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Twain Lumber to invest $7.4 million to reopen Henry County sawmill



Twain Lumber Company plans to invest $7.4 million to purchase and reopen the former Teal Jones sawmill operation in Henry County, a move expected to create 74 jobs and generate more than $51.2 million in purchases of Virginia-grown forest products over the next three years.

Gov. Abigail Spanberger announced the investment last week.

"This investment is a huge win for Henry County and our entire Commonwealth," Spanberger said. "Since 2024, this facility has sat empty, representing an untapped opportunity to grow our forestry industry and create new opportunities for Virginians in the region. Today, I am proud to welcome Twain Lumber Company to Henry County and thank them for the significant commitment they're making to our Commonwealth."

Spanberger said the project aligns with her focus on economic development and the forestry industry.

"This investment continues my focus on driving economic development, creating new jobs, and growing our economy. I look forward to continuing to support the hardworking men and women who help this industry succeed," she said.

With the property secured, Twain Lumber plans to purchase new production machinery and upgrade equipment. The improvements will allow the sawmill to increase its initial operational capacity from 80 million board feet annually to 108 million board feet at full capacity.

The company said the increased capacity will make the facility one of the largest Southern Yellow Pine sawmills in Virginia.

Twain Lumber Company Mill Manager Harrison Wicks said the company is looking forward to restarting operations at the site.

"Twain Lumber Company is excited to begin operations in Henry County and become part of the Commonwealth of Virginia's manufacturing and forestry community," Wicks said. "This facility has a long history in the region, and we are proud to help bring it back to life after more than a year of inactivity. Restarting the mill and restoring approximately 74 jobs represents an important step for the local economy, and we appreciate the support we have received from the Commonwealth, local leaders, and the broader Martinsville community. We look forward to making long-term investments in the facility, our employees, and the region."

(See Twain p. 11)



The Martinsville Sheriff's Office accepts a proclamation honoring the late Sheriff Steve Draper.

Council honors Draper, hears Police Community Check-in plans

By Jessica Dillon

Martinsville City Council heard an update on the Martinsville Police Community Check-in program during its Sept. 8 meeting and honored Sheriff Stephen Draper with a posthumous Key to the City and proclamation, recognizing his 35 years of dedicated service to the City of Martinsville and his lasting commitment to the community.

Draper passed away August 29 after serving as Martinsville's Sheriff for more than three decades.

The council also held a public hearing and approved the city's comprehensive plan, Martinsville Momentum. The Arts and Culture Master Plan also was approved.

Martinsville Police Chief Chad Rhoads said the Police Community Check-in program was developed in response to requests to revamp the Neighborhood Watch program.

"The Martinsville Police Community Check-in program is something that I've worked on and developed in response to requests for a revamping of the Neighborhood Watch program," Rhoads said. "This is our opportunity to recon-

(See Council p. 9)

Henry County Fair returns Sept. 23-26

By Taylor Boyd

The sixth annual Henry County Fair will run Sept. 23-26 at Martinsville Speedway, featuring rides, food, live music, entertainment, agricultural exhibits and more.

The event is sponsored by VisitMartinsville, Henry County, the Henry County Department of Parks and Recreation, Bassett Furniture, B99.9, Southwestern Virginia Gas, West Piedmont Higher Education Center, Lawless Welding, Sarver Properties, Del. Eric Phillips and Roanoke Valley Orthodontics.

Henry County Parks and Recreation Director Roger Adams said the fair will offer a variety of rides, food, live music and other family-friendly entertainment.

"We've got a lot of cool stuff. We've got over 20 rides this year for all ages," he said.

Adams said entertainment is a major feature of the fair, including two new ground shows this year. One is the Magic of Lance Gifford, which features a large tractor-trailer stage show.

"He's never been here before, but he's world famous," he said.

The other new ground show is the Rock N Circus Show.

"He was here the first two years of the fair, and he's got a little bit of a different show," he said.

Adams said the fair will also feature a concert lineup with different artists taking the stage each night.

"Wednesday night is local night, and we have Slick Junior and the Reactors. Thursday is B99.9 night and we have Morgan Wallen and Lainey Wilson tribute bands, so that's Wallen Nation and Lainey Nation," he said.

(See Fair p. 9)

Candidates discuss city finances, growth and reversion

By Jessica Dillon

The Martinsville Henry County Chamber of Commerce hosted a forum for candidates seeking the two contested seats on Martinsville City Council and the At-Large seat on the Henry County School Board.

Council candidates - LC Jones, Charles Niederstadt Jr., Chad Hall, Michael Green and Verna Jenkins - discussed city finances, reversion, economic development, rising costs and their priorities if elected.

Budget

Niederstadt said he reviewed the city budget with City Manager Rob Fincher to ensure he understood the city's finances.

"I've had to do it in business for 25-plus years. I believe a council member has a responsibility to understand the budget before voting on it, not simply rely on somebody else to tell them whether it is good or whether it's a good budget or not. I've been reviewing the city's budget, financial information, audits and the way the city raises and spends money because I want to be prepared to ask questions from day one."

Jenkins compared Martinsville's American Rescue Plan Act funds with Danville's and said she agreed with how Martinsville spent its funds, particularly on Parks and Recreation.

"Now I think that was a pretty good way to spend your money too, because I agree with parks and recreation. I have a certificate in parks and recreation, so we spend it in parks and recreation."

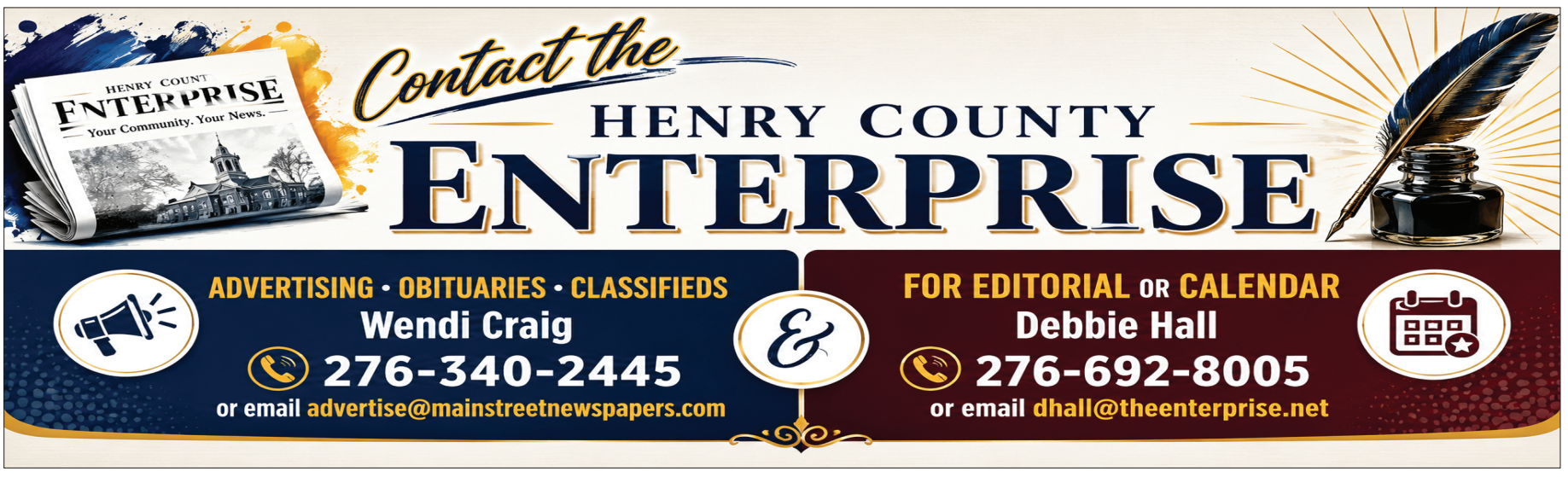
Hall said he wants to focus on creating new revenue for the city rather than immediately considering tax increases.

"I don't think the first thing we need to automatically run to is 'let's raise taxes.' We've got to realize that every dollar spent or every budget dollar that's misplaced or misused comes from a homeowner. It comes from somebody's wallet, whether it be yours or mine or they are a business that's employing 10,000 people. And it's very important that we utilize every dollar that we have. And

(See Candidates p. 10)

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Womack Electric Supply donates computers to Horsepasture rescue squad



The Horsepasture Volunteer Rescue Squad is located at the intersection of A.L. Philpott Highway and Horsepasture Price Road in Horsepasture.



Womack Electric Supply donated six Lenovo all-in-one desktop computers to the Horsepasture Volunteer Rescue Squad. (Contributed photos)

The Horsepasture Volunteer Rescue Squad has received six Lenovo all-in-one desktop computers from Womack Electric Supply to upgrade technology in the squad's classrooms and administrative spaces.

As an all-volunteer agency, the rescue squad prioritizes its budget for lifesaving equipment, including ambulance and medical supplies. The squad previously relied on outdated computers in its two classrooms that made presentations, video calls and computer-based training difficult.

The new computers will allow volunteers to complete training and continuing education at the station, as well as assist with administrative work and call reports.

The donation was made through Womack Electric Supply's Community Outreach Program.

"At Womack Electric Supply, we believe that sustainability and community stewardship go hand in hand," said Al Stewart, president of Womack Electric Supply. "When our IT department initiated a regional technology refresh, we knew these high-performing, refurbished Lenovo systems still had so much to give. Rather than letting excellent technology sit in storage or be recycled, we wanted to invest it directly back into the heroes who keep our community safe. Supporting the Horsepasture Volunteer Rescue Squad aligns perfectly with our mission to empower the communities where our employees live and work."

According to the rescue squad, the six computers will be used for instructor-led and self-directed training, continuing education and administrative tasks.

The six newly installed Lenovo All-in-One desktops will serve multiple, high-impact purposes:

- **Instructor-Led & Self-Directed Training** — The computers will enable two classrooms to facilitate in-house and public lag-free training in safety, first aid, and advanced lifesaving skills without the disruption of outdated hardware.

- **Licensing & Compliance** — EMTs can now easily complete mandatory Continuing Education (CE) credits directly at the station, reducing the need to travel for certifications. Perfect for members studying for exams and recertification.

- **Secure Administration & Faster Reporting** — The dedicated workstations provide a secure, HIPAA-compliant environment for volunteers to handle sensitive medical data, enabling first responders to file call reports faster and spend more time focused on saving lives.

The technology also will support the squad's two classrooms as it expands opportunities for community-based training.

This partnership underscores the profound impact that corporate citizenship can have on vital volunteer organizations. By repurposing top-tier technology, Womack Electric Supply has bridge a critical funding gap for Horsepasture Volunteer Rescue Squad, ensuring local lifesavers are as sharp in the classroom as they are in the field.

The squad is located at the intersection of A.L. Philpott Highway and Horsepasture Price Road in Horsepasture.



Ja'Corian Turner chosen as the student school board member.

Student asks Martinsville School Board to reconsider leggings policy

By Jessica Dillon

The Martinsville School Board heard a student's request to reconsider its dress code and approved several policy updates during its meeting.

The board also appointed Ja'Corian Turner as the new student school board representative.

Several policies were updated for language clarity and to expand parental rights, including KKA — Service Animals in Public Schools; KP — Parental Rights and Responsibilities; JHCD — Administering Medicines to Students; JFCA — Teacher Removal of Students From Class; and GBB — Prohibition of Bullying and Abusive Work Environments.

Veronica Smith, a student, asked the board to allow leggings in schools.

"Leggings are a staple of most girls' wardrobes and are sometimes the only thing that they might own. Everyone's body develops at a different age, and policing an article of clothing that will fit differently on everybody is not a valid reason. When someone is dress-coded or sent home, how are they supposed to learn if they aren't in the classroom?"

Enjoy themed food at Savory September

Big city flavors meet small town charm at Savory September: New York, New York, a Big Apple-themed fundraiser for the arts from 6:30-9:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 18, at Piedmont Arts.

Local chefs will serve small bites inspired by the flavors and traditions of New York City, from classic street food and deli fare to themed dishes from the city's iconic neighborhoods and silver-screen moments. Expect nods to Little Italy, "Breakfast at Tiffany's," the corner bakery, and plenty of other New York favorites.

Savory September Chefs and Menus:

- New York Bakery: Katie Adkins, Rilynn Cowart, Steph Cowart, Meredith Vaughn, and Sally Vaughn will serve Magnolia Bakery's banana pudding, Milk Bar's compost cookie, and mini cheesecakes.

- Hot Dog and Pretzel Stand: Katie Ryan Barham, Kelsey Bassett, Susan Cook, Olivia Garrett, Christiana Jarrett, and Caroline Johnston will serve street food.

- Little Italy: Anne Compson, Mary Compson, and Janet Lewis will serve pasta.

- Studio 54: Rachel and Shannon Cox and Donna and Jimmy McGarry will serve Manhattan clam chowder and Manhattan cocktails.

- "Breakfast at Tiffany's": Susan Critz, Judy Dashoff, Marty Gardner, and Andy Gray will serve bagel chips with smoked salmon, Big Apple and "karat" cake muffins, and soft pretzel bites.

- Girls' Night Out: Monique Holland and Anna Wheeler will serve black-and-white cookies and cosmopolitans.

- ig Apple: Kat and Dave Kitzmiller of Be Wiched Diner will serve New York-themed dishes.

- I Love New York: Blanche and Tom Mahoney, Esther and Buz Schilbe, and Barbara and Guy Stanley will serve Buffalo wings, candied bacon bites with little smokies, mini pretzel cheeseballs, and rugelach.

- New York Glamour: Cassandra and Demedrain Witcher and Ouss Sahhar will serve pretzel bites, cheesecake bites, pigs in a blanket, and tequila sunrise cocktails.

The soundtrack to the event will be provided by singer-songwriter Marie Anderson, whose repertoire includes original music and covers of more than 2,000 songs spanning pop, country, rock, and blues.

Local artist Mark Wright will bring a touch of New York flair to the event, creating caricatures of guests inspired by the iconic celebrity portraits displayed at Sardi's, the legendary New York City institution. Caricatures are $20 per portrait, plus $10 for each additional person included. Tickets for caricatures can be purchased during the event.

Guests can try their luck in a raffle featuring an exciting lineup of prizes, including 50% of total raffle ticket sales; two one-day passes to Rooster Walk in May 2027; a cookie gift box made by Steph Cowart; and a Piedmont Arts gift basket. Raffle tickets are $20 each or six for $100 and may be purchased at Piedmont Arts before or during the event.

Admission is $65 per person and includes food and drinks. Tickets are available at Piedmont Arts and PiedmontArts.org.

This event is sponsored by VisitMartinsville, Diversified Trust, Ameristaff, Bassett Office Supply, Collinsville Printing Co., Daydream Photography, and Draper Flowers and Gifts.

For more information on exhibits and events, visit PiedmontArts.org.

Area schools awarded $355,981 in security grants

School divisions in Henry County, Martinsville and Patrick County have been awarded a combined $355,981 in state grants to purchase security equipment and make security improvements at 10 local schools.

The Virginia Department of Education, in collaboration with the Department of Criminal Justice Services, announced the 2026-27 School Security Equipment Grant awards last week.

Henry County received $197,427 for security improvements at Axton Elementary, Meadow View Elementary and Sanville Elementary.

Martinsville City received $97,198 for Albert Harris Elementary, Martinsville Middle and Patrick Henry Elementary.

Patrick County received $61,356 for Blue Ridge Elementary, Patrick County High, Patrick Springs Primary and Stuart Elementary.

"School security is always top of mind for every superintendent, principal and parent across the Commonwealth, and last week demonstrated the importance of secure buildings," said Jenna Conway, state superintendent of public instruction. "We're pleased to provide them with the resources they need to keep their staff and students safe. These grants represent a shared investment in Virginia's schools."

"Every student deserves to learn in a school where they feel safe, supported and ready to succeed," said Secretary of Education Dr. Jeffery Smith. "These investments give our local school divisions the resources to strengthen school security based on the needs of their individual communities. We are grateful for the partnership of school leaders across the Commonwealth who work every day to create safe and welcoming environments for Virginia's students and educators."

The School Security Equipment Grant program has been offered annually since 2013 under the School Security Equipment Grant Act. It has provided $126 million in investments to schools since its creation.

This year, grants totaled $12 million from the Virginia Public School Authority. Eligible school divisions could apply for funding for the 2026-27 school year between July 1 and Aug. 1.

School divisions were eligible to receive up to $250,000. Schools receiving grants must remain open for at least five more years.

The VDOE received applications from seven regional centers, the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind and 770 schools from 124 of Virginia's 132 school divisions.

Applications were reviewed and awarded on a competitive basis. Grants were awarded to 399 qualifying schools in 91 school divisions.

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

Thursday, September 17
Library Board Meeting, 3 p.m. at the Ridgeway Branch Library. 900 Vista View Lane, Ridgeway.

Tuesday, September 29
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.

Events

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.

Oak Level Ruritan Club Quarter Auction, 7668 Oak Level Road, Bassett. Doors open at 6 p.m., auction starts at 7. Vendors include Snag-A-Bag, Scentsy, Wanda's Designs, Crystals Creations, Paparazzi, Susie's Sweets & Treats, Perfectly Imperfect Design, Still House Products, Tupperware, It's a Man Thing, J.A.M. Cake Kakepops, Black Sheep Retro, Sassy Little Sprouts Boutique. A $5 gets 2 paddles and a door prize ticket. Extra paddles are $1 each. Event will include door prizes, 50/50 tickets and extra door prize tickets will be available at $1 a ticket or 7 tickets for $5. Concessions available such as barbecue, hotdogs, chips, drinks, and dessert. Donations earmarked for community projects.

The Rotary Club of Martinsville and Henry County presents the 2026 TGIF Concert Series. Free to attend, opens at 6 p.m. with music by REMEDY at 7 p.m. Located at West Piedmont Higher Education Center (formerly NCI Collee) Baldwin Building – Outdoor Plaza - 191 Fayette St Martinsville.

Saturday, September 19
Rangeley Ruritan Club Fish Fry, includes 2 fish, slaw, hushpuppies, dessert and drink, $15 a plate. Proceeds go toward community projects, 134 Calloway Drive Fieldale, 4 to 7 p.m. Proceeds to benefit community projects.

Savor the last of the season with Sounds on the Square's final concert of the year - summer going out with a bang with Rosebud Band at the MHC Heritage Museum, 1 E. Main St., Martinsville. The free concert will be from 7-10 p.m. Friday, Sept. 19 (update made on Sept. 2). 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 20
Sunday Afternoon Lectures, 1 E Main St, Martinsville, 3 p.m. Henry County 250. MHC Historical Society Executive Director Holly Kozelsky will talk about the formation of Henry County.

Thursday, September 24
Looted Art: An Opening Journey to Resolution, 6:30 p.m. reception, 7 p.m. talk, Thursday, Sept. 24, Piedmont Arts. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Senior Manager of Provenance Research Karen Daly will discuss art looted during World War II. This event is free and open to the public. RSVP by Wednesday, Sept. 23, to 276-632-3221 or online at PiedmontArts.org. 215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville.

Saturday, October 3
Oktoberfest, 11 a .m. to 4 p.m., Uptown Martinsville.

Blue Jeans & Bling. The Historical Society's signature social event, dinner and silent auction fundraiser, begins with a social at 6 p.m. Pulled-pork BBQ dinner served at 6:30. The event will feature a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, a cash bar, museum tours and entertainment by Jake Earles. The cost is $50/person or $350/Table of 8. Call 276-403-5361 or come by the museum to reserve your spot. 1 E Main St., 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 Mondays 4-5 p.m. at the Bassett Public Library, 3969 Fairystone Hwy, Bassett. New members welcome. For more information call Patti Farmer (276) 358-0489.

Report identifies Southern Virginia's most-needed health care workers

Southern Virginia continues to face significant demand for health care workers, with registered nurses topping the list of occupations needed across the region, according to a new report from Claude Moore Opportunities.

The nonprofit organization, which focuses on health care workforce development in Virginia, recently released its latest State of the Healthcare Workforce report for Southern Virginia.

The report, based on an analysis of active job advertisements by the George Mason University Center for Health Workforce, estimates that Southern Virginia needs 1,229 registered nurses to meet the region's health care demands.

Other occupations with significant workforce needs include 330 physical therapists, 309 social and human service assistants, 288 licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, 249 occupational therapy assistants and 209 nursing assistants.

The analysis also identified a need for 194 speech-language pathologists, 147 personal care aides, 124 nurse practitioners, 121 radiologic technologists and technicians, 105 mental health and substance abuse social workers, 104 occupational therapists, 99 physical therapist assistants, 95 mental health counselors and 87 pharmacy technicians.

The figures are based on data from the first quarter of 2026.

Statewide, the need is even greater. The George Mason analysis estimates Virginia needs 17,288 registered nurses, 8,529 social and human service assistants, 4,436 physical therapists, 4,033 radiologic technologists and technicians, 3,993 licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses and 3,611 nursing assistants.

Virginia also needs an estimated 2,863 mental health counselors and 2,545 personal care aides, according to the report.

Additional statewide needs include cardiovascular technologists and technicians, speech-language pathologists, medical assistants, mental health and substance abuse social workers, physician assistants, psychiatric technicians and occupational therapy assistants.

"Virginia's healthcare workforce shortage creates a serious challenge for the delivery of affordable, accessible healthcare services, but it also presents a real opportunity to create great career opportunities if we can connect Virginians with the education, training, and certification they need," said Dr. Bill Hazel, CEO of Claude Moore Opportunities and former Virginia secretary of health and human resources.

"At Claude Moore Opportunities we are working every day with state, regional, and local partners to create flexible career pathways that allow more Virginians to build a stable, well-paying career while meeting the healthcare needs of their community," Hazel said. "Local, state, and regional partners from the public and private sectors must all work collaboratively to get ahead of this real and urgent challenge."

Karen Schaufeld, president of the Claude Moore Opportunities Board of Directors, said the organization has worked to expand access to health care career opportunities since its founding.

"It is clear that this is one of the most urgent challenges for Virginia's health, well-being, and economic future," Schaufeld said. "We recognize the tremendous personal and community-wide benefits of expanded healthcare workforce and remain committed to investing in Virginia's next generation of badly-needed healthcare workers."

Dr. Caroline Sutter, DNP, co-director of the George Mason Center for Health Workforce, said the needs vary from one Virginia community to another.

"The data makes clear that Virginia's healthcare workforce challenges are not the same in every community," Sutter said. "By identifying statewide shortages and distinct regional needs, this report gives educators, employers, policymakers, and workforce partners the information they need to target resources, strengthen career pathways, and develop sustainable solutions."

Claude Moore Opportunities is working on several initiatives intended to expand access to health care education and training.

One of its primary efforts is the Virginia Partnership for Health Science Careers, a coalition of nine regional "sector partnerships" that brings together schools, health care providers and workforce agencies to identify regional needs and coordinate efforts.

The organization also manages the Claude Moore Scholars program, funded by the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation. Since its launch in 2007, the program has invested more than $27 million to help more than 43,000 Virginia students access education and training related to health care careers.

Claude Moore Opportunities also is developing programs to help military medics and corpsmen pursue civilian health care careers and to expand the state's youth mental health workforce.

The organization planned to host its annual Claude Moore Scholars summit in Richmond last week, bringing together partner organizations from across Virginia to discuss the latest workforce data and strategies for addressing health care workforce shortages.

Initial unemployment claims show slight gain

Virginia Works' Economic Information and Analytics Division, which serves as the Commonwealth's official source for labor market and workforce data, reported that 2,145 unemployment insurance weekly initial claims were filed during the week ending Sept. 5, 2026. The claims were filed with the Virginia Employment Commission, which administers the Commonwealth's Unemployment Insurance program.

This is 1.6 percent higher than last week's 2,112 claims and 17.1 percent lower than the comparable week of last year (2,589). Nearly 80 percent of claimants self-reported an employer which correlates to an associated industry. Based on this reporting, the top five industries (57 percent) were Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (282); Health Care and Social Assistance (225); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (202); Retail Trade (179); and Manufacturing (124).

Continued weeks' claims (19,605) were 1.7 percent lower than last week (19,951) and were 0.7 percent higher than the comparable week of last year (19,460). 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 (3,610); Administrative and Support and Waste Management (2,344); Health Care and Social Assistance (1,981); Retail Trade (1,527); and Manufacturing (1,312).

OPINION

Fighting to Protect the Second Amendment



Morgan Griffith

Representative

New cases are set to go before the United States Supreme Court.

As is custom, many outside groups with an interest in a case plan to submit amicus briefs.

Getting its term from Latin, "amicus" or "friends" of the Court review matters of a legal issue and provide findings in a legal document for Court consideration.

In particular, one amicus brief collected support with respect to Second Amendment rights.

I am a proud supporter and signee of an amicus brief filed by the American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ) and led by Georgia Congressman Andrew Clyde.

The amicus brief addresses two cases currently before the U.S. Supreme Court, Viramontes v. Cook County and Grant v. Higgins. Chief Justice John Roberts and the other eight justices will examine the constitutionality of legal restrictions against semi-automatic rifles.

One attorney who is listed as a Counsel of Record drafting a separate amicus brief in Viramontes v. Cook County is former Virginia Attorney General Ken Cucinelli.

Earlier this year, Cucinelli tried to fight in Virginia courts against Governor Abigail Spanberger's gun grab legislation that places new restrictions on semi-automatic weapons.

But with this new legal fight brewing in the U.S. Supreme Court, I signed my name onto the ACLJ amicus brief that uses similar arguments made by Cucinelli in the Virginia case.

The heart of the argument lies with previous laws tied to a Militia.

In June 1776, the Virginia Convention adopted the Virginia Declaration of Rights. This document is considered a major source of the Bill of Rights that later became part of the U.S. Constitution.

The Virginia Declaration of Rights included the Militia Clause as drafted by founding father George Mason.

The Militia Clause states: "That a well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defense of a free state…"

Further, the Clause reaffirms that "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

This language is enshrined in Article I, Section 13 of the Virginia Constitution.

Further, the Militia Act of 1792 required ordinary citizens to provide themselves with the standard infantry arm of the era.

As our amicus brief states, the arms the citizen was expected to keep were the arms they would bring to militia service.

The establishment of an organized militia, what we know today as the National Guard, came as a result of the Militia Act of 1903. But this legislation did not change the fact that there remains an unorganized militia. Federal law continues to recognize this class of U.S. citizens who are not members of the National Guard.

Therefore, this militia class as proposed by Mason and our founders remains well intact. And with this class comes the access to bear arms for service to a militia.

Respect for this concept has notably frayed, with more Democratic States challenging gun laws on the basis that military-grade style weapons are not protected.

Of course, not every militarily useful weapon is protected.

Nuclear or chemical weapons, tanks and the like fall outside of the scope that an ordinary citizen would be expected to keep or bring for lawful purposes.

A semi-automatic rifle is a class of weapon that extends to tens of millions of Americans, however. The National Shooting Sports Foundation estimates that some 24 million Americans own some modern sporting rifle.

Moreover, numerous state Court decisions cited in the brief show no link of weighing military usefulness with the restriction on a firearm!

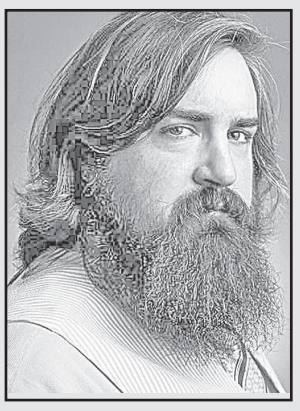
To this point, we argue that the Second Amendment protects Americans from prohibitions on guns on the grounds that mere possession of an arm with a military characteristic or usefulness is not unlawful.

For a militia to carry out its goals of self-defense as well as the defense of the State, access to the kind of weapons that are in common use for lawful purposes and bear a reasonable relationship to the citizen-militia tradition is protected.

It is my hope that the Supreme Court considers the amicus brief I signed onto, addresses these fundamental issues and rules that bans on semi-automatic weapons are unconstitutional.

I will continue to oppose radical Democratic Party policies that attack our constitutional rights, restrict the Second Amendment and weaken the concept of a militia of ordinary men and women.

Trump announces $5,000 dividend for all Americans if they'll let him hold a dollar



By Ben R. Williams

DALLAS, TX — At the recent Republican midterm convention in Dallas, Texas, President Donald Trump announced that he's committed to giving every American adult a $5,000 dividend after the midterm elections if they'll just let him hold a dollar.

"C'mon man, my aunt's real sick," Trump told the cheering audience. "She lives three towns over, and I gotta bring her some food, and you know how expensive the bus is. C'mon, just loan me a couple hundo and I swear I'll send all Americans a check for $5,000. You know I'm good for it."

"Her name?" Trump added. "It's Don… uh… Donna! Donna… Truestory. Yes, Donna Truestory. We all love Aunt Truestory, don't we?"

US House Speaker Mike Johnson defended Trump's announcement, saying that the $5,000 dividend would boost economic growth and argued that Republicans had delivered tax cuts, higher wages, lower drug costs, and other wonderful things that are happening three towns over where Trump's aunt lives.

"While it's ultimately up to Congress, there's nothing wrong with Trump's promise to give each American adult $5,000 if they can just float him a few hundred bucks to buy food for his sick aunt," Johnson said. "But it has to be cash, don't go sending us food to give her. She, uh, she has to eat prescription food."

However, even some of Trump's most ardent supporters are beginning to get cold feet after Trump's promised $5,000 DOGE check and $2,000 tariff check have failed to materialize.

"Just last week, I gave Trump fifty bucks to fill his gas tank so he could make it to his child support hearing," said Trump supporter Jeff Foley. "That's the third time this month that he's run out of gas at the exact same gas station. I'm starting to think something doesn't add up."

Susan Myers said that she's voted for Trump three times and plans to vote for him a fourth time, but even she is beginning to have some doubts that Trump will fulfill his promises.

"He still hasn't delivered the stuff I bought from him back when he was really into selling Younique and essential oils," she said. "I mean, I'll still support anything and everything he does even if it costs me my friends and family and I ultimately die alone, but I would like to get that mascara I paid for."

Drew Newton said that while he still supports the President, his policies have caused him some economic hardship.

"The price of gas is through the roof," Newton said. "Now, I don't blame that on Trump. But I do blame him for stealing the catalytic converter out of my Dodge Ram. He told me it was for charity, but I don't know."

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer said that the $5,000 dividend is just the latest promise from Trump that will ultimately fail to materialize.

"This is even worse than the time Trump told his supporters that he was in contact with a Nigerian prince who would give them millions of dollars if they could just send a few thousand bucks to bribe a bank official," Schumer said. "If our nation is to survive, the path forward is clear: we must stop Zohran Mamdani."

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Kill the Rat Month



Holly Kozelsky

When people look at history, they tend to talk about things removed from daily life – politics, wars, etc.

But we as a whole seem to have forgotten about those aspects of daily life that would have affected us directly – such as the scourge of rats. A century ago in our community, most people farmed. They stored large amounts of foods, such as wheat and corn, over winter. But even people who lived in town and bought their foods stored them in barrels and jars. Rats would get into them.

Yes, rats ate the food. Worse, though, they walked all through the food, and used the bathroom in it, which would ruin the whole lot.

They spread diseases. They chewed away at clothing and linens.

Each year, Henry County called March "Kill the Rat" month. It was a major campaign. Everyone – man, woman and child – had to chip in to do their part to reduce the rat population.

Each March, a contest ran through Henry County for adults and through the schools for children. Though it was exciting to win prizes, it was nasty the way the children had to bring the tails of the rats they had killed for the teacher to tally up. Imagine having a bucket of rat tails in one corner of your classroom.

This poem was published in the Henry Bulletin on Feb. 14, 1922: "Watch the ladies climb a chair – while they wear one in their hair – hear them holler, shriek and scream – kill them, help the little Queens." The article which started with the column finishes: "Moral – Observe 'Kill the Rat Month' during the month of March and kill all you can."

An article on Feb. 28, 1922, in the same newspaper says: "If one man kills all of his rats and his neighbor doesn't his neighbor's rats will go visiting. Now is the time for everyone to kill so there will be no rats to go visiting. Poison given away at the Clerks Office for as long as its lasts."

In 1922 Mrs. Kellogg's class at Horsepasture School won first place for most rats killed, with a $5 prize. That's worth $100 today. Black students and classes would get only half the prize money, so Bettie Hairston's class at Bassett School won only $2.50 for the most rats killed.

In the community-side category, Linwood Stone won $2.50 for killing 237 rats. Allen Haynes got second place for killing 163 rats and one $1.50. Frank Craig got third place at 149, and he won $1. Those were the white children. Among the Colored children, Robert Giles killed the most, 68 rats, and he won $1.50.

Other prizes included –

· The oldest rat, 8 years old, killed by Thomas Self. He won $2.50, given by Mutual Benefit Insurance Company.

· Macon Purcell killed a rat that was 16 ½ inches long. He won the largest-rat prize, which was a box of candy from Kearfott Drug Company.

· Linwood Stone won the prize for heaviest rat. It weighed 1 pound. His prize was a ring from A.D. Beckner. He also won the prize for the first 10 rat tails turned in. It was a fountain pen from Central Drug Company.

· Tom Hill won the prize for the blackest rat killed. His prize was a Quality Cake by Martinsville Bakery.

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If you have news about or an upcoming event for your organization, company or church, email dhall@theenterprise.net.

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CORRECTION

A story published last week about the Martinsville 7 incorrectly stated that the white woman involved in the 1949 case was raped and murdered. The woman survived.

The seven Black men were accused of rape and were executed in 1951. They were not accused of her murder. We regret the error.

Public input sought at fall transportation meetings

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) will host nine meetings across Virginia this fall and is inviting the public to share feedback on transportation projects and programs related to highway, rail and public transportation across the commonwealth. Members of the community may participate by attending public meetings or submitting comments by email or by mail.

The public will have an opportunity to learn and share feedback about top transportation priorities and the vision for transportation in the commonwealth along with information related to various other initiatives. Representatives from the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) will be in attendance to highlight their transportation programs and to discuss your ideas and concerns on Virginia's transportation network. The meetings will consist of remarks from key officials followed by a town hall session where the public may engage in discussion and ask questions about the various initiatives.

The public meeting for the Salem District is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 20 in the Salem Civic Center, 1001 Roanoke Boulevard, Salem.

Submit comments via email or mail, by Nov. 30, to:

- For roads and highways: Six-YearProgram@vdot.virginia.gov or Infrastructure Investment Director, Virginia Department of Transportation, 1221 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219.
- For transit and rail: drptpr@drpt.virginia.gov or Public Information Office, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219.

Virginia Forestry announces acorn, nut drop-off locations

The Virginia Department of Forestry is collecting acorns and walnuts this fall as part of its annual effort to gather seed for growing trees at the agency's Augusta Nursery.

New this year, the department is consolidating collection points and will accept donations only at 25 designated drop-off locations, including select department offices and partner sites.

The deadline to donate is 5 p.m. Oct. 11. Collection areas will accept donations outside, with signs and marked drop-off bins indicating where to leave the acorns and nuts.

Donations collected by the department are used to grow seedlings at the Augusta Nursery. The resulting trees are sold through the department's online store.

"It can't be overstated how much we appreciate the annual collection efforts of community groups, schools, families and volunteers," said State Forester Terry Lasher. "Working with several partners and localities, we are streamlining our fall collection efforts to provide carefully selected drop-off locations. This provides a more precise map of drop-off locations, ensures fewer acorns go to waste and allows our staff to maintain efficient operations."

Augusta Nursery Manager Joshua McLaughlin said the annual collection provides both environmental and financial benefits.

"Our annual acorn collection campaign is not only a fun way for Virginians to engage in forestry, conservation and dendrology, but is a huge help to DOF," McLaughlin said. "Thanks to these donated acorns and nuts, we can plant and grow healthier trees that are already suited to Virginia's climate. Plus, this helps the agency financially…the more donations we receive, the less we spend to purchase seed. DOF then redirects those savings to improve other aspects of nursery operations."



Donated acorns and nuts grow into healthier trees that can be hard to find, or only grow in certain areas of Virginia.

Those interested in collecting should first make sure they have permission to gather nuts in the area and should stay away from roadways.

Acorns should be whole and uncracked. They can be dark brown or green, and caps are not required.

Acorns and nuts should be placed in paper bags or cardboard boxes, not plastic bags, and different species should be kept separate. Bags or boxes should be labeled with the collection location, date and species. Those unsure of the species can include a few leaves from the tree.

The department recommends storing collected nuts in a cool area until they can be delivered to a collection site.

For the best chance of collecting a single species, DOF recommends gathering from yards, sidewalks and driveways rather than forests, where nuts from multiple trees can become mixed.

A list of the 25 designated collection locations, along with additional information and an acorn and nut identification guide, is available at DOF.Virginia.gov.

Questions about the collection can be directed to info@dof.virginia.gov or 434-977-6555.

Emergency preparedness doesn't have to break the bank

September is National Preparedness Month, a reminder that small steps taken today can make a big difference during an emergency. But for many families, preparing for emergencies can feel financially out of reach.

What if getting your household ready doesn't have to break the bank? The American Red Cross has put together a few simple, low-cost or no-cost steps you can take to put your household on the road to preparedness.

1. A great place to start, and it won't cost a thing, is to develop an emergency plan.

Pick two places to meet — right outside your home and another outside your neighborhood. Think about how you'll evacuate — where will you go and how will you get there? Don't forget your pets — make them part of your plan. Make up emergency contact cards for the whole family in case the internet is down and save the information on everyone's phone.

2. Another simple, low-cost or no-cost step is to build a go-kit and a stay-at-home kit.

What should be included? Find out here. Could this be a budget breaker? There are ways to keep the costs down. Does your area have tax-free days for emergency supplies? Build your kit slowly, get one item at a time. Look for sales — buy one, get one free, clearance bins, clip coupons, shop discount stores.

3. Download the Red Cross Emergency app which helps you and your loved ones before, during, and after a disaster.

This step is absolutely free. The app includes guides to help you prepare, National Weather Service alerts, live weather maps and help locating Red Cross shelters. It's available in English and Spanish, and designed with accessibility in mind. Find it by searching for 'American Red Cross' in your app store or visiting redcross.org/apps.

4. Sign up for emergency alerts from your local government.

Find out how officials get out critical local information — like evacuation notices — during an emergency. Learn what disasters or emergencies may occur in your area. These events can range from those affecting only you and your family, like a home fire or medical emergency, to those affecting your entire community, like an earthquake or flood.

5. Is your business, school or organization prepared for an emergency?

Anyone who interacts with your facility is depending on you to be ready. The Red Cross offers a free service — the Ready Rating Program — that helps businesses, schools and organizations become prepared for emergencies. Ready Rating members have access to tools, resources and information for improving their ability to withstand disaster, maintain operations, and protect lives and property. Whether your workplace is large or small, you can join this free, self-paced program. As a member, you will complete easy self-assessments to measure your level of preparedness and find areas that need improvement.

Disasters don't wait for a convenient time. They can strike overnight, during your commute or while your children are at school. The best way to protect yourself and the people you care about is to be prepared before an emergency happens. National Preparedness Month is a great time to take these simple, low-cost or no-cost steps to help keep your household safe when the unexpected happens.



Haze Hall picking on a banjo in 1979 (Photo sourced from Martinsville Bulletin archives)

Community Chronicles

By Jarred Marlowe

Most people in the bluegrass world know the name Earl Scruggs. Not nearly enough of them know the name Haze Hall. That is a shame, because without Haze Hall, one of the most important transactions in the history of American music never happens.

Hall spent the better part of his life within a few miles of Bassett, Virginia, working at Bassett Furniture for close to fifty years and picking banjo wherever anyone would have him — square dances, radio programs, television appearances, county fairs. He was not famous. He did not chase fame. He had a wife and two kids to look after and no money to chase anything anyway. But he could play, and the people who knew music knew it.

Sometime around the summer of 1946, Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys came through the area for a show. Earl Scruggs was playing banjo with Monroe at the time, still early in what would become one of the most celebrated careers in the history of American music. Haze had already been playing all day at the show in Rocky Mount and was worn out by the time Monroe's outfit arrived that evening. He had mentioned to some of the other musicians that he owned a Gibson Mastertone banjo. Word got back to Scruggs. That night around 10:30, Scruggs showed up at Hall's door to buy it.

Haze's wife begged him not to sell. He sold it anyway.

Scruggs did not hold onto it long. He eventually traded it to Don Reno along with a gold plated Mastertone and a new Martin guitar, getting back an old gold plated banjo that, by Haze's telling, looked rough but sounded fine. That was the banjo Scruggs made his name with. Reno, for his part, kept the banjo he got from Scruggs and later told people he would not take ten thousand dollars for it. When Hall heard that, sitting on his front porch in 1979 with a Vega Earl Scruggs model across his lap, he just shrugged. To him it was a keepsake banjo, no better or worse than what he was holding right then. He had owned and played them both.

Hall was known well beyond Henry County in the circles that mattered. Don Reno was a friend. The Osborne Brothers came to Bassett to visit him and bought a banjo, and while they were there played two shows at the Bassett Community Center. He judged at the Galax Fiddlers Convention. He played live radio at the Martinsville station on Monday nights, staying until midnight to tape programs for the rest of the week, and never got a dime for it. He eventually got fed up with publicity that put nothing on the table and quit.

In a 1979 interview recorded on his front porch by a family member, Hall reflected on all of it with the same plainspoken practicality that seems to have defined his whole life. When asked why he never went off and played professionally like Scruggs and the others, his answer was short. He had a family to feed. Music came easy and the money went easy, and he reckoned he had made maybe ten thousand dollars from music over his entire life. He did not seem to lose sleep over it.

Henry County has produced its share of quietly remarkable people. Haze Hall is one of them; a man who spent his life at a furniture factory, played banjo for the love of it, and once sold Earl Scruggs the instrument that helped change American music.

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

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Griffith staff to hold local office hours Sept. 23

Staff for U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, will be available to meet with constituents in Henry and Patrick counties Sept. 23.

In Henry County, staff will be available from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the Henry County Administration Building, Summerlin Room in the Board of Supervisors meeting chambers, 3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.

In Patrick County, staff will be available from 12:30 to 2 p.m. at the Patrick County Administration Building, conference room, 106 Rucker St., Stuart.

Constituents can meet with staff to discuss concerns involving federal agencies or other matters appropriate for congressional assistance.

Program to explore early history of Bassett

The Bassett Historical Center will host "Building A Town: The Early Years of Bassett Furniture" on Oct. 13, exploring the origins and development of Bassett.

Local historian Andy Doss will lead the program, which will examine Bassett's beginnings as a rural agricultural community, the establishment of the Bassett Furniture Company and the growth of the town around the furniture industry.

The presentation will use historic photographs, maps and local stories to explore the people, industries and events that shaped Bassett and its development into a major furniture manufacturing center.

The program will begin at 10:30 a.m. in the Susan L. Adkins Memorial Meeting Room at the Bassett Historical Center.

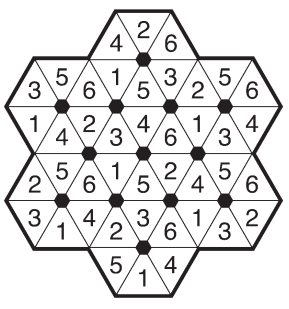
The program is free and open to the public.

Martinsville resident named to President's List

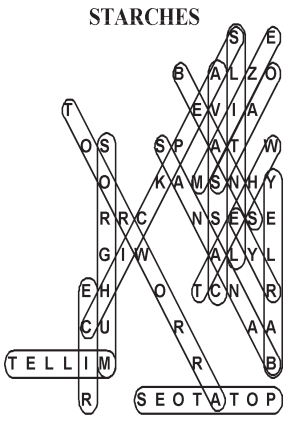
Lauren Mills of Martinsville has been named to the President's List at James Madison University for the summer 2026 semester. Students who earn President's List honors must carry at least 12 graded credit hours and earn a GPA of 3.900 or above. Mills is majoring in Biology - BS.

Puzzle Answers!

SNOWFLAKES
solution



STARCHES



SCRAMBLERS
Solution
1. Anthem; 2. Prior
3. Honest; 4. Scout
Today's Word
CHRISTMAS

FEAR KNOT
answer



Super Crossword
Answers

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Weekly SUDOKU
Answer

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

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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.

Faith Mulch faces possible closure after fires, DEQ complaints

By Taylor Boyd

Although the town has not received formal notice, Faith Mulch owner Michael Kingsley said he plans to close the company's Stuart plant following a series of issues at the facility.

In a text message to Stuart Town Manager Bryce Simmons and Patrick County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director and Stuart Town Council member Rebecca Adcock, Kingsley said, "unfortunately due to the plant issues since my takeover on July 24, 2026, I've decided to shut down the 120 Commerce Street plant."

Simmons said he has not received anything formal from Kingsley regarding the closure.

Adcock said Faith Mulch has been in business for roughly three years and currently has approximately 15 employees.



Faith Mulch's Stuart plant is facing a potential closure following two fires, environmental complaints and a state fire marshal's red tag.

Stuart sawmill temporarily closed after Sept. 7 fire



Multiple volunteer fire departments responded to a fire at Wilderness Stuart Inc., a Stuart-based sawmill, Sept. 7.

By Taylor Boyd

Wilderness Stuart Inc., a Stuart-based sawmill, is temporarily closed after a Sept. 7 fire damaged part of the building's interior.

Ronnie Bolt, owner of Wilderness Stuart, said the damage has prevented the company from producing lumber.

"The fire got a good portion of the building and electrical motors and wire and stuff like that, and I'm going to have to replace about half of my roof. So we're going to be down for a few days," he said.

Bolt estimates the mill will be able to resume normal operations by early October.

School bus involved in second incident in two weeks



A Patrick County school bus struck a downed telecommunications cable Sept. 9, prompting first responders to respond to the scene. No students or the driver were injured, and the bus was not damaged.

By Taylor Boyd

Students and a school bus driver were unharmed Sept. 9 after a Patrick County Public Schools bus struck a downed telecommunications cable, marking the second incident involving a school bus in the county in two weeks.

he earlier incident occurred Sept. 1, when a tractor-trailer struck a Patrick County Public Schools bus on U.S. 58 at Trot Valley Road, injuring the tractor-trailer driver.

Schools Superintendent Dr. Jason Wood said the most recent incident occurred as the bus was turning around on a road.

Town issues voluntary water conservation request

The Town of Stuart is asking its water customers to voluntarily reduce outdoor and non-essential water use until further notice.

The town's water remains safe to drink and the supply remains adequate. This is a request for prudence rather than a restriction, and no penalties will be imposed.

The town draws all of its water from the South Mayo River. Town operators measure the depth of flow over the intake check dam and report each reading to the Virginia Department of Health. The reading taken on the morning of September 14 was 1-5/8 inches, the lowest since the town began keeping this record.

Tourism spending in county tops $33 million in 2025

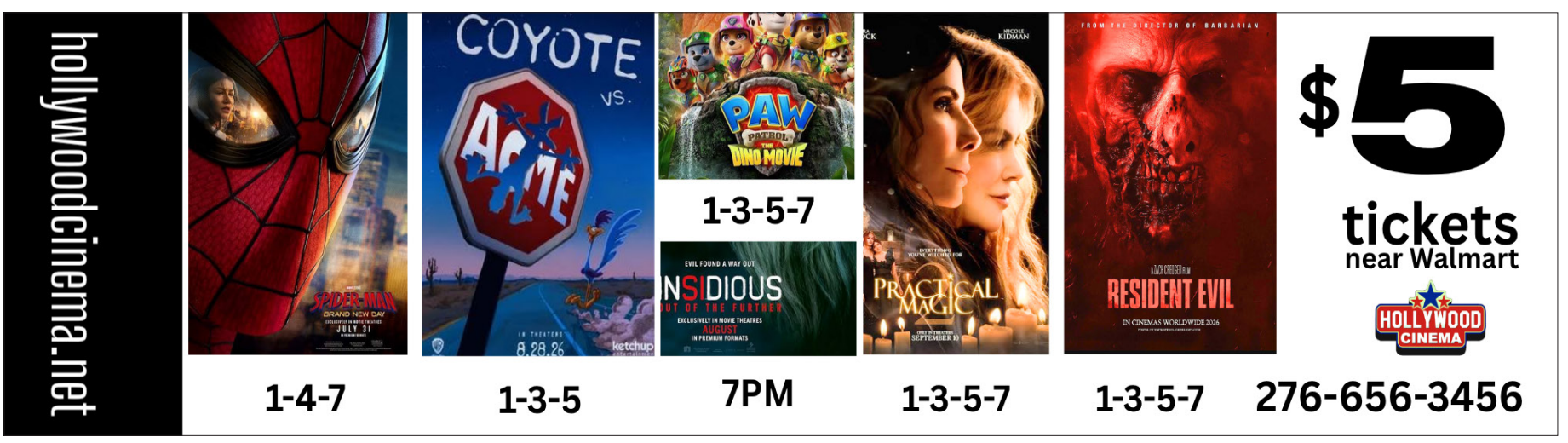
Visitor spending in Patrick County reached more than $33 million in 2025, a 10.4% increase over the previous year, according to the Virginia Tourism Corporation.

Visitors spent $33,084,051 in Patrick County last year, supporting 143 jobs and generating $1,863,171 in local tax revenue.

James Houchins, director of economic development and tourism for Patrick County, said the increase in tourism spending reflects the county's lodging options and outdoor attractions.

"We are excited to see the increase in visitation and spending in Patrick County and the Commonwealth as a whole," Houchins said.

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



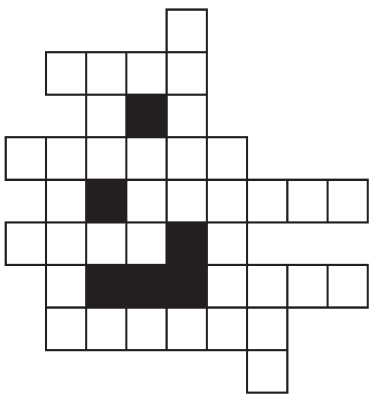
PUZZLE TIME

FEAR KNOT

By: rj johnson

DOUBT? ...OR DARE!

CYO
NEOGIS
♥ TOSUP
GYLU
EPYCUE
EAG
♥ TCSA
APNEC
♥ EGL
EPYLON
GYSIO
♥ ESLA

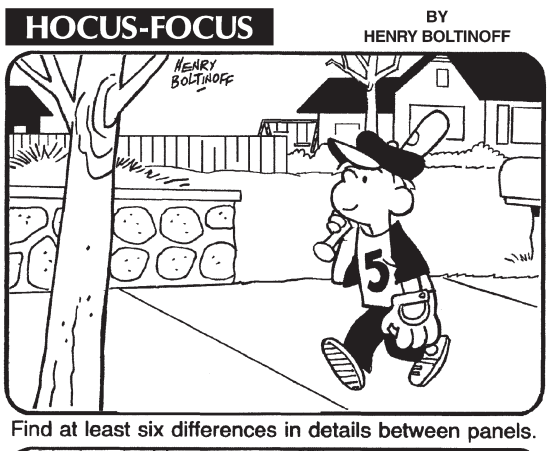


Unscramble these twelve letter strings to form each into an ordinary word (ex. **HAGNEC** becomes **CHANGE**). Prepare to use only ONE word from any marked (♥) letter string as each unscrambles into more than one word (ex. ♥**RATHE** becomes **HATER** or **EARTH** or **HEART**). Fit each string's word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

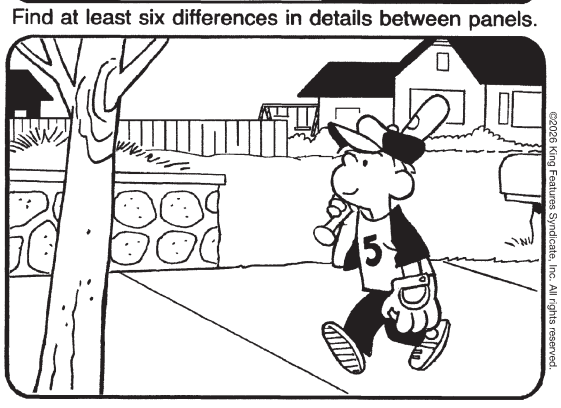
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Number is smaller. 2. Cap is different. 3. Shutter is smaller. 4. Mailbox is lower. 5. Tree is missing. 6. Wall is not as wide.

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MAGIC MAZE ● STARCHES

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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: THE FRUIT OF THE OAK TREE

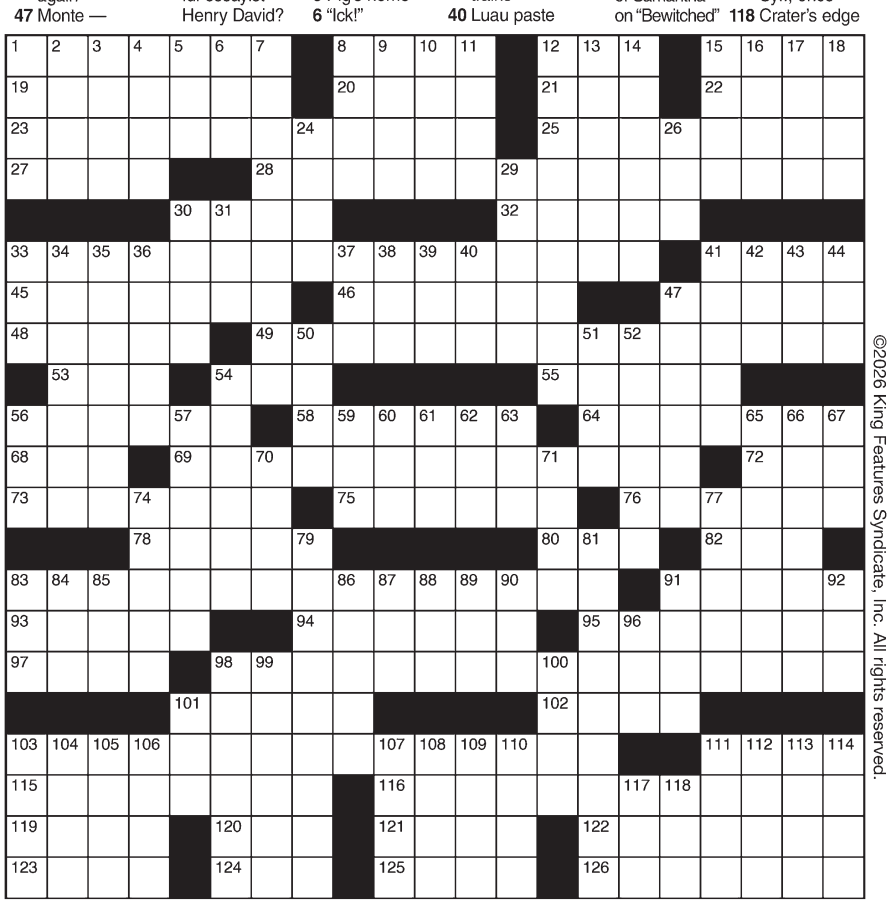
Arrowroot	Cassava	Millet	Rye
Bananas	Chickpeas	Oats	Sorghum
Barley	Lentils	Potatoes	Wheat
Beans	Maize	Rice	

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Super Crossword — JUST ADD WATER

ACROSS
1 "May I talk to you briefly?"
8 Placed
12 Motor oil additive
15 TV character whom you "better call"
19 Certain outlet accessory
20 River of Aragon
21 Weeding tool
22 Singer Amos
23 Like a gallery that has five dozen paintings by artist Antoine?
25 Sort of
27 Shar- — (wrinkly dogs)
28 What a hailstorm is doing when composer Jean-Philippe is caught in it?
30 Hawaiian for "appetizer"
32 Little League precursor
33 Calling device in a forest east of Paris?
41 Banquet, e.g.
45 Four eighths
46 Let borrow again
47 Monte —
48 Oil from flower petals
49 Wine enjoyed near a hearth?
53 Aliens, briefly
54 August hrs.
55 Guilty feeling
56 Garage oil
58 Hilo hellos
64 Giving the go-ahead for
68 Atmosphere
69 Raised, flat land that you are visiting today?
72 Rapa — (Easter Island)
73 Bookish sort
75 Giorgio of fashion
76 Apartment policy about animals
78 Island porch
80 Goat's cry
82 Application file extension
83 Festive antique hat?
91 Slanting
93 "Nay" sayers
94 Shower sponges
95 100-page story, maybe
97 Portend
98 That powerful essayist Henry David?
101 Sea's edge
102 Have — (lose it)
103 Flat-bottomed vessel sailing across the River Styx from Hades?
111 Notion, in Paris
115 An hour before midnight
116 Teasing tribute held at the Green Bay Packers' stadium?
119 Sold out, say
120 "Rock and Roll, Hoochie —" (1973 hit)
121 Leg, e.g.
122 Tom Cruise/Dustin Hoffman film
123 Puts in place
124 Pastor's talk: Abbr.
125 Legs' counterparts
126 Iran neighbor

DOWN
1 [I'm in shock!]
2 Comics dog
3 Metered car
4 Bldg. units in complexes
5 Pig's home
6 "Ick!"
7 Deep-fried crustacean appetizers
8 Riga native, old-style
9 Aid in crime
10 "Dies —" (Latin hymn)
11 Gloomy
12 Tibias
13 Native of Nuku'alofa
14 Eye care chain
15 Fruit discard
16 Top-tier
17 — Major (constellation)
18 In — of
24 Tightly strung
26 Mineo of "Exodus"
29 "— to Be You" (pop standard)
30 Bartlett, e.g.
31 "Friendly skies" carrier, for short
33 Python's kin
34 — -coated aspirin
35 Large central feature of the Astros' logo
36 — apso
37 Be mistaken
38 Singer Brenda
39 Chicago Loop trains
40 Luau paste
41 British bud
42 Previous to
43 Taking after
44 Singer Rawls
47 Chevy pony car
50 "Let's just leave — that"
51 Toy train, when repeated
52 "— Matata" ("The Lion King" song)
54 Part of FDR
56 Car tankful
57 Spreads out, as fingers
59 Meadowland
60 Crew tool
61 Engine noise
62 Org. for cavity fillers
63 It rises daily
65 Kicked out of a country
66 Chocolaty spread brand
67 U.S. soldiers
70 — Sea (salt lake in Asia)
71 "Sands of Iwo —"
74 Basic trick for a skateboarder
77 Actor O'Toole
79 Baseless bit of gossip
81 Ditzy relative of Samantha on "Bewitched"
83 Sharp punch
84 Singer Yoko
85 "Inc." relative
86 Orbiter with a tail
87 — polloi
88 Olympic code for Kabul's country
89 Oom- — band
90 "C'— la vie"
91 State firmly
92 Fraternity "T"
96 "Well now!"
98 Flat, hollow sounds
99 Crested bird with black-and-white wings
100 Harvard rival
101 Submission encl.
103 Pleads
104 Balm plant
105 Camp shelter
106 Nights before
107 Stewpot
108 Impartial
109 "I wonder ..."
110 Recedes
111 Actress Skye
112 Accurse
113 Morales of film and TV
114 Volcano in Sicily
117 Egypt and Syr., once
118 Crater's edge



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Weekly SUDOKU

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

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: ◆◆

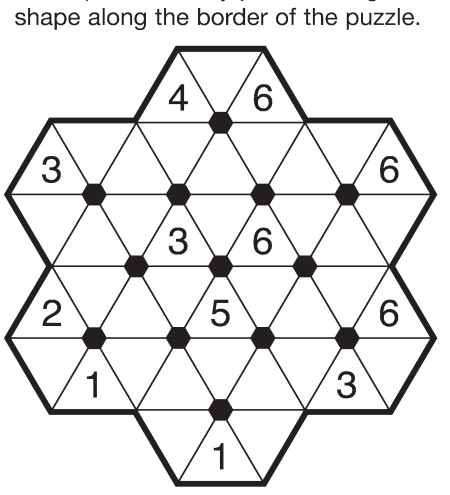
◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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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

• The first animal ever cloned, the famous sheep Dolly, was named for singer-songwriter Dolly Parton.

• According to a study, dancers and choreographers reported the highest divorce rates.

• Students are more than four times more likely to drop out of school if they are unable to read proficiently by the third grade.

• Early hairspray formulas often used shellac, a resin secreted by female Kerria lacca bugs.

• Some scientists have speculated that a zombie apocalypse may not be impossible because humans are vulnerable to neurotoxins, parasites and viruses such as rabies, which can alter behavior and brain function. Prions, the proteins behind mad cow disease, can remain active in deceased tissue, while hypothetical nanobots could raise similar questions.

• Holes in crackers allow steam and gas to escape so the product will remain flat and crisp.

• According to Gallup, Inc., more people recognized the term "UFO" than remembered the name Gerald Ford in a poll taken just six months after Ford left the presidential office.

• The Wizard of Oz's full name is Oscar Zoroaster Phadrig Isaac Norman Henkel Emmanuel Ambroise Diggs. He called myself OZ because the other initials spelled P-I-N-H-E-A-D.

• Frida Kahlo is the only Mexican woman to have a major solo exhibition at the Louvre.

• In many early Northern European tribes slaves were forbidden from hunting since they were not allowed to own weapons or bear arms.

• The first pet insurance in America was purchased in 1982 to protect the dog playing the title role in "Lassie."

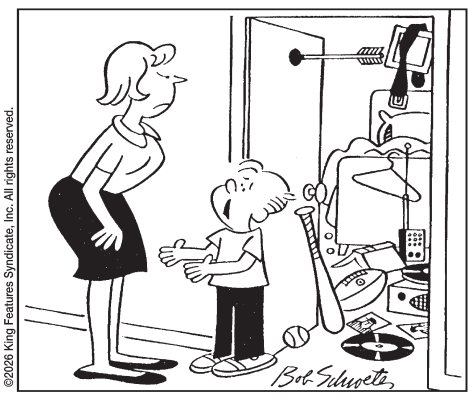
• Archaeology suggests that belt buckles were developed during the Bronze Age.

• The longest poem in the world is the "Mahabharata," an Indian epic dating from the 4th century B.C. or earlier and containing about 1.8 million words.

***

Thought for the Day: "A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kickboxing." — *Emo Philips*

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"Clean up my room? You act like _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ is just around the corner."

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!

Chant **HAMNET**

Former **RIPOR**

Candid **SOTHEN**

Patrol **STUCO**

TODAY'S WORD

Advertise With Us!

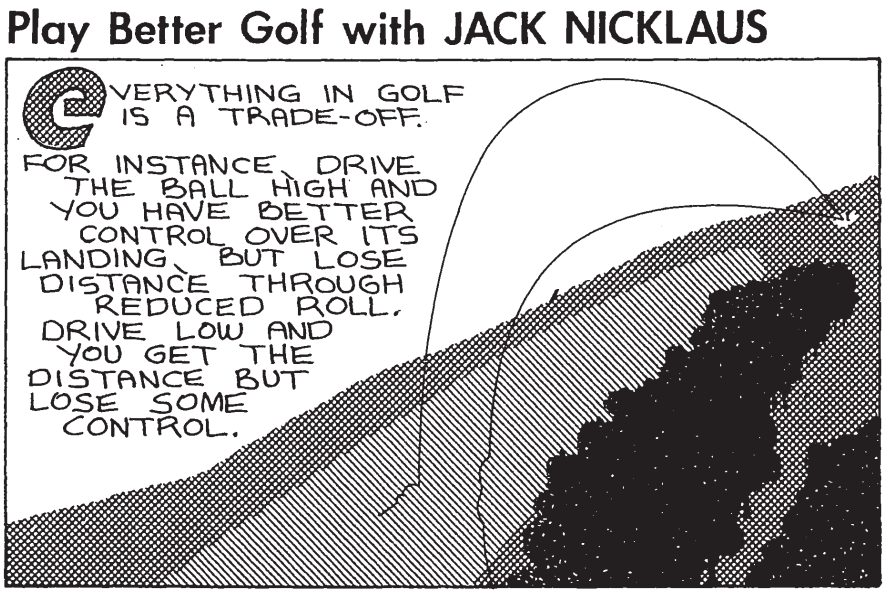
What we offer:
- Flexible pricing
- Highly Customizable Packages that include print, digital or both
- Deeply discounted rates
- Seasonal Specials

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
- A talented team of designers who will work to help you reach your base.

Join our family and put our talented team to work for you today.

For more information, call the office at (276) 340-2445

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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LEGAL

COUNTY OF HENRY
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, a public hearing has been scheduled for **September 23, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.** in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, Kings Mountain Rd, Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive citizen input into the possible issuance of a Special Use Permit for the following case.

Case S-26-11 Jonathan Beckett

A request for a Special Use Permit was received under Section 21-902 of the Henry County Zoning Ordinance to allow for the establishment of a campground facility to accommodate up to 50 RV sites. The property is approximately 8.5-acres, located at 3750 Greensboro Rd, in the Ridgeway District, and is zoned Commercial District B-1, as shown on Tax Map 52.4/58.

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

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

LEGAL

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

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. CL26001306-00
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
CRYSTAL ANN RIGNEY v. HUMBERTO ZUNIGA ROLDAN
123 Moctezume St
Ayala Morelos, Mexico

The object of this suit is to:
OBTAIN A DIVORCE A VINCULO MATRIMONII
It is ORDERED that HUMBERTO ZUNIGA ROLDAN appear at the above-named court and protect his interests on or before October 20, 2026.

AUGUST 21, 2026

Kathrina Salgado
[X] CLERK [ ] JUDGE

LEGAL

IN THE FAMILY COURT OF BERKELEY COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA

TO:
Danny Lee Cuniff
271 Eastview Drive
Collinsville, VA 24078
DOB: 11/10/1968

Magistrate Court Case No.:
26-M02D-00538
Family Court Civil Action No.:
26-DV-299

ORDER OF PUBLICATION
(PROTECTIVE ORDER / HEARING DATE)

1. The object of this suit is to obtain protection from the Respondent.
2. The object of this publication by Class I legal advertisement is to notify Respondent of the PROTECTIVE ORDER prohibiting the above-named Respondent from having contact with certain individuals. This Order may affect property and other rights of the Respondent. Violating this Order may subject the Respondent to criminal sanctions. The Respondent is strongly encouraged to obtain a copy of this Protective Order and Petition from the Circuit Clerk of the county listed above.

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

If appearing by evidence duly taken in this action that you could not be found in or that you have left the State of West Virginia, you are hereby notified of the ORDER referenced above, a copy of the Petition and Order may be obtained at the BERKELEY County, Circuit Clerk's office. This PROTECTIVE ORDER will remain in effect until 9/30/2026.

A Final Hearing is scheduled for the 30th day of September 2026, at 11:00 AM, before the Berkeley County Family Court.

Issued this 09/02/2026 3:15 PM

Michelle R. Schoppert By: [illegible]
Circuit Clerk

Free Fall Fishing Days set for Sept. 25-27

The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) announced its first-ever Fall Free Fishing Days on Sept. 25–27. During these three days, no fishing licenses of any kind or facilities use permits will be required for recreational rod and reel fishing.

Restrictions on designated stocked trout waters will be lifted, opening access to more than 2,900 miles of trout streams and various lakes and ponds.

Celebrate National Hunting & Fishing Day and National Public Lands Day on the water and enjoying the best of Virginia's fisheries.

Fair

(cont. from page 1)

Friday night will be Spirit FM night, with national recording artist Austin French, a Christian musician who performs Christian pop-style contemporary worship music, taking the stage.

"Of course we have all of the wonderful animals with Infinity Acres, the agriculture contest, and then all of the delicious fair food, prize games, and unlimited ride wristbands," he said.

Adams said competitive exhibit contests and their various categories will also be available for viewing. Miss Henry County Fair will also be on-site.

While attendance is weather-dependent, Adams said he hopes about 5,000 people will attend.

"Each year so far, we've had weather at least one night, so that's typically about what we have. I think we could have a lot more if the weather cooperates," Adams said.

Gate admission is $5 and includes concerts, ground shows, the petting zoo, agricultural exhibits and fireworks.

Adams said ride wristbands cost $25 in advance and $30 on-site.

For ride wristbands or more information, visit www.henrycountyvafair.com.

Council

(cont. from page 1)

nect with the community members who are interested in Neighborhood Watch. And it's also an opportunity for us to proactively reach out to them. I don't know that the best way for people to talk to the police department about their community issues and interests is to come to a meeting. Perhaps it's better if we just reach out to them and talk to them where they're at and when it's convenient to them."

The program allows residents to sign up to receive check-ins either in person or by phone. Residents can choose to receive a check-in every two weeks or every four weeks and will be assigned an officer.

Rhoads said the department has not determined how many residents each officer will be assigned.

"You may have one person to check in with. Officers may have 20 people to check in with. But we're going to make that call. We'll reach out to them. We'll hear their concerns about the community, and we're going to keep track of these things. These concerns are going to be tracked to ensure that there's closure."

Rhoads said the program is similar to the city's existing 'SeeClickFix' program but could reach residents who are less comfortable using computers.

"Except this, I think, is going to reach a demographic that's not entirely comfortable using computers," he said.

The program also is intended to provide residents with a way to raise concerns while maintaining confidentiality, Rhoads said.

"So this is our way of sorting out and hearing those concerns. Something very important we want to ensure them is that names are going to be kept confidential. We have had FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) concerns with this thing, but in talking to some FOIA officers, I think that if we have them, when they sign this guarantee of confidentiality, their names can't be released under these things.

"So we will address these issues anonymously so that fear shouldn't factor in programs designed to, of course, increase community trust in law enforcement. It'll also improve communication between residents and police. And our hope is that it helps us to identify crime trends earlier," he said.

Rhoads said the program could help officers identify concerns in neighborhoods where they may not otherwise spend much time.

"We don't live in those neighborhoods. We tend to drive through those," he said. "But if we're reaching out to the citizens and they are voicing their concerns to us, it's going to help us identify those crime trends a bit earlier."

Rhoads said he also hopes the program will improve residents' quality of life.

The program is expected to roll out in early October.

The council also discussed and approved a resolution amending the City of Martinsville's Emergency Operations Plan, as well as discussed and approved a resolution adopting a cash reserve policy for the city's refuse, water/wastewater and electric enterprise funds.

The council also discussed and approved authorizing the city attorney to file a petition with the Circuit Court on behalf of the city and authorized a special election for November.

Expanded testing facilities to help livestock producers



Critical infrastructure to help protect Virginia's largest industry was the reason agriculture officials recently broke ground on expansion projects at the Harrisonburg, Lynchburg and Warrenton Regional Animal Health Laboratories.

"Rockingham County is at the heart of the poultry industry," said Hobey Bauhan, president of the Virginia Poultry Federation. He said the county is one of the top poultry-producing counties nationally, and the poultry industry in Rockingham provides $5.5 billion in economic impact annually. The expanded facilities will help protect flocks from being hurt by avian influenza, Bauhan shared.

Del. Tony Wilt, R-Harrisonburg, told attendees that "agriculture is our lifeblood and VDACS works to protect it."

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' regional health laboratories operate a network of four state-of-the-art animal health laboratories across the state, with the fourth located in Wytheville. The labs offer regulatory and diagnostic testing services for veterinarians, food manufacturers, agricultural producers, pet owners and other government programs. They currently provide a comprehensive range of services, including bacteriology, serology, virology, parasitology, pathology and molecular testing, but some of the lab technology is outdated and the original space was poorly designed for new diagnostic capabilities.

VDACS commissioner Charles Green said the expansion project will add roughly 8,800 square feet of combined laboratory space across the facilities to support modern diagnostic services and disease monitoring.

"This $13.1 million capital outlay project will strengthen critical laboratory infrastructure and testing capabilities, enhance preparedness for emerging animal diseases, and support the health and well-being of the public, animals, and the state's rural communities," Green explained.

Dr. Jessica Walters, Office of Laboratory Services program manager, said the expansion has been a long time coming. "This project has been about five years in the works," Walters said. "Virginia Farm Bureau has been an amazing supporter of all that we do."

VFBF President Scott Sink explained that the state's largest agriculture advocacy organization has supported efforts for the General Assembly to fund the lab expansion, recognizing their importance in protecting the health of herds and flocks.

"We are unique in that we can accept samples directly from farmers as well as from vets," Walters added. "This facility will have drive-through space, which will especially help our poultry clients."

Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Katie Frazier grew up in the Valley and was the keynote speaker at the groundbreaking. "I've seen firsthand why facilities like this are so important."

"VDACS Regional Animal Health Laboratories perform a vital role in providing regulatory and diagnostic testing services for veterinary practitioners, food manufacturers, agricultural animal producers, pet owners and other state government programs. Expanding the capabilities and capacity of the animal health laboratory system is an important safeguard to protecting public health and Virginia's multi-billion-dollar agricultural industry."

www.henrycountyenterprise.com

Candidates

(cont. from page 1)

I think that it's time for us to begin to look towards new revenue, creating new revenue into the city so we can begin to move forward."

Jones said he has heard Martinsville described as not being a "business-friendly city" and hopes to change that.

"Incentives is the big things that we have not touched on, that we need to capitalize on businesses and homeowners to incentivize them to do better. Whether it be businesses starting off or homeowners who've owned their homes for a while and need to redevelop, work on them, or businesses who are getting started and need those incentives."

Jones also said he wants to improve infrastructure and bring office jobs to the city.

"We have a lot of individuals, landowners, some individuals who own multiple plots and areas of land in our cities that we can work with to incentivize to redevelop and bring in developers here to work on our land here."

Green pointed to his current involvement with the city and his review of the current budget.

"I serve on the Architectural Review Board, I serve on the Zoning Board of Appeals. I have a deep interest in the city. I was provided the proposed annual budget before it was approved. I read and studied the proposed annual budget. I went to every one of the meetings the council had with each of the departments, and I listened to their concerns and their budget needs and where they were trying to save the city money. I was there at each and every one of these department meetings. I understand budgets."

Reversion

Jenkins said she is opposed to reversion.

"I've been here two years in Martinsville and I did just a small amount of research on reversion. And I think at this point the city has said no reversion. And Henry County, I don't think they want to take on the financial responsibility that the city has at this particular time. So that's my take on reversion."

Green said he supports holding a referendum on the issue.

"I was 100% for the referendum. We need to focus on what we can unify with the county and grow together. I've seen it done in other states and other communities where counties and cities work together and have been successful and achieve great things for their communities. That's what we need to focus on."

Hall also said he opposes reversion and said Martinsville and Henry County should work together.

"I'm a firm believer that we don't need to build walls around the city to protect it. We need to grow. And the only way to grow is to partner with our brothers and that's the county. That's the bottom line. We're not in competition with the county. We're all in this thing together and we need to understand that. I don't think just jumping right back into reversion is the right answer. I think we need to first build a relationship where we can sit down and discuss business. Again, what do the people want?"

Jones reaffirmed his opposition to reversion.

"I've been a strong opponent against reversion. I would explain this sort of like a broken family — reversion is like having a husband sleeping downstairs in the basement and the wife sleeping upstairs in the bedroom. And they eat together, they pay bills together, they may work together and help each other out, but they're not doing anything to grow together. That is the relationship we have with the county. They are good partners at times, but it's only when it benefits us and benefits them."

Niederstadt also said he opposes reversion but believes residents should have a say in the matter.

"Reversion is a step backwards, but as this thing expired, I do agree that it's the citizens who need to make that decision — the city and the county. We don't need to be at odds with each other. We should be partners with each other. We should work together where we can. Martinsville and Henry County are economically connected. People live in one and work in the other. Businesses draw customers from both. Our roads, utilities, schools, workforce, housing market, emergency services and economic development all affect one another."

Changes to financial oversight

Green said he has discussed the city's financial issues and wants to explore alternatives for financing debt.

"Let's try some solutions that would bring us into a debt service of about 25 million and not 46 million. Taking a look at other options for funding that debt service than a city bond, 30-year bond at these interest rates. And there are options out there. … And so this is what I'm willing to do is work with our city manager and its staff and our people that you elect to come up with solutions that are affordable that benefit the taxpayer of Martinsville."

Hall called for increased financial transparency and regular review of the city's budget.

"I feel like there's something that should be looked at all year round. And I'm sure that it is, again, because this is the citizens' money, we can look at what we budgeted, what we actually spent, even what actually came in, and then we can begin to even make some adjustments to the budget. And again, I don't think that the citizens need to have an accounting degree to understand it. Most average citizens will look at this budget and just look at it. I don't know how that's going to work to ever be transparent enough where everybody can understand what that budget looks like."

Jones discussed the city's transparency page and said officials need to do more to ensure residents understand financial information.

"If you've seen, the transparency page is something we put together for the last couple of years you haven't had. That transparency page allows you to see the budget and understand it. What we have to do better is get that information to citizens who aren't on the page, who don't read it, who can't understand it and make sure that they are reading through and understanding the aspects of the budget, not only on a local level but also on a state level."

Jones also said the city needs to maintain relationships with state legislators to seek funding and economic development opportunities.

Green said financial information should be accessible to the average resident.

"Wouldn't it be nice if we could see what's going on without having to call an accountant or lawyer and figure out how things work? I would favor making financial information easier for the average citizen to understand and access. That includes clearly identifying major expenditures, contracts, capital projects, debt dependent spending, and significant changes from the previous budget. I also believe the council members need to ask more questions if we're not. Before you vote yes or no on something, know what you're voting on, know what's going on, know how it impacts the community. This is your money that the council spends, and we need to be judicious and we need to be wise with how we spend it. Transparency isn't simply putting a document on a website."

Jenkins said the city could improve financial oversight by requiring departments to provide quarterly budget reports to City Council.

"The only thing that I else that I could add to is that we could possibly pull the city departments, each one of them together and have a meeting and start to um, ask them to give us a budget on a quarterly basis and then report them back to City Council. And that will help us to keep on balance on where we are as far as the budget is concerned. That will allow us to not always have to run at the last minute to make a budget because we're just looking at it at date month nine or month ten. So that's the only thing that I would add to pull the departments together, head departments and to have them to have accountability on a quarterly basis to the city council."

Rising costs

Hall said the city needs to live within its means while also preparing properties for new investment.

"The government is just like anybody else, it's got to live within its means and within the budget just like any family, any business. We have to live within that budget and make it work. And I do want to say, this city council has been handed some things they didn't, they didn't do what they didn't see coming, and I think they've done an excellent job to move forward. And I commend them on that. But I do believe that the next steps that we're going to have to take, and I like the idea of if you look around at all these old investment properties that nobody wants, they're not set for the new economy. They're not set for the new generation of employees that have come or businesses that will come. We need to begin to market those properties and get them site ready."

Jones said energy costs will be a major issue and emphasized small businesses and affordable housing.

"Energy cost is going to be the biggest issue that we face over the next few years. I know we keep talking about transparency, and we get into the transparency with the government. We start talking about Flock cameras, how they're affecting us, and we talk about data centers and whether they're coming or not. Data centers bring a lot of money, could bring a lot of money to a local city or the county. But what we have to focus on is what we do best and what the opportunities we have right here in our cities. And, our focus should be small business and continue to build affordable places for people to live."

Niederstadt said he opposes increasing taxes and favors business growth as a way to increase city revenue.

"Personally, I don't like any tax that if you go unpaid, they could take your property from you. I want to see us not in fear of my mortgage going up to a point I can't afford it anymore. I think business growth in the community that offers jobs to our citizens is a way to grow revenue to where we can take care of ourselves and take care of our obligations. As far as attracting private investment, my first priority would be making Martinsville a place where business actually wants to do business."

Jenkins said working with the Chamber of Commerce and other partners is important to attracting businesses.

"I think it's very important that we do work with chamber of commerce and other partners to help continue the growth that we already see. We see small businesses coming in, which is good. And like everyone else has said on the panel, we got to start small and build our way up. I think one of the most important things that we can do is, like LC Jones just spoke of, us making sure that we are in Richmond, making sure that we are making the delegates accountable for what we voted them for. And we need to do that and keep a close relationship with them, not just when something comes available. Let's check with Richmond to see if we can get any funds from them."

Green said bringing manufacturing jobs back to the city requires a qualified workforce.

"These manufacturing, small manufacturing companies that are looking for communities like ours to bring in industrial manufacturing, high speed processing need about 150 to 250 employees. Problem we're running into again is the quality and quality of educated workforce, drug free workforce. I've had production engineers from several plants in our area complain about they go out and they advertise, they have six jobs available. Thirty-five people show up and the minute they say, well, the state requires you all to take a drug test, 60 to 70% of those people walk out of the rooms."

First Year Focus

Jones said residents should not expect major accomplishments immediately from a new council member.

"It's not a lot you can get in your first year. You're going to learn that very quickly. You just can't get things done. The government just doesn't move that way."

He highlighted his work with community programs, including Virginia Career Works, violence prevention and efforts to help people experiencing homelessness.

Niederstadt said he would focus on making Martinsville more business-friendly.

"Yes, the future is our children, my daughter's here tonight. And if we don't become a business-friendly city, what opportunities does she have? What reason does she have to stay here? Or is she going to turn 18, join the military, go to college and leave Martinsville behind? I'd like to think that we can create a community, a business-friendly community that gives opportunities to people like my daughter, that gives her a hope for her future. If I can make one change in my first year, I would make Martinsville a much more business-friendly city by simplifying and speeding up the process for businesses that want to invest here."

Jenkins said her first year would focus on learning more about residents' concerns.

"The first year is always a year of learning. The first year is the year that I would get out and continue to meet with the citizens, talk with them to see what their concerns are for the first year compared to what's going on in the city already and make those changes accordingly. But first of all, I've got to get to know the citizens. I've got to get to know what they want and make sure that they can trust me when it comes time to vote on issues that they are interested in. And it's most important to them, no matter how small, how big."

Green said addressing blighted properties would be his priority.

"Boarded up, blighted, neglected properties that have yet to be addressed. Our city had a goal of demolition of 40 abandoned properties a year. We've only done 20 this year. We have people that are good stewards, and have taken care of their properties all around the city. And this blight issue is not just limited to Precinct 5 or Precinct 6. It's everywhere. And it is on the city to be the steward of those situations that are outside your property line that you can't control. If you've been a good steward of your property, you take care of your property, you have a pristine property, but yet you have three boarded up houses or five boarded up houses around you, why should you be penalized and pay full assessment tax value when you're impacted in real estate?"

Green also said the city should prepare vacant properties for redevelopment.

"We got to take care of these lots, get them ready and go sell them. Martinsville, they're looking for hospitals, affordable housing. That's why I don't want to let one business slip through the crack. Now once you become a business owner, you understand that statement. You don't want one customer to slip through the crack. I believe Martinsville is a place that can grow and we can see its better days ahead of us. The bottom line is we get these old furniture factories and all these things down. We make sure our school systems are where they need to be. And when the citizens come again, we're a perfect fit and I believe they will come to us. I think the phones will ring."

THANK YOU FOR READING
HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Twain

(cont. from page 1)

The project drew support from state and local officials.

"This announcement is a strong example of how Henry County continues to build on its industrial legacy while positioning itself for the future," said Jim Adams, chairman of the Henry County Board of Supervisors. "Seeing the former Pine Products facility in the Horsepasture District return to productive use is meaningful for this community, and we're especially encouraged that Twain Lumber Company's investment will bring new life to the site with quality jobs that offer higher wages. It reinforces our commitment to supporting both new development and the revitalization of existing assets across the county."

Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Katie Frazier said the project will increase Virginia lumber production while supporting timber owners, loggers and foresters.

"Twain Lumber Company will help increase Virginia's lumber production by reopening and expanding a sawmill utilizing sustainable and abundant Southern Yellow Pine. In doing so, this project will help boost the local economy, create new, higher-paying jobs, and expand business opportunities for the Commonwealth's timber owners, loggers, and foresters," Frazier said. "I am pleased that the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development grant program will partner with Henry County and Twain Lumber Company as it revives the forestry industry in this region."

Secretary of Commerce and Trade Carrie Chenery said the investment will expand market opportunities for Virginia timber producers.

"Twain Lumber Company's investment shows what is possible when the state prioritizes cross-agency collaboration and coordinates with forward-looking companies," Chenery said. "Twain will promote economic growth, expand market opportunities for Virginia's timber producers, and bring substantial job growth to Southern Virginia. The Commonwealth stands ready to continue to foster growth in our forestry and agricultural industries."

U.S. Sen. Mark Warner said federal funding announced earlier this year will help the company modernize and restart operations.

"Earlier this year, I was thrilled to celebrate $7.4 million in federal funding to help Twain Lumber Company modernize and restart operations at the former Teal Jones sawmill by bringing this facility back to life and purchasing tens of millions of dollars in Virginia-grown forestry products," Warner said. "Twain Lumber is restoring good-paying jobs in Henry County, driving economic activity in the Martinsville region, and strengthening the Commonwealth's forestry industry. This is exactly the kind of public-private partnership that can revitalize local industries and deliver lasting economic opportunity across Southside Virginia."

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine also welcomed the investment.

"I'm glad Twain Lumber Company is investing $7.4 million in Henry County to reopen the former Teal Jones sawmill, creating 74 new jobs," Kaine said. "This investment will support Virginia's timber producers, provide a critical boost to our forestry industry, and help grow Southside Virginia's economy. I look forward to working with Governor Spanberger and state and local leaders to keep building on this progress and bring more economic opportunities to Virginia families."





Tobacco Commission member Del. Eric Phillips said the project reflects Southern Virginia's manufacturing history.

"It is exciting to see this facility come back to life, creating new jobs, bringing millions of dollars in new investment to our community, and once again supporting Virginia's forestry industry, one of the Commonwealth's largest industries," Phillips said. "Southern Virginia has a proud history of manufacturing and production, and projects like Twain Lumber show that tradition is alive and well. We have the workforce, the resources, and the work ethic for businesses to succeed here. I am proud the Tobacco Commission could help support this investment, and I look forward to welcoming Twain Lumber to Southern Virginia."

State Sen. William Stanley said the project will benefit Henry County and the region.

"Twain Lumber's investment and operation in Henry County is an economic boost for the locality, the region, and Virginia's forestry industry. This facility will create 74 new on-site jobs and even more jobs indirectly, which in turn will help reverse the area's population decline," Stanley said. "Thank you, Twain Lumber Company, for investing in Henry County and our community. This project transforms a raw regional resource and provides an opportunity for wealth generated from the land to stay in this community."

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission worked with the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation to secure the project for Virginia.

Spanberger approved a $150,000 performance-based Facility Grant from the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund, while the Tobacco Commission approved a $150,000 Tobacco Region Incentive for Agribusiness Development Grant. Both grants support projects that source Virginia-grown agricultural and forestry products.

The governor also approved a $59,200 grant from the Virginia Jobs Investment Program to support workforce training.

Explore agricultural traditions at the 2026 State Fair

This year's State Fair of Virginia will offer opportunities to explore the best of Virginia agriculture.

Themed "Virginia's Best of Show," the 10-day event will run from Sept. 25 through Oct. 4 at The Meadow Event Park in Caroline County. Fairgoers will have an opportunity to see and experience Virginia's diverse farming and forestry traditions, with new attractions and returning favorites that celebrate the commonwealth's largest industries.

"State fairs embody the story of agriculture, and that is truly what's at the heart of our mission," said Marlene Jolliffe, the fair's executive director. "Agriculture is a very robust and important part of our economy, so we have a big story to tell."

Equestrian Roundup

Among the many agricultural-themed attractions are an inaugural Equestrian Roundup, featuring premier equine events like an open horse show; a World Champion Blacksmith competition; and the elegant Greenlee Draft Horse Hitch—a six-horse hitch demonstration that takes place daily at 3 p.m.

The roundup also will feature exhibits exploring equine industry careers and industry-related organizations like trail riding and therapeutic riding facilities, show circuits, equine leather workers, horseshoeing, farriery and more.

Farm animals

Other animal-related attractions include milking demonstrations in the SouthLand Dairy Farmers Mobile Classroom; over 300 unique breeds of pigeons in the Pigeon and Dove Tent; and hatching chicks and other farm animals at the Young MacDonald's Farm exhibit.

Fairgoers also can witness a live Milkshakes of Champions contest in the SouthLand Diary Pavilion on Sept. 27 at 4 p.m., where competitors will vie for top honors as they craft and blend delicious dairy creations.

Plants and more

In the fair's Horticulture Pavilion, visitors can view an array of awe-inspiring giant pumpkins, squash, watermelons, beans and more. Beyond the variety of field crops, plants and preserved foods, guests can see how cotton, peanuts, soybeans and tobacco are grown in the adjacent garden and crop plot. The pavilion also will feature exhibits about women in agriculture and uses for herbal and native plants.

The garden's back porch will host daily agricultural programming featuring information on goat milk production, maple syrup, soap making, and discussions with Cooperative Extension agents and Master Gardeners.

On Sept. 25 and 26, agricultural drones will be on display outside of the Horticulture Pavilion, demonstrating how cutting-edge drone technology is used in farming.

After touring the horticulture area, fairgoers can stop by the Meadow Pavilion to discover more about the state's commodities. Virginia Farm Bureau's hands-on interactive educational displays will educate fairgoers how agriculture and farmers impact our daily lives, and how food moves from the farm to the table.

Heritage Village

Just outside of Meadow Pavilion, the fair's Heritage Village showcases historical tractors, traditional farming technology, trades and live demonstrations of bygone farming practices.

Ag competitions

Agricultural competitions and scholarship opportunities are a long-held fair tradition, and visitors are welcome to watch the many livestock competitions. The Livestock Loop, located beside the ticket plaza will host daily events where adults and 4-H and FFA youth showcase their cattle, goats, sheep and swine. Last year, youth and adult exhibitors showed nearly 3,000 animals during the fair's 10-day run.

This year's "Supreme Overall Showman" contest category in the Youth Livestock Program will feature scholarship opportunities for students showcasing beef cattle, meat goats, sheep and swine.

The culmination of the livestock competitions is the Sale of Champions on Oct. 3 at 7 p.m. where fairgoers can "bid" on competitors' animals. Proceeds from the sale will benefit the State Fair of Virginia Youth and Scholarship Programs.

Natural resources and other education

Additionally, the fair's Natural Resources Area inside the Farm Bureau Center includes interactive displays, Virginia wildlife species and engaging activities for all ages offered by the fair's natural resources partners.

Virginia State University's state-of-the-art mobile educational laboratory also returns with exhibits that showcase Virginia's agriculture and forestry. And at the VSU and Virginia Seafood AREC tent, visitors can learn about the invasive Chesapeake Bay blue catfish wreaking havoc on the state's waterways, see live fish, and sample delicious blue catfish nuggets.

For a full list of activities, events, tickets and more information, visit StateFairVa.org. Additional live updates can be found by following the fair on Facebook at Facebook.com/StateFairVa and Instagram @statefairva.

The State Fair is held each fall at The Meadow Event Park in Caroline County and attracts over 200,000 fairgoers. The event celebrates the best of Virginia's past, present and future through scholarship initiatives, creative programming and a focus on the commonwealth's agriculture and natural resources industries.

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THANK YOU FOR READING

Quartet brings jazz and more to Piedmont Arts on Oct. 15

The Robert Jospé Quartet will bring an exciting mix of instrumental jazz, rock, pop, and Latin styles to the Piedmont Arts galleries on Thursday, Oct. 15. A reception will be held at 6:30 p.m., and the concert will begin at 7 p.m.

Featuring Jospé on drums, the quartet includes Daniel Clarke on piano, Paul Langosh on bass, and Brian Mesko on guitar. Their repertoire includes original works, standards from the Great American Songbook, pop, and classic covers by Herbie Hancock, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Leonard Bernstein, and James Taylor, as well as works by other well-known composers.

Jospé studied music at New York University. After graduation, he became an active player in the New York jazz and rock scene, co-leading the fusion band Cosmology. He studied with Tony Williams and Bob Moses and has performed and recorded with artists such as Tim Reynolds and TR3, John McCutcheon, Robin and Linda Williams, and Bobby McFerrin.

He has been a faculty member at the University of Virginia since 1989, teaching jazz drumming and rhythmic fluency courses for hand drums. He is a member of the university's faculty jazz ensemble, The Free Bridge Quintet. He formed the Robert Jospé Quartet in 2022. In 2026, the group released "The Night Sky," an album featuring nine original compositions and two classic covers. It is Jospé's ninth album as a bandleader.

Tickets are $20 for general admission and can be purchased at Piedmont Arts or PiedmontArts.org. Complimentary refreshments will be provided, and additional beverages will be available for purchase.

This project is supported, in part, by the Virginia Commission for the Arts, which receives support from the Virginia General Assembly.

For more information on exhibits and events, visit PiedmontArts.org.



Robert Jospé (pictured) and the Robert Jospé Quartet will bring an exciting mix of instrumental jazz, rock, pop, and Latin styles to the Piedmont Arts galleries on Thursday, Oct. 15.

Farmers increase reach by offering space to RVers



Some farmers are expanding their income by offering RVers the chance to camp on-site and experience a little farm life.

Through Harvest Hosts, an online platform that connects RVers with unique overnight stays, agricultural operations are welcoming travelers, increasing exposure and creating new opportunities to connect visitors with rural communities. According to Harvest Hosts, members have generated over $200 million in revenue for local communities.

Tucked off of state Route 1, James River Cellars and Winery is offering more than wine tastings. Founded in 2001, the family-owned winery began as a hobby before growing into a business venture. In 2020, the winery joined Harvest Hosts and began welcoming RVers.

"Growing up, my family used to take RV trips, and I loved it," said Mitzi Batterson, James River Cellars owner. "So, when this opportunity came across my desk, I thought it sounded great."

Batterson explained that before platforms like Harvest Hosts, many RV travelers would often park overnight in parking lots or rest stops. Now, travelers have a more comfortable, experience-driven alternative.

"Harvest Hosts has been nice for us because it helps increase traffic on the weekdays," Batterson said.

RV parking is available in the winery's large grass field at the front of the property, and can be booked online. Guests can enjoy wine tastings, guided tours, a gift shop and live music on Friday nights. Many also explore nearby restaurants, shopping and attractions.

"We made our own tabletop QR code that visitors can scan to see a list of restaurants, RV places and facilities in the area," Batterson explained.

"It's been a fantastic program."

In Fauquier County, Whiffletree Farm offers road-weary RVers a different kind of overnight stop. Travelers can settle beneath a shady oak tree and trade traffic noise for the quieter pace of a working farm.

"People are going from Florida to Maine, and they'll need a place to stay," said Jesse Straight, who owns the farm with his wife, Elizabeth.

The Straights have raised their family on the property and built a regenerative operation spanning 82 acres, plus 800 rented acres for beef cattle. The farm's location off one of the East Coast's busiest traffic corridors made Harvest Hosts a natural fit.

"And I thought it'd drive a little traffic and a little exposure," he said.

RVers quickly discover it's more than a place to park. Visitors can tour the property, which includes an old racetrack where prized thoroughbreds once trained. Rolling hills, picnic areas and a pond offer tranquil moments along the way.

"And it's satisfying to see people having a good time, enjoying the beauty of our farm, and hearing about their travels," Straight said.

Staying at a working farm where guests can collect eggs, visit sheep, goats, hogs and dairy cows and shop for pasture-raised meats, eggs and local honey creates consumer connections and learning opportunities.

"I think our culture is very segregated from agriculture and lots of people never see food being raised or understand how it works," Jesse said. "It's a good thing to have that exposure."

Read more in Virginia Farm Bureau's Summer Cultivate magazine.

Draper honored with congressional resolution



U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, visited the Speedway Service Center in Martinsville on Sept. 8 to present a congressional resolution to honor former Martinsville Sheriff Steve Draper, who recently died. He also affixed a sticker in his honor to the Martinsville Missile.

During his visit, Griffith met with members of the Martinsville Sheriff's Office and offered his condolences on Draper's passing.

The Martinsville Missile cars are displayed at the Speedway Service Center in Martinsville.



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