nature. The book is available online at Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com.

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Downtown on Patrick Ave. Stuart, VA

Saturday, October 18

SET UP TIME 8am to 10am

Festival starts at 10am until 4pm

Music • Crafts • Games

Music By:

11:00 - 11:45 am. Elijah Smith and Levi Head "Bluegrass"
12:00 - 12:45 pm. Face 2 Face - Christian Rock Band
1:00 - 1:45 pm. Marcie Horne and Company
2:00 - 3:15 pm. Warren, Bodle and Allen

Sound By: August Heat

Apple Dumpling 5-K

Early registration through Oct 5 - \$25.00
Oct 6 through Day of Festival - \$30.00

Contact Patrick County Chamber of Commerce-
276-694-6012 • director@patrickchamber.com
Registration at 7:00 am Race at 8:00 am

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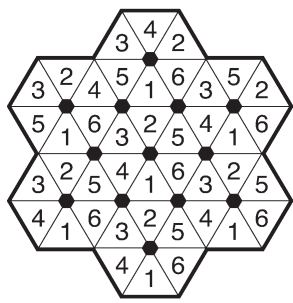
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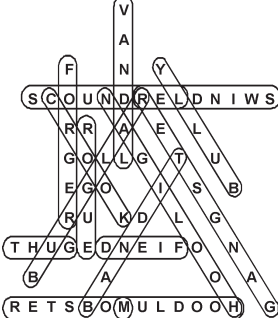
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(SNOWFLAKES)

solution



BAD GUYS



SCRAMBLERS

solution

1. Mutant; 2. Tingle;
3. Novice; 4. Demise

Today's Word

LISTENING



answer



Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

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GIVE TO GRACE
WITH GIRL
SCOUTS

TUESDAY,
SEPT. 30TH
6:00-7:30



The Martinsville/HC Girl Scouts have partnered with Grace Network to collect food for families in need in our area. There will be Girl Scout troops in different locations throughout the area to take your donations.

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

- Troop 1345- Stone Memorial Church
- Troop 2038- Leatherwood Crossing
- Troop 9384- Carlisle School
- Troop 897- Ridgeway Library (4:00-5:30)
- Troop 505- Horsepasture Rescue Squad
- Troop 615-Advance Auto (Greensboro Rd)
- Troop 1925-Adam's Grocery
- Troop 982- Dollar Tree (Commonwealth Blvd)

ITEMS NEEDED

Canned Products- Standard cans
Green peas, Green beans, Corn, Assorted Vegetables, Soups (10.75 oz.), Beef Stew, Tuna, Various Meats, Applesauce, Canned Fruit (up to 22 oz.), Peanut Butter (up to 28 oz.), Jelly (up to 18 oz.), Assorted Beans & Peas, Pork & Beans, Spaghetti Sauce, Juices (46 oz.)
Packaged Products:
Macaroni & cheese (7.25oz), Ramen Noodles, Cereal, Grits, Oatmeal, Saltine Crackers, Box Dinners, Rice (i of pkg), Dry Beans, Boxed Potato products, Pasta Noodles, Jiffy Cornbread Mix, Bisquick/Baking Mix, Sugar (i lb. bag)

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‘Give to Grace with Girl Scouts’ event set for Tuesday

The Martinsville/HC Girl Scouts are partnering with Grace Network to collect food for local families in need.

Girl Scouts troops will be located in various areas of the city and the county to accept donations of canned and packaged foods from 6-7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September

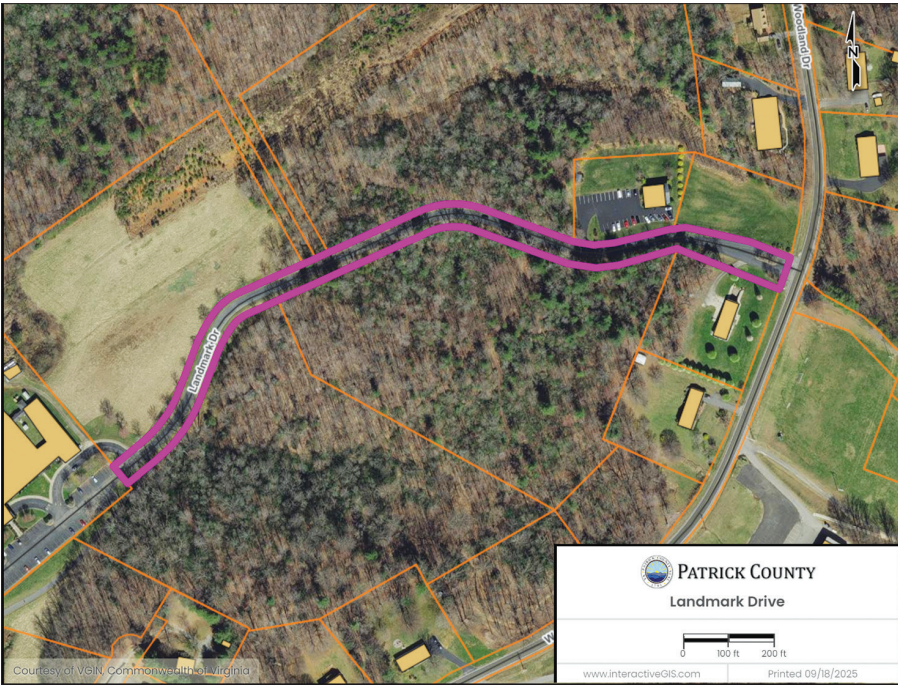
30. (See photo for suggested types of food donations.)

Drop off locations include Stone Memorial Church, Leatherwood Crossing, Carlisle School, Ridgeway Library, Horsepasture Rescue Squad, Advance Auto (Greensboro Road), Adam's Grocery and Dollar Tree (Commonwealth Blvd.)

Crossing the Lines

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

Council tables Landmark Drive ownership discussion



Discussions of assuming ownership of approximately 0.3 miles of Landmark Drive were tabled.

The Stuart Town Council tabled discussions on potentially taking ownership of a section of Landmark Drive at its Wednesday, Sept. 17, meeting, pending consultations with legal counsel.

The section under consideration runs from Woodland Drive to the Landmark Center parking lot, approximately 1,600 feet, or 0.3 miles. It is listed on the county tax map as parcel 48-11-10-32B. Landmark Drive is a private entrance developed and owned by the Landmark Center.

Town Manager Bryce Simmons said the town learned the request via a proposal from Wren Williams' law office.

"My understanding is that it is part of a real estate negotiation,"

Simmons said, and he believes it could be in the town's best interest to assume ownership of the road. He noted the property is ideal for development, with an existing sewer line in place and interest in expanding the nearby Mayo River Rail Trail.

Town ownership "would put it in the public hands, would allow for public access to those properties in the event that somebody wants to develop those parcels. That would be the main sort of access to some of those larger parcels of property that are contiguous in the town," Simmons said.

He added that taking over the road would also give the town an avenue to extend utility services into an area with development potential.

Wade's Orchard to hold 50th-anniversary celebration Saturday



Wade's Orchard will celebrate 50 years of business on Saturday, Sept. 27.

Wade's Orchard, a Woolwine-based family-owned farm, will celebrate 50 years of operation Saturday, Sept. 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The orchard was opened in 1975 by Coy Wade and is now co-owned by him and his two sons, Doug and Dale Wade.

Doug Wade said the family typically holds a celebration every five years.

"We planned one a little bit bigger for the 50th," he said.

The celebration will include live music by Travis Frye & Blue Mountain, Twin Creeks String Band, and Slate Mountain Ramblers.

The Woolwine Ruritan Club will sell hot dogs, chicken barbecue, nachos with cheese and chili, and other food. The club will keep all of its sale proceeds for future projects and donations.

Apple butter, donuts, apple cider, fried apple pies, and other treats will also be available. A bouncy house will be set up for children.

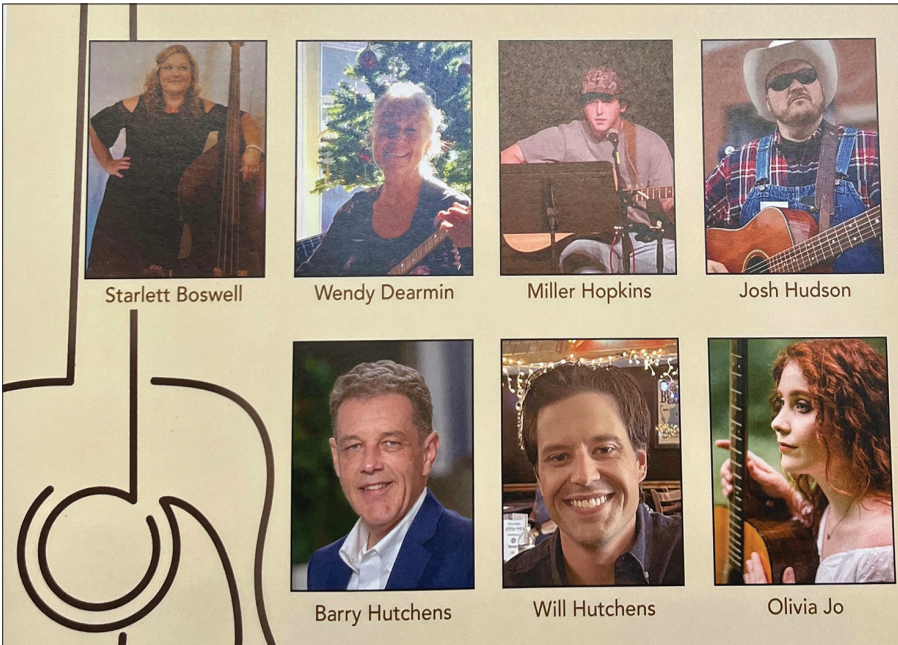
Wade said the celebrations usually attract large crowds, and over 1,000 people are expected to attend this one.

"We normally have a really good turnout. I had problems with getting parking and that stuff for folks" but "everybody's tickled to death when we have one of these celebrations. I have people ask me almost every year, like next year at this time people will be saying, 'Are you going to have another celebration this year?'" he said.

While he hopes for good weather, Wade said the celebration will be held rain or shine.

"If it rains, I'm going to move it inside to my pack house," he said.

Songwriter Circle to showcase eight performers Sept. 27



The Songwriter Circle will showcase eight performers on Saturday at the Star Theatre in Stuart.

The Patrick County Music Association's (PCMA) fourth installment of the Songwriter Circle Series is set for Saturday, Sept. 27, at the Star Theatre.

Doors will open at 5 p.m.

Performers include Starlett Bo-

swell, Wendy Dearmin, Johnny Dearmin, Miller Hopkins, Josh Hudson, Olivia Jo, Barry Hutchens, and Will Hutchens.

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at the Coffee Break and Patrick County Tourism.

Attempted murder charge lodged after alleged standoff with deputies



James Daniel Biggs

A Patrick Springs man has been arrested following a Monday morning incident, according to Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith. James Daniel Biggs, 34, of 2355 Dogwood Road, was charged with at-

tempted murder of a law enforcement officer, abduction, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, violation of a protective order, and reckless handling of a firearm in connection with the incident.

PCHS teacher arrested in alleged misuse of communications system involving student



Harold Bradley Dalton

was arrested Wednesday and charged with three counts of using a communications system to facilitate certain offenses involving a minor, according to Patrick County Sheriff's Lt. Steve Austin. Harold Bradley Dalton, 57, of Ararat, was taken into custody around 1:30 p.m. in connection with the

alleged incident. He is being held without bond at the Patrick County Jail. Authorities said the victim is a Patrick County High School student.

The investigation remains active. Anyone with information is asked to contact Austin at 276-692-5950 or Kruse at 276-692-5123.

Lord's Acre sale Saturday will benefit Penny House



The Penny House in Patrick Springs provides temporary housing for people who have experienced a natural disaster while they work to get back on their feet.

The annual Lord's Acre sale is set for Saturday, Sept. 27, with a portion of the proceeds to benefit the Penny House, which provides temporary housing for people recovering from natural disasters.

The sale will be held in the large building at Rotary Field from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

More than a dozen churches and organizations will sell baked goods, crafts, quilts, vegetables, flowers, food, and other items. An auction of special boxes, everyday items, furniture, and more will begin at 11 a.m.

Lord's Acre President Jane Cardwell said the event was started in 1970 by the Rev. Richard E. Dublin.

"Lord's Acre is a nondenominational, national organization, so every church in Patrick County ... they are actually supposed to be part of the Lord's Acre sale. The problem was because it was a minister for two different Methodist churches, a lot of churches as-

sumed it was for Methodists only," she said.

However, Cardwell said the purpose of Lord's Acre is to promote Christian stewardship among members, churches, and friends of Patrick County. She is working to expand the number of churches involved, and three have joined in recent months.

"We have made Disaster Relief Food Ministry part of the Lord's Acre sale because all they do is mission work, and now we have made the Operation Shoebox Ministry, they are a separate entity in that Lord's Acre sale for people to come and drop off donations in the boxes like toys or a T-shirt, or they can make a monetary donation that day," she said.

Patrick County Christmas Cheer has also become a large part of the program. Cardwell said anyone who wants to adopt a child but cannot afford to do so fully can bring a toy or make a monetary donation during the sale.

Be sure to like the Henry County Enterprise on Facebook

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MOST Affordable Cinema

\$5 tickets

Hollywood Cinema beside Walmart Martinsville 276-656-3456

Bulldog Beat

Issue II

This week in band, Mr. Givens showed us the parts of our instruments and how to play the first note. In PE, we played musical chairs with hula hoops and later a game called Batman. In science, we worked on timelines. In English, we read Freak the Mighty. In math we multiplied and divided fractions. The golf team played Monday. The volleyball team lost, but the football team won 42-0! On Friday we voted for SCA during lunch. In English we had a big test and in math we worked on dividing fractions. **Adelaide Brent, 6th grade**

On Monday we played games in PE. In English we studied character traits. Lunch was nachos. In math, we worked on multiplying fractions. In history, we made clay Pueblo houses. On Tuesday the clubs met and my group played handball. Lunch was good but everyone is still talking about the ducks. On Wednesday we learned about tribes in history. For lunch we had cheeseburgers. In band we practiced our instruments. On Thursday we played netball in PE. In history we made clay adobes. In band we played our first notes. Lunch was ravioli. The duck mystery is still going! **Miriam Carter, 6th grade**

In English we are reading Freak the Mighty. In math we started dividing fractions, mixed numbers, and improper fractions. In science we finished our space exploration timelines. The football team won their game and the cheerleaders did a good job. Mrs. Pierson's class got a new pet, a bearded dragon named Tana. She is small but mighty! **Semaiya Craighead-6th grade**

On Monday, the volleyball team had a home game. The cheerleaders had practice too. They have been learning new tricks for about five or six weeks. We also had testing all week. The teachers helped us a lot, and we want to say thank you to them because we could not have done it without them. On Tuesday, we had a history review and then a test and a quiz. Everyone did really good. The volleyball team had another game at home. The cheerleaders are getting better with their moves and voices. On Wednesday in math, we kept reviewing for a test. In English we had a 20-question test that went straight in the gradebook. We have been taking a lot of tests to get ready for the SOLs. In history we started learning the 50 states. **Nevaeh Daniels-6th grade**

Yearbook staff took pictures around the school and Gifted students started a project on Greek mythology. Thank you, Ms. Hoffman, for sharing your time. The ducks have gotten worse, there are unicorns and dinosaurs now! We still have not found the person who started it but we have our suspicions. On Wednesday

football won 44-0 and volleyball won too. Yearbook started brainstorming yearbook covers with everyone expressing themselves in the design. Band played their first sounds on their instruments. I love Mr. Givens so much. He is so kind to everyone. In art we painted watercolor sunsets. **Mercy Moore, 6th grade**

In 6th grade math we are learning fractions. Mrs. Woody always has fun projects. Mrs. Scales teaches us funny sayings to help us remember. They work! We had a good election and are excited to see the results. On Tuesday six ducks were found in the 6th grade hall! **Emery Taylor, 6th grade**

On Monday for lunch, we had chicken tenders. In math we learned how to multiply fractions. In English we started a new book, and in history we learned about Native American groups. The volleyball team lost, but they tried their best. On Tuesday we had nachos for lunch. In math we learned to divide fractions. In English we took notes, and in history we worked on our projects. Volleyball lost again, but they kept trying. On Wednesday we had cheeseburgers and hamburgers for lunch. In math we learned words for multiplying and dividing fractions. In English we had a sub. In history a lady came to talk to us. The volleyball team lost again, but the football team won. Yay! On Thursday we had spaghetti for lunch. In math we played Knockout. In English we had a test. In history we made clay adobes. Volleyball lost again, but they worked hard. On Friday we had cheese hoagies for lunch. In math we kept doing fractions. In English we read Freak the Mighty. In history we finished our Native American projects. There were no games. **Calleigh Whittle-6th grade**

At MMS the duck mystery is still going! Weird, right? Nobody knows who started it. Don't worry though, it won't be a mystery for long! On Friday 7th grade went on a field trip to the Old Dominion Agricultural Complex in Chatham. We learned about different careers so when we are adults, we will have an idea what we want to do. We love y'all! **Alanna Gerlach, 7th grade**

In class we made memes in Canva with Ms. Talley. Then we had a debate about social media influencers. In math we took notes about order of operations and did practice problems. In history Mr. Skittles came to talk to us about life and how not to make mistakes. **Trinity Hairston-7th grade**

Good morning Bulldogs! Congratulations to the football, volleyball, and golf teams. We had SCA elections. Congrats to Miriam Carter for Secretary, Katie Wall for Vice President, and Maya Williams for President. Mrs. Woody got

an award for Constitution Week. I went with her and said the Preamble and shared some facts. **Jade Holland-Dallas, 7th grade**

This week was busy for the Bulldogs! 8 sport games! Monday, we had a home volleyball game against Patrick County and a golf game against Halifax, which we lost. 6th grade is starting the book Freak the Mighty, and 7th grade is starting the book Not Everything is What It Seems. On Tuesday there were two volleyball games, middle school lost to Tunstall while junior varsity won against Bassett. 7th grade science started learning about cell cycles. Wednesday was wild!! Three volleyball games against Floyd, middle school, JV, and varsity. Thursday, we had another volleyball game at FC and sadly lost. We voted for SCA on Thursday. Students could vote during their lunch block. SCA secretary is Miriam Carter, SCA vice president is Katie Wall, and SCA president is Maya Williams. **Katie Wall, 7th grade**

On Monday the volleyball team played Patrick County. They lost but had some good plays. In science we watched Bill Nye. On Tuesday the 8th grade JV team beat Bassett! In science we had a test, and in history we studied the Preamble. In Algebra 2 we worked on complex numbers. On Wednesday we started absolute value equations in Algebra 2. In English we worked on our novels. **Janette Carrillo-Llamas-8th grade**

In science we are learning about waves. In math we are solving equations. Some questions are hard, but I will figure them out. In history we talked about power and how it should and should not be used. **Tay'Shaun Hairston-8th grade**

The Bulldogs football team finally won a game against Piney Grove! We are proud of the football players and cheerleaders. **Jaymi Henriquez Ramos-8th grade**

In history we took notes on the U.S. Constitution and made a graphic organizer on the amendments. In English we read Long Way Down and learned figurative language. In science we had a test on waves and learned about concave and convex mirrors. In algebra we learned about inequalities. Volleyball played four games this week. **Selena Stultz-8th grade**

This week Mr. Byrd taught figurative language. The JV volleyball team won their game. Basketball players are getting ready for the season. Football won too. **Ma'Kiya Walton, 8th grade**

Thank you Bulldogs for another fun week at MMS! We are proud of our students, staff, and teams. Go Bulldogs!

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PS Form 3526 Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation		
1. Publication Title HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE	2. Publication Number USPS -G	3. ISSN 9-15-25
4. Location 3621 IRISBURG R. AIXON	5. Issue Frequency 52	6. Rate 52.00
7. Contact Person MICHAEL SHAWELL	8. Telephone 304.647-5724	9. Classification
10. Statement of Ownership Year 2025	11. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below 09/12/2025	
12. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Numbers of Copies (Net press run)	800	700
b1. Paid/Requested Outside County	110	112
b2. Paid In-County	111	104
b3. Sales (non-USPS distribution)	0	0
b4. Other classes (USPS distribution)	450	443
c. Total Paid/Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), (4))	671	661
d1. Free Distribution by Mail Outside County	4	4
d2. Free Distribution by Mail In-County	1	1
d3. Free Distribution by Mail Other classes	50	0
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail	0	0
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), (5))	55	5
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c, 15f)	726	666
h. Copies not Distributed	74	34
i. Total (Sum of 15g, 15h)	800	700
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	92.42 %	99.25 %
13. Publication of Statement of Ownership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If the publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the 9-27-25 issue of this publication. <input type="checkbox"/> Publication not required.		
14. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner mountainmessenger (Kathy Hurler) Michael Shawell Publisher		Date 09/15/2025 14:20:53 PM
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Notice of Public Hearing
The Martinsville Architectural Review Board (ARB) will hold a public hearing on October 9, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. and located 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:
APPLICATION for CERTIFICATE of APPROPRIATENESS. Application of Legacy LLC, Applicant, and Owner, requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for exterior changes to the structures on properties located at 512 and 514 Fayette Street. Exterior changes to structures within the Historic District require review by the Architectural Review Board and the granting of a Certificate of Appropriateness (Tax Map #s 31(01)00/16 17 18; 31(01)00/19 20 21.
Any comments or questions can be directed to Hannah Powell, Community Development Specialist, at (276) 403-5156 or hpowell@martinsvilleva.gov.
Notice Submitted By:
Hannah L. Powell, CZA
Community Development Specialist

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Notice of Public Hearing
Martinsville City Council will hold a public hearing on October 14, 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 REZONE** - Application of The City of Martinsville requesting to rezone several properties located along Commonwealth Blvd. from ED-G, Economic Development-General, to C-C, Commercial Corridor to correct existing non-conforming uses (Tax Map #s: 23(01)00/21, 22(01)00/86 86A, 22(01)00/91, 22(01)00/90, 22(10)00/AR, 22(10)00/A1R, 22(10)00/B, 22(08)00/A, 22(08)00/A-01, 22(08)00/C-01, 22(08)00/C-03, 21(06)00/C-04).
2) **REQUEST for REZONE** - Application of the City of Martinsville requesting to rezone property located at 100 S. Jackson Street from ED-I, Economic Development Intensive and C-C, Commercial Corridor, to R-T, Residential Transitional to allow for residential and commercial uses (Tax Map # 31(02)J/04, 31(02)J/03, 31(02)K/45, 31(02)K/44, 31(02)K/06).
3) **REQUEST for REZONE** - Application of the City of Martinsville requesting to rezone the following properties from C-C, Commercial Corridor, to R-T, Residential Transitional to correct existing non-conforming uses (Tax Map #s 31(02)M/5A, 31(02)M/5B, 31(02)M/5C, 31(02)M/5D, 31(02)M/5F, 31(02)M/5E, 31(02)M/5G, 31(02)M/5H, 31(02)M/5L, 31(02)M/5K, 31(02)M/5I, 31(02)M/5J, 31(02)M/5SM).
4) **REQUEST for REZONE** - Application of the City of Martinsville requesting to rezone approximately sixty-four (64) properties located along Broad Street, Bridge Street, Railroad Street and College Street from C-C, Commercial Corridor District, C-N, Neighborhood Commercial District, and ED-I, Economic Development Intensive, to R-T, Residential Transitional to correct existing non-conforming uses.
5) **REQUEST for REZONE** - Application of the City of Martinsville requesting to rezone property located at 500 Blue Ridge Street from C-C, Commercial Corridor, to R-T, Residential Transitional, to allow for residential and commercial uses (Tax Map #37(01)00/07A).
Questions or comments regarding this matter can be directed to Hannah Powell at hpowell@martinsvilleva.gov.
Notice Submitted By:
Hannah L. Powell, CZA
Community Development Specialist


SNHU releases Dean's, President's lists

Lisa Higgs of Martinsville was named to Southern New Hampshire University's Summer 2025 Dean's List. The summer terms run from May to August.
Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.
Southern New Hampshire University also congratulated the following students on being named to the Summer 2025 President's List.
Andrew Norris of Ridgeway, Kevin Davis of Ridgeway, Dante Maniace of Martinsville, Matthew Perea of Collinsville, Devin Desselle of Collinsville, and Erika Deal of Bassett.
Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

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**COUNTY OF HENRY
REZONING PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**
Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **October 15, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. Following these public hearings, the Planning Commission will make recommendations on the applications to the Board of Supervisors.
The Henry County Board of Supervisors will conduct public hearings on the following applications on **October 28, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia.
The purpose of these public hearings is to receive input into the possible rezoning of property. Following are the specifics of the public hearings.
Case R-25-14 Robert Amos
The property is located at 16783 and 16805 A.L. Philpott, in the Horsepasture District. The property is shown on Tax Map 50.8/176. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 1-acre from Commercial District B-1 and Agricultural A-1 to Suburban Residential District S-R. The applicant wishes to subdivide the property and create two, single family residences.
Case R-25-15 Robert Amos
The property is located at 17529 A.L. Philpott, in the Horsepasture District. The property is shown on Tax Map 50.7/70A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 2-acres from Commercial District B-1 to Suburban Residential District S-R. The applicant wishes to rezone the property and apply for the required Special Use Permit, to convert the lower level of the building into a residence, therefore making it a duplex apartment building.
Case R-25-16 Percy H. Gibson, Jr.
The property is located at 60 Broken Oak Dr, in the Iriswood District. The property is shown on Tax Map 45.7/(11)/6,6A,7. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 3 lots from Suburban Residential District S-R to Rural Residential District R-R. The applicant wishes to replace a manufactured home on the property that was destroyed by fire in 2020.
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

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Virginia Department of Transportation

ADVERTISEMENT FOR SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT SERVICES WITH OPERATOR SIGNUP

The Virginia Department of Transportation invites heavy equipment owners to sign up for the rental of their equipment with operators for SNOW & ICE REMOVAL purposes in Martinsville Residency which includes the counties of Henry, Patrick and Carroll during the winter of 2025-2026. Price per hour shall include operators, fuel, tire chains, supplies and required insurance. VDOT will need dump trucks, pickups with plows, motorgraders, backhoes, dozers, track loaders, tractors, rubber tire loaders and farm tractors. All equipment shall be equipped for night work and be in good mechanical condition to ensure a safe and dependable 24/7 operation. VDOT reserves the right to determine acceptability of equipment size and condition for the task. Contractors submitting prices meeting the requirements of the Agreement may be contracted with and **may be eligible to receive a bonus payment and a minimum guaranteed payment for the season.**
Contractors must submit their application on the electronic M7B bidding site at <https://plow4va.vdot.virginia.gov>. All new and returning Contractors must be active in the Virginia eProcurement Portal (eVA) in order to do business with the Commonwealth of Virginia (<https://eva.virginia.gov>). Applications received by 7:00 PM on Thursday October 2, 2025 may be eligible for a bonus payment. See the EVA posting for additional information, including contract requirements.
Questions can be directed to the Martinsville Residency from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday - Friday.
Phone: 276-629-2582
Email: SalemDistrictSnow@vdot.virginia.gov
EEO/AA Employer

Board

(cont. from page 1)



Melanie Hampton discussed what she said are derelict and unkempt properties in the Villa Heights area of Collinsville.

said. Because of this, Wagoner said there has been uncertainty over NCI's future. Crabtree and some "others are lobbying for a cause to ensure that we have an institution of education here in our community in that building, and that it be turned over" to P&HCC, he said.

Wagoner noted the plan requires approval by the General Assembly, the Council for Higher Education, and the Virginia Community College System.

"There's a lot of steps in this process, but they are asking for your support upfront," he added.

County Attorney George Lyle said the transition would be revenue neutral.

"The money spent on NCI would go to Patrick & Henry, an equal amount. It wouldn't be like an unfunded gift," he said.

Vice Chairman Joe Bryant, of the Collinsville District, said he supports the idea and believes P&HCC is well-suited to take over.

Wagoner explained that the county's legislative agenda lists priorities the board believes the General Assembly should act on for the county.

"The broader categories kind of identify what's important to us: economic development and infrastructure, education and workforce, public safety, housing, and recreation and natural resources," he said, adding the board will also ask the state to continue investing in economic and site development to attract industry.

"Another thing was to get the General Assembly to remove" the Compensation Board "requirement that penalizes the sheriff's office for housing inmates from out-of-state or federal inmates. They can house other Virginia jurisdictions, but not federal inmates or out-of-state inmates without getting penalized. You may recall when they built the jail, that was kind of built under the premise that they would take in some other inmates to help offset the revenue and stuff and the state actually penalizes them for doing that," Wagoner said.

Other priorities include continued support for funding, P&HCC, the sheriff's office, water and sewer infrastructure along U.S. 58 West to the Blue Ridge Regional Airport, secondary roads and rural transportation, and a dedicated funding stream for fire and EMS.

"One thing kind of new is we got to find a dedicated funding stream for fire and EMS. That's something we pushed last year, and it never worked out," Wagoner said. He added that a General Assembly study two years ago recommended a plan to fund fire and EMS, but no action has been taken.

The county's 2026 legislative agenda will be posted on its website.



Norton received the county award for her induction to the Ferrum College Sports Hall of Fame.

The board also heard from Melanie Hampton, who spoke about derelict and unkempt properties in the Villa Heights area of Collinsville, and urged the county to enforce ordinances and hold property owners accountable.

"I have been on this journey for about a year and a half. I started in February '24, I sat down and met with (Sheriff) Wayne Davis in his office for about two hours one evening. I had gathered information, GIS, property cards, tenant information or homeowner information contact information, pictures of the current situation of the properties, and many of them were a disaster to say the least," she said.

Hampton said she was referred to Timmy Robertson, who is the deputy over the trash and such ordinances over the county.

"I've been told by many different people" including Bryant, Davis, and Robertson, "that when we try to enforce these laws, or we try to enforce these fines, the judge" decides the case. "I can't hold the judge accountable, and I can't hold the judge's feet to the fire if it doesn't get to him," she said.

Hampton showed the board pictures of homes in her neighborhood that she believes are an eyesore, including a mobile home, multiple vehicles without tags, messy, overgrown grass, and more.

Hampton believes the county needs to amend its ordinances and start holding peoples' feet to the fire.

"I think it's time to start throwing fines and start making people accountable," she said.

Hampton noted the county is building 14 homes in that area.

"These people are going to look at those homes, ride through our neighborhood, and they see all mess and they're going to think one of two things: they've going to think I don't want to live over here or they've going to think, 'they won't mind if I have trash in my yard, or if I have cars stacked one on top on another.' We're not setting the bar very high for the new houses that are coming in as well," she said.

Chairman Jim Adams, of the Blackberry District, told Hampton the deputies in the back of the room were aggressively taking notes while she spoke.

Bryant said he's tried really hard to get the Villa Heights area cleaned up.

"It's like a never-ending battle trying to clean

this place up, but we need to come up with some kind of plan, whether it would be we need to get with you (Hampton), to get with the community, an organizational meeting with your community. We can all sit down and come up with a gameplan on how we as a community move forward with it," he said.

Noting the area is unkempt, Bryant said what he's scared will happen is the wrong crowd will be attracted to the homes that are being built.

"She makes a perfect point, she lives there. Would we want to live there? Would we want to live beside that," Bryant asked, adding it's not that the county hasn't worked to get the problem fixed, but that there's multiple moving parts.

"It's difficult, but I understand exactly where you're coming from. Trust me, I'm not trying to put it off to the side," he said.

In other matters, the board:

- *Presented the Henry County Headliner Award to Deputy Ashley Norton for her induction into the Ferrum College Sports Hall of Fame for 2025.

- *Approved a \$500 donation from the Iriswood District impact funds to Worship on the Lawn, focused on breast cancer awareness.

- *Heard from Director of Elections/General Registrar Dawn Stultz-Vaughn about early voting.

- *Awarded a \$1,975,117 construction contract to Haymes Brothers, Inc., for Reservoir Road reconstruction near the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre.

- *Approved additional appropriations: \$10,000 for a part-time clerical position in the Clerk of Court's office; \$25,968 from an insurance settlement to replace a shelter at Jaycee Park; \$239,100 for school nutrition programs; \$1,859,700 from the 1% Sales Tax fund for elevator installations and electrical upgrades at several schools; \$915,846 from VDOT Revenue Sharing for Reservoir Road.

- *Approved participation in opioid-related settlements against multiple pharmaceutical companies.

- *Appointed Cherisse Hairston to the Blue Ridge Regional Library Board through June 30, 2027.

- *Heard updates on delinquent tax collection, economic development, and general highway matters.

Community

(cont. from page 1)

for" Martinsville Henry County, "many larger communities don't have an arts organization like MHC does."

This year, dancers could select their own partners for the first time. Each pair also works with a professional instructor to polish routines and perfect spins.

The official pairings are:

- Katie Adkins and Brandon Johnson, coached by Victoria Howard, Waltz
- ShanTyia Hairston and Maurice Breedlove, coached by Janeka Hairston, Cha Cha
- Tiffanie Hairston and Brian Hairston, coached by Stacey Davis, Tango
- Sarah Hodges and Kasey Lucas, coached by Catherine Rodenbaugh, Quick Step
- Elizabeth Huerta and Alfredo Huerta, coached by Catherine Rodenbaugh, Salsa
- Margie Price-Savedge and Christopher Janey, coached by Jane Leizer, Swing



Heidi Pinkston displays awards for the upcoming winners as teams are announced for Dancing For The Arts.

- Shatera Robertson and Louis Norton, coached by Stacey Davis, Foxtrot
 - Melissa White and Al Herndon, coached by Jane Leizer, Rumba
- Each team will perform two dances — one assigned and one freestyle — with music chosen by the pair. Each routine is capped at 1 minute and 45 seconds, and a professional production company will handle lights and sound.

"Each dancer's fans will be voting with their pocketbooks," Pinkston said. "Every dollar will be counted as a vote." Membership donations will be doubled for votes. "For example, if someone joins as a single member for \$40, their votes would total 80."

Pinkston added, "We hope you all have a fun time with Dancing For The Arts while helping to keep the arts alive and vibrant in our community."

The event will be held on Saturday, March 14, at 3 p.m. at Martinsville High School.

VMNH Foundation receives historic endowment gift

The Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation (VMNHF) has received a historic donation of over \$4.4 million in support of the foundation's endowment fund. The gift, provided by the late Frank W. Mariels, a long-time resident of Martinsville, is the largest donation ever received by the foundation and will provide greatly enhanced annual income directly supporting the Virginia Museum of Natural History's (VMNH) mission and strategic plan.

"The Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation has long emphasized the importance of growing its endowment fund in support of the museum's mission," said VMNHF Board President Tyler Carter. "With the museum's ambitious plans for the coming years, which include upgrades to the current exhibit galleries and the introduction of new visitor experiences, the ability to achieve its goals has been greatly enhanced through Mr. Mariels' immense generosity."

Beginning in 2012, the foundation's governing board and its Strategic Development Committee, led by former board treasurer Larry Ryder, established forward-looking policies and procedures for sustained endowment growth, providing a vital framework for long-term success.

"The purpose of the Strategic Development Committee was to create a structure that would encourage endowment donations to the VMNH Foundation," said Ryder. "Once invested, the income from these donations would support the mission

of the museum in perpetuity. This generous donation from Mr. Mariels is a huge step in enhancing the growth of the museum."

Offering visitors with new and updated exhibit experiences and public spaces has always been a priority of the museum, but special emphasis has been placed on the endeavor in recent years. With this gift, the museum will move forward with multiple initiatives involving exhibits and public spaces.

"Mr. Mariels' extraordinary generosity will have a transformative impact on the museum," said VMNH Board of Trustees Chair Dr. Melany Clark. "This is truly a gift to the community and the Commonwealth — it will help us improve what we already offer while creating new spaces, like the Young Explorers Center, that will inspire and benefit families for years to come. His kindness ensures that the museum remains a place of discovery and joy for everyone who walks through our doors."

With this gift, the museum will prioritize the establishment of the Young Explorers Center, which will be named in honor of Mr. Mariels. To be located within the museum's current footprint, the 1,700 square foot center will consist of immersive learning experiences, including hands-on STEM stations for children and families, special programming and resources supporting pre-K education initiatives, and flexible space for programming and events dedicated to young children and their families.

"The establishment of the Young



The Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville

Explorers Center is a top strategic priority of the museum and was recently identified as a priority project by the museum's Board of Trustees in the museum's 2025-2030 strategic plan," said VMNH Executive Director Dr. Joe Keiper. "Because of Mr. Mariels' generosity and the foundation's support, we're now in position to ensure that the center comes to fruition in the near future."

The gift will also provide the museum with the necessary support to enhance its current exhibit galleries and to secure high-level traveling exhibits in an effort to further improve the visitor experience.

"The museum's exhibit galleries continue to receive strong reviews from visitors, but we've identified opportunities to improve them even further through upgrades to

technology and enhanced layouts," said VMNH Deputy Director Ryan Barber. "The gift also provides the museum with more opportunities to offer our visitors top-tier traveling exhibits, which play a significant role in making every museum visit memorable. Thanks to Mr. Mariels' support, our ability to make these enhancements and offer these new experiences has increased significantly."

The Virginia Museum of Natural History Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that exists to support the mission and programs of the Virginia Museum of Natural History. For more information about the foundation, visit www.vmnh.net/about/vmnh-foundation.

For more information about the Virginia Museum of Natural History, visit www.vmnh.net.

City

(cont. from page 1)



Interim City Manager Rob Fincher (right) listens attentively. He is pictured with Peyton Nibblett (center) and Aaron Rawls.

Now, do we think he can break the world record of 244.9? Probably because he's the man that built the engine that set that other record, he's going to break that other record," Kozelsky said.

She said the project is also intended to showcase the Martinsville area, and explained that when thinking about how to highlight the area, running around a racetrack is among the top.

Arrington said the idea emerged during a conversation with former Martinsville Mayor Danny Turner about how to celebrate the 250th anniversary.

"Next thing you

know," the discussion turns to fast cars "and getting excited to see how fast we thought we could go. We put our heads to it and got some engineering involved and sort of come up with a plan," he said.

After presenting the plan to the Virginia 250 Commission and the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, Arrington said he worked with the historical society to finalize details.

Kozelsky said the Virginia 250 Commission and Tobacco Commission each donated \$50,000, Henry County contributed \$5,000, and several local businesses and

industries donated \$10,000 each. The museum is serving as the fiscal agent for the project.

Turner noted the project has already attracted national attention. The Discovery Channel filmed at Arrington's facility and plans another session, and Arrington has been invited to appear on Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s "The Dale Jr. Download" podcast, which draws millions of listeners.

"We're looking forward to making this an international event," Turner said. "It is also a partnership with the people at NASA, it's called Space Florida, they

have a partnership with NASA, and this is the runway where the space shuttle landed. They will have jets for photo-ops, and the largest American flag is in the Challenger hangar there, and we'll have full access to that."

Turner said state officials from Virginia and Florida are expected to attend. He added that the project could become an international attraction for Martinsville.

"Lord knows we got the best kept secret around here. We've got shovel-ready sites, we've got perfect weather, and everything just comes together. If we hit a home run here, we'd love to bring a lot of industry back to Martinsville, Henry County, and Southside Virginia," he said.

In addition to the record attempt, Kozelsky said the vehicle will tour the country during the 250th



Joey Arrington shows a Dodge racing engine.

celebration. Turner added the Smithsonian Institution has expressed interest in featuring the car in the national July 4 parade.

"So maybe Martinsville, Henry County, and Southside Virginia will be on Constitution Avenue for the Fourth of July," he said.

Interim City Manager Rob Fincher said the city's Community Engagement Fund could be used to pay for the donation.

In other matters, the council:

- *Heard from Ural Harris regarding council spending of tax dollars.
- *Heard from Patty Covington about ongoing sound problems with MGTV-22. She also suggested scheduling public comment

before votes on relevant actions.

- *Heard from Sylvia Dupee about road issues and the need for curves and gutters on Amy Avenue.
- *Heard from Human Resources Management Analyst Myiah Terry about planned tree planting to celebrate Arbor Day.
- *Rescheduled a presentation by Joe Borgstrom of the Uptown Property Addendum Report for a future meeting.
- *Heard a Transportation Safety Commission update.
- *Approved the resolution and conveyance of 1020 E. Church St. for \$1.
- *Approved a resolution allowing the Youth Advisory Committee to engage in fundraising activities.

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Regional housing development initiative launches



One of the thirteen homes being constructed in Villa Heights in Henry County. (Contributed)

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC), in partnership with Virginia Housing and local housing groups, announces a new Regional Housing Development Program that will expand affordable housing options for low to moderate-income individuals and families in the WPPDC region.

The Regional Housing Development Program is focused on making a meaningful impact in our communities by addressing the critical need for affordable housing. Key initiatives include:

- Increasing Affordable Housing Inventory: Developing new affordable and workforce housing units through construction, rehabilitation of vacant properties, or adaptive reuse of existing structures.
- Serving Underserved Markets: Prioritizing housing production in areas with limited affordable housing options, including rural communities and historically marginalized populations, with a focus on first-time homebuyers.
- Promoting Collaboration: Strengthening partnerships between local organizations, govern-

ments, and the housing delivery network to achieve shared housing goals.

This initiative is a partnership between WPPDC, the Harvest Foundation, Henry County, the Fuller Center for Housing of Martinsville-Henry County, Danville-Pittsylvania Habitat for Humanity, and Landmark Asset Services, Inc.

“Ensuring access to safe, affordable housing is essential for the well-being and economic vitality of our region,” said Sean Campbell, deputy director of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission. “This initiative allows us to work strategically with our partners to create sustainable housing solutions that benefit our residents and support a thriving community.”

The program supports the development of single-family units, and homeownership opportunities are available for first-time homebuyers within the Virginia Housing regional income limits.

“Virginia Housing is excited to partner with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission and community partners to bring more affordable housing to Henry

County,” said Chris Thompson, director of strategic housing for Virginia Housing. “This effort is an outstanding example of the power of working together to leverage resources and commit to action to address a critical issue and ultimately, provide safe, affordable, and quality housing to the community.”

This regional housing initiative directly addresses the needs in our region identified in the comprehensive housing study released by WPPDC in the spring of 2024. The study was conducted in collaboration with the Virginia Center for Housing Research at Virginia Tech and Housing Forward Virginia. Its goal was to address housing challenges and develop sustainable housing solutions for the region.

One project aims to build two single-family homes for low-income families in Martinsville through a partnership between The Fuller Center for Housing of Martinsville-Henry County, The Harvest Foundation, and WPPDC. The Fuller Center for Housing of Martinsville-Henry County, originally a Habitat for Humanity affiliate since 1988, has



Construction teams assemble the framework of a Villa Heights home, advancing efforts in Henry County to expand affordable housing.



The early stages of construction of a new home in Villa Heights.

built over 40 homes and provided essential home repairs throughout the community.

“The Fuller Center is honored to have the West Piedmont Planning District Commission and the Harvest Foundation come alongside us to not only build these homes, but brighter futures, as well,” said Beth Stinnett, executive director of the local Fuller Center for Housing. “With our combined efforts, homeownership is now a reality for these two families. We strongly believe that everyone deserves a safe and affordable home. We also believe in our community and the power of partner-

ships.”

“We know that safe, secure housing is the cornerstone for families to build stability and sustainability in Martinsville-Henry County,” said DeWitt House, vice president for community investments at the Harvest Foundation. “Home ownership is a vehicle for generational wealth and a pathway to economic mobility that can transform lives for decades to come. Housing is needed at all levels in our community, and it is through strong partnerships like this regional initiative with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission that real progress is possible. We are thrilled to see new housing opportunities taking shape, and we are confident in WPPDC’s leadership to carry this important work forward.”

In Villa Heights, Henry County’s initiative will create 13 affordable homes, supported by matching funds from the PDC and Harvest Foundation in partnership with the Virginia Statewide Community Land Trust.

“The grant will allow us to turn regional collaboration into real, tangible housing solutions for our communities,” said Henry County Administrator Dale Wagoner. “We are grateful for the opportunity to expand affordable and workforce housing, particularly for first-time homebuyers. This initiative also gives us a chance to diversify the types of housing available in Henry County,

which is critical as we work to modernize an aging housing stock and meet the needs of current and future residents.”

WPPDC has worked with the Danville-Pittsylvania Habitat for Humanity on several housing projects. For the fourth project, they are working together to build a single-family home in the city of Danville that will benefit a low-income family. According to their executive director, this funding will advance their efforts to provide safe, affordable housing for families in need, beginning with the construction of a new home on Martin Avenue.

“Danville-Pittsylvania County Habitat for Humanity is honored to receive this generous grant from the West Piedmont Planning District Commission through the Virginia Housing Regional Housing Development Program,” said Krystal Davis, executive director for Danville-Pittsylvania Habitat for Humanity. “We commend the PDC’s commitment to regional collaboration and strategic investment in housing solutions that strengthen communities across the Commonwealth.”

Also in Danville, WPPDC is working with Landmark Asset Services on Seeland Valley Apartments, which will provide 52 rental opportunities for very low to low-income residents. The WPPDC will manage the development of projects, ensuring compliance with program rules.

County of Henry

Important Tax Notice

2025 Real Estate Tax (Real Estate Only)

Tax Payment Deadline: Friday, October 31, 2025

Please be advised that real estate tax bills for 2025 have been mailed where possible. However, **failure to receive a bill does not exempt the taxpayer from any penalties or interest** that may accrue due to non-payment in accordance with Virginia law.

Note: To avoid late fees, payments **must be postmarked by October 31, 2025.**

📌 **Please note: This is a new due date for 2025.**

The Treasurer’s Office will be open **Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.** to accept payments.

You may also pay online at www.henrycountyva.gov

Scott B. Grindstaff
Henry County Treasurer

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Fall HOME IMPROVEMENT Guide

Collaborative Special Edition

Considering a room addition project

No one enjoys being in cramped quarters. Whether a person battles a legitimate case of claustrophobia when confined in tight spaces or simply prefers a place to stretch out, there's no denying the appeal of a little extra room. That's particularly so at home, where cramped spaces can make it hard to unwind.

When homeowners feel their walls are closing in on them, many choose to build space via a room addition. Room addition projects are extensive and expensive undertakings, with the home renovation experts at Angi estimating the average add-on costs \$48,000. But Angi estimates such projects can cost as much as \$72,600, or even more depending on the size of the space and the features chosen.

The financial commitment when adding a room is significant, but homeowners and residents also will need to prepare for a potentially lengthy disruption to their daily routines. Various online resources, including Angi, suggest room addition projects typically take around three to four months. With so much at stake,

homeowners who think they might benefit from a room addition can look for various signs to help them determine if such a project is right for them.

- **Increasingly cluttered spaces:** Cramped quarters without much space for people are perhaps the most notable sign that residents can benefit from some additional space in a home. Cluttered spaces suggest homeowners may have run out of room for their stuff, and a custom addition can provide that extra room while contributing to a more calming ambiance in common spaces that may no longer be overwhelmed by papers, toys and other items that can quickly take over a home that lacks space.
- **Lifestyle hurdles:** Millions of homeowners like to entertain friends and family, and that's more manageable for some than it is for others. If interior or exterior spaces do not accommodate hosting, a room addition that expands an existing kitchen or living room might be the ideal renovation project.
- **Functionally challenged:** A home that



A room addition could be the perfect renovation project for homeowners who need more space but still prefer to stay put.

no longer has enough space to meet your needs is another sign a room addition might be in order. This very issue emerged for millions of professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic and has remained a challenge ever since. Indeed, an increase in days spent working remotely has left many homeowners grateful to work from home but desirous of a designated remote work space. A room ad-

dition to accommodate a home office can be just what remote workers need to restore fully functional status to their homes.

- **Cost:** While the sticker price of a home addition may (or may not) raise an eyebrow, the project is almost certain to prove more cost-effective than moving. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Devel-

opment, the average sale price of a home in the United States reached \$503,800 in January 2025. While that marked a roughly \$16,000 decrease from a year earlier, it's still a high figure that many homeowners aren't willing to pay. A cost comparison detailing the price to move versus the price to build an addition may indicate that the latter option is a homeowner's best bet.

When it's time to replace gutters



Gutter replacement projects may not be exciting, but new gutters can make a home safer and prolong the life of a roof and other features on a property.

Home improvement projects run the gamut from complex undertakings like room additions to simpler renovations like a new front door. Some home renovations excite homeowners more than others, but all improvements are a way to make a home safer, more comfortable and/or more functional.

A gutter replacement might not inspire the same level of excitement as a room addition or an overhaul of an outdoor living space, but new gutters can help to prevent roof

damage and make properties safer by ensuring rain water is directed away from walkways. Homeowners who suspect it might be time for a gutter replacement can look for these signs of fading gutters.

- **Cracks or splits:** Cracks or splits at the seams of the gutters where two pieces connect is a telltale sign they need to be replaced. Cracks or splits can slowly lead to separation of gutter pieces, which will lead to leaks. But not all cracks

or splits are found at the seams. In fact, some homes feature seamless gutters, which also can crack or split. Regardless of where they're found, cracks or splits are a warning signs of fading gutters.

- **Rust:** Rust is rarely a good sign whether you're looking at a vehicle or even garden tools. Rust also is a bad sign in relation to gutters. Gutters are painted, and not only for aesthetic purposes. Paint on gutters also serves to protect

them from water. When paint begins to flake, gutters will begin to rust and may even produce noticeable rust flakes on the ground below. Rust on gutters and rust flakes beneath them are indicative of gutters that need to be replaced.

- **Gutters pulling away from the home:** Gutters that appear to be pulling away from the home is a sign that they need to be replaced. Gutters are fastened to a home during installation, which

ensures they can withstand rain and water. Over time, those fasteners can wear down, ultimately leading to gutters that appear to be pulling away from the home. Though gutters can be re-fastened, eventually they will need to be replaced.

- **Pooling water:** Pooling water in a gutter may just be a sign that gutters need to be cleaned. However, pooling water on the ground directly beneath gutters indicates they're not effectively directing water away from the home.
- **Water damage inside:** A home's interior might not be the first place homeowners look when inspecting damaged gutters, but a flooded basement or crawl space could indicate a gutter problem. Gutters and downspouts are designed to direct water away from a home when functioning properly. When that isn't happening, water can pool beneath the foundation, leading to pooling water and other water damage in basements and crawl spaces.





Even if homeowners are floating in the pool and cranking up the air conditioning, they should give consideration to having their furnaces inspected and serviced soon to prepare for the colder months ahead.

Get ready for a furnace checkup

Turning on the heat may be the furthest thing from homeowners’ minds come the end of summer or early fall. After all, there are plenty more days of comfortable temperatures to expect over the weeks to come. However, failing to inspect a furnace prior to when it is needed could lay a foundation for cold evenings.

Many HVAC experts recommend that homeowners get their furnaces tuned up before the first cold spell arrives. When the heat is needed for the first time, it will be guaranteed to work if it’s been examined and any underlying issues have been addressed.

HVAC technicians are busy at the start of summer and winter. If a furnace is not working correctly, it could take some time before a professional can make a service call. Having the furnace and

related equipment checked prior to when it’s time to turn on the furnace means homeowners will not be left in the lurch or potentially spending premium prices for repairs.

It is important to get a furnace checkup for a variety of reasons. Doing so can make the HVAC system run more efficiently, which could result in savings over the winter. Regular maintenance also can help the furnace last longer, delaying the need for a costly replacement. No one wants the furnace to break down in the middle of a frigid night. Annual checkups can help reduce the risk of that happening. In addition, many furnace manufacturers offer warranties on their systems that require annual maintenance from a professional. Failure to have the system inspected could void the warranty.

Multi-generational homes and in-law suites

The modern real estate market has led millions of aspiring home buyers to reconsider their approach to buying a home. Low inventory has led to high home prices. When paired with mortgage interest rates that have remained north of 6 percent for years, the high sticker price of homes has made many buyers wonder if homeownership is simply beyond their means.

It’s impossible to know if or when home prices will come down, but some buyers have chosen to seek homes that can accommodate multiple generations. According to the Pew Research Center, the share of multigenerational homes rose from 7 percent in 1971 to 18 percent in 2021. A multitude of factors have contributed to that increase, and housing affordability is one such variable.

In 2024, researchers studying multigenerational households at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania noted that housing affordability declined considerably in recent years but also had been on the decline for decades. As homes become less affordable, the number of multigenerational households tends to increase, and that’s something modern buyers can keep in mind as they look for a home.

In-law suites that accommodate multigenerational households can provide a pathway to homeownership for buyers who otherwise may be priced out of the market. Buyers considering homes with an in-law suite or those who want to add one to



A private bathroom can make an in-law suite feel more like home.

their existing homes can familiarize themselves with these convenient and potentially cost-saving features.

- Note the significance of a separate entrance. Whether you’re looking for a home with an in-law suite or hoping to add one on to your existing home, a separate entrance for suite residents can allow them to come and go as they please. That sense of independence is significant. In addition, a separate entrance can make a home seem less like a multigenerational residence, which at times can feel crowded, and more like a single-generation home. That can afford all residents a little more peace and quiet in a typical day.
- Expect an increase in taxes if you’re adding on. As with any

A guide to fall lawn care for cool-season grasses



Cool season grasses still need watering even after summer gives way to fall.

Spring is the season most often associated with lawn care, and for good reason. Grass starts growing in spring, and the season is a great time to fertilize many grasses in the hopes lawns can look their best and endure the hotter, dryer weather of summer.

Spring might mark the time when many homeowners begin tending to their lawns each year, but it’s important to recognize the significance of fall lawn care as well. Grasses vary, and homeowners are urged to identify which type of grass is in their lawn so they can ensure it gets the care it needs before winter’s first frost. Cool season grasses like perennial ryegrass and Kentucky bluegrass are common in various regions, and the following strategies can help homeowners with these types of grasses tend to their lawns this fall.

- Stick to your recommended fertilization schedule. Homeowners who have been fertilizing since spring are urged to continue doing so in fall at the recommended interval. It’s easy to forget to fertilize in fall thanks to cooler temperatures that don’t call lawn care to mind and busier schedules after school starts again and summer vacation season ends. But many fertilizer manufacturers advise users of their products to fertilize several times over the course of the year, including in fall. Stick to the intervals recommended on the packaging of the fertilizer you’ve been using, making sure not to forget to fertilize this fall.
- Conduct a soil test. A soil test can determine if the soil is lacking any nutritive elements it needs to come back strong in spring. Certain amendments can restore pH balance if necessary and foster stronger growth when lawns come back in spring.

- Aerate, if necessary. Soil can become compacted over time, and that can cause a range of problems for a lawn. Compacted soil can make it harder for water to reach the roots of grass, which weakens grass and makes it more vulnerable to damage during adverse weather events like drought. Compacted soil also makes it harder for nutrients in fertilizer to get into the soil. Aerating is best left to professionals, particularly in larger lawns, as the job can foster strong root development when done properly.
- Remove thatch where it’s excessive. Thin layers of thatch can benefit lawns by delivering nutrients from grass clippings and leaves to a lawn. However, when thatch is excessive, it can block air, water and even fertilizer from reaching the soil. Thatch often can be removed with a rake, but lawns with especially thick layers of thatch may need to be scarified. Homeowners can take a DIY approach to scarifying or hire a landscaping professional to dethatch the lawn and remove the thatch from their properties.
- Continue to water the lawn. A cool-season grass will continue to require water into the fall. Though the lawn won’t need to be watered as frequently in fall as in summer, various lawn care professionals note cool-season grasses still need roughly an inch of water each week in fall.
- Remove leaves as they fall. Fallen leaves can affect a lawn in much the same way as excessive amounts of thatch, blocking water and nutrients from reaching the soil. So it’s best to remove fallen leaves, especially when they begin to fall in large quantities.

Fall is an opportune time to tend to a lawn to increase the chances grass grows back strong in spring.

addition to a home, adding an in-law suite to an existing home is likely to result in an increase in homeowners’ property taxes. The amount of that increase is contingent upon variables unique to each residence, like location and the size of the addition. When shopping for homes with existing in-law suites, buyers can request existing tax information so they are not surprised by the number like they might be if they add on to an existing home. Despite that, it might still be in prospective buyers’ best interest to add on to an existing property and pay the additional taxes than it would to buy a new home.

- Try to include features residents have come to expect when

living independently. An in-law suite should include its own private bathroom, a washroom for a washer and dryer and a kitchen or kitchenette. If everyone in a multigenerational household is forced to use the same bathrooms, washers and dryers, and kitchens, then the home might begin to feel cramped rather quickly.

- Try to secure off-street parking. Though it might not affect the ambience within the in-law suite itself, an off-street parking spot is a convenience residents will appreciate. Such a space will allow residents to come and go as they please and save them the headache of moving their vehicles for snow plows and street cleaners.

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Remedies for creaky floors

Hardwood floors are coveted features in many homes. The National Wood Flooring Association says wood floors are the most environmentally friendly flooring options available. In the United States, the hardwood forests that provide flooring products are growing twice as fast as they are being harvested. Furthermore, wood floors can last for many generations and require fewer raw materials to produce than other flooring options. That means less waste may end up in landfills.

Hardwood floors can endure for decades in a home, but over time those same floors may need some tender loving care to keep them looking good and working as they should. Squeaky floors are a common nuisance that homeowners may experience. Squeaking is often caused by movement and friction between floorboards. Treating the problem in-



Squeaky floors can be problematic, but noises can be banished with some repair work.

volves identifying the underlying issue.

Loose hardware Squeaky floors may be due to the loosening of the hardware holding the floor in place, says The Home Depot. When nails or screws no longer are secured tightly,

the boards can rub together. The noise heard is the sound produced by rubbing. Tightening or replacing the hardware can help reduce the squeaking.

Counter-snap kit method

This Old House says this kit method is a great way to

fix squeaks without damaging the floor. Once the source of the squeak is located, drill a 3/32-inch pilot hole through the hardwood flooring. Then insert a screw through the kit's depth-control fixture and into the pilot hole, and drive it until it automati-

cally snaps off below the wood surface. Follow this up by filling the hole with wood putty that matches the floor color. Once the putty is dry, lightly sand the area to blend.

Use a shim or shims

Sometimes the

floor may squeak because of a gap between the joists and the subfloor. Filling the gap with a small piece of wood called a shim can help alleviate the gap or gaps.

Drive up screws

If a squeak is just in one spot, The Home Depot says that you may be able to drive short screws from below into the subfloor.

Small gaps

For small gaps between boards, sprinkle talcum powder or powdered graphite between squeaky boards to reduce friction. Wood filler applied with a putty knife also may work. For larger gaps, use a liquid filler designed for wood floors.

Homeowners also can visit their local home improvement center for other hardware solutions designed for under-floor repairs to remedy squeaks. Many people work from underneath the floor, and mount plates or brackets to shore up the floor.

Explaining the replacement process for exterior siding



Siding replacement is a big job but one that can offer immediate curb appeal once completed. It typically is not a do-it-yourself project since it requires specific skills to ensure durability.

The longer a person resides in a particular home, the greater the likelihood that various components of that residence will need to be replaced. Driveways, roofs, HVAC systems, and even appliances all have expiration dates.

Although siding on a home can be quite durable, there may be specific reasons why homeowners choose to or need to replace it at some point. Understanding what's to come of the job can help homeowners prepare. No two siding jobs are exactly the same, and each project will be dictated by a host of variables, including which type of siding homeowners choose. However, these general steps are commonplace during siding replacement projects.

· Choose siding: Homeowners are urged to consult with various siding installation

companies about which products are available and ask each for an estimate. Budget, climate and other factors will narrow down siding materials. The Home Depot says popular siding types include vinyl, wood, fiber cement, metal, and stone. Siding can have almost any color or texture as well.

· Remove and relocate: Outdoor items close to the perimeter of the home will have to be moved out of the way so workers can access the siding. The job will require a dumpster to be dropped in front of the home or in the driveway to collect debris, so homeowners should be prepared to leave space for it.

· Siding delivery: The new siding should be delivered prior to the installation start day. These materials will take up a lot of

room and space should be made available so the installation team can access them without difficulty.

· Interior decor: Siding installation will include hammering, which can disrupt items on interior walls. It is best to have all wall hangings taken down to prevent damage.

· Old siding removal: On the first day of installation, removal of the old siding will happen first, according to Smart Exteriors. Siding, insulation and trim will be removed. In the event that older, asbestos-based siding is on a home, contractors may safely remove and discard it, or go over that type of siding. Homeowners should inquire about this step during the company vetting process.

· Home inspection: Once all old material is gone, the exterior sheathing will be inspected to ensure it is in good shape. Signs of rot or loose boards will be considered and repaired, if necessary.

· New siding install: First workers will put on house wrap or some sort of insulation/water barrier product. Afterwards, siding boards are layered on in the design chosen. Nails or screws are used to attach the siding, and seams will be caulked to prevent moisture penetration. If the homeowner has chosen to have gutters and downspouts installed during the siding job, those will be fitted and installed as well.

· Clean up: The installation team will begin the process of thoroughly cleaning up the property. All tools will be removed, and the property will be swept or blown to clean away debris. Crews typically use powerful magnets to grab stray nails and screws that have fallen into the lawn and elsewhere. The dumpster will be taken away shortly after the work is completed.



Tips for winterizing exterior living areas

When the summer entertaining season draws to a close, homeowners need to ensure their outdoor living areas can handle weather that’s right around the corner. Although outdoor furniture and other items tend to be durable, the impact snow, wind and ice can have on them may lead to damage over time. That is why many homeowners take steps to winterize their outdoor spaces and protect their belongings. Here’s a look at how to prepare for the winter to come.

- Furniture: Cover or store furniture to protect it from the elements. Covering it with weather-proof covers can be adequate if storing items indoors is not possible.
- Deep clean: Items that will be covered or stored should be thoroughly cleaned prior to being removed from spaces for the season. Lingering dirt and moisture can cause damage.
- Insulate and drain: Don’t risk damage to pipes, which can freeze and crack in the cold. Shut off the water supply to exterior faucets and drain water lines to prevent pipes from freezing and bursting. Use foam pipe insulation to prevent freezing and cover any exposed pipes.
- Apply mulch: After cleaning up garden debris, think about applying mulch to garden beds and cover tender plants to protect them from the weather.
- Check gutters: Be sure that gutters and downspouts are clear of leaves and any additional debris. If gutters and downspouts are not cleaned, ice dams may form on the roof and cause water damage.
- Inspect and repair: Inspect walkways



There may be additional, region-specific steps to winterize property, but these pointers are a good starting point to protect outdoor spaces.

and driveways for any damage and make repairs now so water will not seep in and cause further issues with freeze-thaw cycles. Consider applying a sealant to protect surfaces from snow and ice.

- Pools and spas: It’s essential to follow the industry or manufacturer recommendations for closing down swimming pools and spas for the season. While covers may

not be essential in all climates, covering can help prevent leaves and other debris from getting in the water. Water should be expelled from pipes and tubing to prevent freezing and bursting. If space allows, consider moving the pool pump indoors to prolong its longevity. Turn off the electricity to the outlet where the filter is plugged in.

The basics of window replacement projects

Windows in a home are easily taken for granted. Even though residents look through their windows every day, it’s only when issues arise that people tend to give the windows much thought.

Even if windows may not be foremost on the minds of homeowners, they are a notable component of every home. New windows also can be an expensive addition to a home, so it benefits all homeowners to gain an understanding of window replacement projects before they start shopping around for new windows.

- Windows are more complex than new homeowners may realize. Homeowners will need to choose between three commonly available window materials when picking new windows for their homes. Vinyl windows typically are the most affordable option, and opinions vary considerably regarding these products. Some tout their resistance to moisture, but others feel they lack the aesthetic appeal of costlier alternatives like fiberglass. Vinyl windows also can’t be painted, which some homeowners may find problematic. Fiberglass windows can be painted and are known for their strength and durability. Aluminum win-



Window replacement projects require careful consideration, so homeowners identify the best products for their home.

dows are strong and durable as well, but they may not provide as much thermal protection as some other options. Each window type has its own unique pros and cons, and homeowners are urged to do their homework to determine the best fit for them.

- Consider variables unique to your home. Climate is an important consideration when choosing windows, and that of course is unique to each homeowner. How hot or cold the local climate can be will affect how well windows insulate

a home, so a window that’s best for one particular region may not be ideal for another. Homeowners are urged to investigate which window materials are best suited to their local climates. All windows protect against the elements, but some might provide more adequate insulation, which can help keep utility bills low and everyone inside a home more comfortable.

- Homeowners may need to decide between replacement windows or new construction windows. The window ex-

perts at Pella note that new construction windows are the primary option for newly constructed homes or room additions. Replacement windows are typically installed when homeowners need new windows but do not want or need to remove existing exterior cladding or trim. Replacement windows tend to be considerably less expensive than new construction windows, but the latter option merits consideration before making a final decision.

- It can be budget-friendly to replace more than one window at a time. Some, though not all, window installation companies charge a non-negotiable project fee, so it can be more financially savvy to replace more than one window at a time. Replacing windows piecemeal may require homeowners to pay the project fee for each installation, whereas homeowners who replace multiple windows at the same time will only incur that fee once. If homeowners know many windows in their home are in need of replacement, it can be financially advantageous to replace all that need it at once rather than breaking the project up and paying multiple project fees.

Garage conversions are one way to add space



A need for more space compels many homeowners to consider home renovations each year. While some homeowners decide to pull up stakes and move after realizing they need more room to maneuver at home, a real estate market marked by low inventory and high prices has made it more affordable for many property owners to stay put and convert existing spaces.

A garage conversion project is one way for homeowners to create more space in their current properties. Homeowners considering such renovations can benefit from a run-down of what a garage conversion entails and what to expect when the project is completed.

- A new floor will likely be part of the project. Whether you’re converting the garage into a living space or simply hoping to make it look nicer as a workshop or artist’s studio, the existing floor will likely need to be

replaced. Many garages feature concrete flooring, which cracks easily (homeowners considering a garage renovation may already see cracks in an existing floor). When converting a garage, renovation experts will undoubtedly advise replacing the existing floor, and some will recommend polyaspartic floor installation. Various garage conversion experts note that polyaspartic flooring is ideal for garage spaces because it’s durable, resistant to damage that can be caused by chemicals and offers much more aesthetic appeal than a concrete floor.

- The room will need ventilation and heating and cooling. A garage used for traditional purposes (i.e., parking cars, storing lawn and garden tools, etc.) likely will not be connected to a home’s existing HVAC system and may not feature a window that can be opened or closed to allow for fresh air to enter the space. The space will need ventila-

tion and heating and cooling capabilities if it’s being converted.

- Location and climate bear consideration. Before going forward with a garage conversion, homeowners should consider where they live and the local climate. Homeowners living in urban areas where parking is at a premium may be doing themselves (and future owners) a disservice by converting a space where they can presently park a vehicle into something else. In addition, people living in locales where outdoor activities like surfing, kayaking and cycling are popular will have to determine where items necessary for such activities will be stored if they decide to convert their garages into living spaces. Of course, garage renovation teams can incorporate storage into a design, so homeowners should not hesitate to discuss their lifestyle with contractors to ensure the room accommodates their hobbies after the conversion is complete.
- Zoning laws may or may not affect the project. Laws vary depending on where homeowners live, so it’s impossible to say with certainty if homeowners will or won’t run into zoning issues during a project. However, the design of the finished product may offer hints as to any permit-related hurdles homeowners may need to clear. For example, if the garage doors are staying and the space behind those doors is merely being converted with a new floor and other amenities that won’t change the look or function of the space, then homeowners may not encounter any permit issues. A need for permits and some restrictions may emerge if garage doors are replaced by a new wall so the exterior space seamlessly blends in with the rest of the home. Investigate any potential restrictions prior to going forward.

Fall home checklist: Preparing your home for the season ahead

As the long days of summer fade and cooler weather sets in, fall is a season of transition — not only for nature but also for your home. Shorter days, falling leaves and dropping temperatures bring a new set of maintenance tasks for homeowners. Tackling them now can help prevent costly repairs and keep your home comfortable and efficient throughout the colder months.

Here are some key areas to focus on as you prepare your home for the season ahead.

Inspect your roof and gutters
Falling leaves can quickly clog gutters, causing water to back up and damage roofing, siding and foundations. Experts recommend cleaning gutters at least once in the fall, and again if your property is surrounded by trees.

Check your roof for missing, loose or damaged shingles, which can lead to leaks when rain or snow arrives. Look for signs of wear around flashing, chimneys and skylights. If climbing onto the roof isn't safe, use binoculars from the ground or hire a professional.

Seal windows and doors
Drafty windows and doors are among the leading causes of heat loss in a home. Walk through your house on a breezy day and feel for cold air leaks around frames. Caulking, weatherstripping and door sweeps are simple, low-cost fixes that can make a big difference in energy bills.

Consider replacing older windows with energy-efficient models if your budget allows. While that's a bigger investment, many homeowners see significant savings in heating and cooling costs.

Service your HVAC system
Your heating system works hardest in the winter, so fall is the time to ensure it's ready. Schedule a professional inspection and cleaning to check for safety hazards and improve efficiency.

Replace air filters, which should be changed every one to three months depending on use. If you have central air conditioning, this is also a good time to cover or disconnect outdoor units to protect them from debris and ice.

Prepare fireplaces and chimneys
Nothing says fall like a crackling fire. But before you light that first log, have your chimney inspected and cleaned to remove creosote buildup, which can cause dangerous chimney fires. Check that the damper opens and closes properly, and make sure the chimney cap is

intact to keep out animals and debris.

For gas fireplaces, inspect the connections and clean the glass doors.

Protect plumbing from freezing
Even in Virginia, sudden cold snaps can freeze pipes. Disconnect garden hoses and shut off exterior faucets. Insulate exposed pipes in crawl spaces, basements and garages with foam pipe sleeves or heat tape.

Inside, keep your home heated to at least 55 degrees, even if you're away, to prevent pipes from freezing.

Check smoke and carbon monoxide detectors

With heating systems running and fireplaces in use, fall is a critical time to make sure smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are working properly. Replace batteries and test all units. Experts recommend replacing detectors every 10 years.

Maintain outdoor spaces
Raking leaves isn't just about tidiness — it also protects your lawn. A thick layer of leaves can suffocate grass and encourage mold growth.

Fall is also a good time to aerate your lawn and apply fertilizer to help it recover from summer heat and prepare for winter dormancy. Trim trees and shrubs away from your house to prevent damage from falling branches during storms.

Store outdoor furniture and equipment

Clean and store patio furniture, umbrellas and grills to extend their life. Drain fuel from lawnmowers and other small engines before storing them for winter. If you use a snowblower, check that it's in working order before the first snowfall.

Inspect insulation and attic spaces
Heat rises, so proper insulation in your attic is key to keeping energy costs down. Look for uneven insulation, gaps or areas that have been disturbed by pests. Inadequate insulation can lead to ice dams on your roof and higher heating bills.

Safety first: Review your emergency supplies

Fall weather can bring heavy rains, high winds and even early snowstorms. Make sure you have a working flashlight, batteries, blankets and a basic supply kit in case of power outages.

A season of preparation
Home maintenance may feel like a never-

Save energy — and money — this fall and winter

Colder weather often means higher utility bills, but a few simple steps can help keep energy costs under control while keeping your home comfortable.

- Adjust your thermostat wisely**
- Lowering your thermostat by just 7–10 degrees for eight hours a day can save up to 10 percent a year on heating costs, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.
 - A programmable or smart thermostat makes it easier to set efficient schedules automatically.

- Seal leaks and drafts**
- Weatherstrip doors and windows to prevent warm air from escaping.
 - Don't forget areas such as attic hatches, dryer vents and electrical outlets on exterior walls.

- Use window treatments to your advantage**
- Open blinds or curtains on south-facing windows during the day to let in the sun's warmth.
 - Close them at night to provide extra insulation.

- Service your heating system**
- A clean, tuned furnace or heat pump runs more efficiently and uses less energy.
 - Replace filters regularly — every one to three months — to improve airflow.

- Use ceiling fans year-round**
- Set ceiling fans to rotate clockwise on a low speed in the winter to push warm air down into living spaces.

- Be smart with water heating**
- Water heating is the second-largest energy expense in most homes. Lower your water heater thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to save energy and prevent scalding.
 - Wash clothes in cold water when possible and only run full loads in dishwashers and washing machines.

- Switch to LED lighting**
- Replace old incandescent or CFL bulbs with LEDs, which use up to 75 percent less energy and last significantly longer.

- Unplug idle electronics**
- Devices like phone chargers, gaming consoles and microwaves draw power even when not in use. Use power strips to switch them off easily.

ending list, but tackling tasks season by season makes it manageable. Fall is the ideal time to prepare for the colder months ahead, ensuring comfort, efficiency and safety for your household.

How to spot a mold infestation in your home

Homeownership comes with an endless list of tasks, from routine maintenance and minor fixes to major projects. Some jobs are about function, while others are for aesthetics. But potential health concerns tied to a home deserve just as much attention.

Mold is one such concern. Though it's difficult to pinpoint exactly how much mold poses a health risk, most homeowners would agree that no mold is best. According to the New York State Department of Health, exposure to indoor mold can cause nasal and sinus congestion; itchy, red, watery eyes; wheezing or difficulty breathing; cough and throat irritation; skin rashes; and headaches.

Because of these risks, it's important for homeowners to recognize the signs of a mold infestation.

Learn what mold looks like.

Mold patches increase in size the longer they go unchecked, making them easier to spot as time passes. The Department of Health notes that mold often appears as fuzzy patches that may be discolored or even slimy.

Pay attention to odors.

Mold produces a distinct musty smell that is often the first sign people notice. If you detect such an odor, try to trace it to its source. That may take some trial and error, as mold can grow behind or underneath surfaces such as carpets, wallpaper and cabinets. It also can grow inside walls, which may require help from a remediation professional.

Know where to look.

While mold can grow anywhere in a home, moisture-prone areas are most vulnerable. In bathrooms, mold may develop around sinks, shower stalls, curtains and tiles. In kitchens, it can appear on tiles or the seal around a refrigerator door. Mold also may grow on and around window air conditioning units.

Certain people are more susceptible to mold-related health problems than others, including those with respiratory conditions or compromised immune systems.

Homeowners can help protect themselves by staying alert to signs of mold, addressing problems quickly, and, when necessary, working with remediation professionals to remove infestations and reduce the risk of them returning.



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