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HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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Master plan adopted for future Mayo River State Park

By Taylor Boyd

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has adopted the master plan for the future Mayo River State Park.

The plan was adopted July 27 and outlines the development of the 637-acre park along the North and South Mayo River in Henry County. The park is directly adjacent to North Carolina's Mayo River State Park and is expected to be developed over approximately 30 years.

DCR Director Nikki Rovner said in a press release that the master plan reflects the agency's commitment to conservation, recreation planning and community engagement.

"This park will provide exceptional opportunities to experience the Mayo River corridor while protecting one of Virginia's most scenic and culturally rich landscapes," Rovner stated in the release.

According to the DCR, major features planned for the park include a visitor center, day-use facilities, overnight accommodations, expanded trails and river access.

The plan calls for a visitor center with educational exhibits and programming space, along with picnic areas, a playground, a stargazing area and multiple trailheads.

Overnight accommodations are planned to include cabins, tent camping and group camping sites, along with a bathhouse.

The master plan also calls for an expanded network of hiking and mountain biking trails and connections to North Carolina's Mayo River State Park.

Canoe and kayak put-ins and an Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible fishing pier are planned for the North Fork Mayo River. A pedestrian bridge across the North Fork is planned for a later phase of development.

"The plan emphasizes conservation of rare ecosystems, forests, and river corridors, along with the protection of historically significant sites such as Byrd's Ledge. These resources will be incorporated into dedicated interpretive trails and signage," the release states.

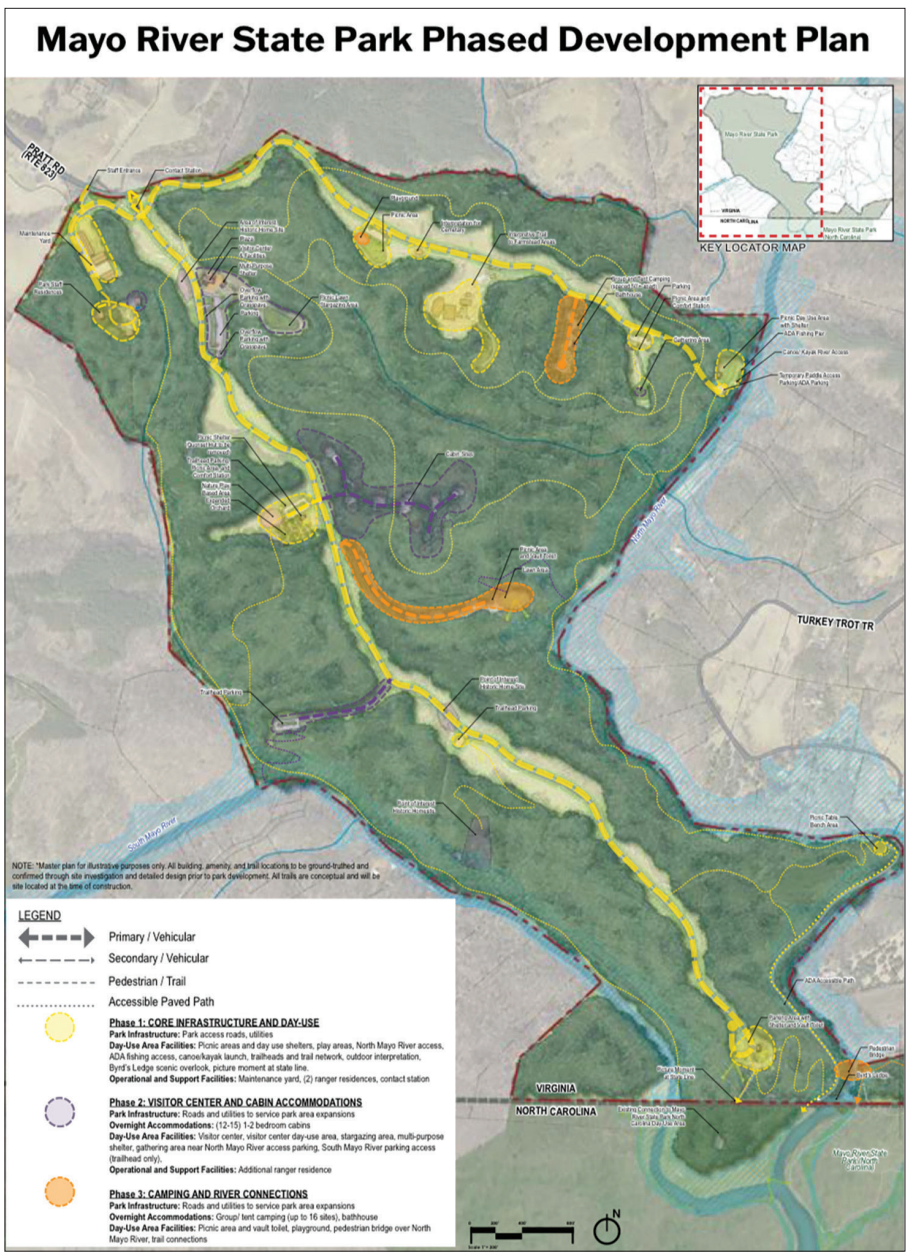
The plan also calls for the protection of rare ecosystems, forests, river corridors and historically significant sites such as Byrd's Ledge. Interpretive trails and signage will be used to highlight those resources.

Park development will occur in phases as funding becomes available, beginning with core infrastructure and day-use facilities. Later phases will include overnight lodging, expanded trail connections and additional river access.

Henry County Administrator Dale Wagoner said the state purchased the property nearly 20 years ago with plans to develop a state park.

"We have been working with the DCR and along with many other

(See Mayo River p. 2)



The 637-acre Mayo River State Park will be developed over an estimated 30 years.

Sheriff suspends use of Flock camera system

By Taylor Boyd

Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis has suspended the sheriff's office's use of its Flock camera system, citing concerns about privacy and the potential misuse of the technology.

Davis announced the decision Aug. 14, ending the use of cameras that have been in operation since 2023.

"They're completely deactivated. No Henry County Deputy can access data from them, nor can any other law enforcement agency access data from them," he said.

The cameras remain in place while Davis works through the process of removing them. He said he also was awaiting information from Flock about whether the cameras themselves are still recording.

"I do not know if they are still recording or not recording, I cannot accurately answer that. I'm awaiting answers from Flock at this point," he said,

The system was installed through a grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Jus-

(See Sheriff p. 10)



Michael Williams and his wife, Lisa.

Fairmont Drive water line project moves forward

The Henry County Public Service Authority (PSA) has awarded a $309,300 contract to C.W. Cauley and Son, Inc., for the installation of a water line extension to serve residents along Fairmont Drive in the Bassett community.

The contract was awarded following a competitive bidding process in which C.W. Cauley and Son, Inc., submitted the lowest bid. Funding for the project will come from existing funds in the PSA's Capital Budget.

"This project is important not only because it expands access to public water, but because of the concerns residents have raised about the quality of the water from their wells," said PSA Vice-Chairman Marcus Stone. "As someone who works in healthcare, I understand the importance of having access to reliable, safe drinking water. At the same time, the PSA has a responsibility to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us and to consider the costs associated with expanding infrastructure. This has been a long process of balancing those fiscal realities with the growing needs of the community, and I am proud that we are now in a position to move this project forward."

The Fairmont Drive water line extension has been under discussion for more than a decade. In February, residents approached the PSA Board urging action on the project, citing deteriorating water quality from wells serving homes in the area. The project includes approximately 2,900

(See Fairmont Drive p. 9)



James Benkahla

Benkahla named Martinsville city attorney

Martinsville City Council appointed James Benkahla as the city attorney, effective Sept. 1.

The council approved Benkahla's appointment in a 5-0 vote during its Aug. 11 meeting.

As city attorney, Benkahla will serve as the city's chief legal officer, providing legal advice and assistance to City Council, the city manager, city departments, boards, commissions and

(See Benkahla p. 6)

Fieldale man seeks kidney donor

By Debbie Hall

A Fieldale man is hoping to find a living kidney donor and regain some of the independence he has lost to kidney failure.

Michael Williams, 64, travels to Fresenius Kidney Care in Martinsville three days a week — Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays — for dialysis treatments that last 3 1/2 hours.

Williams has stage 5 renal failure, the most advanced stage of chronic kidney disease. His kidneys no longer adequately filter waste and excess fluid from his blood, leaving dialysis to perform that work.

"I was diagnosed with diabetes in my 30s and was on a pretty high dose of insulin back then," he said.

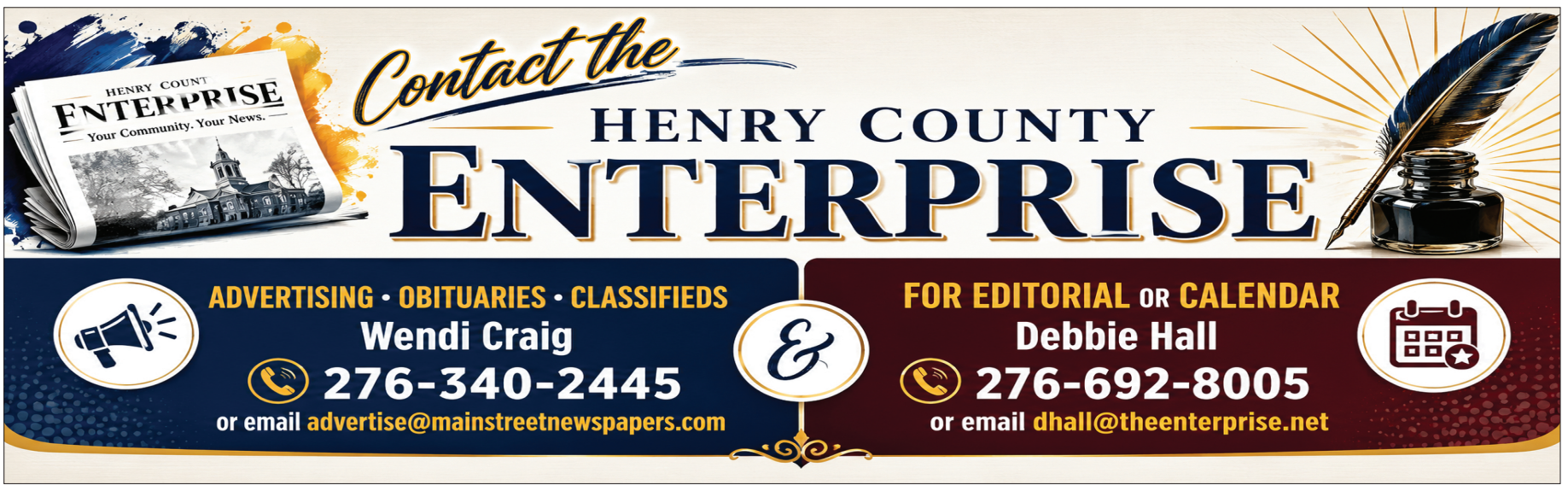
Williams learned he had stage 3 kidney failure when he was 58.

"We increased my fluid intake and medi-

(See Fieldale p. 5)

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Eco Ambassador Council funds eight environmental projects

The Eco Ambassador Council (EAC), a coalition formed by Carter Bank, with members including Blair Construction, Clark Gas & Oil, Frith Construction, Hooker Furnishings, Intertape Polymer Group (IPG) and Jones & DeShon Orthodontics, is proud to announce the selection of eight community-led environmental projects that will receive a combined $70,778 in funding during 2026–2027. To date, the EAC has invested $257,178 in projects throughout the region since 2022.

The projects span Southern Virginia and North Carolina's northern Piedmont and focus on expanding outdoor recreation, improving water safety, protecting wildlife habitat, reducing litter, enhancing environmental education and creating more equitable access to the region's natural resources. Together, they represent the EAC's continued commitment to investing in projects that strengthen both communities and the environment.

"These projects reflect the kind of practical, community-driven solutions that create lasting impact," said Tyler Carter, Community Reinvestment Administrator for Carter Bank and an EAC member. "Whether we're helping a young person experience their first paddle trip, protecting a threatened species or improving access to public green spaces, every investment represents our shared commitment to making this region's natural resources healthier, safer and more connected."

Among this year's funded projects is the Outdoor Equity and Access Initiative which will remove barriers that often prevent underserved communities from enjoying the outdoors by providing free guided paddling and hiking programs, transportation assistance, outdoor equipment and multilingual educational materials. By addressing financial, geographic and language barriers, the project will make outdoor recreation more accessible while encouraging lifelong environmental stewardship.

Building on a successful educational program that has been piloted in Martinsville and Danville, the EAC will also fund the Epic River Experience for youth in Patrick County. This program will bring hands-on river education to local high school students who will receive beginner paddling instruction and water safety and stream quality education while gaining confidence on the waterways that define their community.

EAC Leadership members also selected the Step into Nature program, a new guided hike series that

will introduce participants to local trails while incorporating Leave No Trace principles, outdoor safety and environmental learning.

"What makes the Eco Ambassador Council unique is that local businesses aren't simply writing checks, we're investing in the future of the communities where our employees and families live. Every project we support strengthens our region by protecting the resources that make this region such a great place," said Michael Jones, Director of Global Energy & Sustainability at Intertape Polymer Group (IPG), the newest member of the EAC. "These investments create opportunities for people to build meaningful connections with nature that can advance to lifelong stewardship."

Wildlife conservation remains a priority for the EAC and through the Bog Turtle Signage Initiative at I.C. DeHart Park in Woolwine, educational signage and habitat enhancements will increase awareness of the federally threatened bog turtle while protecting one of the region's most sensitive wetland ecosystems.

To improve water quality, the EAC has also funded Virginia's First Trash Trout Installation which will be installed in Martinsville. The floating litter collection system will intercept trash in Jones Creek before it reaches larger waterways while engaging volunteers in ongoing cleanup and watershed stewardship efforts.

"The Eco Ambassador Council continues to prove that when businesses invest in conservation, the entire community benefits," said Jim Frith, Chairman of the Board of Frith Construction and also a founding member of the EAC. "These projects will inspire more people to become lifelong stewards of the natural places that make this region special."

Following overwhelming public interest, the EAC has funded Paddle Safety Classes for the second year. Six beginner-friendly classes will be provided in 2027 and participants will receive personal flotation devices, safety equipment and practical skills needed to safely enjoy river and lake recreation.

"Investing in the community where we live and work impacts not only local businesses but contributes to quality of life for our citizens and specifically our employees. It also showcases our public spaces to our region's visitors," said Tim Clark, President, Blair Construction and a founding member of the Eco Ambassador Council. "It's a long-term commitment at Blair Construction to give back and be a part of the continued growth in Southern Virginia. When I was asked to be part of this council, there was no hesitation because I knew the impact we could make on our community."

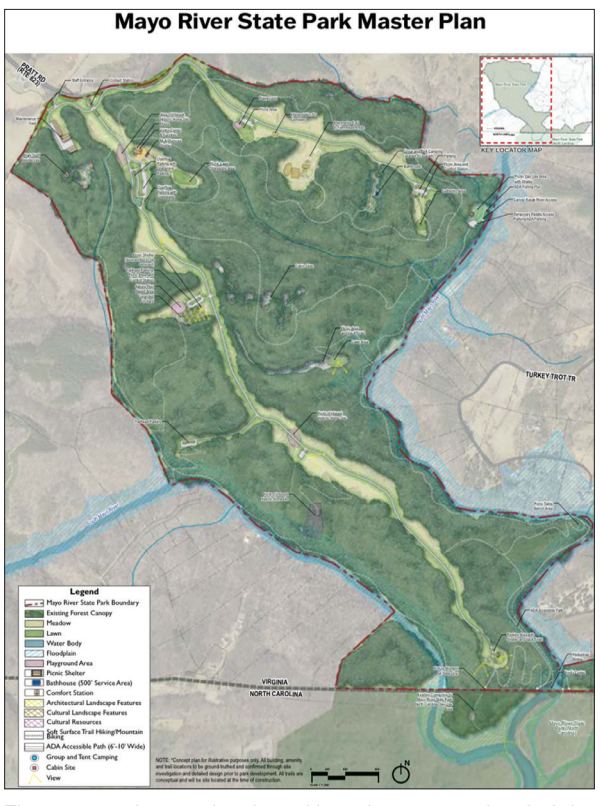
Environmental education will expand in the region through a previously funded project, The WaterShed, an outdoor classroom in Basset, VA. In phase two, there will be a native pollinator garden and stormwater demonstration area where students can explore biodiversity and habitat restoration through learning experiences aligned with Virginia Standards of Learning.

The Angel Overlook Enhancement Project in Meadows of Dan was also selected for funding and will improve one of Patrick County's most scenic destinations by adding picnic facilities and landscape enhancements that encourage visitors to spend more time enjoying the panoramic views of Pilot Mountain and the Sauratown Mountain Range.

"Investments like these improve quality of life for residents, enhance tourism and encourage people to get outside and enjoy everything our region has to offer," said Anna Lester, Vice President of Clark Gas & Oil and a founding member of the EAC. "One of the things I love most about the Eco Ambassador Council is that every business can choose how they want to be involved. Some members simply help select and fund projects, while others roll up their sleeves alongside their employees and families to volunteer to help support these projects. We love having the opportunity to work together outside the office, give back to our communities and see firsthand the difference these projects make."

Mayo River

(cont. from page 1)



The master plan can be viewed by going to www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/mr-masterplan.

community partners to move this forward. We're looking forward to the General Assembly stepping up and funding the program so we can move forward with the Mayo River State Park," he said.

Wagoner said the project received strong community support during public meetings.

"The Spencer Penn Centre was packed the night we had a public meeting, and it was overwhelmingly supported. It will be a great amenity in our community and the Commonwealth that will provide recreational opportunities for our residents of the Commonwealth and other states as well," he said.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Jim Adams, of the Blackberry District, said adoption of the master plan is an important step for the project.

"We now have a plan for what this park can become. The next step is getting the funding in place to make that vision a reality," he said.

For more information about the future Mayo River State Park, visit the DCR website.

The master plan also is available through the DCR website.

West Piedmont testing center earns national certification

West Piedmont Higher Education Center announced that its testing center has earned Test Center Certification (TCC) from the National College Testing Association (NCTA), recognizing the center's commitment to excellence, professionalism, and quality in the administration of testing services.

NCTA's Test Center Certification is designed to recognize testing centers that demonstrate adherence to NCTA's Professional Standards and Guidelines and are committed to providing a high-quality testing experience. The certification process includes a comprehensive review of a center's policies, procedures, operations, training, testing environment, and other aspects of test administration.

"Achieving the NCTA Test Center Certification is an exciting accomplishment for West Piedmont Higher Education Center and an important step forward for our Testing Center," said Joe Sumner, Executive Director of West Piedmont Higher Education Center (formerly the New College Institute). "This certification demonstrates our commitment to providing students, professionals, and community members with a secure, professional, and high-quality testing environment. We are proud to offer this level of service right here in Southern Virginia."

The certification represents the culmination of significant work by the center's staff and the King Hall and testing center coordinator Stacey Davis, who led the certification process and worked to ensure the Center met NCTA's standards.

"This was a major undertaking, but it was also a great opportunity to take a close look at our processes and make sure we are providing the best possible experience for every person who comes through our testing center," said Davis. "I'm incredibly proud of the work that went into earning this certification and excited about what it means for the future of testing services at the center."

NCTA is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting professionalism and quality in testing services and programs. Its standards serve as a model for test centers administering a wide range of examinations, including standardized tests, certification exams, distance-learning exams, and other computer- and paper-based assessments.

With the new certification, West Piedmont Higher Education Center joins more than 200 testing centers across the United States and Canada that have earned NCTA Test Center Certification since the program began in 2010. Certification is valid for five years.

The center provides a convenient, professional testing environment for individuals pursuing education, professional credentials, certifications, and other testing opportunities. The center currently offers testing through several providers, including CLEP®, Praxis®, and Pearson, which offers NREMT, GED, PTCB, and other exams.

"Expanding access to quality testing services is an important part of the center's mission," said Sumner. "Whether someone is working toward a degree, earning a professional credential, or taking an exam required for their career, we want them to know they have a trusted testing resource right here in our community."

For more information about West Piedmont Higher Education Center's available testing services, visit wphed.org/testing-center or contact Stacey Davis at sdavis@wphed.org or 276-403-5615.

Arrington named Grand Marshal at VIR

Martinsville race car builder Joey Arrington will serve as Grand Marshal for the IMSA Michelin GT Challenge and Virginia Is for Racing Lovers Grand Prix at Virginia International Raceway Aug. 21-23.

Arrington built the VA250 Car, which Tommy Hurley of Ridgeway drove to a 253-mph Stock Car Land Speed Record March 23 at the NASA Shuttle Landing Facility at Kennedy Space Center.

Arrington, Hurley and the record-setting car will return to Virginia for the VIR weekend as part of the 253 MPH: Speed Meets Heat Tour — The Road to 270.

Fans will be able to see the car, meet Arrington and Hurley, visit with members of the VA250 team and use the project's "Be the Next Legend" racing simulators.

Arrington, the son of NASCAR independent racer Buddy Arrington, has spent more than five decades building engines and race cars in Southside Virginia.

"It's incredibly special to bring this car and our team back to VIR," Arrington said. "This is home for us. To be asked to serve as Grand Marshal while Tommy, the car and the entire VA250 team are here makes this weekend something I'll never forget."

Students sought for American Legion oratorical contest

The American Legion is seeking high school students interested in competing for college scholarships through its High School Oratorical Contest.

The contest is open to students in public, private and home schools. Established in 1938 as a Constitutional Speech Contest, the program is designed to deepen students' understanding of the U.S. Constitution while developing leadership and communication skills.

Each student prepares and delivers a speech on the U.S. Constitution. Competitions progress through local, district, regional, state and national levels, with scholarships awarded to winners at each level. The national winner receives a $25,000 scholarship.

The first local contest will be conducted on a date to be announced, before the end of the first semester 2026.

For more information, search online for "2027 American Legion High School Oratorical Contest" or call Curtis R. Millner Sr. at 276-403-2640.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Meetings

Tuesday, August 25
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Municipal Building, 55 West Church St., Martinsville.

Henry County Board of Supervisors meet at 3 and 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Room, Henry County Administration Building, 3300 King's Mountain Road, Martinsville.

Tuesday, September 8
City Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Municipal Building, 55 West Church St., Martinsville.

Events

Friday, August 21
TGIF Series Legendz Tribute Band, West Piedmont Higher Education Center (formerly NCI), Baldwin Building, Outdoor Plaza, 191 Fayette St., Martinsville. Doors open at 6 p.m.; music begins at 7. Food and drink vendors on site.

Join the MHC Lancers Alumni Network for a Lunch Bunch program that will be held monthly sarting in August. The group meets at a favorite, local eatery to connect, share stories and reminisce on members time at Longwood. Hugo's Restaurant & Sports Bar, 25 Bridge St. N, Martinsville, is selected this month. Attendees can order their own food and pay at the restaurant. RSVP on Facebook.

Saturday, August 22
Country Breakfast at Rangeley Ruritan Club, 7 to 10 a.m., 134 Calloway Drive, Fieldale. Includes sausage, eggs, hashbrowns, biscuits and gravy. Eat in or take out. Donations accepted. Proceeds go toward community projects.

Smith River Fest, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monogram Smith River Sports Complex, 1000, Irisburg Road, Axton.

American Legion Homer Dillard Post 78 will host a fish fry from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at its post home, 139 Creekside Drive, Martinsville. Fish sandwiches are $10, homemade desserts are $2, and water and soft drinks are $1. The event will be drive-thru with limited dining-in available. Call 276-340-5169 or 276-673-7663 to place pickup orders.

The GBAC will present Rhythms by the River, 5-7 p.m. at 3525 Fairystone Park Hwy., Bassett. Blue Windows will entertain southern rock. Bring a chair. Food will be available for purchase, with the proceeds going to benefit the Bassett Library Expansion Project. Email bcm.gbac@gmail.com with questions.

Friday, August 28
Exhibit Opening Reception, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Piedmont Arts. The opening reception is in honor of new exhibits, "COLLECTive Concerns: Collage and Assemblage" and "Chris Gregson: Novus Ordo Seclorum." Complimentary refreshments will be served. Music by Joanie McPeak. This event is free and open to the public. RSVP by Wednesday, Aug. 26, to 276-632-3221 or online at PiedmontArts.org. These exhibits are sponsored by Katie and Jack Adkins, Lucy Coleman, Olivia and Pres Garrett, Gale and Will Gravely, Melody Margrave, Helen S. and Charles G. Patterson Jr. Charitable Foundation Trust, Lynwood Artists, and What's Your Sign.

Saturday, August 29
'Fight Like Jackie' Spaghetti Benefit Dinner, $15 per meal. All proceeds will support Jackie. Hosted by the Fieldale Fire Department, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., at Rangely Ruritan, 134 Calloway Dr., Fieldale.

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

Through Monday, Aug. 31
Henry County Commissioner of Revenue Tiffany R. Hairston and her office are participating in the 2026 Commissioners and Cans Food Drive. Every donation goes to the Patrick & Henry Community College Patriot Pantry. Canned meats, vegetables and other non perishable food items are requested. Drop off at the commissioner's office, Room 108, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville. Call the office, 276-634-4610, for more information.

Friday, September 4
Sounds on the Square with Rosebud Band, 7 – 10 p.m. Food and drinks will be available for purchase, and admission to the MHC Heritage Museum will be half price. The Floyd-based band draws inspiration from long-form improvisation. Rosebud stretches each tune into a living, breathing experience. Members are Ryan Thaw on bass, William Hairston on guitar, Colin Cospel on guitar, Blaine Kaiser on drums and Will Tillery on keyboards.

Sunday September 6
Open Mic/Jam Session, 2 to 4 p.m., at the Bassett Ruritan Club, 277 Philpott Dam Road, Bassett. Admission is free.

Tuesday, September 15
A Five-Star Stay For Bees, 1 p.m., at Patrick & Henry Community College Fab Lab. Help create a welcoming habitat for native bees and other pollinators. Build your own bee hotel and learn simple ways to support the pollinators that help our gardens, flowers, and communities thrive. A $10 supply fee is required at the time of registration. In-person registration required at Ridgeway Branch Library/Fab Lab, P&HCC Dalton Idea Center, 26 Fayette St., Martinsville.

Wednesday, September 16
A Five-Star Stay For Bees, 1 p.m., at Patrick & Henry Community College Fab Lab. Help create a welcoming habitat for native bees and other pollinators. Build your own bee hotel and learn simple ways to support the pollinators that help our gardens, flowers, and communities thrive. A $10 supply fee is required at the time of registration. In-person registration required at Collinsville Branch Library, to attend Fab Lab, P&HCC Dalton Idea Center, 26 Fayette St., Martinsville.

Thursday, September 17
A Five-Star Stay For Bees, 1 p.m., at Patrick & Henry Community College Fab Lab. Help create a welcoming habitat for native bees and other pollinators. Build your own bee hotel and learn simple ways to support the pollinators that help our gardens, flowers, and communities thrive. A $10 supply fee is required at the time of registration. In-person registration required at Bassett Branch Library, for event at Fab Lab, P&HCC Dalton Idea Center, 26 Fayette St., Martinsville.

Friday, September 18
A Five-Star Stay For Bees, 1 p.m., at Patrick & Henry Community College Fab Lab. Help create a welcoming habitat for native bees and other pollinators. Build your own bee hotel and learn simple ways to support the pollinators that help our gardens, flowers, and communities thrive. A $10 supply fee is required at the time of registration. In-person registration required at Martinsville Main Library, event at Fab Lab, P&HCC Dalton Idea Center, 26 Fayette St., Martinsville.

Savory September: 6:30-9:30 p.m., at Piedmont Arts. Big city flavors meet small town charm at this New York-themed fundraiser for the arts. Admission tickets are $65 per person and include food and drinks. 50/50 raffle tickets are $20 each or $100 for six. Admission and raffle tickets are available at Piedmont Arts and piedmontarts.org. 215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville.

Ongoing

A series of four classes on genealogical research will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Bassett Historical Center on the first four Tuesdays in September (1, 8, 15, 22). There is no charge for the classes. The classes are limited to 12. Call the Bassett Historical Center 276-629-9191 to reserve a spot.

Lynwood Artists meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Piedmont Arts.

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.

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.

Piedmont Arts Guild meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, except in November and December, at 11:45 a.m. at Piedmont Arts.

Virginia Foothills Quilters Guild daytime group meets on the first Tuesday of each month from 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. at Piedmont Arts and on the third Friday of each month in January, March, May, July, September, and November, from 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at Piedmont Arts. Virginia Foothills Quilters Guild evening group meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 6:30-9 p.m. at Piedmont Arts.

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.

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, 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.

TOPS FIELDALE VA 0626 meets on Tuesdays 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.

County deputies terminated after separate arrests

Two Henry County Sheriff's Office deputies have been terminated following separate arrests on criminal charges outside Virginia.

The first incident occurred July 23 in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Henry County Deputy Christopher Michael Shaver was arrested by the South Carolina Highway Patrol and charged with driving under the influence and leaving the scene of an accident, according to a release from the Henry County Sheriff's Office.

Shaver was assigned to the Corrections Division/Adult Detention Center and was off duty at the time of the incident. Following notification of the arrest, the sheriff's office took immediate administrative action, and the deputy was terminated within hours, the release stated.

The matter also is being addressed in accordance with applicable requirements of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services regarding decertification, it added.

The second incident occurred Saturday night, Aug. 15, in Eden, North Carolina. Henry County Deputy Homer Charles Jessee was arrested and charged with driving while impaired and assault and battery.

Jessee also was assigned to the Corrections Division/Adult Detention Center and was off duty at the time of the incident. Following notification of the arrest, the sheriff's office again took immediate administrative action and the deputy was terminated, the release stated. The matter also has been addressed in accordance with applicable requirements of the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services regarding decertification.

Sheriff Wayne Davis said conduct that violates the law, including drinking and driving, will not be tolerated and is not consistent with the standards expected of employees.

"The citizens we serve have every right to expect those who work for the Sheriff's Office to conduct themselves responsibly, both on and off duty. Drinking and driving is dangerous, it is preventable, and it will not be tolerated within this organization. Our employees are not above the law, and when their conduct fails to meet the standards of this office, we will take appropriate action."

The Henry County Sheriff's Office recognizes the seriousness of having two employees charged with alcohol-related driving offenses within a short period of time. While both incidents occurred while the employees were off duty and neither involved a county-owned vehicle nor other county property. Employees of the Sheriff's Office are expected to maintain standards of conduct that reflect the responsibility and public trust associated with their positions.

The criminal cases remain under the jurisdiction of the respective law enforcement agencies and court systems where the arrests occurred. The sheriff's office will respect those processes and address the employment matters separately and in accordance with agency policy.

The sheriff's office thanked the South Carolina Highway Patrol and Eden Police Department for their professionalism and for taking appropriate action in the incidents.



OPINION

Organ Scandal



Morgan Griffith

Representative

The 118th Congress served as a launching pad for numerous actions taken in the 119th Congress.

House Republicans reintroduced commonsense policies that first secured House passage in the 118th Congress.

One bill, the Laken Riley Act which I repeatedly voted for, makes it easier for law enforcement to arrest criminal illegal aliens for certain crimes. This bill received swift consideration and passage in both the House and Senate.

A second bill is the HALT Fentanyl Act. I was the proud House sponsor of this legislation to permanently designate lethal fentanyl-related substances as Schedule I drugs. The bill also made researching Schedule I drugs easier so that we can work to better understand the impacts of these substances on human health.

Like the Laken Riley Act, this bill received swift consideration in both chambers of Congress.

Both of these bills not only won support in the 119th Congress, but from the President as well. President Trump signed these bills into law to help protect American communities.

Some of my actions in the 118th Congress have influenced further action at the federal level.

During that time, I served as the Chairman of the Oversight & Investigations Subcommittee for the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Moreover, I was a leading Energy and Commerce member on the Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic.

During my leadership on these panels, I routinely participated in oversight of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), with particular interest in American public health agencies engaged in risky research and gain-of-function research projects.

Our investigative work demanded answers from public health officials like Dr. Anthony Fauci.

My findings led me to introduce the Risky Research Review Act. This bill outlines key reforms to make American-funded research more safe, more transparent and more accountable.

To continue momentum on this front, I reintroduced the bill in the 119th Congress with Senator Rand Paul. But the Trump Administration is actively responding to my concerns.

In July 2026, the Trump Administration announced a new government policy for stopping high-risk life sciences research.

The federal policy prohibits American funding of dangerous gain-of-function research in both domestic and foreign settings and aims to establish stronger oversight for life sciences research that could present significant risks to human health.

The Trump Administration further limits federal support for research in countries or institutions that lack appropriate biosafety, biosecurity and oversight standards.

While I will still push for my legislation to enshrine necessary guardrails into law for federally funded risky research, these federal actions are steps in the right direction.

A separate health care policy I investigated under my Chairmanship in the 118th Congress concerned the implementation and oversight of the organ donation and transplant system.

I led a hearing to spotlight issues with our organ transplant programs and discuss the failures of the groups responsible for the procurement of organs, Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs).

In particular, I highlighted alarming allegations that were previously raised to my Subcommittee's attention.

We received reports that an OPO had planned to operate on prospective organ donors who showed signs of life!

Another allegation claimed that somebody mouthed the words "help me" just before doctors were ready to commence an organ harvesting procedure.

The patient survived, but this disturbing detail reinforced Congressional desires to make the organ transplant process more safe and less risky.

These reports reflected concerns about Network for Hope, one federally designated OPO, and its management and operating procedures.

Upon hearing these troubling allegations, my Oversight Subcommittee brought in medical experts to understand the organ transplant health care landscape and determine the frequency at which these incidents happen.

Following my investigation on the issue, the Trump Administration has worked to protect prospective organ donors and patients awaiting lifesaving treatments.

In August 2026, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services made steps to decertify Network for Hope! This means the OPO can no longer do business with the federal government, and it loses a primary source of income.

This action is another critical federal step in working to ensure the safety and integrity of organ donation and securing U.S. health care programs to better protect patients.

I am proud to have been an early advocate on these issues to help sway federal action. I will continue to shine a light on issues that deserve attention from Congress, the President and the American people.

Changing course takes courage



Holly Kozelsky

"I told you so" is a bitter pill to swallow.

When someone has a change of heart, we should accept the new position gracefully. That's standard decorum. However, if we must add additional reasoning for responding politely, let's add that we should make it easy for others to admit earlier mistakes and change course. If the course they are headed on is what we have wanted all along, make it easy for them, not embarrassing or difficult!

Psychological maneuvering aside, it is normal for dedicated professionals to continually reevaluate what they are doing and to readjust their actions as best suit the needs of the moment.

Would we really want someone in charge who has such a shallow ego that he is afraid to veer from his original course for fear of reprisal? Of course not. It would be entirely damaging to have a leader or scientist or officer to insist on a wrong or even outdated position out of obstinance and fear of being shamed.

Henry County Sheriff Wayne Davis on Aug. 14 did an about-face. He sent out a public statement saying that the department would stop using Flock cameras, effective immediately.

"… in the three years since we implemented the Flock system, the viewpoints and concerns surrounding this technology have changed significantly," he wrote on Aug. 14.

Flock cameras themselves had not changed at all. What had changed was people's understanding of them.

"As your Sheriff, I have a responsibility to continually evaluate …" he wrote. "Leadership means being willing to constantly evaluate procedures when circumstances change …"

Public response to his statement came pouring in. When I saw his Facebook post just 3 hours after it was posted, it already had 359 likes, 69 shares and 70 comments, nearly all of which applauded the announcement of the change. Not one person complained that he first said one thing and then another.

Not one person ridiculed Sheriff Davis for having embraced the use of Flock cameras in the beginning.

Not one person gloated, "I told you so."

We as a community have learned to accept changing policies and beliefs based on changing understanding of situations.

Where was this maturity and level-headedness during the ever-evolving understanding and experience of the Covid-19 pandemic?

Covid-19 was something new. There was no handbook for it; scientists and doctors scrambled for methods to adapt and protect in real time, as the crisis unfolded.

It was scary. Weren't you terrified of victims' descriptions of feeling like their lungs were full of glass shards? Didn't you notice that the newspaper's obituary listings were suddenly twice or three times longer than they used to be?

Scientists and doctors tried to figure out how to deal with it as it unfolded, and in the course of doing so they tried one thing and then another. The intention was to keep us safe.

And people ridiculed them and complained.

Now, suddenly, we have learned to accept a changed mind, a reversal of policy made due to increased understanding of a situation.

Thank goodness. Let's hope our newfound politeness sticks.

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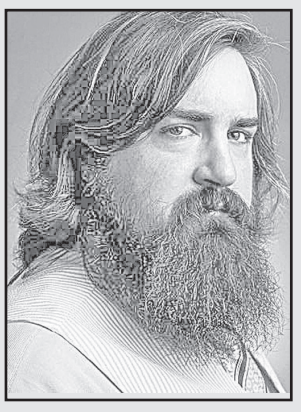
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It's getting harder and harder to satirize this



By Ben R. Williams

WINNESHIEK COUNTY, IOWA — Tommy Neddermeyer Jr. runs a hand along his pristine 1968 Plymouth Barracuda. The car was bought new by his father, Tommy Neddermeyer Sr., who passed it along to his beloved son shortly before his death.

"We used to tear up the country in that bad boy," Neddermeyer said wistfully. "You could rev that 383 in Decorah and they'd hear it all the way in Freeport."

Tommy had planned to pass the Barracuda along to his own son, Trey. Unfortunately, that won't be happening.

"It's going to auction this weekend," Neddermeyer said. "I've already lost the farm. If I don't sell that car, I'll lose the house, too."

For decades, the Neddermeyer family has grown and harvested soybeans. Since Donald Trump was elected to his second term, however, Trump's tariffs coupled with retaliatory tariffs from China have disrupted the global soybean market, devastating the livelihoods of farmers like Neddermeyer.

"I voted for the man three times," Neddermeyer said. "All that stuff about helping American farmers, I believed all of it. And of course, I wanted him to keep those criminal migrants and trans people out of Winneshiek County. Me and my buddies actually thought we saw a trans person lurking around Phelps Park a few weeks ago, but it turned out to be a weather balloon."

Now, Neddermeyer said, he feels like he's been conned.

"I had to sell the farm last month," he said. "I couldn't turn a profit on the soybeans, and I couldn't even afford to harvest them because diesel has gotten so expensive because of that war with Iran. I've been ruined. Selling the Barracuda will buy some time, but if things don't change soon, me and the wife will be living out of our old camper."

"It's not like I could have known," Neddermeyer said. "I thought Trump was trying to help farmers like me."

But is that true? At a June 18, 2024 campaign rally in Racine, Wisconsin, Trump's own words told a different story.

"We're going to support these farmers, folks," Trump told the audience. "I love the farmers. Except for Tommy Neddermeyer of Winneshiek County, Iowa. Have you heard of this guy? He's a low IQ individual and we're going to knock the hell out of him."

"Well, I assumed he was talking about my dad," Neddermeyer said. "I guess I thought it was odd, but you know, I'm a patriot. If it came down to choosing a side, I was going to choose Trump every time."

However, at a July 27, 2024 rally in St. Cloud, Minnesota, Trump's rhetoric became more specific.

"I hate Tommy Neddermeyer Jr., age 47, of 39 Dobson Lane, Calmar, Iowa 52132," Trump told the attendees. "Just to be clear, I have no issue with his father."

"I hate his stupid face and his ugly wife and son," Trump continued. "I want to take the dumb

(See Williams p. 5)

OPINION

Williams

(cont. from page 4)

1968 Barracuda he owns and run him over with it until he explodes like a watermelon. I promise you all that I will destroy him. I will see to it that he has to sell his farm and his house and die penniless in the gutter having lost everything dear to him. This is my pledge to the American people."

"I didn't take it personally," Neddermeyer said. "I figured that's just how politicians talk, you know. I just wish someone had told me what Trump was really planning to do. How could I have known?"

As Neddermeyer hitchhikes toward an uncertain future, he said that he struggles sometimes not to blame himself.

"There are times that I think maybe I shouldn't have voted at all," Neddermeyer said. "That maybe I've been the rube this whole time. But let me tell you, no matter how bad things get, Kamala would have been worse."

At a June 23 rally in Macungie, Pennsylvania, Trump announced that his plan to destroy Neddermeyer was almost complete.

"His spirit is broken, folks," Trump said. "Soon, Tommy Neddermeyer Jr. will be a husk of a man buried in a pauper's grave. The only thing I like about him is that he's so incredibly stupid that he'll probably vote for me a fourth time."

"Would I vote for Trump again?" Neddermeyer said. "Yeah. I mean, he's a business man."

Paid Column Support

Letter To The Editor

The Martinsville lawsuits saga continues

It is time to question the media's coverage of the lawsuits by Aaron Rawls, LC Jones, Aretha Ferrell-Benavides, and former city attorney Sands Anderson. In some news outlets, it is obvious who they see as the villains. In others, it's too close to call; then there are the neutral reporters. This is typical of news outlets and their reporters.

Right now, the city is in campaign mode, covering the election of new city council members. If you think the press cannot control an election, you are obviously on the planet Mars. In the upcoming election, only Mayor LC Jones is under scrutiny. The rest of the campaigners are just bystanders looking for a way to get noticed by the voters.

Most news outlets have reported on the LC Jones lawsuit. How they report on Jones could affect his election, or is that their plan? Some news outlets report only one side of the story. No need to report on the other side because they have picked their villain and are now slickly trying to influence Jones' campaign. One city council campaigner has said enough is enough, but as usual offers no answer. Sounds like they are announcing a new special at the food market, sold by themselves. Another council seeker wants you to believe they are the savior; good luck with that?

In the upcoming city council election, don't let the news cycle control your beliefs. The purpose of lawsuits is to fix a wrong, settle a private disagreement, or get money or other relief for a loss. And yes, that includes attorney fees. There is a saying about history: it can be "his story," and that includes the news reporter, not the facts of the issue.

Lawrence Mitchell,
Martinsville

Fieldale

(cont. from page 1)

cation," he said.

"I went back for a check up and had skipped over stage 4 and went into stage 5 renal failure about three years ago," he said.

Williams initially used peritoneal dialysis, or PD, a home-based treatment for kidney failure. Eventually, that treatment was no longer an option, and he began hemodialysis at home with the help of his wife, Lisa.

"My wife was my caregiver, basically," Williams said.

In early December two years ago, Williams was hooked up to dialysis and the procedure was about to begin when he began having trouble.

"I began shivering and got really cold. After 2 1/2 days I woke up in ICU with a tube down my throat and strapped to the bed," he said. "It turns out I basically passed away in the chair at the house."

After that incident, Williams was required to receive dialysis at a medical facility.

"I'm in the center three days a week. It takes 3 1/2 hours to get a treatment," he said.

The treatments have significantly affected his daily life, including his ability to travel and participate in activities he enjoys with his family.

"We like to travel and we've done that for a long time, but that has pretty much stopped," he said. "My life has changed so much, we can't travel without trying to setup dialysis at different centers wherever we are going which must be setup almost a year in advance most times. That doesn't work out most of the time."

A kidney donation would improve his quality of life, Williams said. In short, "it would give me my life back."

Although his wife and family would say otherwise, Williams said, "I feel like I'm a major burden on my wife and family right now, and it's hard to deal with."

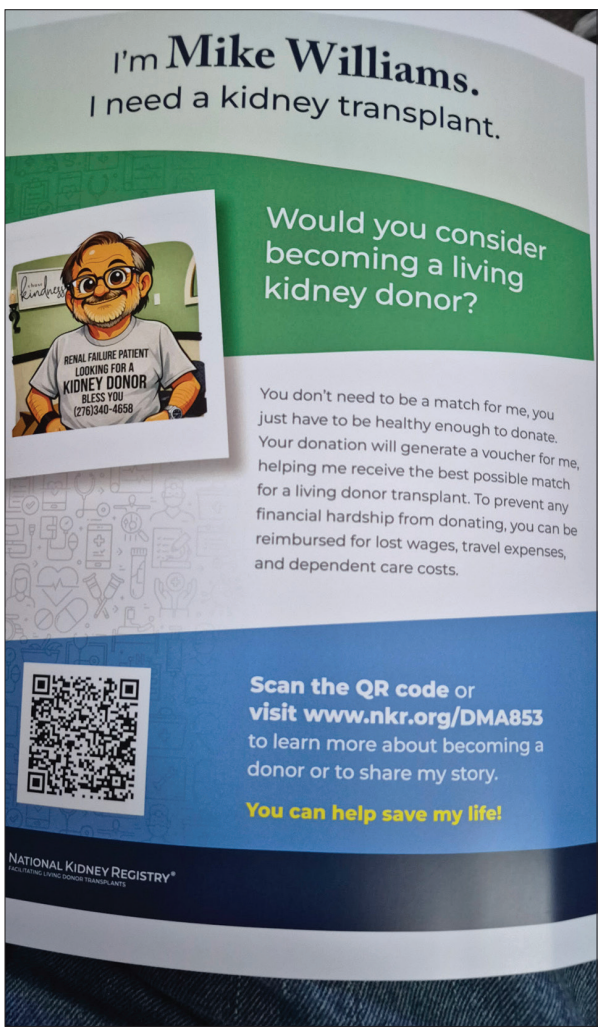
In his profile with the NKR, he wrote that "being tired all the time makes it difficult to ride" his motorcycle or doing "the community service I love doing. Being unavailable to go fishing with my grandsons or taking our granddaughter to the beach has made me feel useless sometimes. The change in my life physically and mentally is hard to deal with. I am so much less of me now."

Williams is among the estimated 96,000 people waiting for a kidney. He is registered with the National Kidney Registry (NKR) and transplant centers at UVA Health/University Medical Center in Charlottesville, Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and Duke University Hospital in North Carolina.

"It takes 3 to 5 years to get a kidney," he said, adding his insurance will pay "for everything" if someone decides to donate a kidney to him.

Williams has been a member of the Fontaine Ruritan Club for 28 years. He and his wife have two daughters and four grandchildren.

For more information, visit www.nkr.org/DMA853.



For more information, scan the QR code or visit www.nkr.org/DMA853.

Norfleet earns degree from University of Maryland Global Campus

Sherry L. Norfleet of Martinsville, earned a Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity Technology from University of Maryland Global Campus in spring 2026.

Norfleet was one of more than 7,300 students worldwide who earned degrees from UMGC in the spring 2026 term.

'People are the key': AARP VA urges folks to meet, talk to each other

By Zamone Perez
Virginia News Connection



An AARP survey found men over the age of 45 now register higher rates of loneliness than women. (Adobe Stock)

As the loneliness and isolation epidemic is on the rise, especially among those 45 and older, AARP Virginia is encouraging people to get out and be involved in their communities.

A recent survey by AARP found 40% of people 45 and older felt lonely and isolated. Researchers pointed out the middle of life, when a person is in their 40s and 50s, can actually be some of the loneliest times in their lives, given many major life changes happen at those ages.

Lilia Keys, a retired school counselor and volunteer for AARP Virginia, said those who share hobbies can help combat isolation.

"If you find people that have the same interests as you do, that's one way of just getting out of your shell and being able to talk to other people. We have to find something that interests, a reason for them to get up," Keys recommended.

The rise in loneliness comes as many Americans across the country retreat from public life. Attendance of religious services, volunteering, and membership in community groups have been declining for decades.

Keys explained connections can be made in many places. For example, AARP Virginia hosts a number of coffees and other activities. Keys introduced two women she knew at the event and the very next day the two women were at a different event together. Keys stressed life is meant to be experienced with others.

"People are the key. You need to have friends. You need to talk to somebody. You need to just kind of share life experiences," Keys emphasized.

The World Health Organization has listed loneliness as a global health threat, associated with the deaths of nearly 900,000 people annually.



Franklin County Sheriff Bill Overton and P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges conclude the signing of a memorandum of understanding to establish a training partnership between P&HCC and FCSO.

P&HCC, Franklin County Sheriff's Office sign training MOU

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) and Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) have entered into an agreement for P&HCC to become the training provider for the county's justice-impacted population.

"This is a bifurcated mission to instill hope and serve the community as well. We have seen firsthand that when you give someone a pathway to a good-paying job that changes the trajectory of their lives, reduces recidivism, and improves the circumstances of their family. We believe in that powerfully and we are delighted to partner with Franklin County in this important way," said P&HCC President Dr. Greg Hodges.

The primary goals of the agreement are to reduce recidivism among justice impacted individuals and to promote economic stability among such individuals through training for industry recognized certifications and credentials. P&HCC instructors will provide instruction on-site at the Franklin County Jail, providing coaching to assist students in successfully completing the training programs and connecting justice-impacted individuals to community support resources and employment opportunities.

"With this partnership, I just believe we're going to soar," said Franklin County Sheriff Bill Overton, adding, "We feel a lot of pieces are coming into play to help us be successful on this level that we are embarking upon. I couldn't think of anything more exciting or any one group to partner with for what Patrick & Henry is doing. I'm so grateful that we are finding ways to help the gentlemen in our facility and cut their recidivism rate."

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Benkahla

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agencies.

His duties will include advising the city on municipal law, contracts, ordinances, real estate transactions, procurement, personnel matters, economic development, litigation and compliance with state and federal laws. He also will assist with policy development, legislative matters and other legal issues affecting city operations.

Benkahla brings more than 30 years of legal experience, including nearly two decades as a county attorney for local governments in Virginia. He began his legal career through Virginia's Law Reader Program and is a member of the Virginia State Bar.

He earned a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science in psychology from Radford University. He previously served as county attorney for Augusta and Spotsylvania counties, advising county boards and departments on zoning and land use, procurement, contracts, real estate, regulatory compliance, litigation and government operations.

Under his employment agreement, Benkahla will receive an annual salary of $155,000, plus $5,000 for travel. He also will receive benefits available to eligible city employees, including health insurance, Virginia Retirement System benefits and contributions, life and disability insurance, workers' compensation coverage, paid leave and holidays.

Virginia Department of Corrections launches Citizen's Academy

Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) Director Joseph W. Walters announced the launch of the agency's first Citizens' Academy, a four-week program beginning Oct. 14.

The VADOC Citizens' Academy will offer community members, such as family members of public safety team members, incarcerated individuals, or individuals under community supervision, civic organizations, college students, and faith-based leaders a first-hand look at the agency's mission, operations, and the work of its dedicated staff.

Participants will visit a correctional facility, a Probation & Parole Office, VADOC's Headquarters in Richmond, and the agency's Academy for Staff Development to learn about institutional operations, community supervision, leadership, reentry efforts, employee training, and employee health and wellness. The program will conclude with a keynote address and graduation ceremony.

The VADOC Citizens' Academy aims to strengthen public understanding, highlight employee professionalism, and support relationship-building with community leaders, educators, businesses, and civic organizations. Application details and schedules are available on the VADOC website under the Community and Legislative Affairs section located under the "General Public" tab.

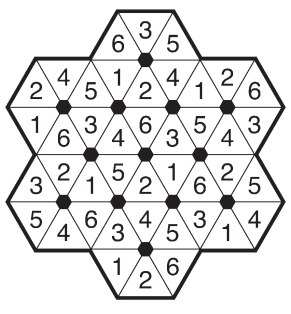
"I'm excited to provide community members with a detailed, inside look at the important work our dedicated public safety team performs every day to keep people in communities all across the Commonwealth of Virginia safe," said Director Walters. "We look forward to opening our doors, sharing our work, and building stronger connections and relationships with communities across Virginia."

Applications will be accepted for the VADOC Citizens' Academy through Monday, August 24.

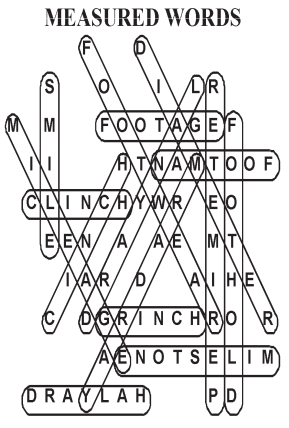
Learn more about the Citizens' Academy by watching this video on the VADOC's YouTube channel.

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Answers

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Enterprise Exchange

In the spirit of partnership, we're sharing highlights from our sister newsroom at The Enterprise (www.theenterprise.net) to help keep our readers in Henry County and Martinsville informed.

County sees increase in carryover funds

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County Board of Supervisors learned the county experienced an increase in carryover funds during the annual year-end report at its Aug. 10 meeting.

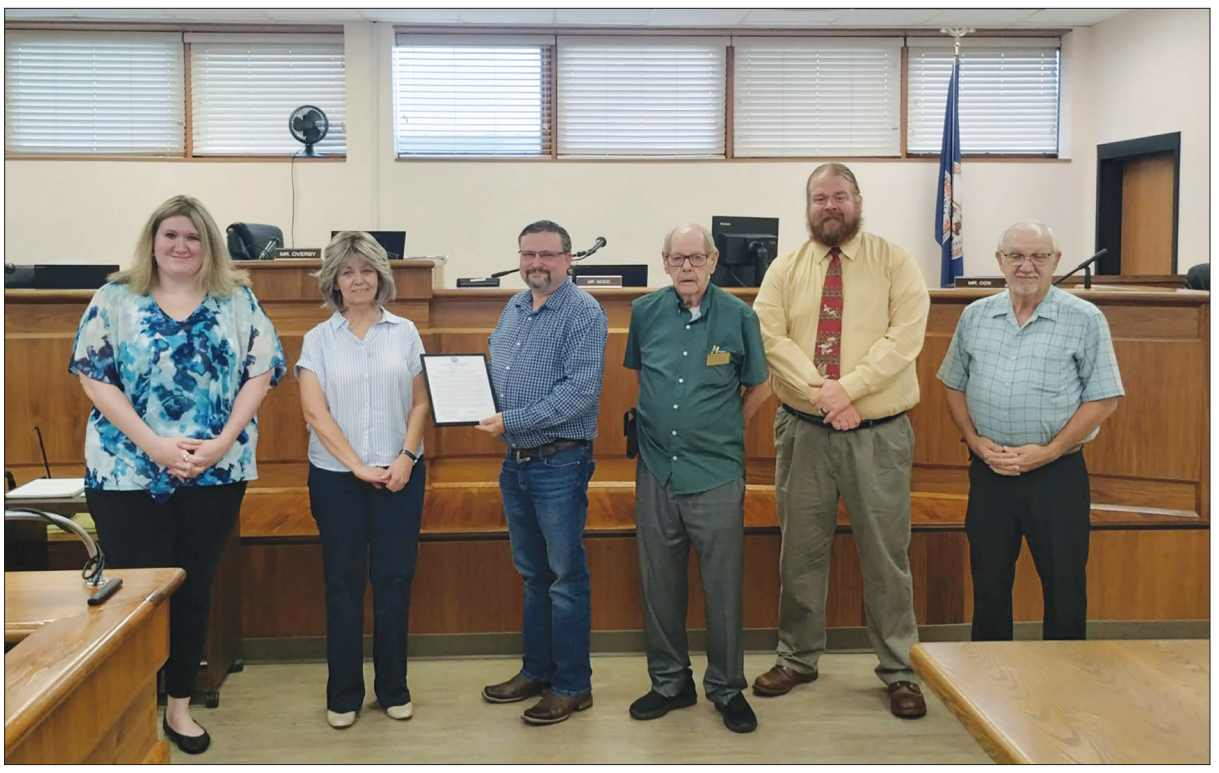
The fiscal year ended June 30, 2026. Treasurer Sandra Stone said the net general county fund balance carried forward was $13,947,421, an increase of $295,852 from the previous fiscal year.

"That was an increase of $295,852 from last fiscal year," she said.

Stone said the county's carryover balance comes from several sources, including unspent department budget funds, revenues that were higher than budgeted and unspent carryover funds from the previous year.

"Carryover funds are needed and used during our lower revenue months. Usually, these months are August to October and February to April," she said.

At the end of June, the county's contingency fund balance was $1,251,601. The county earned $442,876 in interest on investments and $16,396 in interest on deposits.



The Enterprise, which is marking its 150th anniversary, was selected as the first local business to be recognized as a Patrick County Partner. Pictured are Taylor Boyd and Debbie Hall, from the newspaper; and supervisors Andrew Overby, Richard Cox, Jonathan Wood and Clayton Kendrick. (Photo by Somer Luna-Ojodeagua)

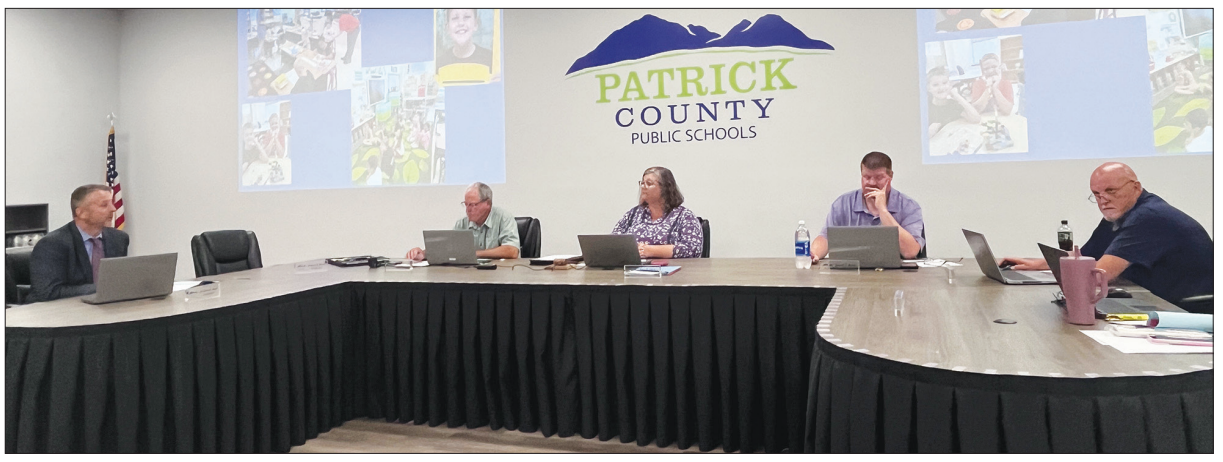
Patrick County schools earn Beta distinction

By Taylor Boyd

The Patrick County School Board learned the school division was awarded National Beta District of Distinction for the 2025-26 school year during its Aug. 13 meeting.

Schools Superintendent Dr. Jason Wood said this is the third consecutive year the division has received the award.

"This shows the tremendous amount of great students we have and the hard work our staff puts into making sure our students have extracurricular activities beyond just the normal academics. Our students do so well in the competitions that the state has at the national level," he said.



The Patrick County School Board learned the school division was awarded National Beta District of Distinction for the 2025-26 school year.

Flash flood causes further Campbell Branch discoloration

By Taylor Boyd

A flash flood on Campbell Branch, a tributary of the Mayo River, caused further discoloration of the water earlier this month, according to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

The latest incident occurred more than a month after DEQ issued a request for corrective action to Faith Mulch following a July 18 spill of blue-green hydroseeding mulch into Campbell Branch.

According to DEQ, the material is a nontoxic, blue-green-dyed hydroseeding mulch.

DEQ Senior Communications Coordinator Sarah Pentecost said the short-term corrective actions requested by the agency have been implemented.

Rotary, Ruritan event set for Aug. 27

By Taylor Boyd

The Rotary Club of Stuart and Stuart Ruritan Club will hold Pints for Patrick County Partnerships from 6-8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 27, at Pickle & Ash.

Admission is a $5 donation at the door.

Stuart Rotary Club President Liz Pierce said the Rotary Club began its Rotary on Tap events in January.

"We've been rotating between four different restaurants and we do what's called a Pints for Event. Each month we pick a different cause and the restaurant donates $1 per drink that's sold, and then we just invite people to come in and it's more of a networking community event," she said.

For the Aug. 27 event, the two groups are teaming up to give local businesses and nonprofit organizations an opportunity to pitch projects that would help them grow or better serve the community.

Businesses and nonprofit organizations interested in participating can register online or contact Pierce at LPierceStuartRotary@pm.me for more information.

Harris seeks Smith River District seat

By Taylor Boyd

Five years after ending her term on the Patrick County Board of Supervisors, former Smith River District representative Crystal Harris is seeking the seat again in the Nov. 4 election.

Harris will face interim representative Richard Cox, who is also seeking the post. The winner will serve the remaining three years of the current term.

Harris previously served on the board for 21 years. She said she decided to seek the position again because she felt the need to work as a team with the Board of Supervisors.

"I did say we need new eyes," at the end of her last term, "but what I think I said was 'young, new eyes.' We've had a hard time recruiting the young people to get involved."

With the community behind her encouraging her to run again, "and with a lot of thought and consideration, I decided that I could be a benefit to the county," she said.

Harris said her more than two decades of experience on the board gives her knowledge she could use to serve the community.

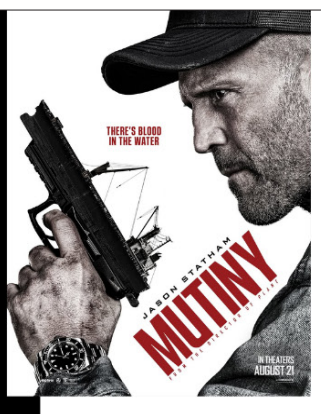


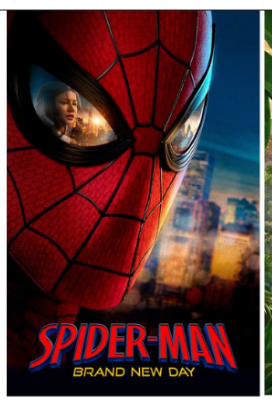
Crystal Harris is seeking the Smith River District seat on the Patrick County Board of Supervisors in the November election.

To read more about these and other stories, check out The Enterprise

www.theenterprise.net

hollywoodcinema.net











$5 tickets near Walmart

1-3-5-7-9 1-4-7 1-3-5-7-9 1-3-5-7-9 1-3-5-7-9 276-656-3456

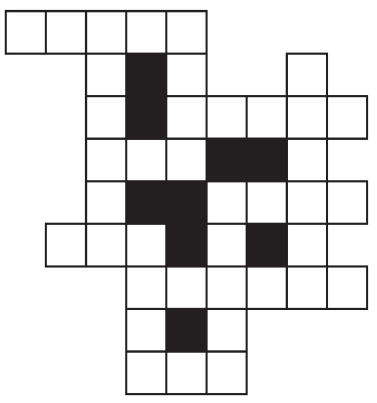
PUZZLE TIME

FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

HET
WOPNUT
♥ ARMCO
EWOM
REACNA
♥ MYA
♥ ENMA
AWMCA
♥ ENW
SORRAT
PYNPI
♥ RYNA

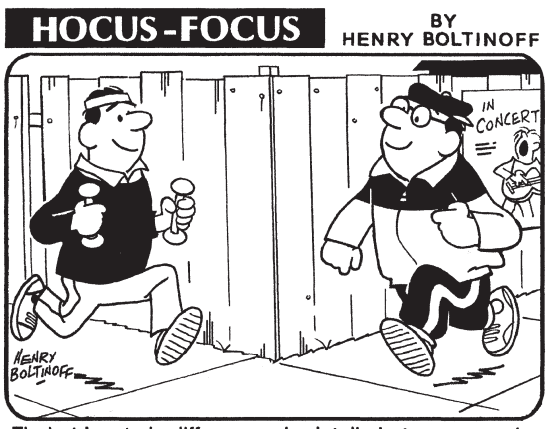


Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥ **RATHE** becomes **HATER** or **EARTH** or **HEART**). Fit each string's word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

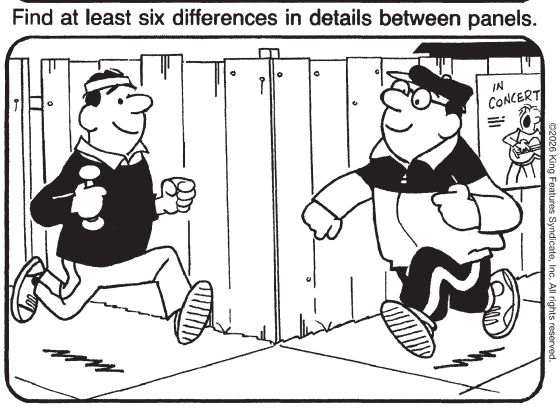
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Arm is raised. 2. Poster is smaller. 3. Weight is missing. 4. Cap is reversed. 5. Line in sidewalk is moved. 6. Leg is moved.

MAGIC MAZE ● MEASURED WORDS

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: A FIELD OF GRAPEVINES

Cinch
Clinch
Diameter
Footage
Foothold
Footman
Footwear
Grinch
Halyard
Lanyard
Mileage
Milestone
Perimeter
Smile
Yardarm

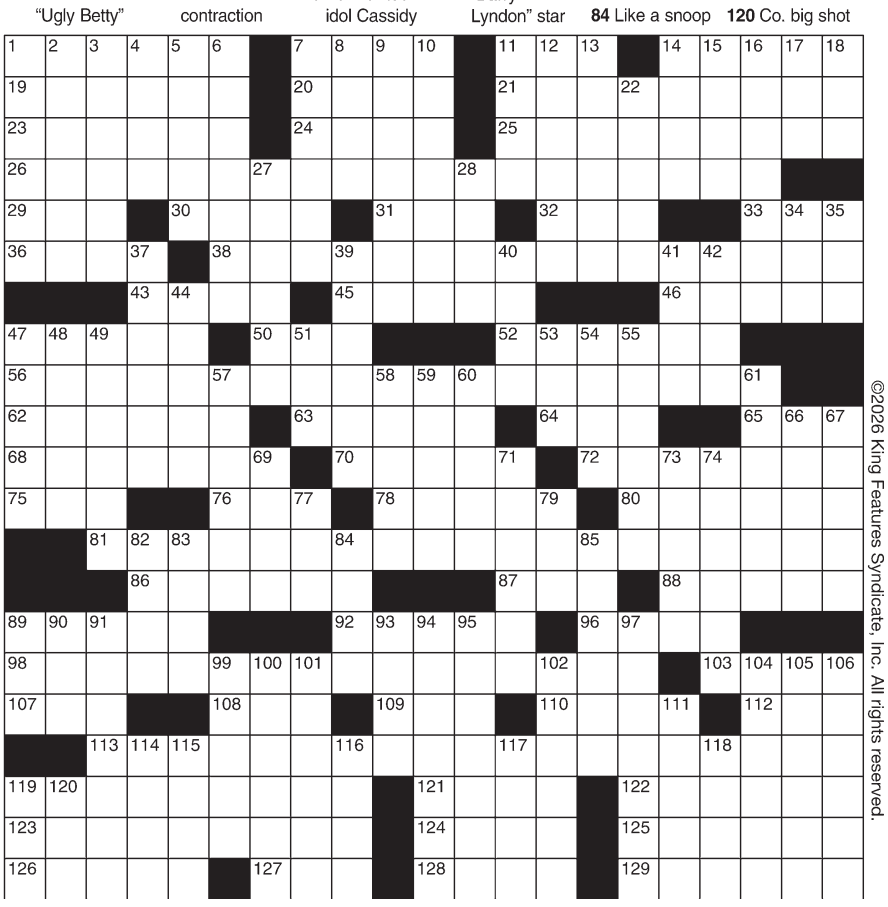
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Super Crossword

TOOTIN' MAD

ACROSS
1 Lie down in rest
7 Pedometer unit
11 Trial fig.
14 Pig in a kids' series
19 A bit coarse, as humor
20 — sapiens
21 Informal talks
23 Personae non — (unwelcome sorts)
24 At the summit
25 Nielsens, e.g.
26 Start of a riddle
29 Granola bit
30 Goose of Hawaii
31 Many a craft brew, in brief
32 — center (play area)
33 Thu. follower
36 "That's — blow!"
38 Riddle, part 2
43 Suffix with billion
45 High-IQ crew
46 Harp relatives
47 Uncouth sorts
50 Ortiz of "Ugly Betty"
52 City near Seattle
56 Riddle, part 3
62 Hat for Indiana Jones
63 Esther of "Good Times"
64 China's Chou En- —
65 Uncertainties
68 Very last part
70 Opus
72 Freaks out
75 Gore, Roker and Pacino
76 Relative of .edu or .org
78 Base for head hair
80 Like many Coast Guard rescues
81 Riddle, part 4
86 Feature of the word "jot"
87 Execs' mag
88 Idea sources
89 Skylit lobbies
92 Project deets
96 James of "Alien Nation"
98 End of the riddle
103 Pirate's drink
107 Bunch
108 "Deck the Halls" contraction
109 Mined stuff
110 Egyptian canal
112 Year, in Brazil
113 Riddle's answer
119 Like the work of insurance risk calculators
121 "Bye-bye!"
122 Walk really quietly
123 Lambastes
124 Pre-'91 empire
125 "7 Rings" singer Grande
126 Applesauce brand
127 "Fancy that!"
128 Chinese dog, in brief
129 Became taut

DOWN
1 Singer Belle or Spektor
2 Lengthy reprimand
3 Beseech reverently
4 Preminger of film
5 Former teen idol Cassidy
6 Glasses and contacts
7 Unselfish sort
8 Carry around
9 Like theatrical behavior
10 Appear like a jack-in-the-box
11 Last part of some plays
12 Saloon
13 Castle tower
14 Org. against leather
15 Estrada of "CHiPs"
16 Miss terribly
17 Tent stake
18 Hoofed beast
22 Nickname for Louis Armstrong
27 Make beloved
28 Sculling tools
34 Comic Issa
35 SSNs, e.g.
37 Artist Andy
39 Iconic "Dragnet" line
40 Granola bits
41 Often-tickled Muppet
42 With 48-Down, "Barry Lyndon" star
44 French river or department
47 U.K.'s counterpart to an Oscar
48 See 42-Down
49 A bit strange
51 Neither's partner
53 Ocean east of Ga.
54 Mined stuff
55 Columbus citizen
57 Mexican general Villa
58 Donovan of "Clueless"
59 Decide (to)
60 Decompose
61 "— Cousins" (Elvis Presley film)
66 Grazing area
67 Doesn't leave
69 Mail slot spot
71 Plaza Hotel girl
73 Rho follower
74 Botching it up
77 "Rocky III" co-star
79 Wordplay bit
82 "That so?"
83 Persian ruler
84 Like a snoop
85 Build up, as interest
89 Piercing tool
90 Even if, in brief
91 Snare drum sound
93 Inadequate
94 Annual basketball contest on the Continent
95 Silk nightdress
97 Proficient in
99 Pong maker
100 Clamping down on
101 Lordly home
102 Beachward
104 Believers in Jah, informally
105 Common soccer score
106 Conk out, as a machine
111 Old name of the Congo
114 "Hooper" star Reynolds
115 Junior miss
116 Big ice mass
117 Bit of work
118 Revolve
119 It's pressed for cash
120 Co. big shot



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Weekly SUDOKU

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

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

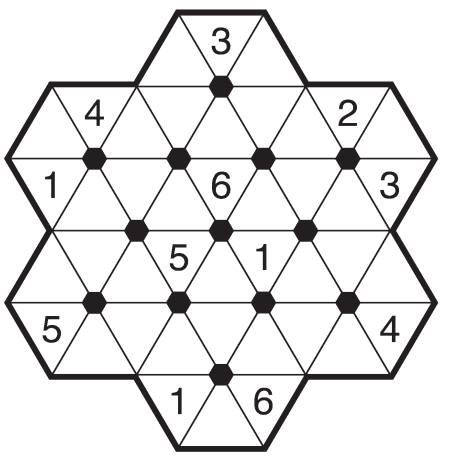
◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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SNOWFLAKES

by Japheth Light

There are 13 black hexagons in the puzzle. Place the numbers 1 - 6 around each of them. No number can be repeated in any partial hexagon shape along the border of the puzzle.



DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆

◆ Easy ◆◆ Medium ◆◆◆ Difficult

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

• On average, it takes between 12 to 14 dates before couples will trade house keys.

• In 1915, the Kansas legislature introduced a bill that would make it a misdemeanor for a woman under age 44 to wear lipstick because it would "create a false impression."

• The rocket frog can jump more than six feet by releasing energy it stores in its tendons.

• While several companies claim to be America's oldest soft drink brand, including Moxie, Dr Pepper, Vernors Ginger Soda and Hires Root Beer, all of which were created in the late 19th century, the inventor of carbonated water was Swedish chemist Joseph Priestley, in 1767.

• The Grand Canyon is so large that it can be seen from space.

• When language barriers caused confusion during international soccer tournaments, English referee Ken Aston was inspired to create the yellow and red card system while sitting at a traffic light. The cards were introduced at the 1970 World Cup.

• Ancient Romans sent slaves into the mountains to collect snow that they flavored with fruits and juices to create their own version of ice cream.

• Sunlight hitting Earth for one hour contains more energy than the world uses in a year.

• In 2013, the Chicago Sun-Times laid off 28 of its full-time photographers and trained its reporters to take their own iPhone photos.

• Bees contribute to more than $15 billion worth of crops every year through pollination.

• Wagyu beef, generally held to be some of the world's best, usually comes from cows raised in Japan with such luxuries as massages, a better diet and longer lifespans.

• Studies have shown that mice have dropped dead after breathing some new carpet fumes.

***

Thought for the Day: "One thorn of experience is worth a whole wilderness of warnings." — *James Russell Lowell*

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SCRAMBLERS

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

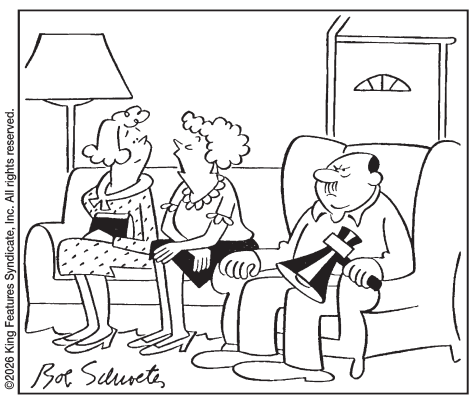
Alarm
SNORES

Ripe
RUMATE

Truth
POGLES

Heir
ICONS

TODAY'S WORD



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"When Stanley speaks, everyone _____!"

Advertise With Us!

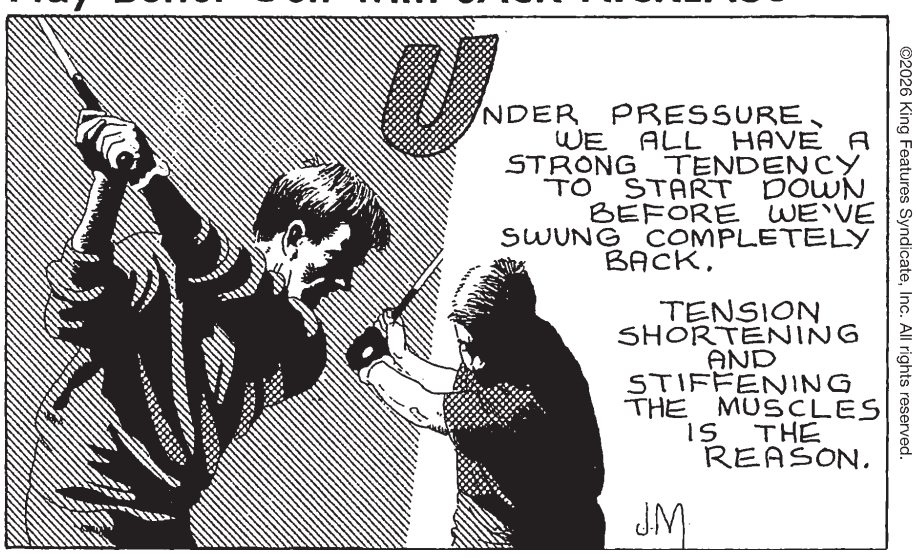
What we offer:
- Flexible pricing
- Highly Customizable Packages that include print, digital or both
- Deeply discounted rates
- Seasonal Specials

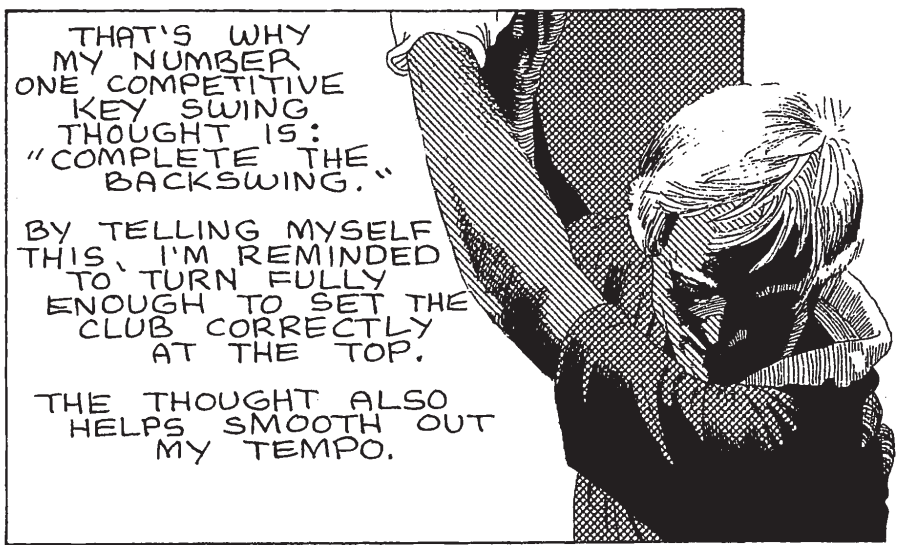
What we have:
- A team of Advertising Specialists who will work with you to customize a package, *STRETCH* your advertising dollars, and accomplish your advertising goals
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For more information, call the office at (276) 340-2445

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LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL26001166-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT
3160 Kings Mountain Rd, 3rd FL, Martinsville, VA 24112
Evelia Coral Perez Perez v. Ponciano Flores Martinez
Mexico City, Mexico

The object of this suit is to:
OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINCULO MATRIMONII
It is ORDERED that PONCIANO FLORES MARTINEZ appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before SEPTEMBER 20, 2026.
JULY 22, 2026
Katherine Salgado
[ ] JUDGE [X] CLERK

LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a series of public hearings has been scheduled for **August 26, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of these public hearings is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of Special Use Permits for the following cases.

Case S-26-09 Ryan Smith
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-302 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a campground facility to accommodate up to 80 RV sites, with the first phase of development to be 40 sites. The property is located at 895 Sugar Tree Dr., in the Iriswood District, is zoned Agricultural District A-1, as shown on Tax Map 56.2/44A.

Case S-26-10 Randy Campbell
A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-602 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow a single-family residence to be converted into a duplex dwelling. The property is located at 468 Fellowship Dr. in the Horsepasture District, is zoned as Suburban Residential District S-R, and is shown on Tax Map 50.3(34)5/24.

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

LEGAL

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to Virginia Code §§ 15.2-1800 and 15.2-1813, the Martinsville City Council will hold a public hearing on **August 25, 2026**, at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers of the Martinsville City Municipal Building, 55 West Church Street, Martinsville, Virginia 24112. The purpose of the public hearing shall be to hear public comment regarding the following ordinance:

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-18
ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027

WHEREAS, in accordance with the provisions of §§ 15.2-2507 and 15.2-1427 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, the Martinsville City Council has duly advertised and conducted a public hearing on **August 25, 2026** at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers at the Martinsville Municipal Building to consider amendments to the City's budget for Fiscal Year 2026-2027; and

WHEREAS, these adjustments are necessary to properly account for revenues received and to appropriate funds for approved capital infrastructure improvements;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA, that the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget be, and hereby is, amended as follows:

Appalachian Region Commission Grant $700,000
Contribution from Fund Balance (Grant Match) ... $300,000
TOTAL REVENUES $1,000,000

The above revenues are hereby appropriated for the following expenditure. This expenditure is fully supported by the identified grant revenues.

MiNet Fiber Expansion $1,000,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES $1,000,000

This Ordinance shall become effective upon adoption, August 25, 2026.
Recorded Roll Call Votes:
Aye **Nay**
Abstain **Absent**

ATTEST:
_____
Mayor
_____
Deputy City Clerk

LEGAL

VDOT 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 2026-2027. 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 Friday September 18, 2026 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

LEGAL

PUBLIC NOTICE

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AUGUST 19, 2026 - 4:00 PM - 55 W. CHURCH STREET, MARTINSVILLE, VA, 24112
MARTINSVILLE CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SEPTEMBER 8, 2026 - 7:00 p.m. - 55 W. CHURCH STREET, MARTINSVILLE, VA, 24112 (SHOULD COUNCIL CHAMBERS BE UNAVAILABLE, CITY COUNCIL WILL MEET SEPTEMBER 8, 2026 - 7:00 p.m. - 1 ELLSWORTH STREET, MARTINSVILLE, VA, 24112 - FIND ALL UPDATES ONLINE: https://www.martinsville-va.gov/)

Notice is hereby given that the City of Martinsville Planning Commission and the City of Martinsville City Council will conduct a public hearing at their respective dates and times on the following item. All interested parties are encouraged to present their views at these series of public hearings to be held separately.

The Commission and the City Council will receive and consider public input regarding the draft Comprehensive Plan. The state-mandated Comprehensive Plan is the City's key policy document for land use, development, housing, infrastructure, transportation, and related economic and social issues. A complete draft of the plan may be examined at the City of Martinsville Community Development Office at 55 W. Church Street, Room 217, Martinsville, VA, 24112 and is also available online at: https://www.martinsvilleva.gov/567/Martinsville-Momentum-2026-Comprehensive.

This Comprehensive Plan Amendment repeals and replaces the adopted 2021 Comprehensive Plan in its entirety. Content, maps, goals, objectives, and strategies for all chapters have been revised and/or replaced in entirety to address key issues and priorities identified through public outreach and to comply with the Code of Virginia. The revised plan consists of the following chapters: 1) Establishing Momentum, describing the Comprehensive Plan purpose and process; 2) Building Momentum, describing the strategic framework that translates Martinsville's vision into actionable priorities and implementation strategies. 3) Natural & Historic Resources, describing policy framework for preserving Martinsville's natural, historic, and cultural assets while advancing sustainability, resiliency, and heritage-based community development; 4) Community Health & Safety, describing policies and strategies to promote public health, enhance community safety, and improve residents' overall quality of life through coordinated services, resilient infrastructure, and equitable access to essential resources; 5) Community Facilities & Infrastructure, describing strategies for ensuring reliable, resilient, and well-maintained community facilities and infrastructure that support current residents and future growth; 6) Economic & Workforce Development, describing policy framework for promoting sustainable economic development, supporting workforce growth, and expanding opportunities for businesses and residents; 7) Housing & Neighborhoods, describing strategies to expand housing opportunities, and promote safe, attractive, and sustainable neighborhoods throughout Martinsville; 8) Mobility & Transportation, describing policies and strategies to improve Martinsville's transportation network by enhancing connectivity, accessibility, safety, and mobility for all users; 9) Future Land Use, describing a community-centered vision for how the City will evolve over time by enhancing quality of life, improving access to essential services, and preserving the character and natural-beauty that makes Martinsville unique; and 10) Maintaining Momentum, describing the implementation framework for translating the Comprehensive Plan into action through coordinated responsibilities, prioritized initiatives, and ongoing performance monitoring.

Both the Planning Commission Meeting and the City Council meeting will be held in Council Chambers of the City Municipal Building at 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville, VA, 24112, in a public facility believed to be accessible to persons with disabilities. Any person with questions on the accessibility of the facility should contact the Community Development office at 55 W. Church Street, Room 217, Martinsville, Virginia or by email at hpowell@martinsvilleva.gov.

If you cannot make it to the public hearing but would still like to submit a public comment, you can submit them electronically by emailing them to: hpowell@martinsvilleva.gov.

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. 26000977-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT
3160 Kings Mountain Road, 3rd Floor, Martinsville, VA 24112
Michael Timothy Riley, Jr. v. Brittany Dale Burnette Riley
Address Unknown

The object of this suit is to:
DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE
It is ORDERED that Brittany Dale Burnette Riley appear at the above-named court and protect her interests on or before October 2, 2026.
AUGUST 3, 2026
Katherine Salgado
[X] CLERK [ ] JUDGE

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL26000910-00
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
VA. CODE §§ 1-211.1; 8.01-316, -317, 20-104
HENRY CIRCUIT COURT
3160 Kings Mountain Road, 3rd Floor, Martinsville, VA 24112
Rosa Aurora Jimenez Aguilar v. Luis Miguel Gomez Vega
86 Meadow Lane,
Collinsville, VA 24078

The object of this suit is to:
OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINCULO MATRIMONII
It is ORDERED that Luis Miguel Gomez Vega appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before October 9, 2026.
AUGUST 10, 2026
Katherine Salgado
[X] CLERK [ ] JUDGE

THANK YOU FOR READING

Fairmont Drive

(cont. from page 1)

linear feet of new 6-inch and smaller water lines, along with appurtenances and other related work.

The construction phase is expected to take approximately six months. A definitive construction schedule will be established after a notice to proceed is issued and a schedule is agreed upon with the contractor.



The project represents a significant step toward addressing the concerns raised by residents while making use of existing Capital Budget funds rather than relying on outside funding.

The PSA will provide more information to residents as construction is set to begin, including general information about how to apply for a water tap and establish water service.

In other matters, the board adopted resolutions authorizing staff and legal counsel to proceed with condemnations for easements associated with both the Villa Heights Sanitary Sewer Project and the Horsepasture-Price Road Water Line Project. The board also received its routine monthly reports.

Mountain Valley recognized for hospice care

Mountain Valley was recognized as a 2026 Hospice CAHPS Honors recipient for its Virginia service area, a national distinction recognizing hospice organizations that provide exceptional care and outstanding patient and family experiences.

The Hospice CAHPS Honors program, presented by MatrixCare, recognizes high-performing hospice providers based on results from the Hospice Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey. The award reflects feedback from patients' families and caregivers and highlights organizations that consistently deliver high-quality, compassionate care.

To earn this recognition, hospice providers must score above the MatrixCare national performance benchmark on key quality measures, including families' willingness to recommend the hospice, as well as multiple indicators related to communication, symptom management, emotional support, and overall quality of care.

"This recognition reflects the compassion, dedication, and professionalism of our Virginia team," said Jenna Campell, Chief Clinical Operations Officer. "Every day, our staff and volunteers are committed to creating the best experience for every patient, every family, every time. We are honored that the families we serve have recognized their commitment through this award."

The 2026 Hospice CAHPS Honors awards were based on survey results collected from April through December 2025. Award recipients were identified by comparing hospice performance against national benchmarks across 22 quality indicator measures.

Mountain Valley remains committed to providing compassionate, patient-centered hospice care that supports individuals and families with dignity, comfort, and excellence throughout life's journey.

Martinsville student wins statewide STEAM-H essay contest

A Martinsville High School student is among the winners of the Virginia Council on Women's 15th annual STEAM-H Essay Contest.

Kamori Dillard was named one of two winners from the Southwest/Southside Virginia region. She and the other contest winners were recently recognized by Gov. Abigail Spanberger and First Gentleman Adam Spanberger at the Executive Mansion.

More than 300 young women from across Virginia submitted essays for this year's contest, which awards scholarships to high school junior and senior girls planning to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics and health care.

The Virginia Council on Women established the contest in 2012. To date, the council has awarded more than $225,000 in scholarships through the annual essay contest.

Dillard was joined as a regional winner by Emmaline Dowell of Chilhowie High School.

Other winners were Clara Cho and Samiah Jeffries from Eastern Virginia/Hampton Roads; Grace White and Zakiyyah Foster-Rasheed from Richmond/Central Virginia; Margaret Thomas and Hannah Ahmad from Valley/Western Virginia; and Sienna Sung and Nardos Gelashe from Northern Virginia.

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

Sheriff

(cont. from page 1)



tice Services, which funded the installation and service contract for 10 fixed cameras and four mobile units. The system was provided at no cost to Henry County taxpayers.

The cameras remain in place for now, Davis said, as his office works toward a final resolution.

Davis said he believes Flock cameras are a useful investigative tool and that the installation and recording of license plate information are permissible under case law.

"However, the Constitutional violations arise when the misuse occurs. When officers conduct searches for noncriminal justice purposes, for unlawful purposes, those are when the Constitutional, and most certainly privacy, concerns arise," he said.

Davis said these violations have occurred countless times across the United States, however Henry County has not received a complaint or accusation that Flock data has been misused locally.

"We in Henry County have never had a complaint nor an accusation that any data from a Flock camera has been misused here locally, and I want to ensure that it stays that way," he said.

In an August 14 statement, Davis said, "I am not a big-government Sheriff. I am one of the strongest believers in the Constitution of the United States, and I firmly believe in protecting the constitutional rights and individual liberties of every citizen we serve.

"At the same time, I have sworn an oath to protect our community and have a responsibility to provide our deputies with the tools necessary to investigate crime and keep our citizens safe," Davis said, and added that his decision to suspend use of the system was based on his responsibility to continually evaluate the tools and technology used by the sheriff's office.

"I do not believe that we should use technology simply because it is available or because it gives law enforcement additional capabilities. Every tool we use must be evaluated against the principles of accountability, responsible policing, constitutional protections, and the safety of the community we serve," he said.

Davis said he does not plan to replace Flock with another license plate reader system, such as Axiom or Motorola.

"This license-plate reader technology is not proprietary to Flock, there are numerous other companies that provide the exact same service. Flock is nothing but a brand, and we're not seeing the other technologies' names with the same complaints, however the same technology exists," he said.

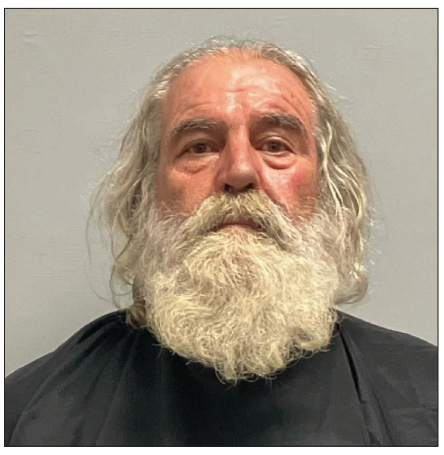
Davis said he believes discontinuing Flock is the right decision for Henry County, and noted that it has received widespread community support.

"The reaction from the community and the citizens have been overwhelmingly positive. I've also had a number of officers reach out to me and also agree with the privacy concerns associated with them," he said.

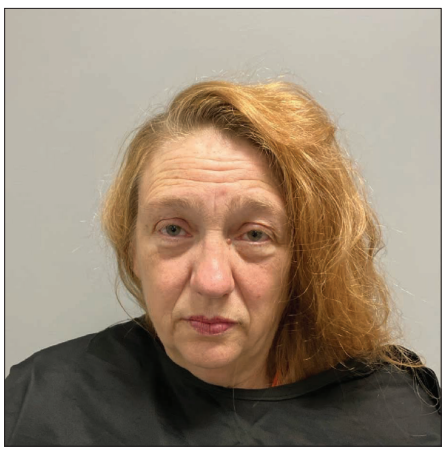
"As Sheriff, my responsibility is to make decisions that are in the best interest of the Sheriff's Office and, most importantly, the citizens of Henry County. I have listened to our community, I have carefully considered the facts, and I believe discontinuing our use of Flock technology is the right decision for Henry County at this time.

"My number one priority has always been, and will remain, serving the citizens of Henry County, protecting their constitutional rights, and doing everything within my authority to make this the safest community possible," Davis said.

Two arrested after Bassett drug search



Jeral Max Sunderland



Deidre Chaney Cox

Two people were arrested after the Henry County Sheriff's Office executed a narcotics-related search warrant Aug. 13 at a residence in the 9100 block of Fairystone Park Highway in Bassett.

The Sheriff's Office SWAT team executed the warrant at about 10:30 p.m. after investigators received increased complaints about suspected drug activity in the area, particularly near the Brookshire Apartments.

Investigators with the Sheriff's Office VICE Division and Narcotics Interdiction Unit conducted an investigation and developed evidence indicating methamphetamine was being distributed from the residence.

Four people — three men and one woman — were detained while investigators searched the residence and adjoining structures. Investigators seized suspected methamphetamine, drug paraphernalia consistent with narcotics distribution and a firearm.

Investigators also seized several electronic devices and other evidence that raised concerns unrelated to the original narcotics investigation. One of the people detained was identified as a registered sex offender. The electronic devices will undergo forensic examination as investigators determine whether additional offenses occurred.



Items seized after a search warrant was executed in Bassett.

Jeral Max Sunderland Jr., 62, and Deidre Chaney Cox, 54, were charged with possession of a Schedule I/II drug and possession of a Schedule I/II drug while possessing a firearm in connection with the incident.

Both were held without bond.

The investigation is ongoing, and additional charges may be filed as investigators examine the seized evidence and electronic devices.

The sheriff's office encourages residents to continue reporting suspected criminal activity, and appreciates community members who continue to report suspected criminal activity. Information provided by residents remains an important part of identifying and addressing illegal activity throughout Henry County.

Data centers in VA need to conserve water during drought, group says

By Zamone Perez
Virginia News Connection

Consumers in the Potomac River Basin are being encouraged to limit their water use and river health groups stressed data centers with high water usage need to heed the call.

Below-average rainfall and groundwater supply have put the large watershed in conditions ranging from abnormally dry to extreme drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. Officials have asked for voluntary water conservation in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

Pat Calvert, Virginia director of conservation for the environmental nonprofit American Rivers, said data centers need to adhere to preservation practices taking shape around the Commonwealth.

"We need to preserve our water supply right now by using common sense water conservation measures at the personal level but I also believe it's at the permitted level, so that includes everybody," Calvert asserted. "Businesses and industries that are using water need to be also held to account."

Virginia is home to one of the largest concentrations of hyperscale data centers in the country. According to the Environmental and Energy Study Institute, larger facilities can consume up to 5 million gallons a day to cool their servers, the equivalent of a city with a population of 50,000.



Larger, AI-focused data centers could spur even more water consumption, according to a study by the Environmental and Energy Study Institute. (Adobe Stock)

This year, Virginia lawmakers passed bills requiring water utilities to send yearly or quarterly reports on data center water usage. Calvert acknowledged the policies, set to begin in January, will be helpful.

Calvert argued officials need to be cognizant of the potential overstressing of the Potomac, which can affect water accessibility.

"We certainly need to be vigilant in ensuring that everybody is part of this effort to ensure that we're using our dwindling water resources wisely and that conservation measures are being considered seriously across the board," Calvert urged.

Forecasters said there is a nearly 50% chance the Potomac River will experience low flow through the end of the year. If it happens, officials may need to release additional water supply from two D.C.-area reservoirs.

THANK YOU FOR READING HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Pilates fundraiser helps raise funds for local moms





A Pilates fundraiser brought together community members and vendors to raise money for Moms Helping Hands of Southwest Virginia. (Photo by Daydream Photography)

By Jessica Dillon

Moms Helping Hands of Southwest Virginia held a Pilates fundraiser at the Spencer-Penn Center, bringing together community members and vendors to raise funds for the organization.

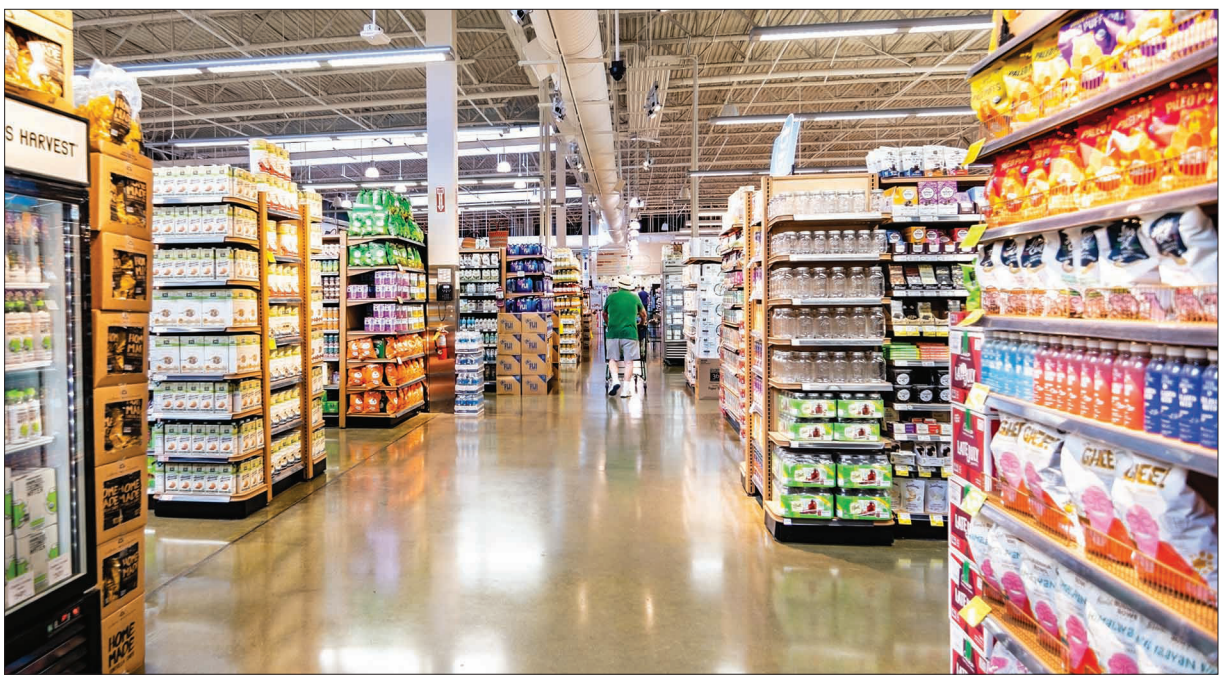
The group focuses on supporting women with children and helping families through difficult times.

"I am incredibly happy with how our event turned out. I'm so thankful for everyone who showed up, the vendors, the class participants, and the volunteers. I was finally able to total everything up this afternoon. Between the 50-50 raffle and the $25 vendor fee we charged, we were able to turn a profit of $522 after deducting what we paid to rent the pavilion," said President Kayle Martin.

"We are already having discussions about hosting another event in October and hoping to find a more centralized location in Martinsville to maybe have a little better turnout for our vendors," Martin said.

The group is beginning a new holiday project and hopes to receive grants to help fund it.

"We have the holiday project coming up that we are raising funds for. We have also applied for a few grants and are waiting to hear back on those next month."



Virginia lawmakers passed a budget including $200 million in cost-sharing for its SNAP program. (Adobe Stock)

Virginia SNAP enrollment down 100,000 after Trump admin restrictions

By Zamone Perez

Virginia News Connection

More than 100,000 fewer Virginians are receiving SNAP benefits than last year, according to data released by the Virginia Department of Social Services.

The agency's latest numbers from June 2026 confirm fewer than 750,000 Virginians are enrolled, down from more than 850,000 people the previous year. The drop comes after President Donald Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act into law. It cut nearly $200 billion in food assistance funds, put funding costs onto states and increased restrictions and work requirements on recipients.

Rodrigo Soto, legislative and campaigns director for the advocacy group the Commonwealth Institute, said the drop does not mean people are less hungry; it means people have been pushed out due to bureaucratic burdens.

"As the administration continues to make public benefits more difficult for people to access, that doesn't take away the fact that hunger still exists. It just means people are hungry and not getting benefits at the same time," Soto explained.

The Trump administration argued work requirements help encourage workforce participation, cut down on federal spending, and encourage state accountability. Soto pointed out the changes to SNAP affect everyone, and states must find millions of dollars in their budget to compensate for new cost-sharing requirements.

Virginia lawmakers allocated more than $200 million toward the new requirements, a move Soto noted takes money away from other major priorities of state residents.

"Whether or not you're on SNAP, this impacts you. Because if you care about your schools, if you care about your roads, if you care about your healthcare, there (were) less funds this year in the state budget to be able to invest in those things because we had to catch up on those mandatory SNAP cost shifts," Soto emphasized.

Adults up to the age of 64 without children have to work or volunteer 80 hours a month to receive benefits. People can apply for certain exemptions, such as if a person is pregnant or has a condition keeping them from working.

Expert: New vaccine recommendations threaten health of children in VA

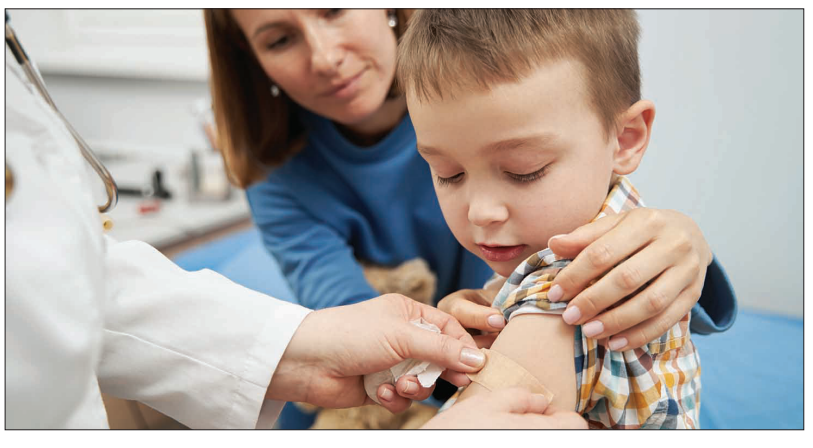
By Zamone Perez

As the Trump administration moves to revamp U.S. childhood vaccination policy, health experts said it could be detrimental to children and the country.

An order by President Donald Trump reduced the federally recommended vaccine schedule from 18 to 11. Vaccines for hepatitis A and B, RSV, and bacterial meningitis were among those taken off the list. The administration recommended a more spread-out vaccine schedule and single-dose vaccinations for measles, mumps and rubella, which are commonly combined into a shared dose.

Jenna Reimenschneider, vice president of advocacy and policy for the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, said the orders are not based in science.

"This executive order just continues to sow confusion and uncertainty in vaccine safety at a time where it's absolutely critical that we improve childhood vaccination rates," Reimenschneider stressed.



The Trump administration argued the new guidance gives parents more control and aligns the U.S. with other industrialized countries' vaccine policies. Trump also made unfounded claims about links between vaccines and autism. The suggestion to spread out vaccinations is meeting resistance in the medical community. Health experts argued the spread-out vaccine schedule can put a heavy burden on parents' schedules and finances.

Reimenschneider added the multivisit requirement will create an environment where children are regularly behind on vaccinations, creating a public health risk.

"That's time off of work, that's transportation, that's additional co-pays for a visit potentially," Reimenschneider observed. "That is a real issue and is going to have lasting repercussions that ultimately will result in kids having fewer vaccinations, being off schedule. It's very concerning."

While counties across Virginia report childhood immunizations at above 95%, pockets of rural areas across the commonwealth fall well below the 95% threshold needed to achieve herd immunity.

Fluvanna County pharmacist charged with stealing prescription opioids

A federal grand jury indictment was unsealed last week charging a Fluvanna County pharmacist with diverting liquid hydromorphone for his own use and replacing it with water.

An indictment is merely an allegation and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

According to the indictment, Joshua Joseph Walden, 52, who previously worked at Jefferson Pharmacy in Palmyra, Virginia, is charged with one count of tampering with consumer products and attempt to tamper with a consumer product, two counts of theft of pre-retail medical products, and one count of acquiring a controlled substance by fraud.

Walden worked as a pharmacist from in or before July 2023 until he resigned in February 2025, according to court records. Throughout the course of his employment, Walden stole liquid opioids and amphetamines and further tampered with prescription medications with reckless disregard for the risk that another person would be placed in danger of death or bodily injury.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Office of Criminal Investigations, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Virginia State Police are investigating the case.

First Assistant United States Attorney Robert N. Tracci for the Western District of Virginia made the announcement.

Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher B. Browne is prosecuting the case.

Weekly initial claims for unemployment increase

Virginia Works' Economic Information and Analytics Division, which serves as the Commonwealth's official source for labor market and workforce data, reported that that 2,663 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims were filed during the week ending August 8.

The claims were filed with the Virginia Employment Commission, which administers the Commonwealth's Unemployment Insurance program.

This is 16.8 percent higher than last week's 2,280 claims and 1.5 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (2,624). Nearly 75 percent of claimants self-reported an employer which correlates to an associated industry. Based on this reporting, the top five industries (61 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (329); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (257); Health Care and Social Assistance (244); Retail Trade (206); and Manufacturing (156).

Continued weeks' claims (20,613) were 0.0 percent higher than last week (20,603) and were 4.0 percent lower than the comparable week of last year (21,463). Nearly 93 percent of claimants self-reported an employer which correlates to an associated industry. Based on this reporting, the top five industries (59 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (3,691); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,388); Health Care and Social Assistance (2,068); Accommodation and Food Services (1,691); and Retail Trade (1,476).

Local band JUND releases first music video

By Jessica Dillon

A local band has teamed up with other area musicians and performers to film its first music video.

JUND, whose members are from Henry and Patrick counties, has been touring throughout the region as part of the local heavy metal scene.

The band's new song, "Verdant Catacombs," draws on movie themes and current topics.

"The song is called 'Verdant Catacombs.' The name is derived from a specific card in magic," said singer Charles McCall.

JUND's current lineup formed around 2025, McCall said, although the members have been playing together for several years.

"We've been playing shows for the past five years together, as JUND for the past" two or so years. "We've met a crazy amount of bands, played a ton of shows, or probably close to that 100 show marker if we're not past that now. It's been a great time," said drummer Chris Reeves.

The group played its first live show at DJ Whats! and has maintained a close relationship with the venue's owner, making it a natural choice for the band's first music video.

"We love DJ Whats! I love this venue. We love the energy it brings, the vibe from this place, the energy and time and work and everything that he's put into this type of place," McCall said. "We love it here."

Guitarist Michael Patterson said the band's name comes from the card game "Magic: The Gathering."

JUND has also performed at several charity events and plans to continue supporting local causes.

The band has raised money for the Martinsville-Henry County Harm Reduction Coalition and the Rocky Mount No-Kill Shelter. During the Christmas season, the band also holds a food drive, collecting money and nonperishable food for the Grace Network.



JUND worked with local musicians and performers to film its first music video.

"We've raised money for the Rocky Mount No-Kill Shelter. And every year in previous iterations around Christmas time, usually the first Saturday in December, we always raise a food drive. So money and any kind of nonperishable foods, we give to the Grace Network because they'll help people with a lot of different things, like jobs," McCall said.

JUND is scheduled to perform at New Moon Tattoo's Halloween show Oct. 30 and at Scuffle Hill's Halloween show Oct. 24.

"Verdant Catacombs" is now streaming on various music platforms. The band also announces upcoming events through Facebook.



Jenkins receives Mayor Edward Page Scholarship

Nicholas Jenkins, a graduating student of Magna Vista High School, has been selected to receive the Mayor Edward Page Scholarship for Public Service in the amount of $500, according to a release from the Town of Ridgeway.

Jenkins was selected in recognition of his outstanding dedication to volunteer and community service, as well as his high academic achievement and commitment to excellence in the classroom.

The Mayor Edward Page Scholarship for Public Service honors students who demonstrate the values of service, leadership, academic achievement, and a commitment to making a positive difference in their communities.

This fall, Jenkins will attend Radford University, where he plans to study pre-med with a focus on physical therapy. His commitment to helping others through both service and his future career makes him a fitting recipient of this scholarship.

"Nicholas Jenkins represents the very best of what we hope to see in our young people—academic excellence, a willingness to serve others, and a desire to make a difference," said Mayor Craig O'Der. "It is my honor to recognize Nicholas with the Mayor Edward Page Scholarship for Public Service, and I wish him tremendous success as he begins this next chapter at Radford University."

The Town of Ridgeway congratulates Nicholas Jenkins on this well-deserved honor and wishes him continued success in his education, career, and future service to others.

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Ninth District staff set August hours

Staff for U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, will hold traveling office hours Aug. 26 in Martinsville and Patrick County.

Staff will be available from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at Martinsville City Hall, Room 32, 55 W. Church St., Martinsville, and from 12:30 to 2 p.m. at the Patrick County Administration Building, 106 Rucker St., Stuart.

For more information, call Griffith's Christiansburg office at 540-381-5671 or Abingdon office at 276-525-1405.



CEDS working committee kickoff

West Piedmont seeks input on economic development strategy

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission is updating its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and is seeking input from residents, businesses and community partners through a public survey.

The CEDS serves as a regional framework for economic growth and community development, including efforts to create jobs, diversify local economies and improve quality of life.

"Updating the CEDS is a critical opportunity to guide the future of our region," said Michael Armbrister, executive director of the WPPDC. "This plan not only sets our shared vision and priorities, but also serves as a vital tool when competing for grant opportunities that can bring new resources and investments to our communities."

The WPPDC was designated as an Economic Development District by the U.S. Economic Development Administration in 1992. The designation requires the commission to update its CEDS every five years to qualify for EDA assistance and maintain its designation. The previous CEDS covered 2022-26.

"Community input is essential to creating a strategy that truly reflects the needs and aspirations of our region," said Kiana Dillard, economic development specialist for the WPPDC, who is leading the update.

The commission hosted a working committee meeting June 6 with regional leaders from health care, education, transportation, economic development, government and nonprofit organizations. The group discussed goals and timelines, as well as regional strengths, challenges, opportunities and trends.

The planning process is expected to conclude in early 2027, with the final plan scheduled for adoption in the spring.

The survey is available on the WPPDC website, www.westpiedmontpdc.org.