



# THE ENTERPRISE

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**VOICE OF THE PEOPLE SINCE 1876 | Dedicated to serving the communities of Patrick County**

## Candidates outlined goals at a recent forum



Interim Patrick County Circuit Court Clerk Morgan Boothe, and challengers Nancy Belcher (center) and Erica Cipko Wade, wait for their turn to address several people attending the Patrick County Young Professionals (PCYP) Candidate Forum last week.

**By Taylor Boyd**  
More than a dozen candidates outlined their platforms and goals if elected at the Patrick County Young Professionals (PCYP) candidate forum held October 10 at the Star Theatre.

The three candidates vying for the Clerk of Court post-interim clerk Morgan Boothe and challengers Nancy Belcher and Erica Cipko Wade – each were among those addressing voters.

Interim Clerk of Court Morgan Boothe said she was hired in the clerk's office in 2017 and has worked in every department within the office over her six-year tenure.

Since being appointed interim

clerk by Patrick County Circuit Court Judge Marcus Brinks, Boothe said the office has come a long way since November, in part because of the staff.

"I couldn't have made all of these changes and cleaned up and caught up all that we did without them. I'm truly grateful for their support throughout this year, and I think that speaks volumes that they are in my corner," she said.

Boothe said she thinks she's the most qualified candidate for the position because of her experiences working in the office for six years as a Deputy Clerk plus one year serving as interim Clerk of Court.

"I am the most qualified to contin-



ue what I'm already doing. I have actual clerk experience, and I think that sets me apart from the others," she said. "I have upgraded our office quite a bit in just one year, and I have many plans for the years to come that would benefit the citizens of Patrick County if elected."

The frustration experienced by Belcher and her colleagues prompted her decision to seek the post, Belcher said.

"I wanted to be able to fill that void. The clerks are doing a good job for what they know," Belcher said. "However, they don't know what they don't know, and having worked in this field for 25 years, I have seen, and I have experienced,

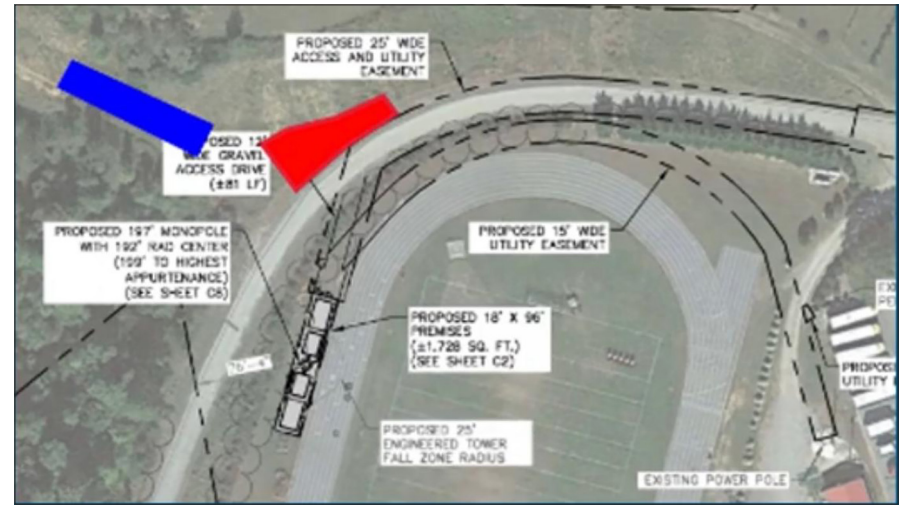
the good, the bad, and the ugly."

Regarding Brinks' appointment of Boothe as interim clerk, Belcher cited section 24.2—228.1 of the Virginia Code, and then explained that "in layman's terms, because most of us don't have law degrees, that simply means that Judge Brinks was mandated by law to choose Ms. Boothe."

Belcher added this was but one example of how her 25 years of experience can come into play.

While she knows the law and has worked with some of the best attorneys, Belcher said she lacks in-office experience, but she believes that is not always a bad thing.

(See Candidate Forum p. 3)



Schools Superintendent Jason Wood said the emissions from the tower are similar to those from Bluetooth headphones.

## Board approves cell tower relocation

**By Taylor Boyd**  
The Patrick County School Board approved an option for a cell phone tower relocation at its October 10 meeting.

Schools Superintendent Jason

Wood said the two options were to increase the distance of the towers from the schools. "They range from 550 feet from the school to 600 feet. There's a little change in elevation."

(See Cell Tower p. 3)

## Let's do the Mash, the Monster Mash



Voting is now live for the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce's Monsters on Main Street, as creatures and ghoulies make appearances in and around Stuart thanks to local organizations, businesses, and individuals. Can you find the 15 newbie monsters lurking around town? Keep your eyes peeled and vote for your favorite now through the end of October. The voting form can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/MonstersonMain2023voting>. Hint: The creature pictured is hanging out at the Patrick County Branch of the Blue Ridge Library. (Photo by Pat Delaney)

## Easing the burden on taxpayers is Kendrick's goal

**By Taylor Boyd**  
In his bid for a second term, Clayton Kendrick said his top priorities are keeping taxes low and easing the burden on local taxpayers.

The way to do that is to "look for more outside money. Grants and other funds, so we can keep the burden on the local taxpayers down," said Kendrick, the incumbent in the race for the Mayo River District seat on the Patrick County Board of Supervisors against challenger Danny Foley.

Seeking outside funding would help the county keep the taxes as low as possible, said Kendrick, 69.

To help address funding challenges, Kendrick said the board must search for grants because the county's Contingency Fund is limited.

"I think West Piedmont (Planning District Commission) already has got about six (grants) that they're working on for Patrick County, and hopefully this new grant writer can come up with some stuff, too," Kendrick said.

Another challenge is the need for more businesses and jobs, and Kendrick said supporting the Econom-



Clayton Kendrick

ic Development Authority (EDA) to find and attract new businesses and opportunities to locate in the county is important.

"I think the EDA Director's going to do a good job. He seems to be really looking for" alternative funding opportunities and businesses to grow the tax base, Kendrick said.

A believer in public participation in local politics, Kendrick said he feels the supervisors need to know what residents want and need. "I

(See Kendrick p. 11)

## Foley hopes to move the county forward

**By Taylor Boyd**  
In his bid for the Mayo River District seat on the Patrick County Board of Supervisors, Danny Foley said he wants to move the county forward.

Foley, 66, is facing incumbent Clayton Kendrick in the November election.

He said he decided to run because he thought the county could be and do so much more than what it's doing.

"We're sort of in that holding mode, holding pattern, and we just weren't really moving forward," he said.

When he was getting signatures to officially appear on the ballot, Foley said he was told that there's nothing here for children or young people.

"The reason there's nothing here for the kids, we just never really did any infrastructure to bring in more business. I mean the internet in a lot of places in Patrick County is really bad," he said.

Foley said there's also people in Patrick County that need water because they have iron in their



Danny Foley

water. "Egg Farm Road, I had an aunt, she dug three wells and none of them come up good," he said.

Foley believes the biggest challenge facing Patrick County is the need for more and better infrastructure.

"We need to be looking at getting more grants, and that'd be the way to move the county ahead for future business. Without infrastructure nothing's really com-

(See Foley p. 11)



## Tourism Talks

Hi Patrick, It's that time of year again when we must bring out our sweaters, coats, and sweatshirts as the crisp, cool air and beautiful autumn colors are in full swing. We've been swamped this month, with the Autumn Leaves Festival in Mt. Airy taking place last weekend. Over 1,000 people visited our booth, and it was a fantastic experience.

This weekend, the Apple Dumping Festival will be held in downtown Stuart; pancakes will be served on Sunday in Meadows of Dan; a Barbeque Dinner and car show in Ararat; and music at the Rotary Building given by the PCMA. You can find information about these events and more on our website.

In other news, we've significantly increased tourism this year. In 2022, we saw an increase of 3.5%

in total spending for tourism in the county. Tourists spent \$5.1 million on lodging, \$3.2 million on food and beverage, \$8.3 million on retail, \$2.2 million on recreation, and \$4.2 million on transportation. This is a total spending of \$23 million, an increase of \$800,000 from the previous year. We're thrilled with this growth and are looking forward to more in the future.

As you sip on your pumpkin spice, we encourage you to come and support our local events. They're attractions for tourists and opportunities for families to come together. We have much to offer in Patrick, so come and get lost and find yourself here!

I'll be in touch soon.  
Best regards, James Houchins,  
Director of Tourism (jhouchins@co.patrick.va.us)

## Congressional staff to visit

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith's staff will visit Patrick County and the City of Martinsville on Oct. 25.

Staff will be in Martinsville from 10 – 11:30 a.m., in City Hall, Council Chambers, Second Floor, 55 W. Church Street, Martinsville.

Staff will be in Patrick County from 12:30 – 2 p.m., in the Patrick County Administration Building, Conference Room, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart.

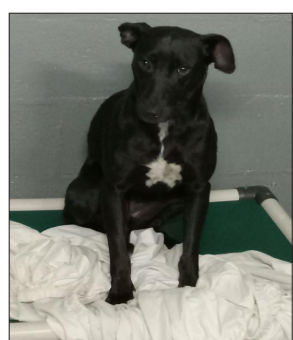
Call the Christiansburg Office at (540) 381-5671 or the Abingdon Office at (276) 525-1405 with any questions.

## Tennis courts under construction



New tennis courts are being built at Patrick County High School. Once completed, the new courts will allow the school to host matches again. (By Pat Delaney)

## Pets of the Week



This sad girl looks to be a Lab mix and was found on Hughes Brown Road.

This adorable young man with one eye patch is anxious for his new home.

If you recognize these dogs, please call the shelter. If your dog is missing, call the shelter right away. Time is limited, and the shelter is past its capacity, so please consider saving a life. Call the Patrick County Public Animal Shelter (PCPAS) at (276) 694-6259, or view available pets on the shelter's Facebook page. Adoption fees are \$10 and include spay/neuter and a rabies vaccination.

The Patrick County Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) offers a spay/neuter program for dogs. Call (276) 694-2378 and leave a message. Someone will call you back.

## Initial claims for unemployment insurance fall

The number of initial claims for unemployment insurance decreased in the latest filing week to 1,378 and remained at typical pre-Pandemic volumes experienced in 2019, according to data from the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA).

For the filing week ending October 7, the figure for seasonally unadjusted initial claims in Virginia was 1,378, which was a decrease of 370 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 12,360, which was 235 claims lower than the previous week but an increase of 100% from the 6,172 continued claims from the comparable week last year.

An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of claimants. Of those, over half (54 percent) of continued claims were from professional, scientific, and technical services

(1,851), administrative and support and waste management (1,689), manufacturing (1,598), and health care and social assistance (1,111). Eligibility for benefits is determined on a weekly basis, and so not all weekly claims filed result in a benefit payment. This is because the initial claims numbers represent claim applications; claims are then reviewed for eligibility and legitimacy.

[1] Note: Advance claims are not directly comparable to claims reported in prior weeks. Advance claims are reported by the state liable for paying the unemployment compensation, whereas previous weeks reported claims reflect claimants by state of residence. In addition, claims reported as "workshare equivalent" in the previous week are added to the advance claims as a proxy for the current week's "workshare equivalent" activity.

## PATRICK COUNTY VOTERS, DO YOUR HOMEWORK & BE INFORMED!

**Erica Cipko Wade's** strong ties to our community are exemplified by her active involvement in various volunteer roles, such as serving as a volunteer firefighter/EMT and as a member of the Town Council. Her active engagement with the community equips her with the insight to understand and address the needs and concerns of our fellow citizens.

Furthermore, **Erica C. Wade** currently shares the same perspective as our citizens and attorneys, recognizing the critical importance of efficient processes and the proper handling of cases, finances, and filings, the good and the bad. This shared understanding makes her the most qualified candidate for this position, she knows the changes necessary to improve all aspects of the current office. From teaching EMT courses to maintaining her integrity throughout her legal career, a vote for Erica, is a vote for Patrick County.

**In these pivotal times, when the role of the Clerk of Court is more significant than ever, it's vital to make a well-informed decision.**

Show your support for **Erica Cipko Wade**, a dedicated public servant committed to upholding the highest standards of excellence and integrity.

**NOVEMBER 7, 2023**

**Vote**

**ERICA CIPKO**

**WADE**  
CLERK OF COURT



Erica C. Wade and husband, Robbie Wade.

- Proven Community Leadership
  - EMT & Fire Fighter for 10+ years
  - Town Council Member
  - Patrick County Young Professional
  - Former Patrick County Chamber Director
- **12 plus years of Legal Experience in ALL legal realms**
  - **Civil, Criminal, Real Estate, Probate, and Bookkeeping**
- Worthy of our citizens' trust
- Dedicated to Patrick County
  - Born and Raised in Patrick County

"It is important for Patrick County and its citizens to have the right persons in positions of our County's government. When my legal experience began, I realized just how important the Clerk of Court was and is, and how an efficient and courteous Clerk's Office could benefit our community. Over the past few years, productivity and standards have fallen in our current Clerk's Office. If elected, I plan to establish a set of checks and balances that eliminate extended delays in Orders and filings, in addition to providing new and updated services for those utilizing the Clerk's Office." E. Wade

**NOVEMBER 7, 2023...**  
**your VOTE matters!**



# Candidate Forum

(cont. from page 1)

"We got bit last time because of in-office experience. Let's not let that happen again," she said of retired clerk Sherri Hazlewood, who had many legal concerns.

Some goals Belcher has for the clerk's office include improving customer service and imparting and sharing the knowledge she has gathered over the last 25 years with the clerks, so they can better understand the legal system as a whole.

"Because the mistakes that are happening, they continue to happen. It impedes the justice procedures," she said.

Wade said the journey of seeking the post has been eye-opening.

"I come before you not as a career politician, but as one who is a community-driven individual with an honest background. My life has been woven in this community and that's why I'm here, to pledge my service as the clerk of court for this office," she said.

Wade said her goal is to 'right the wrongs' of the current clerk's office.

"One of the reasons that Ms. Boothe was appointed is because she was the senior clerk in the office at that time," Wade said. "They could have chosen to go outside of our county like they did when they brought in some outside clerks, but they chose not to because this was the easy fix, I believe."

Wade said she sees continual issues in the clerk's office while working with two different attorneys' offices, and noted that she doesn't frequent the clerk's office as much as she used to "simply cause I'm not met with the nicest faces these days, and that's frustrating."

Wade's goal is to bring some variation to the clerk's office. One challenge she believes the office will face is working together to get everyone adequately trained.

"None of our clerks are currently certified Deputy Clerks or Master

Deputy Clerks," Wade said. "Some of the other surrounding areas do have those, that would be a goal of mine to make that happen."

Another goal is to bring everyone in the office up to an adequate level of accountability and transparency while still serving the public as the office should.

"The reason, and I hate to say negative things, but the reason in-office experience doesn't work is because it was proven not to work in our clerk's office," she said. "A few years ago, the Patrick County citizens elected Ms. Hazlewood, and we saw where that got us. It's not always what's necessary."

## State Senate

Incumbent Senator Bill Stanley, R-Moneta, said that since being elected in 2011, he's passed more than 140 bills, a majority "have been concerning our area, Southside and Southwest Virginia, and Patrick County in particular. I always carry our conservative values because in Richmond, what we're facing is Northern Virginia that forgets that we built Virginia down here."

Stanley said that the area tries to dictate what's best for the entire state, "so, we have to fight. We have to stand loud and proud and not give up for one inch, one moment, for one instant. Because otherwise, they will be turning every farm we have into a solar farm. They will be making you buy very electric and inefficient electric cars. They don't even come down here. They don't even know where we are."

Among the most important things in the region are preserving the traditions and values of Southside and Southwest Virginia, and educating children on how to think rather than what to think through indoctrination, Stanley said.

Noting that the average income in Virginia for a family of four is \$70,000, but drops to \$38,000 in this area, Stanley said modern-

izing schools and providing more skills and opportunities for students to grow and break the cycle of poverty, find good jobs, and stay in the area is necessary.

Additionally, "there's more we can do to make sure that we don't have food deserts in our area. There's more we can do to make sure that we're not an underserved, underprivileged medical healthcare area. There's more we can do to make sure we're creating job opportunities for our children, as I am trying to do through the New College Institute (NCI) in Martinsville, he said of the facility that serves Patrick County and other areas as well.

Stanley's challenger, Renie Gates said she is compassionate, committed, and courageous "because I'm here, and I'm fighting for us" because she knows affordable housing, affordable healthcare, mental health, and opioid support are all needed in the area.

"We need to have access to reliable internet so that we can also have phones to be able to contact our neighbors, and be able to gain knowledge, and be able to help our students in school," she said.

Reliable, accessible, and affordable transportation is also important, she said, noting that many people have told her they are having problems with transportation to medical appointments.

"Right now, you're an hour and a half away, if you go to Roanoke, and that's a lot of time you have to commit to be able to take your mom, your dad, and your kids to those locations," she said.

Gates said ensuring medication is affordable is another necessity to help people have a better quality of life and living.

"I do have a lot of hurdles that we will have to overcome, but I have kids, and I'm smart, and I'm capable. I know that I can do this if you guys have the same faith in me,"

she said.

## House of Delegates

Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, did not attend the forum, but his opponent, Patty Quesenberry, said many people are one paycheck away from being homeless and losing their homes.

"Trying to make sure that you have your bills paid, food on the table, trying to decide whether to fix your flat tire, or whether you need to get your medicine or pay your light bill. People still have that continual struggle," she said.

In her positions as a housing counselor, in foster care, in-home counseling, and medical support, "I've actually asked people every time I go what do you think are the key issues. I hear housing, of which I'm very familiar with, we don't have enough housing benefits, we don't have enough subsidized housing," she said. "People pay" outrageous prices "if they have bad credit, and they need to have safe housing just like everyone else."

Quesenberry said she also feels like women need to be able to have the right to reproductive freedom and the government should not have control over their bodies. She added broadband is another important issue that needs to be addressed.

"If you don't have functioning internet, then you're not going to have the ability to get employment, have your children educated well, and people that are working from home," she said.

Other candidates who participated in the event included incumbent Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith, Treasurer Sandra Stone, Amy Walker, Ryan Lawson, Shannon Harrell, Clayton Kendrick, Danny Foley, Clyde DeLoach, Steve Marshall, Richard Kreh, Glenna Morse, Tabitha Overby, and a representative for Dayna Bobbitt.

To view the full forum, visit Facebook.com/TownofStuart.

# Cell Tower

(cont. from page 1)

Relocation areas are near where seniors potentially would take lineman classes next year as part of the Patrick County High School (PCHS) Career & Technical Education (CTE) program.

Wood said he has already spoken to the Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC), and the poles would be moved over Christmas break.

Wood also asked for more feedback as the school system had some parents concerned about the radio frequency exposure levels.

"The tower emissions are very similar to the levels you would have from a Bluetooth headphone device, which is much lower than a handheld walkie-talkie or a cell phone," he said. "So,

they kind of equated it to if you're on the football field for practice, there's no more danger than if your child is wearing Bluetooth headphones, and that's kind of what students are using now."

In Fairfax County, Wood said there are 26 towers located within 600 feet of schools, and the school division has had no issues thus far.

In other matters, the board:

\*Approved the personnel report as amended.

\*Heard the superintendent's report.

\*Approved the consent agenda.

\*Adopted a proclamation naming October 2023 as Bullying Prevention Month.



The Patrick County School Board approved relocating the cell towers to the location in red at its October 10 meeting.

\*Were recognized by the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) for their participation in VSBA professional activities.

# Lowes Foods sells Stuart store during expansion

Lowes Foods, a Carolinas based grocer, is opening a fifth store in the Charleston market in Summerville, South Carolina, and has acquired Foothills IGA Market in Marble Hill, Georgia.

Along with its expansion, the company will close two stores - Stuart, Va. and Yadkinville,

N.C. The Yadkinville store will close at the end of this month.

Food Country purchased the location in Stuart at the end of September. That company's temporary signage has been installed at the Stuart location.



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Mark Pendleton Jason Pendleton

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Dear Patrick County,**

As a concerned citizen of Patrick County, Virginia, I have been closely following the recent developments in the Patrick County election, and I must say, a Clerk's race has turned out to be surprisingly captivating. Throughout my life, I have spent the majority of my career either in an office setting or under the supervision of a manager who oversaw our day-to-day activities. In these professional environments, I have witnessed firsthand the consequences when an individual fails to carry their weight with their tasks. Moreover, I have seen the havoc that can ensue when an entire team neglects their responsibilities, resulting in a backlog of work and incomplete tasks. Regrettably, this situation seems to mirror what's happening in the Clerk's Office. In my observation, Morgan Boothe, the interim Clerk, has taken pride in her achievements over the past few months. She claims to have accomplished these tasks such as processing 300 sentencing orders, completing over six months' worth of estate filings, and tackling tasks that were previously backlogged, thereby alleviating strain on the office's operations. While I understand that certain tasks may have required a Clerk's au-

thorization, it raises questions as to why so many things fell behind in the Clerk's Office until election time. Shouldn't every member of the office have diligently carried out their responsibilities to ensure the smooth functioning of the office over the past few years? A proficient Clerk's Office that values integrity should operate with strong moral principles and consistently do what is right, regardless of external scrutiny or the proximity of an election. Pointing fingers solely at the former Clerk and deflecting responsibility while claiming the unwavering support of the deputy clerks for Morgan Boothe does not demonstrate integrity. It suggests a desire to maintain the status quo, which does little to inspire confidence in our system. In light of these concerns, I urge you to cast your vote for an outsider, Erica Cipko Wade, who possesses the courage to disrupt the existing patterns and pave the way for success. It's time to elect a candidate who is unafraid to make the necessary changes to ensure a more efficient and accountable Clerk's Office. Let us vote for a candidate who will create the ripples of progress our community deserves. Thank you.

Shelia Ashley,  
Patrick Springs

**Patrick County Voter,**

My name is Robert E. Dillon. I am motivated to write this letter by my love of Patrick County and my desire to see its citizens receive the best service possible from its elected officials.

I have known Morgan Boothe for several years through my work and have come to appreciate and respect her immensely.

I feel that she was the perfect choice to be selected as interim clerk of the Patrick County Circuit Court when she was appointed, and she has not disappointed. Since taking the reins last year, one of the first programs that she implemented was the cross training of employees to learn more than one position. (The Clerks office is a multifaceted operation involving numerous different parts and jobs.) This is an added benefit for the employee and is also very useful if one of the staff is ill or becomes injured in some way and is unable to work.

Ms. Boothe also makes it a point

**Campaign kindness**

Readers - PLEASE don't believe everything you hear. I think it's so sad that people can justify belittling and insulting another person for their own personal financial gain, especially those same people use the fact they are devout Christians as part of their platform.

Regardless of who you may vote for, I want you to know that Morgan Boothe is one of the nicest people I know. It hurts me to see the way people are treating her just because they want her job. Why can't people just admit that although Morgan is doing a great job, they want her job because it's a great paying job. That's what this is really about - MONEY.

I have spent countless hours in the Circuit Court's deed room over the past 23 years. I witnessed years of tension between previous Clerks and employees and saw many of them leave because of it. It became the norm for the employees to walk out and go home at 4:50 p.m., regardless of whether or not there were people there. It was not a pleasant place to be and only got worse as the employees were being

to ensure that the citizens of Patrick County who are called for jury duty are as comfortable as possible. This includes her providing drinks and snacks for the jurors. Ms. Boothe is the only Clerk of Court whom I have seen do this for jurors.

Lastly, I would like to point out that Morgan Boothe is the ONLY candidate seeking the position of Clerk of Circuit Court who has actually worked in the clerk's office.

Think of it this way, if I have been working construction as a roofer/framer for 25 to 30 years, do you really want to trust me to install your plumbing or electrical wiring in your new home? I may have many years of experience, but is it the right experience?

Please vote for Morgan Boothe for Clerk of Patrick County Circuit Court on November 7, 2023.

Thank you,  
Robert E. Dillon,  
Bassett

blamed for circumstances they had no control over.

When Morgan was appointed interim Clerk, I witnessed for the first time ever the employees banding together as a team to get the Clerk's Office back in order. They all spent many nights and weekends working to get criminal orders caught up. They have made it their priority to improve the reputation of the Clerk's Office and its employees. They are always there at 5:00 p.m. and most of the time they're still there at 5:30 p.m. or after. They respect each other and work well as a team, which is so nice to see.

I understand wanting the job of Clerk, as it's a great paying job, but when you've just spent months insulting the interim Clerk and all of the employees, do you really expect them to teach you their job if you're elected? Are you going to be able to record my deed on your first day on the job if you have no employees left? It takes a team to run that office. Please BE KIND!

Carmen Puckett,  
Stuart

**Dear Editor**

Election time is very important and can be confusing. Although all of the candidates for Clerk of Court present outstanding credentials, I base my vote on personal experience and experiences my family and friends have had.

I support Erica Cipko Wade for the office of Clerk of Court. As long as I have known Erica, she has shown true love and support for our county and the people in it. Her sense of duty and integrity have shown through in her many years as a firefighter and frequent volunteer at community events.

She has served and is still serving on the Stuart Town Council and in this position has helped steer the town to continue in a positive stable position.

She always has a positive outlook and encourages everyone she encounters. She is generous in her time and support for anyone needing assistance. When she asks someone how they are or what

needs they have she really listens to the answer and will do whatever she can to help. She strives to make everyone feel included and heard. I am sure this will continue if elected Clerk of Court.

Erica has a deep understanding of the legal system and has the analytical skills necessary to ensure that the Clerk of Court's office operates efficiently and effectively. Her problem-solving abilities and attention to detail will serve our community well.

As a lifelong resident of Patrick County and a registered voter eligible to vote in the local election I encourage all voters to consider Erica C Wade as the best choice for Clerk of Court in the upcoming election. Her dedication, ethics, intelligence, and abilities make her the ideal candidate to serve our community in this vital role.

Rita S. Wray,  
Spencer

**Boothe/Belcher**

Morgan Boothe was appointed by Judge Brinks, according to a news article in The Enterprise published on November 16, 2022, to fulfil the duties of Clerk of Court in the absence of the former clerk. Morgan took this position and saved our county some money, by agreeing to do this job on her meager salary. It would have been very easy for the county to pay a clerk to come in from another county, but Morgan stepped up to the plate and took the challenge. And she has done very well. I have known Morgan all of her life. Her brother was in school with my son from Kindergarten through Senior year at PCHS. They played sports together and this meant that Morgan was around "the boys" most of her life. She also graduated from PCHS and started at the Clerk's office 7 or 8 years ago. Her family is here, and her roots are here. Last year, she decided that the Clerk's office would do a food drive for the Food Bank. This was at Thanksgiving, and they provided us with what they had supplied. She made the Clerk's office a drop off point for the Food Bank and she has come to help on distribution day. I do feel, if Morgan is elected, she has what it takes to allow longevity in the Clerk's Office. She is young and she has the knowledge to go far. She has run a clean campaign and has not done any "mudslinging" during the campaign.

Nancy Belcher and I went to

school together and we were both in the Pride of Patrick County Marching Cougar band. She graduated from PCHS and her family is from the county as well. Nancy has worked in several law offices and most recently is working in the Commonwealth's Attorney's office. When I first came on as Director at the Food Bank, Nancy was instrumental in helping us at a time when we really needed it. Through her church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, we were provided a tractor trailer load of food and for that we are extremely grateful.

Glennnda Morse is running for Commissioner of the Revenue. Glennnda most recently came and helped with distribution and back packs at the Food Bank. Glennnda has been with the Treasurer's Office for years and I think she would be a good Commissioner if elected.

As Poll Chief I urge you to make an informed decision before you vote. I do think it is important for public officials to be a part of their community and I am sure these ladies have volunteered at many places other than the Food Bank. We appreciate the support from all of them and I wish them well in the election. If you have a question, ask them, and they will be glad to answer.

Rhonda Pruitt,  
Director, PC Food Bank

**Citizens of Patrick County,**

I would like to address a few things regarding the Clerk of Court election this upcoming November 7th. It seems the current employees in the Clerk's office are being painted with the same brush as the previous Clerk. Most of the county I am sure are aware of the struggles the Clerk's office has faced in the past year. As a current Deputy Clerk in this office, I can tell you that everyone has worked overtime, unpaid, to try and bring the office back up to where we know it should be. Erica keeps talking about "integrity", where was her integrity during Ms. Hazelwood's term? She was aware of shortcomings and failings to have orders completed in time. Could it be that there is nothing that could have been done as Ms. Hazlewood was a constitutional officer? She keeps eluding that the current staff and Ms. Boothe should have done something about the situation that was at hand with Ms. Hazlewood. Just to clear the air, I contacted the Circuit Court team asking for help with the situation and was met with silence. So, someone please explain how the people in the office were to do anything.

Erica also keeps referring to audits and how the current Interim Clerk was the bookkeeper under these audits. She may have been the bookkeeper, but that does not mean she was responsible for all the fines and costs findings. Once again, something she fails to understand, as she has no experience in this office or any Clerks office. Let's

take a moment and talk about the experience she does have. Her experience comes from working for her stepfather. Granted later she has worked for Mr. Williams, although working for two attorneys seems to be a conflict of interest, I would think.

Nancy Belcher has many years under her belt with the Commonwealth's office, and in her words "trained by the best attorneys". Has she been trained by these attorneys on how the Clerk's office is to operate and under what codes? I will grant her the courtesy to say she knows a lot about criminal from the side of the Commonwealth, however, much different procedures from the side of the Clerk's office. What does she know of Civil filings, Land records, Estate and Probate matters? She could learn them yes, but this county deserves stability and not eight years of someone trying to learn a job that a qualified candidate is already doing.

Morgan Boothe would never say this herself, so I will say it for her, she worked eight months as Interim Clerk with not a penny of extra pay. Ask yourself if the other two candidates would be willing to do this? Long days, weekends, and holidays. It is a clear choice, choose the candidate that has made the sacrifices to clean up a mess she did not make. Morgan Boothe is Interim Clerk now and should be Clerk for the next eight years.

Lisa P. Mickles,  
Deputy Clerk

(See Letters to the Editor p. 7)

**Letters to the Editor/Viewpoints Policy**

The Enterprise welcomes letters to the editor and/or reader viewpoints of 500 words or less. Submissions may be edited for clarity, length, legal ramifications or general taste at the editor's discretion. We reserve the right to refuse to publish submitted letters for the same reasons. All letters must be signed by an individual and include community. Verifiable sources for information cited must be forwarded to the editor. Letters that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered for publication.

Disclaimer: Viewpoints and opinions expressed in letters selected for publication are the opinions of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Enterprise.

## Patrick Pioneers

*Patrick County Canning Company*

**By Beverly Belcher Woody**

From the pages of the Bassett and Henry County Journal on 23rd of April 1953, "Deputy Sheriff J. B. Hanby said today that the Patrick County Canning Company, in the downtown section of Stuart, was broken into sometime during the weekend and seven or eight hundred pounds of sugar was stolen. The robbery was not discovered until late Monday afternoon. The sugar, in one-hundred-pound bags, was valued at \$72.00, Hanby said he was told by George Cristall, manager and president of the company. The officer said that entry was made through a rear window and the sugar was apparently taken out through a double door. The window and the door were closed by the thieves." I can't possibly imagine what anyone would do with that much sugar! (wink)

George Cristall was born on the second of May 1896 in Mitrovoon, Greece. In May of 1911, he boarded the Argentina, a ship on the Austria-America ship line and departed for New York, New York. Cristall arrived on Ellis Island the second day of June 1911. In April of 1923, Cristall became a naturalized citizen of the United States of America.

Two years later, in Greensboro, North Carolina, Cristall married Miss Elsie Panagrodon, who was also a Greek immigrant from the

North Aegean Sea area. Tragically, Elsie and their newborn baby died the following year in 1926. Cristall married again that year to another young lady from Greece, Miss Violet Rekata. The couple had two sons, James born in 1927 and Jack born in 1929.

According to the Martinsville business directory, Cristall worked as a merchant in Martinsville until 1941, when he established the Stuart Cannery (registered as Patrick County Canning Company) in the old railroad depot. Cristall continued operations in the old building until he constructed a new building on the same site in 1945. The enterprise, which canned apples, tomatoes, blackberries, and other local produce, employed roughly fifty workers, including my Dad who worked there briefly when he returned from serving overseas in the U.S. Army.

Suzanne Hutchens told me that her husband, Larry, his siblings, and mother used to pick blackberries to sell to the Stuart Cannery. His Dad would also collect berries picked by the neighbors and deliver them to the cannery. Mr. Hutchens was able to get a few extra gas ration stamps in order to make the "berry runs."

The Stuart Cannery provided one of the first opportunities for women to work outside the home too. Mike and Opal Williams said that Virginia Williams used to work at the cannery. In an interview by Tootsie

Cassell, Lizzie Pack worked at the Stuart Cannery for fourteen years while putting both of her daughters through school.

In an interview by Jackie Love, Rosie Goin's Pack worked at the Stuart Cannery too. Pack stated, "I've never seen as many canned apples in my whole life. I worked for old man George Cristall and his two boys, Jimmy and Bully. I don't know his real name. They called him Bully. I peeled the apples and got them ready for canning; then they'd bake them and can them. They were really good. They shipped them all over.

Tootsie Cassell also interviewed Ada Smart who reported that when she worked at the Stuart Cannery, she earned .40 cents an hour. Folks traveled up and down the mountain to work at the cannery too, including Muriel Shelor Wood and Gaye Belcher Edwards.

The Stuart Cannery closed in 1960 and the building was later used by Brent Watkins for his business, Stuart Glass. George



George Cristall Apples. (Courtesy of Patrick County History Museum)

Cristall passed away in 1968 at the age of 74. Thank you to Mike and Opal Williams and Suzanne Hutchens for information for this article.

Woody may be reached at rockcastlecreek1@gmail.com or (276) 692-9626.

## Social Security Matters

**By Russell Gloor, National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation, the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens**

**Ask Rusty - How Will My Wife's Social Security Be Affected by her Teacher's Pension?**

**Dear Rusty:** My wife, born in 1960, was a Texas school teacher for about 10 years and receives a \$1,000 per month pension from that work. She didn't pay into Social Security while teaching, but she paid into it for about 23 years while working elsewhere. I paid into Social Security my entire life, the maximum in most years, so my SS benefit will be much greater than hers.

I understand there are some sort of penalties or restrictions on my wife's Social Security benefits and also for spousal benefits due to her school pension. Please share the process I can use to estimate my wife's Social Security and tell me if she can file for spousal benefits. Signed: Planning for the Future

**Dear Planning:** Because your wife has a Texas school teacher pension earned without contributing to

Social Security, any SS benefits she is entitled to will be affected by two rules - first, by the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) which will reduce her personally earned Social Security retirement benefit and, second, by the Government Pension Offset (GPO) which will reduce any spousal boost (if she is entitled to one) to her own benefit.

The amount of the WEP reduction to your wife's personal SS retirement benefit will be computed using a special formula which considers the number of years she has contributed to Social Security through other (non-state) work. Since your wife became eligible for Social Security benefits in 2022 the maximum WEP reduction with 23 years contributing to SS will be \$358. If your wife has already obtained an estimate of her Social Security retirement benefit, deduct \$358 from that estimate and that will be pretty close to her actual SS retirement benefit when she claims. Social Security will figure out the exact amount of her WEP reduction when your wife applies, but you can also use Social Security's "WEP Calculator" for an

estimate, which you can find at this link: [www.ssa.gov/benefits/calculators/](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/calculators/).

Whether your wife will be entitled to a "spousal boost" to her own Social Security retirement benefit depends on how your respective FRA entitlements compare, and the GPO. The base amount of your wife's spousal boost will be the difference between her pre-WEP FRA entitlement and 50% of your FRA entitlement. If your wife's normal FRA entitlement is less than 50% of your FRA entitlement, the difference is a "spousal boost" added to your wife's personal SS retirement benefit. However, that base spousal boost will be reduced if taken before your wife reaches her FRA, and even further reduced by the GPO (the GPO reduction will be 2/3rds your wife's State of Texas pension, e.g., about \$667). Any remainder left after these reductions to your wife's spousal boost will be added to her own WEP-reduced SS retirement amount, but if the remainder is \$0 then no spousal boost will be given, and your wife will get only her WEP-reduced Social Security

retirement amount.

FYI, Social Security's WEP and GPO provisions apply to anyone who has a pension earned without contributing to Social Security, including many public service retirees in the 26 states which do not participate in the federal Social Security program. I've published numerous articles about how these rules affect benefits, and also about the rationale behind both provisions, which you are welcome to review at this AMAC Foundation website: [www.SocialSecurityReport.org](http://www.SocialSecurityReport.org).

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory)) or email us at [ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org).

## Is A Plant-Based Diet Good For Your Skin?

Did you know that your skin is the largest organ of the body? Not only that, it makes up 16% of our body's weight. Why, then, do we disregard the necessities and care our skin needs daily?

It's been shown that eating plant-based foods reduces the chances of skin inflammation. At the same time, it increases alkalinity in the body, specifically by foods high in omega-3 fatty acids or unsaturated fatty acid. Fatty acids aid in providing energy for the muscles, heart, and other organs, making them the building blocks for cell membranes, and are used as energy storage for the body.

Inflammation is a mechanism of the body that indicates there is something in your body that it cannot accept. Inflammation is warning you that there is something harmful your body is encountering, such as pollution, sun exposure, or certain foods. Inflammation is usually short term until you find the source and discontinue contact. It becomes a danger when the inflammation is chronic. This is usually due to that fact that the harmful cause is not addressed and stopped.

Chronic inflammation is due to

glycation. Glycation is the process of sugar molecules binding, damaging, or breaking down essential proteins in the body. This includes a protein called collagen that is found in our skin. Glycation is not only linked to aging, but it's also linked to life-threatening chronic diseases like vascular disease and atherosclerosis. Consuming refined sugars triggers the process of glycation.

How can we boost the health of our skin?

Your body needs fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and legumes because these foods contain the essential nutrients that the body requires to flourish. As it turns out, your skin needs these nutrients just as much as the rest of your body.

For example, vitamins E and C protect the skin from sun exposure and decrease wrinkles. Vitamin A maintains and repairs skin tissue. It is important to remember the vitamin B complex, specifically biotin. Biotin is the basis for your skin, hair, and nails and is vital to keeping the skin barrier functionally strong and protecting against external harm. There are minerals that are required for healthy skin as well. Zinc, copper, and se-

lenium play roles in skin barrier function, protection against free radicals, and prevention from skin conditions.

Improve your digestion to improve your skin health

Even your digestive health is connected to your skin health. For instance, if you aren't consuming plenty of healthy fats, your skin will be drier, and your digestive process will be disrupted. Ensure that your body has enough good bacteria such as probiotics. When your gut has the correct number of probiotics, it activates vitamin K, magnesium, calcium, zinc and some B vitamins. All of these are important for healthy skin.

So, what plant-based foods are the best for our skin?

Avocados - yes, our beloved avocados made the list! Not only are avocados high in all the essential nutrients for the body, they have everything your skin needs to thrive, such as vitamins E and C, as well as antioxidants such as lycopene and beta-carotene and essential fatty acids.

Walnuts are high in omega 3, which is important in reducing inflammation, as well as zinc, selenium, and antioxidants. Nuts and seeds are nutrient-packed and are

good for overall health, but sunflower seeds specifically lead to benefiting skin health since they contain selenium, zinc, linoleic acid, and vitamin E.

Bell peppers, leafy greens, and sweet potatoes are a good source of beta-carotene, an antioxidant that is converted to vitamin A and not only keeps your skin youthful but also improves your longevity. Finally, broccoli is rich in beta-carotene, lutein, zinc, vitamin A, and vitamin C. But broccoli is best known for the chemical compound sulforaphane. Sulforaphane is proven to benefit skin health by being an antioxidant, anti-microbial, and anti-inflammatory.

With all these newfound, plant-based foods that support your skin, it should make you want these foods as part of your weekly grocery list. The plant-based diet touches every aspect of our physical health and improves it by leaps and bounds. Take charge of your health today and make it a lifelong commitment.

(Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Raeann Lael, MPH. Used by permission from [www.lifeandhealth.org](http://www.lifeandhealth.org). Courtesy of LifeSpring - Resources for Health and Healing Stuart, VA.)

# #1 Radford team tops Cougars



Jermaine Penn on his way to a 95 yard kickoff return touchdown.



Cougars block the Radford point after attempt.



Jay Howard puts pressure on the Radford quarterback.



Bobcat pass interference moved the Cougars near the goal line.



Paul Pascale stops the Bobcat runner for a loss.



Reyli Martinez-Tejeda was perfect kicking on the night.

**By Pat Delaney**  
The number one 2A football team in the state, the Radford Bobcats, visited the Patrick County Cougars on October 13, and came away with a 55-27 win. Radford came in unbeaten at 7-0, having outscored their opponents by 262 points in previous games, but it was the Cougars who struck first on Friday.

On the opening kickoff, Jermaine Penn raced 95 yards for the touchdown, bringing the Cougar faithful to their feet, and grabbing the momentum from the Bobcats.

Wanting to keep the momentum, Cougar Head Coach David Morrison went for an onside kick. The ball appeared to hit a Bobcat player, and the Cougars pounced, giving them first and ten near midfield. A flag on the play led to a lengthy discussion amongst the officials. The ruling was offside, forcing another kickoff.

Radford grabbed the momentum back on their first play from scrimmage on a long throw, down to the Cougar five yard line. After scoring on their next play, and a two-point conversion, the Bobcats took an 8-7 lead. Two more touchdowns added to their lead at 22-7.

Late in the first quarter, a Jermaine Penn run moved the Cougars deep into Bobcat territory, setting up a Reyli Martinez-Tejeda field goal, closing the gap to 22-10. After a Bobcat touchdown, the first quarter ended 29-10.

Opening the second quarter, the Cougars moved the ball downfield on the

ground behind solid blocking. The drive, which included a fourth-down conversion, ended with another Martinez-Tejeda field goal, and a score of 29-13.

The Cougar defense stiffened on the next Bobcat drive, forcing a punt. Patrick County took over on their 30, but turned the ball over on a fumble that was initially returned for a touchdown. A Bobcat penalty took away their score, but still gave them the ball on the Cougar side of the field. A 30-yard touchdown run for Radford increased their lead to 35-10. Ethan Cobbler dashed around the line and blocked the Bobcat extra point kick.

Radford would score on a sixty yard interception return and a touchdown, with 54 seconds left in the half to head into halftime with a 48-13 lead.

After Radford scored on the first drive of the second half to make the score 55-13, the Cougar defense made some adjustments.

After forcing the Bobcats to turn the ball over on downs, the Cougar offense took over. They marched 50-yards down the field behind solid blocking, ending the drive with an Easton Harris touchdown.

In the fourth quarter, the Cougar defense pressured the Bobcat quarterback often. The Bobcats turned the ball over after a bad snap got away from the quarterback. The Cougars would convert the turnover with another solid drive. A pass interference call against the Bobcats gave the Cougars a first down near

the goal line. A Jermaine Penn touchdown run capped the drive, closing the gap 55-27 with 3:17 left in the game.

The Cougar defense was solid on the next drive, with Paul Pascale chasing down the Bobcat quarterback for a loss with little time left. The Cougars tried for a long pass as time ran out, ending the game 55-27.

But there were positives even in the loss.

Patrick County put up more points against Radford than any other team this season. Coach Morrison also liked the second half performance of the defense.

"We kind of dialed up the intensity a little bit and fixed a few things that we were looking at and we just played better defense overall in the second half," said Morrison. "You know, we got down a few scores in the first half, and I thought we gave up a couple of scores that we shouldn't have. They were able to tack on a couple of cheap scores on some big plays.

"You can't take anything away from that Radford team. They're number one in the state right now for a reason," he said. "They're a good team and they've got explosive players all over the field and they've got some kids that are just lightning in a bottle. You give them an inch and they're going to run the field on you."

Defensively, Jay Howard's seven tackles, including one for a loss and a sack, led the Cougars. Paul Pascale and

Joshua Jimrusti chipped in six tackles a piece with Stephen Spencer adding an interception and three tackles.

Coach Morrison thought the offense improved as the game went on. While not breaking long runs, they ground out the short gains that moved the ball.

"Sometimes, two or three yards on first down is a big play. You just don't realize it until later in the down series. That's one of those things we have to do a little better job of executing the entire offense. Not just the x's and o's, but the whole tempo and pace of the offense, everything we want to do, we have to do it a little better," he said.

Jermaine Penn led the offense with 147 yards rushing, and 117 yards on kick returns. Reyli Martinez-Tejeda was perfect on the night, going 2-2 on field goals and 2-2 on extra point attempts.

Looking ahead, Coach Morrison said, "we've got to be able to run the football, to open up the passing game. We can move the ball through the air when we need to, but we've got to have a solid run game in order for us to be successful in the last few games of the season, and moving into the postseason. If you don't have a running game, you're not going to be a very successful football team. That's all there is to it."

The Cougars will visit Alleghany High, in Covington on October 20th in a Three Rivers District matchup.

*For more photos, visit [theenterprise.net](http://theenterprise.net).*

# Kyle Larson clinches Championship 4 berth with win at Las Vegas Motor Speedway

**By HOLLY CAIN**  
NASCAR Wire Service

Kyle Larson earned this trophy the old-fashioned way. The driver of the No. 5 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet led the most laps and swept both stage wins but still had to hold off a hard-charging, equally motivated Christopher Bell at the finish line to claim a dramatic victory in Sunday's South Point 400 NASCAR Cup Series Playoff race at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

The 31-year-old Larson blocked the final charge by fellow Playoff driver Bell's No. 20 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota as the two cars approached the checkered flag. Larson ultimately positioned his Chevy in front to claim a .082-second win and most importantly, secure the first of four available positions in the NASCAR Cup Series Championship 4 race at Phoenix in three weeks.

It was a compelling afternoon ushering in this final three-race, eight-driver round of Playoff competition to set up the four-driver title chase. There were seven race leaders and 20 lead changes. Larson held off the field on a re-start with 45 laps to go and never relinquished it despite quality challenges from Bell to close out the race and earlier, Roush Fenway Keselowski owner-driver Brad Keselowski, who led 38 laps himself.

Larson led seven times and accumulated the most laps led - 133 of 267 - on the afternoon to top the 1,000-laps led mark on the season - his 1,031 total laps out front in 2023, most in the series.

Not only did he have to hold off Bell, who made up half a second in the closing five laps to get to Larson's bumper, the 2021 series champ Larson survived a close call mid-race, his Chevy getting loose and out of control. But the former dirt race champion dramatically corrected and calmly carried on.

"Thankfully Christopher [Bell] always races extremely clean, it could have gotten crazier than it did coming to the start-finish line so "thank you" to him for racing with respect there," Larson said. "What a job done by my team. Just a great race car.

"I almost gave it away there in Turn one and two. Got sideways and hit the wall and had to fight back from there. I was happy to pull away as much as we did and was hoping that would be enough to maintain, which it was. But I didn't think they'd be able to get as close as they did at the end, so nerve-wracking.

"This is really cool to get to race for the championship in a few weeks and really glad I don't have to stress these next two races," Larson continued.

Despite the impressive afternoon Bell, who started from pole position and led 61 laps now finds himself ranked fifth - three points below the four-driver cutoff line heading into next week's Playoff race at Homestead-Miami Speedway.

"I don't know what else I could have done," Bell said. "I feel like that was my moment, that was my moment to make the Final Four and didn't quite capture it. Coming to the checkers there, I knew

he was going to be blocking so I'm like I'll try to go high, and he went high. I don't even know if I had a run to get by him coming to the line. Just wasn't enough, but a great day. Great day for sure to get those stage points and a second place finish out of it. Puts us behind by two [points] so we're not out of it by any means, but would have been nice to lock in."

Seven of the eight remaining Playoff-eligible drivers finished among the Top 10. Playoff driver Ryan Blaney finished 36th. His No. 12 Ford was disqualified following post-race technical inspection when the left front damper didn't meet the specified length. He now sits 56 points below the cutoff line for the Championship 4 and essentially must win one of the next two races - at Homestead-Miami Speedway or Martinsville Speedway - to advance.

The non-Playoff cars of Richard Childress Racing's Kyle Busch, RFK's Keselowski and Trackhouse Racing's Ross Chastain rounded out the top five behind Larson and Bell.

Playoff drivers William Byron, Tyler Reddick, Martin Truex Jr., Denny Hamlin and Chris Buescher finished sixth through 10th, respectively.

The race shook up the Playoff points. Beyond Larson's automatic bid, Byron still holds the championship lead in what is now more tightly-bunched standings. Byron is 11 points above the cutoff line, and is followed for the final championship spots by Hamlin (+4) and Truex (+3).

Bell sits three points below Truex on the cutoff line, followed by Reddick (-15), Buescher (-23) and Blaney (-56).

Hendrick Motorsports executive - and NASCAR Hall of Famer driver Jeff Gordon - smiled when asked about Lar-

son's day.

"I don't know where to begin," Gordon said. "It certainly looked like they were the class or the field at one point, then Bell did then Keselowski did. Great race really."

Asked if Larson was potentially as "good" as the 93-race winner Gordon had been when competing, the former four-time series champion said, "You take a guy like Kyle and his capabilities and his talent and he's impressed me with his work ethic too. I wasn't sure how he approached the Cup Series and [crew chief] Cliff [Daniels] and all the data that Cliff gives him in the meetings they have. . . it's a lot of information you have to absorb.

"But he's stepped up to the plate and done absolutely everything the organization has asked of him and then some. It's been a great relationship and this year has been all about getting the car and team to align.

"Seems like in the Playoffs they've been bringing fast race cars and stepping up to the plate."

The next race of this final three-race Playoff round to set the championship field is next Sunday's 4EVER400 Presented by Mobil 1 at the 1.5-mile Homestead-Miami Speedway (2:30 p.m. ET, NBC, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio). Larson is the defending race winner.



Kyle Larson, driver of the #5 HendrickCars.com Chevrolet, crew, and family celebrate in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series South Point 400 at Las Vegas Motor Speedway on October 15, 2023 in Las Vegas, Nevada. (Photo by Chris Graythen/Getty Images)

## PCHS Sports Schedule

Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of October 19-25

10/20 7 pm Football at Alleghany

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(cont. from page 4)

Two candidates are running for the Commissioner of the Revenue. Tabitha Overby has been employed in the Commissioner of the Revenue office for 16 years. The other candidate is employed in the Treasurer's office under the authority of the Treasurer.

The Commissioner of the Revenue and Treasurers officers do not have the same duties, they are two separate Constitutional Officers elected by the voters every four years. In the State of Virginia checks and balances are a vital part of these two offices. The Commissioner of the Revenue is in charge of keeping up with assessments of various taxes, Treasurer is in charge of collecting taxes. The two officers work together but one constitutional officer is not to be over the other.

Computer programs between the two offices are not the same and should not be. Because one works in the Treasurer's office does not give them experience in knowing the system in the Commissioner's

### Stop Kicking the Can

The Young Professionals' Oct. 10 Candidates Forum provided a great jumping-off place for understanding where Patrick County is now and mapping out where it should be headed.

Consider the three-way contest for Clerk of Court. Morgan Boothe deserves a lot of credit for untangling even some of the chaos left by her predecessor. Her superiors deserve none.

Should Boothe be rewarded for her dedication and diligence? Or should the role be handed over to someone able and anxious to take it the next level, as challenger No. 1, Nancy Turner Belcher, suggested? Challenger No. 2, Erica Cipko Wade, made much the same argument, albeit in a softer tone.

Will Boothe resign if she is not elected? Possibly. But that would retroactively disprove her fitness for the job. It's been said that Belcher would take the job for only one term, then retire. That holds some appeal. Elect her, continue rebuilding and then take another vote.

We can't afford to delay the decision, to keep on kicking the can down the road. Choose Wade. Like Belcher, she acknowledges the problems that remain in the clerk's office. But her less-forceful approach offers hope that Boothe and the staff will be encouraged to stay on and join a team intent on rebuilding the office.

The same logic applies to other contests in our local elections.

### Dear Voter,

My letter is to give 100% support to Morgan Boothe in the upcoming election for Clerk of Court for Patrick County. I've observed her for a while now and can attest that she has the character and track record of achievements to make her a fine public servant, one we can trust to work hard and do the right thing for the good of the community.

Morgan has served six years in various roles in the Clerk of Courts office and has the support of all deputy clerks in the office – and that says something about the kind of manager they know she will be. She has taken steps to effectively modernize office operations, clean

### Pro Boothe

Growth and wisdom come from acting and doing, not necessarily connections and networks. Any position in County government is important, so you would hope that citizens would vote for those with experience, as long as those candidates have shown themselves to be knowledgeable and honest and have worked for the betterment of the citizens.

Some candidates turn to negative talk and rumors in a desperate attempt to get a vote. Is that how they would conduct themselves on the job? It's unfortunate, but it's a reality. I urge citizens to do their research and base their vote on fact, not rumor.

Morgan Boothe has proven she is the clear choice for the Clerk of Court's office. Instead of hiring a

office. The October 4th issue of the Enterprise Glenna Morse stated the Commissioner's office is not on line for reading deeds. That is a false statement deed access was obtained from the Clerk of Court years ago to help in working land Transfers.

Think about it you have candidate Glenna Morse who has worked under the authority of Treasurer Sandra Stone for 12 years, what's going to happen to our system of having two separate offices? Myself and many other citizens have a concern the Treasurer will control both offices therefore destroying the separation of offices.

Tabitha Overby has been a dedicated, honest, hardworking employee of the Commissioner of the Revenue office for 16 years. Vote Tabitha Overby for Patrick County Commissioner of the Revenue.

Janet H. Rorrer,  
Retired Commissioner of the Revenue

Steve Marshall, candidate for Patrick County Supervisor representing the Blue Ridge District, cited a study concluding that owners of smaller homes in Patrick County were being taxed at a considerably higher assessment than owners of large homes. Many in the audience appeared startled, including his opponent, incumbent Clyde DeLoach.

One who was not, however, was Patty Quesenberry, candidate for delegate to represent the state's 47th District. (It must be said that her opponent, incumbent Wren Williams, was not startled either. He didn't attend the Forum.) Quesenberry has worked as a housing advocate for low-income families. She can tell you about more challenges than property taxes being faced by that segment of our population. What's more important, as a long-time rescue squad volunteer in Floyd County and social services worker in the area, she's familiar with the proposals and possible solutions to problems we're all facing in one way or another, especially the many facets of healthcare.

It takes some time to make progress in all the areas that need attention in Patrick County: healthcare, broadband, education, fiscal responsibility, environment, etc. The current flurry of announcements of progress in these areas is encouraging but also conveniently timed. Should we be kicking the can down the road one more time?

Judy Ferring,  
Claudville

up sentencing order backlogs, and keep costs down for taxpayers in the county.

Most importantly, Morgan has character that is sadly absent from so many elected officials these days. When she says she's going to do something, she does it. Morgan gets a lot done but doesn't go looking for personal accolades; she works the way she does because she loves our community.

I hope all will join me in supporting Morgan Boothe for Clerk of Court. She will continue to do great work and make us proud.

Rodney W. Overby,  
Stuart

clerk from another locality, as was previously done, the Honorable Judge Brinks chose Morgan as interim clerk, which speaks volumes.

Morgan has worked tirelessly to complete a backlog of work all the while making some much needed improvements and continuing her daily duties as Clerk. She has earned the position. Her staff has expressed their support for Morgan as well.

Candidates should be respectful, and Morgan is running a respectful campaign. That's who I want to represent Patrick County.

Join me in voting for Morgan Boothe for Patrick County Clerk of Court.

Jim and Ann Litten,  
Stuart

## OBITUARIES

### Temple Neal Bowman



Mr. Temple Neal Bowman, 89, of Ararat, VA, passed away peacefully with family on Sunday evening, October 8, 2023. Temple was born March 2, 1934, in Patrick County, VA, the first born of Oscar Lawrence and Hattie Belle Marshall Bowman. Temple graduated from Blue Ridge High School in 1952 at the top of his class. He lived a fulfilled life as a family man and a businessman. He started his first business at the age of seven, opening a small community country store. Owning a grocery store in Mount Airy and Ararat continued throughout his life. He also had other business ventures that included selling insurance for 20 years, a construction company, a used car business for 29 years, delivering flowers, and was known as the Avon "lady." One of his favorite honors was serving as an Ararat Ruritan for close to 40 years. During this time, he held all the offices in the club and made lifelong friends.

Temple was a people person and loved meeting and talking with old and new friends throughout his life. He is survived by his wife, Lottie Clement Bowman; a daughter and son-in-law, Dianne and David Lawson; two grandchildren, Wyshona Lawson and D.J. Lawson and his wife, Miranda; two great-grandchildren, David Lawson, III, and Chloe Belle Lawson; two stepchildren, Kathy Tucker and Georgie George and her husband, Ira; three sisters and two brothers-in-law, Gracie Beck, Hazel and Gene Combs, and Mozelle and Posey Stanley; two brothers and sisters-in-law, Wade and Do-

ris Bowman and Leon and Evon Bowman; and special family and friends, Sandra Stanley, Debbie Bowman, Cora Beasley, River Beasley, Kevin Elgin, and Peggy Pack. In addition to his parents, Mr. Bowman was preceded in death by his first wife, Uniter Marshall Bowman; two stepchildren, Bruce Hodges and Barbara Beasley; and a brother, Ersel Ray Bowman. The funeral service will be held Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 11:00 AM at Doe Run Baptist Church, with the Rev. Terry W. Vaughan and the Rev. Rickey Martin officiating. Interment will follow in the church cemetery. The family will receive friends Wednesday from 6:00 until 8:00 PM at Moody Funeral Home in Mount Airy, where his body will remain until carried to the church to lie-in-state 30 minutes before the funeral service. Online condolences may be made at [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

## Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre in the REX

When Nellie Quackenbush returns to the farm from the big city, will Noble Hart still have her heart?

Coming to the New Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre, October 19 through 22, is No, No A Million Times No (Only a Farmer's Daughter). This light-hearted musical melodrama features plenty of romance and toe-tapping tunes that are sure to put a smile on your face and a song in your heart. "Everyone leaves the theatre feeling 100 times better than when they walked in," director Rex Stephenson says of the power of the story that has held its appeal since 1957.

The veteran cast, under the direction of Stephenson and Em-

ily Blankenship-Tucker, (Music Director), features Michael Trochim as Pappy, Kristina Stump as Birdie, and TJ Baker as Duplikate, with a multi-generational company of Ferrum College students and community members.

A tasty buffet precedes the matinee performances on Thursday, October 19 and Sunday, October 22. The actors in the company serve as waiters and the meal is designed around the theme of the play. Evening performances, (show only), are on Friday, October 20 and Saturday, October 21 at 7:30 pm. Call 540-365-4355 or go to our website [www.ferrum.edu/theatre-tickets](http://www.ferrum.edu/theatre-tickets) for reservations.

## Steele among Youngkin appointees

Julie Steele, of Stuart, was among those appointed to the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation during Gov. Glenn Youngkin's recent round of administration and board appointments.

Steele is the director of the Reynolds Homestead in Critz.

Also named to the foundation were:

Joshua Hess of Christiansburg,

District Director, Congressman H. Morgan Griffith

The Honorable Saul Hernandez of Washington County, Vice President of IT, Food City

Kevin Byrd of Blacksburg, Executive Director, New River Valley Regional Commission

Sharon Buchanan of Cleveland, Southwest Region Manager, Virginia State Parks.

### More than 45 helped at blood drive

Thank you, Patrick County. Eighteen equivalent units of blood were collected which translates to helping 48 patients with medical issues. There were three first-time donors.

Please join me in welcoming The Landmark Center as our newest corporate sponsor this month to the Red Cross blood drive.

Thank you, Volunteers! They are the ones who make your donation experience as pleasant as possible. The Volunteers take time out of their schedule to help donors through the general process of donation. Volunteers this month were William Hines, Debra Boswell, Betty Holt, Harriette Moore, and Jack Vestal.

We are always interested in adding to our roster of Volunteers. If

you are interested in giving back to your community, please consider volunteering your time with the Patrick County Blood Drive, the oldest continuing blood drive in the county. Please stop by the next blood drive or contact one of the volunteers for further information.

Please remember that the American Red Cross encourages donors to make an appointment for your time to donate via internet at [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or by calling 1-800-733-2767.

Next month's blood drive is scheduled for Tuesday, November 14. At next month's blood drive, we will start collecting donations at 10 a.m., adjusted for daylight savings time. Hope to see you there!

Gene Stirewalt,  
Stuart

**Clark Gable Boyd**

Mr. Clark Gable Boyd, age 84, of Ararat, Virginia passed away unexpectedly on Friday, October 13, 2023, at Forsyth Medical Center in Winston-Salem, surrounded by his loving family. Clark was born April 13, 1939, in Patrick County, Virginia to the late Harvey and Sarah Gwynn Boyd. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, and friend. Clark was one-of-a-kind and loved to talk and carry on with people. Mr. Boyd retired from Bassett Furniture after 47 years of service and will be deeply missed by all who knew him. Surviving is his daughter and son-in-law, Tammy Boyd Rocha and Jose; two sons and daughter-in-law, Ronnie Boyd, Roger Boyd and Dena; five grandchildren and spouses, Brittany Inman and Jonathan, Benny Boyd and Stacey Gwyn, Jesse Boyd,



Joseph Boyd and Mariah, Connor Boyd; three great-grandchildren; two sisters and brothers-in-law, Margaret Boyd and David Brown, Judy Boyd Johnson and Jimmy; brother and sisters-in-law, Donald Boyd and Christa, Jewel Boyd; along with several nieces and nephews. In addition to his parents, Mr. Boyd was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years, Shirley Jean Cain Boyd, whom his missed dearly and longed to be united with when he entered his heavenly home. As well as three sisters, Louette Boyd Bolen, Josie Boyd Epperson, Annie Boyd Johnson; and four brothers,

Jesse Boyd, Monroe Boyd, Roger Boyd, and Clifford Boyd. A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 12:00 PM at Chestnut Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Ararat, Virginia will Rev. Arlis Thomas officiating. Entombment will follow at Skyline Memory Gardens in Mount Airy. Friends wishing to pay their respects, his body will lie-in-state Tuesday, October 17, 2023, beginning at 7:30 AM. Then the family will receive friends on Tuesday evening, from 6:00 PM until 8:00 PM at Moody Funeral Home in Mount Airy. The body will also lie-in-state on Wednesday, October 18, 2023, from 11:00 AM until the time of the service at the church. Moody Funeral Services in Mount Airy has been entrusted with the arrangements. Online condolences may be made at [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

**Charles "Ross" Setser**

Mr. Charles "Ross" Setser, age 58 of Stuart, Virginia passed away at SOVAH Martinsville Hospital on Thursday, October 12, 2023. He was born in Dekalb, Illinois on February 27, 1965. He was preceded in death by his father, Charles Robert Setser, Jr.; two granddaughters, Ivy and Miley Sester; one brother, Charles "Squirt" Setser; and one sister Judy Donnell. Ross was a fine automotive mechanic, loved Mopar cars, and going to Monster Truck Rallies with his family. He had a great sense of humor and enjoyed joking and carrying on with everyone. He always enjoyed his visits with his brother in Tennessee. His



greatest joy in life was his family; he will be remembered as a devoted husband, loving father, caring papa, attentive son, brother, uncle, and friend. He is survived by his loving wife, Karen Setser; two sons and daughters-in-law, Charles Setser (Megan) and Chris Beasley (Dawn); one daughter and son-in-law,

Autumn Hull (Kenny); four grandchildren, Tucker Hull, Maddie Hull, Eva Sechrist, and Ivy Stewart; his mother, Ruth Harshberger Whitaker; three brothers and sisters-in-law, T-bone Setser (Alyssa), Jack Setser (Lorraine), and Jimmy Johnson (Penny); favorite uncle, Paul Harshberger; several nieces and nephews; and his beloved cat, Sassy. All services are private. The family is gathering at his home on Dry Pond Highway in Stuart. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart has been entrusted with the services and online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

**Linda Edwards**

Linda Edwards passed peacefully in her sleep on October 9 2023. She was a direct support professional with the Patrick County Developmental Center. She enjoyed cooking; reading gardening and church. She loved people and helping them. She is survived by one daughter Elizabeth Edwards and one grandchild Ethan Edwards. She is survived by one sister Carol Goard numerous nephews and nieces. She is also survived by her two sweet dear friends Betty Jett and Penny Belcher. She was proceeded in death by her parents Rufus Edwards and Flora Bell Edwards.

She was a kind beautiful soul and she was loved by everyone. They will be a graveside funeral at Rose-lawn and a celebration of life service planned soon. Instead of flowers we ask for donations in her honor to the Patrick County Developmental Center or Five Forks Wesleyan Church.

Funeral services for Mr. Hazelwood will be held Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Pastor J.R. Shelton officiating. Burial will follow in the Five Forks Wesleyan Church Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. If desired, memorials may be made to Kate B. Reynolds Hospice Home or to Mountain Valley Hospice. Online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

**Glen Franklin Hazelwood**

Mr. Glen Franklin Hazelwood, age 89 of Stuart, passed away Sunday, October 15, 2023 at Kate B. Reynolds Hospice House - Trellis Supportive Care, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He was born in Patrick County on August 18, 1934 to the late James Ernest Hazelwood and Cappie Shelton Hazelwood. In addition to his parents, Mr. Hazelwood was preceded in death by his wife, Nancy Louise Gunter Hazelwood; a son-in-law, Randy D. Armstrong; and seven brothers, Leonard, Troy, Earl, Emory, Herman, Cecil and Charles Hazelwood. He attended True Gospel Church and loved listening to gospel music, especially at Dominion Valley Park. He loved being called "Papa" and was also known as "Nature Boy", watching west-erns and wrestling. He never met a stranger or a person he couldn't love and was known to many as "Santa Claus."



Mr. Hazelwood is survived by his daughter, Mildred Armstrong of Walnut Cove, North Carolina; two granddaughters, Amanda Stephens (Nate) and Sara Sullivan (Derek); five great-grandchildren, Kaleigh Stephens and boyfriend, Johnny Dotson, Bryson Stephens,

Funeral services for Mr. Hazelwood will be held Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Pastor J.R. Shelton officiating. Burial will follow in the Five Forks Wesleyan Church Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. If desired, memorials may be made to Kate B. Reynolds Hospice Home or to Mountain Valley Hospice. Online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

**Donald Lewis Wood**

Mr. Donald Lewis Wood, age 74, of Stuart, Virginia passed away surrounded by his family on Tuesday morning, October 10, 2023, at his home. Mr. Wood was born in Martinsville, Virginia on August 25, 1949, to the late Aaron Zenas Wood and Verna Mae Martin Wood. In addition to his parents, Mr. Wood was preceded in death by one brother, Roger Dean Wood; and one niece, LeAnne Wood. Donald faithfully served in the U.S. Army and was a Vietnam War veteran. Mr. Wood was a dedicated member of Mount Herman Church of the Brethren where he served as deacon, Sunday school teacher, and choir member. He owned and operated Granite Memorial Service for over 30 years. Donald was an avid Dolly Parton fan and enjoyed taking pictures. Above all, Donald loved the Lord, and being



"papa" to his grandchildren. Left to cherish the fond memories of Mr. Donald Wood are his loving wife of 55 years, Mary Lee Adams Wood; one son and daughter-in-law, Matthew Lewis Wood (Shannon Hughes Wood); six grandchildren, Cheyenne Lee Wood, Carly Mae Wood, Hannah Grace Wood, Leah Kendrick, Tyson Kendrick, Cameron Kendrick; one sister and brother-in-law, Joyce Ann Jackson (James); several nieces and nephews; special friends, William Turner, and Mike Varner. A funeral service for

Mr. Donald Wood will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at Mount Herman Church of the Brethren in Bassett with Pastor Noel Naff and Pastor Mike Varner officiating. Burial will immediately follow the funeral service in the New Hope Church of the Brethren Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the funeral service at the church on Thursday afternoon. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in memory of Donald Wood may be made to the Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department, 6687 Fairystone Park Hwy., Stuart, VA 24171 or to the Smith River Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 122, Woolwine, VA 24185. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart is serving the Wood family, and online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

**Open Enrollment Season Means Medicare Scams**

It's open enrollment season, which also means it's Medicare fraud season. Eligible beneficiaries have until December 7th to shop for the best deal for their health care dollar. Unfortunately, some of the deals offered won't be deals at all. Just like in other years, Medicare scams spike during open enrollment season with criminals posing as insurance providers calling and emailing about free gifts or limited time offers. These ploys are designed to capture information criminals can use to bill Medicare for bogus services and treatment. Be suspicious of anyone who calls, emails or visits you promoting a Medi-

care plan. Legitimate health plans can only contact you if you've requested information or if you have an existing relationship with them. Lastly, always review your Medicare or explanation of benefits statement to ensure fraudulent charges aren't included. The AARP Fraud Watch Network is a free resource for all. Learn how to proactively spot scams or get guidance if you've been targeted. Visit [www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork](http://www.aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork) or call our dedicated helpline to speak to a fraud specialist at 1-877-908-3360. To learn more about AARP Virginia, like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/aarpvirginia](http://www.facebook.com/aarpvirginia) and follow @AARPVa on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/aarpva](http://www.twitter.com/aarpva).

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# Kendrick

(cont. from page 3)

think a good way of doing that is coming and speaking out at the meetings," he said.

Though he thinks town hall meetings could be a good idea, Kendrick said that it's difficult to get people to attend those. For example, he recalled that only one person attended a town hall meeting at the Patrick Henry Volunteer Fire Department.

"I guess probably a better way than that is going to community events and talking to people," he said.

Kendrick also thinks the county government should be more transparent than it has been.

"I think a lot of times, executive session over the years has been used to keep stuff from the public that should be public knowledge. We've tried to be more transparent, and we'll keep on working to-

wards that," he said.

Kendrick said the county excels the most with the school system, which has good students and staff.

The county lacks jobs for its residents.

"I think even the college and stuff, they've started to see that people need to be trained in things like plumbing, and welding, and mechanics, and trades like that," Kendrick said, adding that is a positive step because "we need to look more towards that instead of training people for computers and things that the jobs aren't here anymore," he said.

A Patrick County native and small business owner for more than 40 years, Kendrick said he knows how the county works and what it needs.

"I'm out talking to people a lot, and I hear what they want and

what they're needing," he said. "I'd like to have another term just to try to finish some of the stuff we've started. Some of the projects, some of the grants, some of the EDA projects."

Kendrick said he thinks the county has also developed a better relationship with the school board over the past few years and wants to see that continue.

The first year he was elected, Kendrick said the board managed to balance the annual budget without a tax increase – an accomplishment he is most proud of, given that "we'd been told before that by the accountants we couldn't do that without at least an 11-cent increase on real estate taxes.

But, "we managed to balance it without that increase and put a little bit of money in the first year back in the contingency fund,"

Kendrick said.

Since he's been on the board, Kendrick said he has helped to keep taxes down and balance the budgets while not cutting any services or anybody.

He has accomplished that by spending "the money more wisely."

Kendrick worked at Stuart Flooring for a year and a half while attending Patrick County High School (PCHS). After graduating, he worked at JP Stevens for almost two years before working at Fieldcrest for about two years. He then went into business for himself as Kendrick Garvel Hauling.

Kendrick's been married to his wife for four years and has two daughters and four stepchildren.

In his free time, Kendrick enjoys farming and working on his equipment.

# Foley

(cont. from page 1)

ing," he said. "You got to have infrastructure for businesses. We're pretty much limited with what we currently have."

While he believes paying for the infrastructure would mostly come from grants, Foley noted he thinks "some kind of match" from the locality would be required.

"Sometimes, you can get grants without a match, it's just you have to apply for them to get them. I know we've hired a grant writer, which hopefully, will help us," he said.

Foley said one thing the county lacks is trying to do more with infrastructure, especially on U.S. 58 going down to the Henry County line.

"We need to look at doing some infrastructure up in Meadows of Dan along the U.S. 58 corridor,"

he said. "There's a huge potential for growth on both ends of the county."

The county also needs to be more focused on what needs to happen and develop a good five-year plan just for infrastructure as it's going to be the future of the county.

"Right now, we've got tourism. Sure, tourism is great, but we need more than just tourism to keep the county going," he said.

As a businessman who's been in sales for 30 years, Foley believes that sales is important as if one is good at it.

"You're good at selling the county and feeling the pulse of the people in the county," Foley said, adding the county needs more of a businessperson who has sales experience to promote the county.

"We don't need something to

happen and then we say 'woah, we should have done something about that years ago.' We need to look at doing things that need to be done now that haven't been taken care of. Infrastructure in my mind is a really great thing," he said.

Foley believes when the county starts focusing on that, that other things will come.

"I think we've more or less been doing the same thing for years, and that's the reason taxes are going up. We have to start thinking a little bit out of the box. Right now, I think we've got a great thing going on with tourism, and I'm really glad to see that part of the picture has been taken care of," he said.

A supporter of public involvement in local office, Foley said one thing he's campaigning on is going around and talking to local business owners to find out what their needs are and if they see anything the county could do to help them.

"I've already started talking to a few business owners, but there's still a lot more I need to talk to," he added.

Foley said he believes county staff is already transparent, but

there are some issues at the Board of Supervisor meetings. One of which is difficulty hearing the supervisors when they speak into their microphones.

"I can't hear a thing they're saying," Foley said. "They need to speak into the microphones. The chairman controls the meeting. He needs to direct the other board members to speak into the microphones, and then if the public still can't hear what's going on, we need to do some upgrading on the microphone system."

Foley graduated from Patrick County High School (PCHS) and took a leadership course through Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) while he served on the board of supervisors.

He was previously on the board from 2004-2007 and from 2011-2015.

Foley has been in the car-selling business for 30 years. He started out at Blue Ridge Transfer where he worked for 16 years before he moved into car sales.

Foley has one son, one daughter, and three grandchildren. In his free time, he enjoys tinkering with stuff and using his hands.

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**Meetings**

**Wednesday, Oct. 18**  
The Stuart Town Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the Stuart Town Office.

**Wednesday, Oct. 25**  
The Patrick County Economic Development Authority (EDA) will meet at 7 p.m. in the Patrick County Administration Building.

**Events**

**Thursday, Oct. 19**  
The Patrick County Republican Committee will meet at 6 p.m. at the Motorsports Hall of Fame Auditorium.

**Friday, Oct. 20**  
The Patrick County Library will hold an educational presentation about Medicare and Social Security starting at 12 p.m.

Jeb Stuart Rescue Squad will hold a spaghetti dinner from 6-8 p.m. at 1258 American Legion Road. Plates are \$8 for dine-in or take out. Orders can be called in at (276) 694-6171.

The Woolwine Methodist Food Truck will be at the Fairystone VFD from 3-4:30 p.m.

**Saturday, Oct. 21**  
The Fairystone Volunteer Fire Department will hold a country breakfast from 6:30-10 a.m. Dine in prices are \$10 for an adult plate and \$5 for a child plate. All take out plates are \$10 each. To place an order, call (276) 930-2113.

The Patrick County Master Gardeners will hold a Native Plant Sale from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. beside the Tourism Office on Main Street in Stuart. Plants are \$2 and up, and proceeds will benefit the Patrick County Alzheimer's Group.

The Town of Stuart's 22nd annual Apple Dumpling Festival, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Stuart.

**Sunday, October 22**  
Pancake Days, Meadows of Dan, starts at 7 a.m. in the Meadows of Dan Community Building.

**Saturday, Oct. 28**  
Fairy Stone State Park will hold a ranger led Ghost Hike beginning at the ADA Fishing Area parking lot at 7, 8, and 9 p.m. Don't forget your flashlight. To register, call the park's office at (276) 930-2424.

High Point Baptist Church will hold a free bowl of soup event from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Vegetable beef and meat-free vegetable soups, dine-in or take out, 2381 Big A School Road, Stuart.

Trunk or Treat, 4-6 p.m. at Shelters 3 and 4, Fairy Stone State Park.

**Tuesday, Oct. 31**  
Middle Cross Missionary Church will hold a Trunk or Treat event, 59 Wayside Road, Stuart, from 6-8 p.m.

**Ongoing**

The Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard meets at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the American Legion Post 105. Interested veterans are welcome to attend.

Fridays in October - The Stuart Farmers' Market is open from 8 a.m. till noon, with locally grown fruits, vegetables, meats, baked items, eggs, crafts and more.

The Coffee Break Café hosts live music on Tuesdays from 9 to 11 a.m. Bring an instrument, or just come and listen.

The Patrick County Library hosts Story Time with Ms. Sam at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesdays, with books, songs, finger plays, and more. For more information, call (276) 694-3352.

The Patrick County Library will hold the LEGO Club with Ms. Sam on Mondays from 4:30-5:30 p.m. This program is mainly intended for school age children. For more information, call the library at (276) 694-3352.

The Patrick County Quilters' Sit-N-Sew is held on Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Quilted Colors. For more information, call

276-694-3020 or email patrickcountyquilters@gmail.com.

The Stuart Elementary School Running Club will hit the pavements along the sidewalks in town on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

The Ararat Ruritan Club will hold Rook games every Monday night from 6:30-8 p.m.

The Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard meets the first Tuesday of every month at the American Legion Post 105 at 7 p.m. Interested veterans are welcome to attend.

Starting Oct. 24, 1:30-2:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, an Introduction to Zen Meditation and Zen Buddhism will be held at the Blue Ridge Regional Library Stuart site.

The Patrick County Parks and Recreation Office is now accepting basketball registration for the 2023 - 2024 school year. Students who are currently in grades K - 7 are eligible to participate in the recreation department's basketball program. Registration forms are available at any elementary school or parents can call the recreation office at (276) 694 - 3917 to register children. The deadline for registration is Friday, October 27, 2023. Games will begin the second week of November 2023.

Messianic Bible Study, Fridays from 6-7:30 p.m. Event is for anyone wanting a deeper understanding of the Old Testament and how it relates to us now. Come and discover the Hebrew side of the Christian Faith during the meetings held at The Honey Pot, 106 N. Main St., Stuart (across from The Coffee Break). Call (276) 694-2356 for more information.

Last Tuesday of each month, Golden Oldies, Open Jam at Willis Gap Community Center, 144 The Hollow Road, Ararat, with 50s, 60s, 70s Rock and Roll. Doors open at 6 p.m. Music gets underway at 7. Food is available.

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The columnists' views appearing on this page do not necessarily reflect the editorial position of *The Enterprise*.

**Cyber tip prompts arrest of Stuart man**

A Stuart man was charged on Wednesday with possession and distribution of child pornography, Patrick County Sheriff's Lt. Steve Austin wrote in a release authorized by Sheriff Dan Smith.

Scottie Andrew Cassell II, 29, of 15019 Jeb Stuart Highway, was arrested during the execution of an early morning search warrant at his home.

The incident began when investigator Jason Kruse received

a cyber tip from ICAC (Internet Crimes Against Children), that an email - allegedly containing a video of child pornography - had been intercepted. After numerous digital search warrants, authorities developed a suspect.

Cassell is currently being held in the Patrick County Jail under a \$5,000 secured bond.

The investigation is ongoing. Anyone with information is urged to call Kruse at (276) 692-5123.



Scottie Andrew Cassell II

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**NOTICE**

All announcements to be included in the Community Calendar must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday the week before publish date. Items are published as space permits. Email to: dhall@theenterprise.net

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# Deadline to share acorns with Department of Forestry is Oct. 16

By Brian Fritz  
Capital News Service

Residents can help the state's reforestation efforts by collecting acorns and dropping them off at Virginia Department of Forestry locations. The last day to drop off acorns is Monday, Oct. 16.

The Augusta Nursery just outside of Charlottesville will plant the acorns.

VDOF Augusta Nursery manager Joshua McLaughlin oversees the selection and planting of millions of seedlings every year.

"I never thought I had a green thumb," McLaughlin said. "I come here, start planting seeds, start growing things like, 'Oh my gosh, I actually enjoy this.'"

Acorns from healthy trees can be delivered to the VDOF in a paper or burlap bag. Public efforts were

so great last year that the VDOF was able to cancel orders from suppliers.

"The public saved us a bunch of money last year," McLaughlin said.

Chris Cough, associate professor of biology at VCU, said the benefits of the program go beyond restoring Virginia's natural landscape.

"Just broadly, the idea of engaging citizens for the purpose of understanding and appreciating the science and the environment around them, and that's important," Gough said.

The VDOF has a higher need for acorns from the white, black and chestnut oak species.

It also needs species from:

- \*black walnut
- \*Chinese chestnut
- \* Northern red oak
- \* pin oak



- \* Shumard oak
- \* Southern red oak
- \* swamp chestnut oak
- \* swamp white oak
- \* water oak
- \* willow oak

The VDOF also asked acorn collectors, if possible, to identify the type of tree by including a leaf with

the collection. Different species should be separated.

Capital News Service is a program of Virginia Commonwealth University's Robertson School of Media and Culture. Students in the program provide state government coverage for a variety of media outlets in Virginia.

# Long Term Care Committee to Host Community Health Fair Friday

The annual Patrick County Community Health Fair is slated for 8 a.m. -2 p.m. on Friday, October 20 at Rotary Field in Stuart. Sponsored by the PC Long Term Care Committee, the event offers speakers on relevant topics, breakfast and lunch, and a vendor fair, all at no charge to attendees.

Of note this year is that the health fair is not geared solely towards seniors. Terri Alt of Patrick County Extension said, "We wanted to open the event up to adults of any age who

might be interested in planning for their futures, who might be caregivers to older adults, or who are working in senior care fields. Everyone needs to be familiar with these subjects as they affect all families regardless of age."

The event begins with registration at 8:00 am at the Hooker Building with a light muffin, fruit and coffee breakfast available. Speakers on tap include a representative from the sheriff's office about services available to the community, followed by Brooke Gill from the Alzheimer's Association with her presentation "Ten Warning Signs of Alzheimer's."

Jenny Brummitt from the Southern Area Agency on Aging will speak about Warning Signs of Suicide, an issue that affects many families in rural areas. For those who need to understand the sometimes intimidating process of "getting your affairs in order," Sarah Bidwell, owner of Wills on Wheels, will discuss the legal documents that everyone, regardless of age, should have in place.

After the symposium segment of the event, a free lunch will be provided to the first 75 people who register at the door, and the vendor fair will open in the agricultural building next door. "We have 24 vendors who will be on site Friday," says Landmark director of community relations Lisa Martin. "Blood pressure checks, services, home health agencies, insurance agencies, really all areas that serve community health in our area."

The vendor fair will last from noon to 2 p.m., and participants do not have to attend the symposium to visit the fair. However, the doors will not open to the fair until noon.

This event is free to the public and door prizes will be awarded during the symposium and vendor fair. The Patrick County Long Term Care Committee is comprised of representatives from Southern Area Agency on Aging, The Landmark Center, Blue Ridge Therapy Connection, Patrick County Extension, Patrick County Health Department, and Social Services.



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**Weekly SUDOKU**

by Linda Thistle

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**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆**

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging  
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## October Fundraiser for Susan G. Komen Foundation Launched

James River Equipment, a leading provider of John Deere agricultural and construction equipment, is proud to announce its October fundraiser in support of the Susan G. Komen Foundation's mission to combat breast cancer. Throughout the entire month of October, James River Equipment will be running an exciting fundraising campaign centered around a custom-wrapped pink Gator Utility Vehicle raffle.

James River Equipment has wrapped a John Deere Gator Utility Vehicle in a striking pink color to symbolize support for breast cancer awareness. Raffle tickets for a chance to win this unique vehicle will be available for purchase at all 46 James River Equipment construction and agriculture locations throughout North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia from October 1st through October 31st. Each raffle ticket is priced at just \$25.

"James River Equipment is honored to support the Susan G. Komen Foundation in their

tireless efforts to find a cure for breast cancer," said Michael Board, Marketing Director at James River Equipment. "We invite our customers, friends, and community members to join us in this meaningful campaign. Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of those affected by breast cancer."

Raffle tickets can only be purchased in-store, and the lucky winner of the custom-wrapped pink Gator Utility Vehicle will be drawn on November 3rd, 2023. Make sure to mark your calendar and keep an eye out for the announcement of the winner.

One hundred percent of every dollar raised during this campaign will be donated to the Susan G. Komen Foundation to support their crucial work in breast cancer research, advocacy, and patient support. Visit your nearest James River Equipment dealership to buy your tickets and support this vital cause.

For more information about the fundraiser, please visit [JamesRiverEquipment.com/WeDigPink](http://JamesRiverEquipment.com/WeDigPink).

## Wood presented Patrick County Clean Water Farm Award

The Patrick County Soil and Water Conservation District (Patrick SWCD) Board of Directors and Staff nominated and presented Lester Wood with the Patrick County Virginia Clean Water Farm Award. Wood's farm is located in Meadows of Dan, Virginia and part of the Dan River Watershed.

The Clean Water Farm award was established to provide special recognition to farmers who demonstrated a strong commitment to natural resource conservation through the implementation of best management practices and management of their lands. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation was given lead responsibility for program development and administration and the Department relies upon Soil and Water Conservation Districts to select worthy recipients within their communities.

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Best Management Practices (BMP) Program and Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) was used to assist Mr. Wood with the stewardship of his land that he desired. As part of his stewardship of the land, Mr. Wood has protected almost two thousand feet of streams that run through his property by fencing out livestock access. Mr. Wood established 1.8 acres of new riparian buffers to help filter run-off from his farm. To facilitate rotational grazing, he installed 3700' of interior fence to create several grazing paddocks. A limited access stream crossing was installed to allow cattle and farm machinery to cross the stream without damaging the stream banks and channel. To provide his livestock with clean water, he drilled a well and installed three frost free watering facilities.

Past Patrick County Clean Water Farm Award winners include: David Collins, Wyoming East Farm, Tim Service, Helen Clark Wood and Kate Dunnivant; Pansy, Jeff and Eddie



Lester Wood was presented the Patrick County Virginia Clean Water Farm Award.

McAlexander; Greenview Farm; Benton and Michael Culler; Pam Hall; Mulberry Farm; Joey Epperson; Joe and Denise Clark; Dannie and Kathy Anderson; Larry Hutchens; Leon and Jane Stevens; John and Rose Wood; Marion and Glenda Cobbler; Ted and Brenda Kirby; B H Cooper Farm; Dewey Moss and Roger Wilson; Clarence and Darrell Mitchell; Chester Turner; and John F. Clark.

The Patrick Soil and Water Conservation District office, along with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, are proud sponsors of the Clean Water Farm Award. These individuals are role models who encourage others' stewardship. Agricultural Producers spend time, energy and hard-earned money carrying out conservation practices that benefit many people. There are 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts throughout Virginia. If you would like to nominate someone for the Clean Water Farm Award or schedule a field visit to sign up for Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share, please contact the Patrick SWCD office at (276) 694-2911.

Submitted by the Patrick County Soil and Water Conservation District.

## VOTING FOR THE PATRICK COUNTY CLERK OF COURT IS AN IMPORTANT DECISION.

Look, in elections it's easy to get bogged down in small-town rumors, inuendo, and tacky personal attacks, but for all of us it boils down to this:

DO WE WANT TO ELECT THE ONE PERSON WHO ALREADY KNOWS THE JOB, HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY DOING THE JOB, IS ACTIVELY TEAM BUILDING AMONG THE STAFF, IS PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH FOR STAFF THROUGH CONTINUED STRATEGIC EDUCATION AND IS MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO STREAMLINE PUBLIC SERVICES?

**OR**

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**Patrick County Clerk of Court**

# War in Israel

On the morning of October 7th, Hamas (the terrorist organization which currently governs Palestinians in the Gaza Strip) carried out a surprised attack on a number of communities in Israel. Hamas fired thousands of missiles in Israel, as fighters invaded Israel by land, air, and sea.

Hamas' brutality has been stunning. At the time of writing this column, they have killed more than 1,000 Israelis, including more than 200 people attending a music festival, and 27 Americans. There are stories of kidnapped families, murdered grandparents, beheaded babies, and burned children. All innocent civilians who were killed for no other reason than being in Israel.

These acts of terror are unconscionable, yet Hamas says their actions are justified. Ghazi Hamad, spokesperson for Hamas, said the attack was justified due to the attacks by Jewish settlers, against Palestinians, in the West Bank.

To the shock of many around the world, Palestinians and other Muslims agree, saying after years of injustice at the hands of Israel in the Gaza Strip, it's only right that Hamas would react in such a way.

This thinking does not surprise me, however. Palestine has long blamed Israel for their suffering, while both its leaders and people have actively worked against their own self interests.

One such example is the destruction of greenhouses in the Gaza Strip.

From 1967 until 2005, Israel controlled the Gaza Strip. In 2005, Israel decided that it was best for Israeli military and citizens to leave Gaza, due to nonstop violence stemming from the Palestinian uprising known as the Second Intifada.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon put forth a plan for Israeli disengagement, which was then ratified by the Knesset (Israel's Parliament).

On August 15, 2005, Israel Defense Force (IDF) installations and forces were removed from Gaza. About 9,000 Israeli citizens were evicted from settlements in Gaza and northern Samaria in the West Bank and paid a lump sum by the Israeli government to move. Jewish cemeteries in Gaza were even dug up by IDF forces and the bodies were then reburied in Israel. By September, Israel's withdrawal was complete.

As Israel pulled out, there was an international effort to preserve greenhouses in Gaza (built by the now-evicted settlers), which were to be taken over by Palestinians. The greenhouses had been very successful, producing vegetables and flowers that were exported around the world.

American Jewish donors bought the more than 3,000 greenhouses from Israeli settlers and transferred them the Palestinian Author-



**Morgan Griffith**  
 Representative

ity (Palestinian leadership at the time). In all, about \$13 million was spent on the project, which was set to provide thousands of jobs for Palestinians.

But instead of capitalizing on the flourishing agricultural industry supported by these greenhouses, the Palestinians destroyed them. Looters took off with irrigation hoses, water pumps, and plastic sheets. There were even reports of entire greenhouses being dismantled and carried away.

Some of the Palestinian police charged with guarding the greenhouses also joined in with the looters to steal equipment.[1]

Many blamed the Palestinian Authority, saying they did not provide enough security to prevent the looters from stealing.

The Palestinian economy was in bad shape, people were in desperate need of jobs (with unemployment estimated to be at about 50 percent), but Palestinians destroyed what could have been job providing infrastructure that was given to them.

Is that Israel's fault?

Gaza has struggled to rebuild, made even worse by the election of the Hamas political organization in June 2007. Since the takeover by Hamas, Israel and Egypt have often closed their border crossings, making it extremely difficult to export goods out of Gaza.

And instead of investing in infrastructure, such as hospitals and schools, for its people, Hamas has used what funds they have been able to acquire to build weapons in order to attack Israel. In one instance, they dug up water pipelines meant to provide water for Palestinians in Gaza and turned them into missiles.

They have also built a network of military tunnels to smuggle men and weapons around Gaza and to access the Israeli border. These tunnels are often built under civilian areas in order to use innocent people on the surface as shields.

While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is extremely complicated, Israel has proposed a two-state solution, Israel and Palestine, where each would recognize the other. The Palestinians, however, refuse to recognize Israel and still maintain their objective of the destruction of the state of Israel and elimination from Israel any person who came after the early part of the 20th century.

For questions, concerns, or comments, call my Abingdon office at (276) 525-1405, my Christiansburg office at (540) 381-5671, or via email at <https://morgangriffith.house.gov>.

# First registered EMT apprenticeship program in Virginia launched

In partnership with the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, the Danville Life Saving Crew – the primary Emergency Medical Services provider for the City of Danville – signed 13 individuals as Virginia's first Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) registered apprentices during a ceremony on Oct 6. These 13 apprentices are beginning the process of obtaining their Emergency Medical Technician Certification from the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians and their Journeyworker Credential from the State Apprenticeship Agency. The EMT apprenticeship program is one year, which equates to 2,000 hours of on-the-job training.

Virginia registered apprenticeship programs require a mix of on-the-job training and related technical instruction (RTI). For this program, the RTI will be front-loaded into the first 10 weeks and provided by the Danville Area Training Center. After completing classwork and waiting for their EMT exam date, the apprentices will work as a third person on an Emergency Response Vehicle. After passing their exam, the apprentices will be certified EMT-Basics and can continue on-the-job training with increased duties alongside a mentor. The apprentices will respond to emergency calls, provide basic life support/pre-hospital services to the critically ill and injured, and transport patients to a medical facility, always working in collaboration with and under the direction of other crew members and the incident command.

The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) Division of Registered Apprenticeship approved the Danville Area Training Center as a private RTI provider earlier this year. The apprenticeship program was officially registered with DOLI in April.

After their one-year term, these apprentices will receive their Journeyworker Credential, a portable, nationally recognized credential from the State Apprenticeship Agency that demonstrates mastery of skills and competencies. In addition to the EMT and Journeyman certificates, participants will also earn CPR and Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) certifications. After obtaining these certifications, these individuals can then serve as

mentors for future EMT apprentices.

Registered apprenticeship is an occupation-specific training model designed to produce highly skilled workers to meet the demands of employers. The model includes a paid job experience for employees that includes a combination of on-the-job training and related technical instruction.

Through the Expanding Talent through Registered Apprenticeships (ExTRA) program, IALR has helped establish 18 apprenticeship programs with various companies across Southern Virginia in industries like construction, healthcare and manufacturing. Some of these companies have already hired apprentices to complete those programs, whereas others are working through logistics before beginning to hire apprentices. IALR's efforts to expand registered apprenticeship programs in Southern Virginia are supported by grants from the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission. These grants fund both IALR's Apprenticeship Coordinator — Natori Neal, who began work in February 2022 — and reimburse eligible RTI costs for employers establishing new registered apprenticeship programs.

IALR's apprenticeship program is part of the EmPOWER framework, an employer-driven, work-based learning system of programs that systematically connects students to careers through focus areas like career awareness, career exposure and engagement opportunities, and career experience through apprenticeships, internships and other work-based learning programs.

The Virginia Career Works West Piedmont Region is partnering to provide supportive services for apprentices in the program, including 50% wage reimbursement to DLSC for 10 weeks. They will also provide monetary incentives to apprentices for reaching certain milestones during the program.

The IALR serves as a regional catalyst for economic transformation with applied research, advanced learning, advanced manufacturing, conference center services and economic development efforts. IALR's primary service area is Southern Virginia, including the counties of Patrick, Henry, Franklin, Pittsylvania, Halifax and Mecklenburg along with the cities of Martinsville and Danville.

# Pursuit ends in arrest of Patrick Springs man

A pursuit that reached speeds of 135 miles per hour on Friday, October 13, culminated in the arrest of a Patrick Springs man, according to a release from Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith.

The incident began at 7:45 p.m. when Deputy C.L. Elgin tried to stop a vehicle that was allegedly going 67 miles per hour in a 40 mph zone on County Line Road.

Smith alleged the vehicle, a Ford Mustang, immediately began to flee when Elgin turned around to on it. Two other deputies, Andrew Kinney and Matt Hodges, were close by and observed the Mustang pass them at a speed estimated in excess of 90 mph.

The pursuit eventually led the deputies to Virginia

57/Fairystone Park Highway. The Mustang allegedly reached speeds in excess of 135 mph in a remote stretch on Virginia 57, according to Smith.

After entering Henry County, the Mustang encountered congestion from slower moving vehicles near the Old Lake Market. As a result of the slower speed, Kinney was able to perform a Precision Immobilization Technique (PIT maneuver) to remove the vehicle from the highway, ending the pursuit.

Minimal damage was done to the sheriff's vehicle, while the Mustang sustained extensive damage, according to the sheriff.

There were no injuries. Jody Wayne Adkins, Jr., 22, was charged with the felony eluding law enforce-



Jody Wayne Adkins, Jr.

ment, reckless driving and reckless driving by speed. He was taken into custody without further incident, and is being held without bond in the Patrick County Jail.

The Henry County Sheriff's Office and Virginia State Police assisted in the pursuit.

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# Student loan payments resume with new providers, new plans

By Vali Jamal  
 Capital News Service

Borrowers will resume student loan payments this month after a three-year freeze that started in March 2020.

Sudden job loss from an economy shuttered by the pandemic put the loan payments on pause, and the restart was extended several times. Student loans did not accrue interest until Sept. 1 this year.

Over 1.1 million Virginia residents carry a cumulative \$43.8 billion in student loan debt, according to the Department of Education. People between the ages 35-49 carry the most student loan debt in Virginia, for a collective \$16.6 billion owed.

Approximately 45 million Americans, or around 17.4% of the U.S. adult population, have student loan debt.

Scott Kemp is the student loan ombudsman for the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

"People have gotten out of the habit of making loan payments," Kemp said.

Many borrowers have a new loan servicer and might be unfamiliar with the new websites.

"Back in 2019, we had seven loan servicers; we're now down to five," Kemp said. "So I'd say the vast majority of loan borrowers have either a new loan servicer or they have a loan servicer who's changed their name."

Borrowers have options if they are struggling to pay back their loans.

If a borrower works for a qualified employer, they can apply to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. After 120 months or 10 years with such an employer, any outstanding debt is forgiven. The borrower has to make regular payments and provide annual employer verification.

There are now also four income-based payment options with the SAVE plan being the cheapest option, according to Kemp.

The "Saving on a Valuable Education" plan is based on income and takes a smaller portion of the bor-

rower's discretionary income.

Federal Student Aid also has a temporary "on-ramp transition" period, where borrowers have up to 12 months to resume payments without penalties such as negative credit reporting, or defaulting to a collection agency.

It may be appealing as borrowers adjust, but the option comes with costly drawbacks, according to Kemp.

"You may not be making a payment for 12 months, but unlike before, interest is going to accrue every month," Kemp said. "If that loan was \$20,000 in August, if you wait a year, it's probably going to be \$21,000."

Many of the new options were established through a student loan reform led by President Joe Biden's administration, although Biden's signature \$10,000 loan forgiveness effort was overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Many borrowers still feel overwhelmed and trapped by their outstanding loans.

Frustrated by mismanagement Christina Winton has two degrees and currently works for the state of Arizona. As a public servant, she would qualify for PSLF. Winton said she has made more than the qualifying amount of 120 payments.

Winton shared her account record that showed just under \$30,000 of remaining student loan debt, from a Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix.

She has filed paperwork for PSLF and for "borrower's defense," a discharge option available if a school engaged in misconduct.

Winton is frustrated by "mismanagement" from loan servicers and the Department of Education. She cited that her provided signatures were overlooked, her payment history lost and her applications stuck in a holding pattern.

She feels "trapped in debt" and is unable to make her student loan payment because she is already struggling with other important bills, Winton said. She feels forced between feeding her family, keep-

ing the water running and a student loan payment plan that has been a headache.

Winton works with the advocacy organization Student Loan Justice to help restore borrower and bankruptcy rights to student loans.

The Department of Justice issued guidance last November that could make bankruptcy discharge of student loans more likely, if certain stipulations of hardship are met. The DOJ guidance was to enhance "consistency and equity" of student loan bankruptcy claims in accordance with existing case law.

Current borrowers should keep a good record of their payment history and call those who can make a difference, according to Winton.

"Keep all your documentation and then call your senators, House representatives, contact the president, contact the first lady, contact your local constituent, your local attorney generals' offices," Winton said.

Winton also advised students to not borrow any more money and called for the federal government to cancel all student loans.

"I would love to own a home"

Daniel Sherwood shared his account record that showed over \$70,000 in student loan debt, which he fears will keep him from home ownership.

He currently rents in Seattle but "would love to own a home." Sherwood stated that he can't, because of "student loans that will die with me."

Congress should pass bills to remove interest and require the borrower's consent before the loans are sold to another company, according to Sherwood.

"I wish they would've told me that they could sell my loans off to a different student loan company, and thus changing the terms and interest rates on you without getting your consent," Sherwood stated in an email. "I wish I fully understood the contract that I was signing at the age of 18."

Biden recently announced another plan to erase \$9 billion in student loan debt. An estimated 3.6 million

borrowers will have a cumulative total of \$127 billion forgiven.

Sherwood understands the Biden administration wants to help people like him. He thinks borrowers who were promised \$10,000 student loan forgiveness, or more in some cases, should be in the next batch of forgiven loans.

Higher education finance reform Some organizations want higher education to be publicly financed altogether.

Liz King is the senior program director for education equity at The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a legislative advocacy group founded in 1950.

Debt-financed education holds students back from pursuit of their goals, King said. They might not pursue an art, law, medical or engineering degree based on the final price tag.

"It limits our growth and development as a society if individual students do not have the opportunity to pursue their passions and share their gifts and talents with the rest of us," King said.

All student loan debt should be forgiven and the financing of higher education should be reformed, according to King.

"One of the most important messages to convey is how important it is to vote and be civically engaged and to ensure that your voice is heard," King said.

King also encouraged borrowers to contact policy makers and advocacy groups, and share their stories about the impact of their debt.

"Policymakers need to hear the real stories of what this really means, who's really affected and the way in which we need a broader, longer term, bigger picture, structural reform to move away from debt-financed higher education," King said.

Capital News Service is a program of Virginia Commonwealth University's Robertson School of Media and Culture. Students in the program provide state government coverage for a variety of media outlets in Virginia.

## Back Yard Cow donates sale proceeds to reading initiative

Thanks to The Back Yard Cow for donating their Saturday, Oct 7 sales to the Patrick County Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

Between sales and donations, a total of \$630 was raised! These funds help the program to continue to mail out a book a month to kids in Patrick County that are younger than 5 years old.

The Patrick County Dolly Parton Imagination Library is the local partner with the national program and in partnership between the Chamber of Commerce, One Family Productions, Step Inc., and Stuart

Rotary Club.

For more information on the program visit the chamber's website, [www.patrick-chamber.com](http://www.patrick-chamber.com)

The Back Yard Cow is a seasonal ice cream shop located in Woolwine Virginia. It is owned and operated by the Merriman family. Their last day for this season was Sunday Oct 8. They will reopen in April featuring a great list of ice creams, sundaes and floats.



Pictured are Rebecca Adcock, executive director of the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce, and Wendy Merriman, owner The Back Yard Cow.

## October is Pastor Appreciation Month

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# Just Add Worms

By Hannah Vinova  
 Patrick County Master Gardeners

What happens when you mix food scraps, junk mail, and worms? You get dirt! Vermicompost (worm composting) to be exact. You can save money every spring by creating your own nutrient and microbe-rich soil amendment at home and the best part is, you have most of what you need at home to get started! Now, before you squirm at the idea of playing with worms, channel your inner child and hear me out.

Your soil needs you! In order to produce beautiful flowers and nutrient-rich food, soil needs to retain water and have access to nutrients. Vermicompost increases the soil's ability to retain water and feeds the soil organic matter that releases nutrients over time for your plants to consume. Vermicompost is so nutrient dense that a little goes a long way; you should only use 20% of the volume of the soil you are treating. Keeping a worm bin will save you a lot of money by reducing your kitchen waste and will feed your garden without the need for chemical fertilizers.

If that isn't reason enough, according to the EPA, over 50% of the waste generated in the US consists mostly of organic materials (paper and paperboard products, food scraps, and yard clippings) as of 2018. That is 146 million tons of waste that were carried away to the landfills! If we would all maintain a worm bin we could greatly reduce the waste going to landfills as well as our dependency on non-renewable energies used to transport and process that trash. Nothing speaks to my heart more than a simple solution to a complex problem. Worms to the rescue!

So, what is composting? Composting is the process of converting organic materials into nutrient-rich soil amendment. This typically requires building an outdoor pile (at least 3' X 3') of 'green' and 'brown' organic materials (more on this later), keeping it moist, and turning it every so often. The pile will get hot, killing all of the pathogens that may be present, and the microbes will work to decompose all of that material in 6-9 months on average. Vermicomposting has a similar process minus the heat and with the addition of worms to the pile. Best of all, keeping a worm bin is easy; you only need 4 things: a bin, bedding, worms, and food.

**The Bin**  
 You are going to need a home for your worms. This is as simple as getting a plastic storage tote with a lid from your basement or garage, you know you've been wanting to pick that up anyways. Now take that bin and make holes along the top 1 inch to allow for air circulation; don't make holes on the top or bottom of the bin. Holes on the top of the bin will allow too much light and holes on the bottom of the bin will allow moisture (and potentially worms) to escape. Your worms will need a dark and moist environment to thrive so keep this in mind as you prepare your bin. Then you'll need to find a place to put the worm bin, this can be indoors or outdoors as long as it's protected from the elements. The most important thing about the location is that it is convenient for you to visit and feed the worms, so think of an area of your home that you visit regularly; I keep mine in the back porch under a table.

**The Bedding**  
 Worm bedding is as simple as shredding cardboard or paper and you can add peat moss, coco coir, or even yard waste (like grass clippings and wood chips) in moderation. The job of the bedding is to absorb and hold moisture, allow oxygen to flow, and block out light.

**Worms**  
 When you are ready to get your worms, reach out to that friend or neighbor that already has a worm bin or to a local master gardener. Happy worms double their population every 90 days, so we are happy to share some with you to get started. If you decide to buy some, there are many sources online, just make sure you get Red Wiggler worms. Red Wigglers love your organic trash and their one mission in life is to eat it. Other types of worms, like the ones you find in your garden after a heavy rain, are not interested in your food scraps and will not be happy in the bin environment you carefully crafted. As a rule of thumb you should start with about a pound of worms but you can absolutely start with less. Just keep in mind that the amount of material you put in the bin is relative to how many worms you have. You don't want food going bad before your worms can eat it because the bin can get smelly and attract other critters you don't want around.

**Food**  
 There are two types of organic material you can feed your worms: greens (nitrogen-rich) and browns (carbon-rich). Greens are fruit and vegetable scraps (peels, husks, leaves, cores, melon rinds, roots, and stems), wilted, brown, or rotten produce, coffee grinds, and lawn clippings. Bread, pasta, and rice fall in this category too, but keep these to a minimum. You can even feed them that dead plant you forgot to water, just make sure it wasn't diseased so you don't spread the disease. Brown materials are shredded paper, cardboard, newspaper, paper towels, coffee filters, egg shells, dryer lint, feathers, and hair (human and animal). You should avoid feeding them garlic, onions, human or animal feces, citrus, dairy, meat, oils or grease, and bones. When it's time to feed your worms, make a hole on one side of the bin, fill it with the green material and then cover it with the brown materials. You want to be mindful not to overfeed your worms; they eat half their weight per day, so if you started with a pound of worms, you can feed them 3.5 pounds of food per week. Before feeding them again, make sure they have eaten through the food they already have and alternate the side of the bin with every feed, this will encourage the worms to move through the bin and aerate the compost for you.

Hopefully by now you are inspired to start your own vermicompost bin and feel armed with all of the information you need to do it. If you need additional help with information or worms, talk to one of our Patrick County Master Gardeners and they will point you in the right direction.

Now go do like the early bird, get some worms and battle climate change one banana peel at a time.

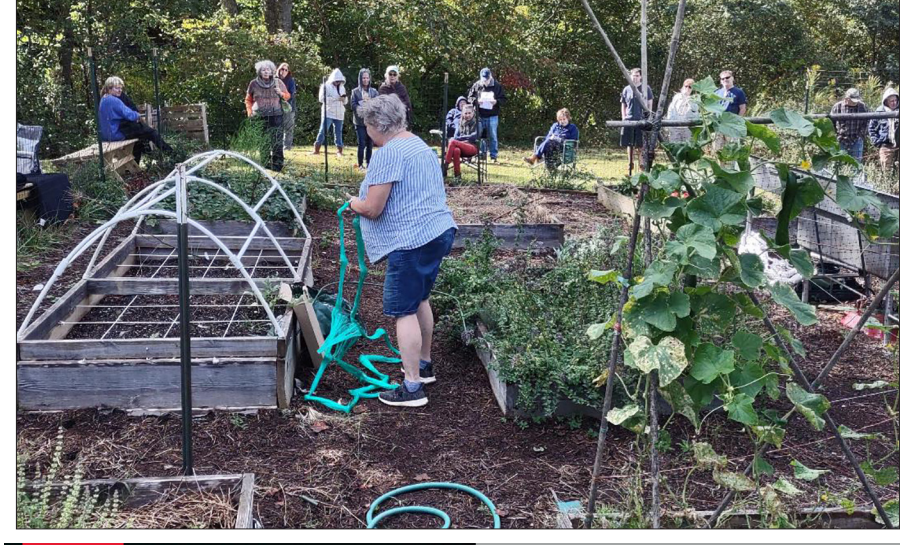
<https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/national-overview-facts-and-figures-materials>

# Detering deer, row covers, native trees and strawberries

Master Gardeners Judy Ferring, Ginnie Conway and Debbie Connor presented information on using companion plants to deter deer, native tree identification and extending the growing season using row covers. Information on growing strawberries was also shared by Norma Bozenmayer and locally grown strawberry plants were given to participants to plant their own strawberries.

Mark your calendar for Master Gardener Native Plant Sale October 21, from 10 a.m. till noon outside the Visitors Center on Main Street in Uptown Stuart.

The last Learning Garden Workshop of 2023 will be held on November 4, at 10 a.m. Fruit trees, forest farming and garlic planting will be covered. For information on Master Gardener programs email mgpcva@gmail.com.



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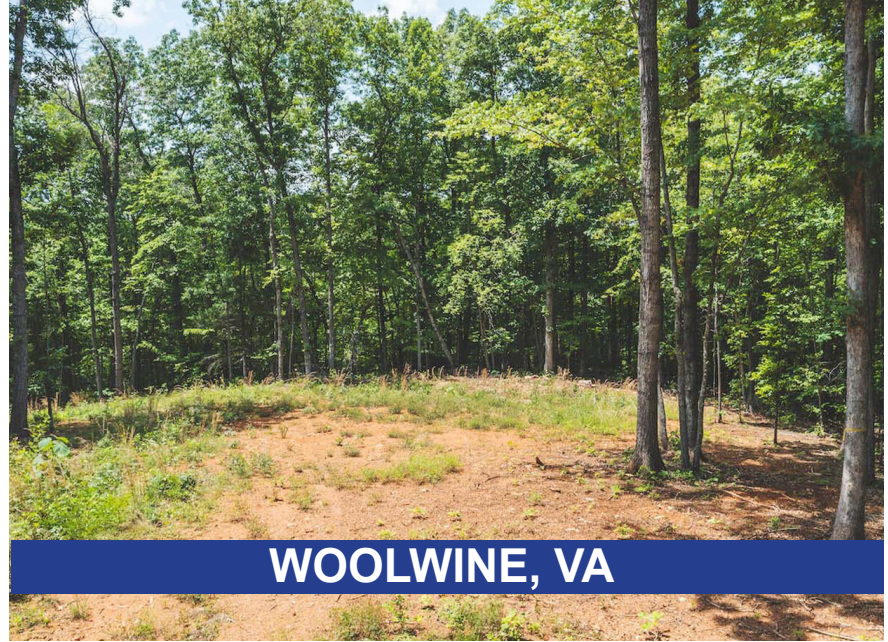
## FEATURED LISTINGS

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**STUART, VA**

Beautiful 3 bedroom, 2 bath brick home on 3.4 acres of land. The home has a full, unfinished basement and a nice deck overlooking the backyard and creek. **\$190,000**



**WOOLWINE, VA**

Check out this wooded 12.394 acre property that features multiple springs and a stream. It offers great road frontage and would be ideal for a permanent home, weekend getaway, or hunting cabin. **\$75,000**

**JUST LISTED**



**MEADOWS OF DAN, VA**

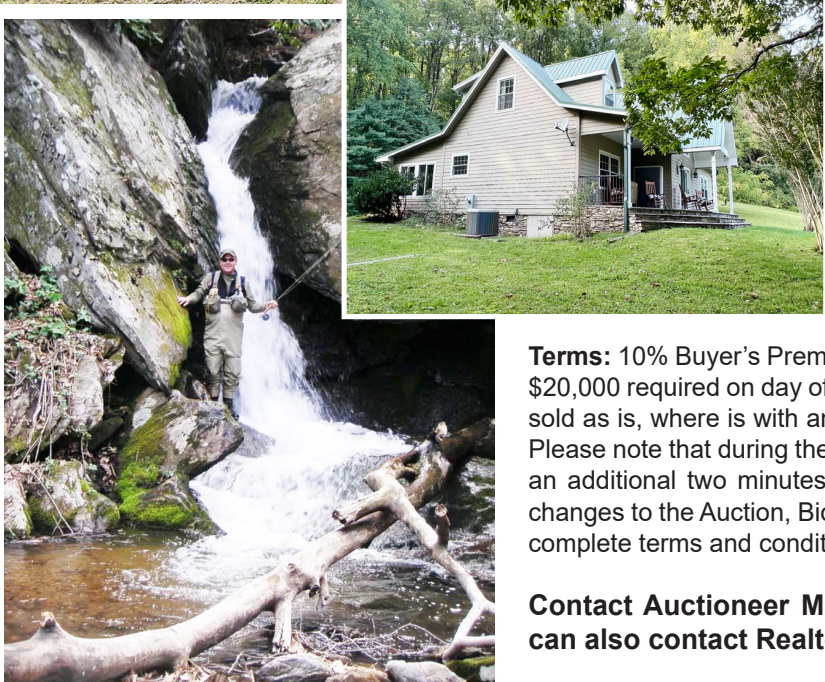
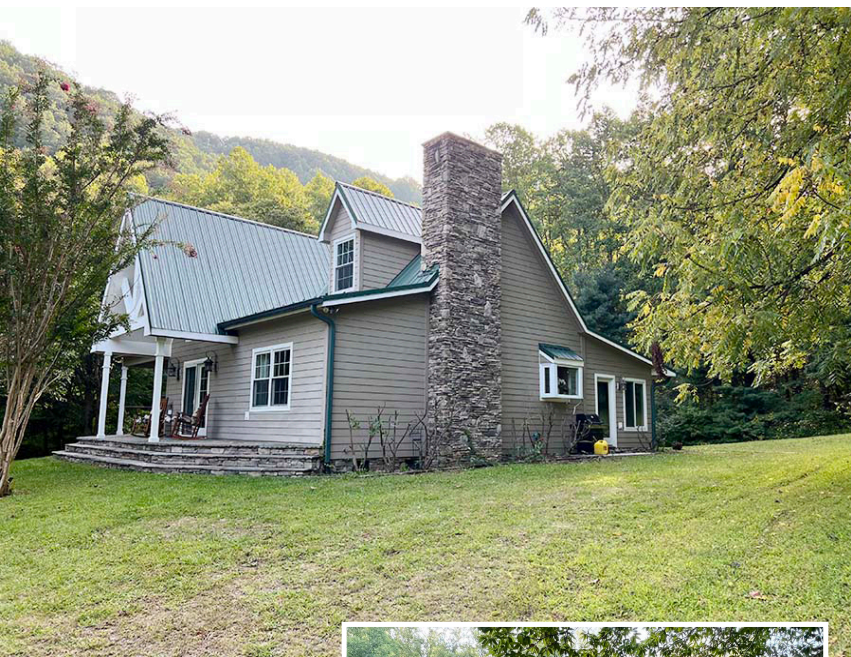
Beautiful mountain cottage on 3+ acres of land with creeks and springs. Home has 2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths and just over 1,000 sq ft of finished living space. **\$289,900**



**GALAX, VA**

Take a look at this immaculate 2 bedroom, 2 bath home in the Chestnut Falls Community. Home features 3,350+ sq ft of living space and sits on 5 acres of land. **\$389,000**

## ONLINE AUCTION



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With 1.6 miles of impressive creek frontage along the North Fork of the Smith River, this property is a dream for outdoor enthusiasts. Cast your line into the river and enjoy fishing with both native and rainbow trout at your doorstep. This expansive property is densely wooded, providing a natural sanctuary for wildlife and endless opportunities for recreation and exploration. Whether you're a hunter or simply seeking seclusion, this land has it all. There is a conservation easement in effect for the property. Please refer to the bidder packet at VAAuctionPro.com for more information. The property also includes a 24x30 barn and a 16x32 detached garage, offering ample space for storage and projects.

This is your opportunity to own a secluded retreat where the wonders of nature are right at your doorstep. Whether you're seeking a peaceful escape, a hunting paradise, or a fishing haven, this property has it all.

**Terms:** 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$20,000 required on day of sale. Close on or before December 4th, 2023. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence placing a bid. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps at VAAuctionPro.com.

Contact Auctioneer Matt Gallimore at 540-239-2585 or email Gallimore.Matt@gmail.com. You can also contact Realtor Boogie Dehart at 276-952-5061 or email BoogieD@yahoo.com

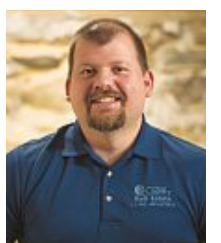


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