



# THE ENTERPRISE

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

## P&HCC celebrates the official opening of MET II with a 50 percent enrollment increase



Dr. Greg Hodges, president of Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) welcomed visitors at the grand opening of the new MET II.



A group of visitors toured the new areas of MET II.

**By Debbie Hall**  
Local and state representatives, as well as those from various organizations and agencies, gathered on November 30 to celebrate the grand opening of the MET II lab at Patrick & Henry Community College, which currently boasts 165 stu-

dents. “The grand opening has been years in the making,” Dr. Greg Hodges, president of P&HCC, said at the event that was held at P&HCC’s Martinsville campus. “In 2017, we opened Building I of our Manufacturing, Engineering,

and Technology Complex. We call it ‘The Met,’ which is 50,000 square feet dedicated to what we at P&HCC call the J-O-B Degree. “MET I is dedicated to the career and education pathways such as mechatronics, robotics, CAD, industrial maintenance, industrial engi-

neering and electronics, and the Racing College of Virginia,” Hodges said. With the grand opening, “we add an additional 22,000 square feet of space to MET II, which allows us to triple our welding capacity and ex-

(See P&HCC p. 3)

## Thomas Stuart returns, Marcy still missing

**By Debbie Hall**  
One of the felines missing from Stuart has been found, but the location of another remains a mystery.

Thomas Stuart, a mascot of sorts in the Uptown Stuart area, was found on Sunday, Dec. 10. He had been missing since Nov. 30.

Erica Cipko Wade, who is one of the humans caring for Thomas, said “it seems that he just walked up the street.”

James Edwards and Doug Still-er spotted Tom as he walked up Main Street from the area of the Visitor Center, Wade said. The two “snagged him and kept him until” Town Manager Bryce Simmons arrived with a cage to hold Thomas for the time being.

Shortly thereafter, Chris Corbett arrived at the office of his law firm to let Thomas inside, said Wade, who attends church in Collinsville.

“I was down there trying to orchestrate/coordinate his return to the office,” she said of the law firm. Thomas splits his time between



Bryce Simmons, town manager, corralled Thomas in a crate shortly after the feline was found Sunday.

there and Divine Designs Salon, often visiting other businesses along the way.

When found, Thomas “was basically clean and his feet were white, and fairly dry even though it was raining,” Wade said. “He lost about 5 to 6 pounds, and was fairly dehydrated.”

In his usual style though, “he

(See Thomas Stuart p. 3)



A mobile home has been parked near the Virginia 8/103 intersection for months. (Contributed photos)

## Fundraising effort underway to move abandoned property

**By Debbie Hall**  
A handwritten sign affixed to one end of an abandoned mobile home says it all: “If you can haul me, you can have me,” but so far, there have been no takers, and a fundraising effort is now underway to pay for expenses related to demolition/moving.

“I’m not sure who put the sign up, but I know lots of folks in the community would like to see it gone,”

said Sondra Miller, owner of the property where the disabled trailer has been parked for months.

The home was wrecked while it was being towed from Virginia 8 onto Virginia 103, according to Miller.

Initially, the home was parked near the Virginia 8/103 intersection sometime in early June. Some say it predated the Beach Music Festival,

(See Mobile Home p. 3)



The festival of lights will feature different caroling groups every night except Wednesday, December 20.

## Festival of Lights returns to Dehart Park

**By Taylor Boyd**  
The third annual DeHart Park Festival of Lights will be held Friday, December 15 through Saturday, December 23, at the park. The festival operates on Fridays and Saturdays from 6-9 p.m. and Sundays – Thursdays, from 6-8 p.m.

Amy Corns, chairman of the Stuart Parks & Recreation Association Fundraising Committee, said the event represents the community coming together to spread Christmas cheer while also raising money for the park.

“Each year, we kind of focus on a different fundraising goal. This year, the profits from the Festival of Lights will go to raising money to redo our bathrooms to make them

ADA (Americans with Disability Act) compliant,” she said.

Corns said the association added a pickleball court this fall and a sand volleyball court last year. It also is finishing up additions to the playground for inclusive playground pieces. A T-Mobile grant is earmarked to pay for the equipment.

“We’re hoping to provide access and pour maybe a concrete walkway towards those ADA pieces so that the community can easily access them at our park,” she said. “We got a grant for \$45,000 for those inclusive pieces, but we will use our fundraising funds to help with anything that we need to tie

(See Festival p. 7)

## Attempted murder charge lodged in Dec. 7 incident

A Bassett man was charged with attempted murder in connection with an incident in the Claudville community of Patrick County, according to a release from Patrick County Sheriff Dan Smith.

Smith said the incident occurred around 3:40 a.m. on December 7, when video surveillance allegedly captured footage of a man with a gasoline can and the occupied home at 23 Mills School Road being ignited. The home is located in the Claudville area of the county.

Shortly after 4 a.m. that day, a man crashed his vehicle approximately 12 miles from the home, Smith said.

Daniel Shields Reynolds, 39, was arrested by the Virginia State Police as a result of the crash, and charged with driving under the influence, Smith said.

On the afternoon of December 7, the resident at 23 Mills School Road discovered smoldering melted siding and other burned material on her home, and contacted the sheriff’s office, Smith said, adding that Reynolds had been released from the Patrick County Jail just before the call reporting the fire damage.

Smith said that Reynolds and the resident at 23 Mills School Road had been involved in a relationship.



Daniel Shields Reynolds

“That fact that the home did not become fully engulfed in flames is a miracle, otherwise we would most likely be dealing with a loss of life,” Smith said in a Friday release.

Smith said the Henry County Sheriff’s Office was “an enormous help” in locating and arresting Reynolds in connection with the incident.

Currently, Reynolds is being held without bond in the Patrick County Jail. In addition to attempted murder, he also is charged with arson in connection with the incident.

Sheriff lieutenants Foley and Steve Austin are handling the case. Anyone with information is urged to contact Foley at (276) 692-6660 or Austin at (276) 692-5950.

# REAL ESTATE AUCTION

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## Fire season in Virginia ends, after extreme activity

During this year's fall fire season, which ran from Oct. 15 to Nov. 30, the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) responded to 156 wildfires that burned nearly 25,000 acres and damaged 13 structures. Suppression efforts by DOF and the agency's firefighting partners are credited with saving 224 homes and 268 other structures, with an estimated protected value of \$46.8 million. For comparison, 89 wildfires burned 2,654 acres in the 2022 fall fire season.

"With 35 consecutive days of suppression efforts, this fall fire season provided tremendous challenges," said State Forester Rob Farrell. "Our wildland firefighters once again answered the call to protect Virginia's communities and natural resources. These successes would not be possible without our local, state and federal partners, as well as supporting resources from other states."

Drought conditions combined with seasonal factors such as low humidity, high winds, and dry leaves and grass, allows wildfires to start easily, spread quickly and be difficult to contain. Although the fall fire season has ended, the threat of wildfire is always present, and many parts of Virginia are still in a drought.

"Until drought conditions lift, fire danger will remain elevated," said DOF Director of Fire and Emergency Response John Miller. "The leading cause of wildfires this year was once again escaped debris burning. Many localities have implemented fire restrictions, so check with local officials before conducting any outdoor burning. Even if no fire restrictions are in place, we encourage those in drought areas to delay all outdoor burning until the drought is lifted."

Follow these tips when burning debris:

- \*Check with local officials before burning.
- \*Avoid burning if your locality is in a drought.
- \*Avoid burning on dry, windy days.
- \*Keep your burn pile small.
- \*Stay with your fire until it's completely out (drown, stir, drown again, ensure it's cool).
- \*Have a rake or shovel and charged water hose on hand.
- \*Have a phone ready to call 911 if a fire escapes your control.
- \*Consider a "green" alternative to burning yard debris: compost your organic yard waste.

## Pets of the Week



This white dog with the baby blue eyes is so anxious to have a home for Christmas. Please come and meet him. He needs a home with no chickens.

This handsome orange cat would love a home for Christmas. There are many cats in the shelter waiting for a home.

Call the Call the Patrick County Public Animal Shelter (PCPAS) at (276) 694-6259 for more information. To view other available pets, visit the shelter or check out its Facebook page. Adoption fees are \$10 and include spay/neuter and a rabies vaccination.

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# P&HCC

(cont. from page 1)

pand both virtual and robotic welding to produce employees with skill sets that are in high demand in our service region," he said.

"The local economic payoff is already underway, as we are able to begin instruction in this new facility back in February while renovations were being finalized," Hodges said. "We now have 165 students currently enrolled in this new building, representing a 50 percent enrollment increase in just a few weeks, with an additional 71 students on the processing list to begin very shortly."

The success, he said, "is the direct result of one thing: Partnerships."

Hodges explained that the grand opening of MET II would not have been possible "without the confidence and investments" in P&HCC from its local, state, and federal partners.

"With a total price tag of just shy of \$6 million, MET II is opening today because our partners ensured that the vision became a reality for a state-of-the-art facility that provides students with skills and competencies, they need to acquire good paying, high demand jobs in the communities" served by the college, Hodges said, and extended "deep appreciation" to those partners.

At the federal level, P&HCC "received \$458,000 from the Public Works Program of the Economic Development Administration for purchase of this state-of-the-art equipment" used in the new lab, Hodges said.

On a regional and state level, Hodges said P&HCC received \$600,000 from the Tobacco Commission in renovation funds, and an ad-

ditional \$224,000 in equipment.

Locally, the P&HCC Board invested \$1.1 million in local funds, "and finally, and most critically, we want to acknowledge and extend our deep, deep gratitude to the Harvest Foundation, which invested \$3.45 million in total project funds," he said, adding several members of the foundation and its board also were among those attending the ceremony.

Hodges extended his "deep gratitude to the team" at the college, "who have worked so hard to ensure that this facility is, indeed, best in class.

Go VA Region 3 provided funds to add another instructor, Hodges said, and also noted the P&HCC Board has partnered with the college throughout the process.

The grand opening represents 40 percent of the space allocation in MET II, Hodges said. The remaining 60 percent of the building was separated by a door behind the podium.

It represents 30,000 square feet of the building "for which we are now raising funds which will expend current programming and create new programming in areas like precision machining, engine repair, heavy equipment operation, and simulation," Hodges said.

The renovated space once complete will also create an additional flexible space to accommodate the workforce needs of new businesses and the expansion of current regional employers, he said.

"As with all renovations for our two MET buildings, every square foot will be dedicated to good-paying jobs here in our community," he

added and introduced Mark Heath, president and CEO of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. (EDC).

Heath said the grand opening "truly is a great day" for the college, but also for the community "as it relates to the community's overall economic development efforts.

"In today's economic development world, competition is greater than ever. Communities are investing in sites and buildings, housing, and all manner of place-making to make themselves stand out in a very crowded field," Heath said.

Workforce training "has always been a key component to any community's economic development and marketing plan. Especially in today's tightening labor market, workforce training is first and foremost in the minds of companies and site selection consultants alike," Heath said, adding that P&HCC "has long been a key team member of the Martinsville-Henry County EDC's efforts, and today's announcement only further adds to their importance."

The EDC, Heath said, "has been bringing clients to MET I for a number of years, and it has added a lot to our economic development success over the past number of years. Now, with MET II's expansion, Patrick & Henry's already world-class welding program will only enhance the EDC's training offerings even more."

Heath added that "the EDC appreciates all of the hard work on behalf of our community, and we can't wait to bring our clients from around the world to this world-class

facility."

Dr. David Doré, Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, commended Hodges, the team at P&HCC, the partners "who played a key role in bringing this to life. We are in a competitive environment like we have never been before."

The building, Doré said, "really exemplifies the kind of alignment and partnership that we are building across the entire system. I have been in manufacturing facilities throughout the United States, and you have one of the finest facilities in the nation in terms of really being best in class. Everything you do here is best in class and we want to keep that momentum going."

Doré said, "This building and this team exemplifies this notion of getting to yes. Partnerships with industry and alignment will become more and more important to the economic development of the Commonwealth of Virginia."

He again thanked Hodges and his team "for the kind of alignment that we need across our whole system."

DeWitt House, senior program officer with the Harvest Foundation, said that P&HCC "is one of the best-kept secrets in our community."

However, that is changing, he said, adding that the Harvest Foundation's investment "is what we look at as just one investment in a series of great investments in this community, and what Dr. Hodges and the folks" at P&HCC "are doing to move the workforce forward. We're looking forward to being partners for a long time to come."



Mark Heath, president and CEO of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp. (EDC), said the new facility will help with marketing and economic development efforts.



DeWitt House, senior program officer with the Harvest Foundation, addressed those gathered at the grand opening.



Dr. David Doré, Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, was in Martinsville-Henry County to celebrate the grand opening at P&HCC.



A group of visitors toured the new areas of MET II.

# Thomas Stuart

(cont. from page 1)

was so happy to be with people who loved and missed him," Wade said, adding that Thomas also "had lost his voice from yelling so much before he was noticed."

On Monday, Thomas was checked out by a veterinarian, Wade said.

"He has a mild upper respiratory infection and is getting fluids. His nails are broken, and he has scratches on his feet, likely from trying to get out of wherever he was," she said.

For now, "it seems like there are big details missing, but only Tom will know the truth" about the circumstances of his 10-day absence, Wade said.

Wade and others also spent part

of Monday "working on collecting all the pledged reward money," which was last reported on the salon's social media to be \$1,000.

Meanwhile, Marcy Boots, one of Thomas' offspring, remains missing, according to Susan Branham, owner of Quilted Colors in Stuart.

Like Thomas, Marcy had the same routine for nearly five years, Branham said.

"She mostly stayed inside the store," but Marcy sometimes went outside during the day, Branham said, adding that Marcy almost always returned at night, until Monday, Nov. 27.

The appearance of the two cats is remarkably similar as well, Barn-

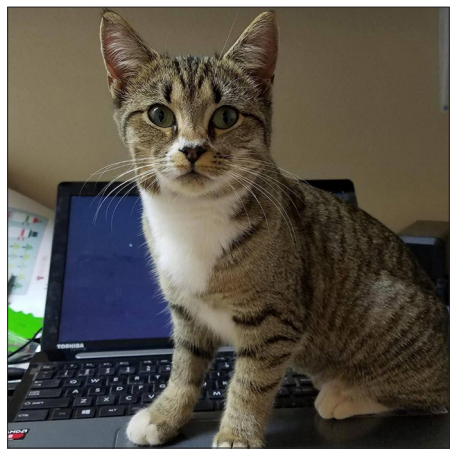
ham said.

"A lot of people would ask me 'was that Thomas,' when they saw her in the window" of the store on Main Street, Branham said, and explained that the biggest difference is the white spot on Thomas' nose is on the other side on Marcy.

Additionally, Marcy is spayed, but she is not as big as Thomas.

"She has a little bit of extra fluff on her, but not much," Branham said.

Thomas' return has given her new hope that Marcy also will find her way back. That, combined with the fact that "she did this once before. She was gone three weeks to the day," Branham said. "So, it's



Marcy Boots is still missing.

possible" that she will return.

Anyone with information about Marcy's whereabouts is asked to call the store at (276) 694-3020.

# Mobile Home

(cont. from page 1)

which got underway on June 8.

"The owner, upon the request of the state trooper to move it off the road, had it towed to the place it is now," Miller said of the trailer's current location, listed online as 6115 Dry Pond Highway, Stuart.

Miller, who owns the right of way where the trailer now sits, explained that the owner of the mobile home "began working on fixing the hitch, I am guessing so that he could finish moving it to its intended destination. Before he could accomplish this task, however, he died."

Miller said she contacted the sheriff's office, state troopers, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), the Commonwealth Attorney, and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

"I also contacted some neighbors and contractors, trying to figure out options," she said.

The state discontinued maintenance of the area now occupied by the trailer and no longer has control of it, said Lisa Price-Hughes, resident engineer with VDOT.

Hughes said VDOT officials are working with the Virginia State Police (VSP) to have it towed.

"We don't have any way to tow it," she said. Generally, in cases that involve abandoned vehicles in snow storms, etc., "we work with the Virginia State Police to get them towed."

Miller said she also has no way to move the property.

"I think the hitch might be broken so I am not sure



A handwritten sign states "If you can haul me, you can have me."

how easy it would be to move it. It is a standard-size single-wide trailer with 2 bedrooms and 1 bathroom. It's in poor condition overall," she said.

She has the necessary paperwork, including a Vehicle Removal Certificate, and an Abandoned Vehicle Record Request Receipt issued by the DMV "that I would present to the licensed demo contractor.

"I can now have the trailer demolished, but that is very expensive," Miller said, adding that her primary interest is getting the home off of her property.

"It just really comes down to funding at this point," Miller said, adding that she has received one quote from a demolition contractor to demolish the trailer.



According to a printed notice, the home is considered an abandoned vehicle.

"It was \$4,000," Miller said. "No one I know has that kind of money for something random like that."

She is pursuing legal options and said her sister suggested starting a GoFundMe page for the abandoned trailer demo and/or legal fees.

"My time frame to raise funds for this trailer's demolition is 1 year," Miller wrote on the fundraising site. "If I don't have the funds needed by that point, I will be forced to return donations, less the money spent on legal fees and the trailer will remain indefinitely."

To donate, or for more information, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/abandoned-trailer-demolition>.

# A Date Which Will Live in Infamy

On December 7, 1941, just before 8:00 am, the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service launched a surprise attack on the United States. The U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, located on Oahu, Hawaii, was attacked by 353 Imperial Japanese fighters in two waves.

The attack destroyed eight massive U.S. battleships and more than 300 airplanes. In total, 2,403 Americans were killed as a result of the attack, and 1,178 others were wounded.

Almost half of the Americans who died that day were aboard the USS Arizona. An 1,800-pound bomb was dropped on the battleship and landed in the ship's forward ammunition magazine. The ship then exploded and sank, killing 1,000 men who were trapped inside.

Seven and a half hours later on that day, Japan officially declared war on the United States and the British Empire.

The following day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed the nation in a Joint Session of Congress. The opening line of the speech began, "Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy..."

The United States, up until the attack on Pearl Harbor, was a neutral nation. On December 8, the United States Congress declared war on Japan, and so led to the U.S. formally entering World War II.

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor was designed to destroy the United States' Pacific fleet. Almost the entire fleet was moored around Ford Island in the harbor and hundreds of airplanes sat in nearby airfields.

However, as it turns out, one of our Navy's most important types of vessels, our aircraft carriers, were not there that day. These air-

craft carriers played the critical role of bringing planes to distant battle areas around the Pacific.

All three of the Pacific Fleet's carriers were away from Pearl Harbor on December 7. The USS Enterprise was on its way back to Pearl Harbor, after transporting 12 Marine Corps F4F-3 Wildcat fighters to Wake Island. The USS Lexington was sent to Midway Island to deliver 18 Marine Corps SB2U Vindicator dive bombers. The last, USS Saratoga, was in San Diego after going through months long refit.

Our other four carriers, USS Ranger, USS Yorktown, USS Hornet, and USS Wasp were stationed on the East Coast.

The absence of the carriers that day proved to be crucial to the United States' success in future battles in the Pacific. American aircraft carriers played important roles in the Battle of Coral Sea (May 4-8, 1942) and the Battle of Midway (June 4-7, 1942).

The USS Lexington and USS Yorktown successfully damaged a Japanese carrier and sunk supporting ships during the Battle of Coral Sea. However, the USS Lexington was critically damaged (and later scuttled), and the USS Yorktown was badly damaged as well. Despite this, USS Yorktown was able to return to Pearl Harbor for repairs. The carrier was put to sea only 72 hours later, even though it was originally thought repairs would take weeks. Accordingly, Yorktown was able to provide support at the Battle of Midway.

During Midway, Yorktown took on counterattacks by the Japanese, providing cover for USS Enterprise and USS Hornet. Though the Japanese crippled Yorktown, their losses proved substantial, having lost four aircraft carriers during



the battle. It is considered a turning point in the War in the Pacific.

A Side Note

Jeannette Rankin was the first woman to be elected to federal office in the United States. She was also the only member of Congress to vote against declaring war on Japan and entering World War II. She had been one of a handful of members who earlier in her life had voted against entering World War I as well. While some may argue there were valid reasons to vote against WWI, there was no justifying voting against defending ourselves from the Japanese after their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor.

It is important to remember Pearl Harbor and honor the lives lost on that day. It is also important to remember our nation unified, fought, struggled, and prevailed.

On the 82nd anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, I commend our men and women in uniform, both past and present, for their service.

If you have questions, concerns, or comments, call my Abingdon office at (276) 525-1405, my Christiansburg office at (540) 381-5671, or via email at [www.morgangriffith.house.gov](http://www.morgangriffith.house.gov).

# Escaping the Black Hole of Worry

By Bryan Golden

Worry is an all-consuming black hole which drains your time, emotions, and physical well-being. Worry is insidious because you are so used to it that you aren't aware how often, or how readily, you worry. For some people, worry is a way of life.

We grow up being taught, by example, to make worry a regular activity. We worry about what happened. We worry about what is happening now. We worry about what might happen. We worry about what others will do. We worry about what other people won't do. We worry about just about everything.

Worry becomes a default reaction to uncertainty. At the very least, worry is like being in a rocking chair; it's a lot of activity which doesn't get you anywhere. At its worst, worry causes, or worsens, physical and mental ailments.

Some of the many conditions worry can be responsible for include stress, anxiety, headaches, high blood pressure, coronary issues, sleep disorders, and eating disorders. Ironically, people commonly react to the onset of these maladies by worrying even more.

Taking control of and reducing worry has no negative side effects. The only impact of this strategy is a substantial improvement in your quality of life, and a markedly higher level of happiness.

Regardless of how much you currently worry, you can substantially decrease the level. This starts with recognizing how much you worry and then making a commitment to doing what it takes to reduce the degree to which you worry. Here are some practical strategies for reducing worry.

Stop worrying about the past by recognizing there is nothing you can do to change it. There are two lessons to be learned from your past; what worked and what did not. Eliminate any behavior which does not bring you your desired results. Keep repeating those actions which have been successful. Past bad decisions are counteracted by making better decisions now.

Issues, which you are concerned about, fall into two categories. There are those things which you can't do anything about. Since there's nothing you can do about them, let each one go. Your energy is better spent with the second category, those things you do have influence over. With these issues, replace worry with action by taking the necessary steps required to accomplish your objective.

Keeping things in perspective reduces worry. Many of the things you worry about don't matter, or are irrelevant. Don't devote any time to them. They are not worthy of your attention. Ask yourself if what you are worried about today will matter 5 years from now. If it won't,

save yourself the 5 years and stop worrying about it now.

Have positive expectations for today and tomorrow. Don't think about what you don't want. Do not become embroiled in an endless cycle of what if scenarios of what could go wrong. Instead, focus your concentration on visualizing exactly what you want to achieve and how you want your future to look.

There is a solution for every problem. Your objective is to find it. Stop rehashing problems over and over, from every possible angle. Identify a problem once, and then get to work fixing it. Solutions are only implemented through action.

Believe in yourself. You have what it takes to live the life you want. You can attain your goals. Your past does not limit you, it prepares you. Don't allow bad experiences to pollute your future.

You can escape the black hole of worry. Start making positive changes today. Implement at least one of the above strategies. Once you have done so, add another. In less time than you realize, your worrying will substantially diminish.

*Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at [Bryan@columnist.com](mailto:Bryan@columnist.com) or visit [www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com](http://www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com) Copyright 2023 Bryan Golden.*

# Community College to Lead Regional Work-Ethic Focused Instruction

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) is one of three community colleges awarded a grant for \$85,000 from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) as part of the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP) to support delivery of the Mike Rowe Works (MRW) Work Ethic Certification. MRW curriculum was developed in partnership with Wichita State University Tech to examine the importance of work ethic, personal responsibility and a positive attitude.

"Skill and competency development at Virginia's community colleges prepares students to secure paid internships and career opportunities," said

Dr. Alisha Bazemore, assistant director of innovative work-based learning initiatives at SCHEV. "The overlay of the MRW Work Ethic curriculum provides a soft skills foundation for those students to become more marketable to potential employers."

P&HCC, as a National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) Leadership School, was one of two schools in Virginia, and twenty schools nationally, to pilot the Mike Rowe Works Work Ethic Curriculum in 2020 through a partnership of NC3, the Mike Rowe Works Foundation, and Wichita State University Tech. Shannon Whitlow, P&HCC's Career Services Coordinator at that time, became a Master In-

structor for the program. P&HCC offered the training to multiple cohorts of students, primarily in the college's unique programs that serve underrepresented students, including Hope Center Ministries recovery program, Guided Career Exploration youth program in partnership with Virginia Career Works - West Piedmont, and the Road to Success in Virginia Program, which provides assistance for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients. P&HCC issued 51 Mike Rowe Works Work Ethic Certificates during the pilot. Now, P&HCC will take the lead on a regional project serving V-TOP Region 3 in partnership with Danville Community College and Southside Virginia Community College.

"Patrick & Henry Community College is proud of the work accomplished as part of the pilot program that introduced the Mike Rowe Works Work Ethic curriculum across the country at community colleges and we are honored to lead the region in implementing the program in our area," said P&HCC president Dr. Greg Hodges.

As the Southern VA Works Collaborative, P&HCC will work with Danville Community College (DCC) and Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC) to serve V-TOP Region 3. This includes P&HCC's service region (Henry County, Patrick

County, and the city of Martinsville). Danville Community College serves Pittsylvania County, Halifax County, and the city of Danville. Southside Virginia Community College serves the following counties: Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Greensville, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward.

The three community colleges have committed to partnering on instruction to serve the entire V-TOP three region. All three community colleges enjoy strong working relationships with the workforce development boards which serve Region 3: Virginia Career Works - West Piedmont and Virginia Career Works - South Central, including representation on the Boards. Virginia Career Works partners will assist with outreach and recruitment for the program. Additionally, all three community colleges are partners with K-12 and higher education centers through GO TEC, a highly successful talent pathways initiative through GO Virginia Region 3.

V-TOP is administered by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia in partnership with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the Virginia Business Higher Education Council. It is funded by the General Assembly's Commonwealth Innovative Internship Fund and Program.

## 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

*Stuart Cotton Mill*

By Beverly Belcher Woody

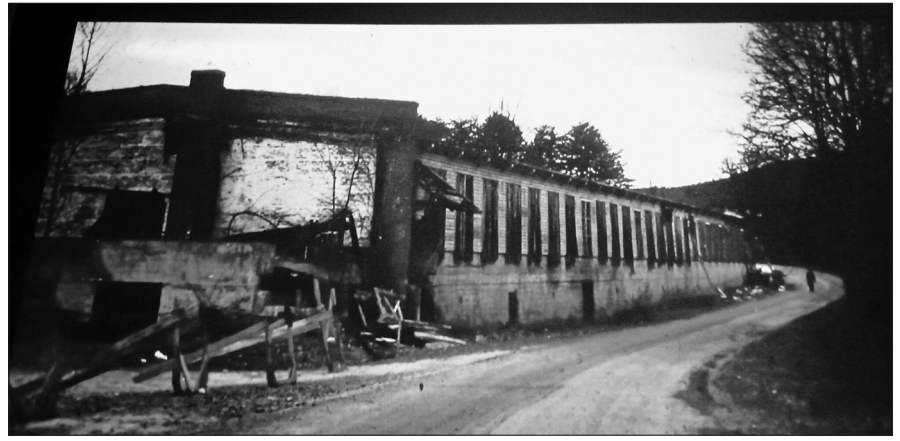
This week's column leads me to more questions, rather than finding answers. I have been unable to find much information about the Stuart Cotton Mill and was wondering if any readers had heard stories from families that worked there in the early 20th century? The cotton mill was located below Stuart Elementary School on what is now Oakhurst Drive.

The Danville Register & Bee, November 19, 1921, edition stated, "It is currently reported here that the Stuart Cotton Mill has been sold to the Patrick Land and Development Company and that it will be leased to a concern in High Point, North Carolina which plans its' operation as a knitting mill. The deed of sale is expected to be executed this

week. The mill has never been operated, although at one time, machinery was placed in it for the manufacture of cotton goods."

Cindy Griffith wrote that the Stuart mill was part of the Schoolfield division of Dan River Mills but closed when the Great Depression hit the community. Lawrence Burton stated that county fairs were held across from the cotton mill in the 1940s.

An article in the 12th of September 1931 edition of the Roanoke Times stated, "Meetings are being held here this week by business and professional men of Stuart in an attempt to raise \$12,000.00 to purchase and repair the old cotton mill building. The Jobbers Pants Company, a firm that has been operating in Martinsville for several years, desires to open a unit in Stu-



Stuart Cotton Mill, from Curtis Carter Collection.

art and the new plant will require a building, for the use of which, the pants company will pay 7% interest for rent. The only building available in Stuart is the cotton mill, which can be bought and repaired for \$12,000.00."

Did this deal ever pan out? I can't find where Jobbers ever operated in Stuart.

Sandy Rodgers recalls going to the mill with his mother and grandmother while they were shopping for piece goods; this would have been around 1950.

If anyone has more information about the Stuart Cotton Mill, I would love to hear about it. 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 - I'm Returning to Work; What Should I Do About Social Security?**

**Dear Rusty:** I started collecting Social Security at age 62 earlier this year. I had an opportunity to partner in a new business this year that will allow me to earn about \$200,000 in 2024. Because this is significantly above the allowed earnings when collecting early benefits, I need advice on how I handle this with the Social Security Administration. Am I supposed to call them and advise them of my change in income for 2024? If so, am I going to be penalized in any way? I expect they will stop all payments in 2024 once I alert them to the change. Will I be eligible for Social Security payments when I retire again? This is planned to take place before I reach full retirement age of 67. For information, my 2023 income will not exceed the 2023 allowable income limit. Signed: Un-retiring

Temporarily.

**Dear Un-retiring:** You have a couple of options, considering that you recently claimed early Social Security benefits but are returning to work with income significantly more than the 2024 earnings limit of \$22,320.

The first is to simply contact Social Security and tell them you are returning to the work force and tell them your anticipated 2024 income. They will suspend your SS benefits for all of 2024 (to avoid overpaying you and making you return those 2024 payments later). If you plan to continue in your new business beyond 2024, you can advise them of that as well and they will continue the suspension of your benefits, until such time as you either discontinue working or reach your full retirement age (the earnings test no longer applies after you reach your FRA). At that time, SS will resume your monthly Social Security payments and, at your FRA, will give you time credit for all months your benefits were suspended, providing you with a higher monthly payment after your full retirement age is at-

tained (with an adjustment for benefits already paid).

Your other option is to contact Social Security soon and request that your recent application for Social Security benefits submitted earlier this year be withdrawn. You have 12 months from the date of your application to do this, but you will need to repay Social Security all money which they paid to you or on your behalf (including your monthly payments, any income tax you had withheld from those payments, and any dependent benefits which might have been paid based on your record). That will effectively "wipe the slate clean" with Social Security and will be as though you had never claimed, allowing you to simply wait until you stop working, or until your FRA, or even beyond your FRA, to re-apply for Social Security at a higher monthly amount. The advantage of this option is that when your benefit restarts there will be no adjustment (reduction) for past benefits paid.

What I suggest you not do is simply wait to see what happens. That would result in Social Security

catching up after the IRS informs them of your 2024 earnings, resulting in you receiving an Overpayment Notice from the SSA demanding repayment of 2024 benefits paid. In that case, you would need to quickly repay Social Security in a large lump-sum or have your SS benefits withheld until the debt for exceeding the earnings limit was repaid. In a nutshell, I suggest you call Social Security and tell them you are returning to work, what your earnings are expected to be, and for how long.

*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).*

# The Secret to Winter Exercise You Need to Know - Part 2

Make an appointment with yourself

This is the Stephen Covey thing. In his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey shares a grid that really sums up our busy lives.

**A: Urgent and important.** These are things that absolutely must get done. Even with the best planning, things will sometimes occur that becomes more urgent and important than everything else. These should be emergencies and hopefully limited in scope and frequency. For example: car malfunctions or illness in the family.

**B: Urgent, but not important.** These are things that have snuck up on you, likely due to bad planning, and you now have to drop everything to get it done. Maybe it's a party you're hosting tonight that you have to go grocery shopping for. You had known about the party weeks ago but now you're up against the clock so you have to deal with it in a rush.

My favorite example of this is Christmas. I often see people in a panic as Christmas approaches. Store lines suddenly become long and filled with people with stressful expressions on their fac-

es. Didn't they have all year to get ready? It's on the same day every year, is it not? How can they seem so surprised by it? (An example that hits closer to home, but is something I shall cease speaking of is the dreaded wedding anniversary...)

Interestingly enough, most people seem to spend the most time and effort in this category.

**C: Not urgent, but very important.** These are the things that you typically put off, as they are not under a time crunch, but are the very things that make you better. These are the things that help you grow and bring about the most happiness. One key thing to remember is that these often don't bring about the most pleasure, but they do result in the most happiness.

I'll name some of the things that belong to this category for me, and may apply to you, too:

Time with your spouse and children. Don't wake up one day and realize that you've grown apart from your spouse. Don't go to your child's graduation and realize you don't know their favorite color, their favorite food, their friends, and that you don't know them.

Devotional time. Getting your mind right, relaxed, and re-focusing on your purpose is something that you should do on a daily basis; otherwise, we will drift off without realizing it. I read my Bible every morning, even before I exercise.

**Reading for knowledge and self-improvement.** Successful business tycoon Warren Buffet spends most of his "working" day reading. Why? Because that's how he learns. Most people want to be good at their job. What's the easiest way to achieve that? Read. Read about your job. Even jobs that require practice with your hands is greatly aided by reading and thinking about the job itself.

Finally, we get back to exercise. It's easy to blow off working out today. We say, "I'll hit the gym tomorrow." If we do that too often, we'll never get the benefit of exercise. If you want to lose weight, feel energetic, be able to run around with your kids, travel around Europe on vacation with your spouse, or go camping, hiking, backpacking with your friends, you will need to build up some endurance, stamina, strength. If you want to run a marathon, you're going to have to put in some time.

The more we can spend our time and effort in this box the better we can become.

**D: Not urgent and not important.** This is the category for wasted time, so I won't spend any time on this. We can all find a lot of areas in our lives that fit into this box. Your job is to eliminate it to make room for the important stuff.

Now how can you operationalize this principle? You need to book time to exercise. Make it a priority. Make it a scheduled appointment with yourself and keep it. You wouldn't miss a meeting with your boss, would you? Well, when you get down to it, you are your first boss! Don't ditch a meeting with yourself! Not only will you regret it, but you may have to fire yourself and hire a coach, literally. Seriously, there is a big market now for personal coaches, health coaches, life coaches, etc., because people are needing more help to keep themselves accountable.

(Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Harvey Hahn, MD, FACC. Used by permission from [www.lifeandhealth.org](http://www.lifeandhealth.org). Courtesy of LifeSpring - Resources for Hope and Healing Stuart, VA)

## Congressional staff plan final meetings of year

Congressman Morgan Griffith's Ninth District staff members will be available in Patrick County and Martinsville on December 18.

Staff members will be in the Council Chambers, located on the second floor of the

City of Martinsville's Municipal Building, at 55 W. Church Street, from 10 - 11:30 a.m.

They will return to the Patrick County Administration Building, 106 Rucker Street, Stuart, from 12:30 - 2 p.m., and meet with residents in the

Conference Room.

In the event of inclement weather (heavy snow, sleet, icy rain, etc.), traveling office hours may be rescheduled to avoid putting constituents at risk. If a locality's schools are closed, then its office hours

will be closed as well.

Call the Christiansburg Office at (540) 381-5671 or the Abingdon Office at (276) 525-1405 with any questions or to schedule an appointment time in the event of office hour closure.

# Cougars drop game to North Stokes

**By Pat Delaney**  
 The Cougar boys' basketball team lost to North Stokes on December 8, 81-60. The Cougars began the game slowly, falling behind 6-0, but came roaring back. With their defense causing turnovers, Patrick County finished the quarter on a 20-10 run, taking a 20-16 lead into the second quarter.

Mid way through the second, the game was still tight, with the teams tied at 27. Unlike the first quarter, it was the Vikings of North Stokes who finished with a run, closing the half on a 13-3 run for the 40-30 half-time lead. For the Cougars, the last several minutes of the half saw them getting good looks at the basket, but unable to get the ball to drop. The

Vikings strung together points, including several 3-pointers to extend their lead to ten. In the third quarter, the Vikings got hot early, extending their lead to 15 in the first minute and a half of the second half. The Cougars held tough for the first part of the quarter, but in the last four minutes of the third, went cold offensively, falling behind by 22 at the end of the

third. The Cougars played tough in the final quarter, but couldn't string together enough points to make a dent in the Viking lead, falling 81-60. On the night, Tyler Marshall led the Cougars with 13 points, 2 assists and 4 rebounds. Noah Jessup had 8 points, 5 assists and 5 rebounds and Cameron Collins chipped in 8 points and 3 rebounds.



Tyler Marshall shoots over the Vikings defense.



Cougar point guard Noah Jessup fires a pass.



Nathan Large goes for the layup.



Cameron Collins puts up a 3-pointer.

# Lady Cougars fall to North Stokes

**By Pat Delaney**  
 The Patrick County High Lady Cougars dropped their first game of the season in a hard fought game against North Stokes, 53-45. The game, played on December 8, featured the unbeaten Lady Cougars and the 5-1 Lady Vikings. Both squads were strong defensively to start the game, with neither team able to get much going on offense in the early going. Tied at 11 with a minute to go, the Lady Cougars grabbed the lead briefly, but a late Lady Viking 3-pointer gave them a 14-13 lead at the end of one. Patrick County Head Coach Tony Mosley liked the physical

way his team was playing on defense. "That's our style, being hard-nosed and physical." The Lady Cougars got off to a strong start in the second, grabbing a 22-18 lead following a Kendra Worley 3-pointer with 4:30 to go in the half. From there, the teams battled back and forth, with North Stokes taking a 2-point lead into the half at 29-27. The second half was much like the first, with both teams playing strong, physical defense. In the latter part of the third quarter, North Stokes broke the Lady Cougar full court press several times, allowing them to extend their lead to five at 48-38 through three. "We knew that #4 (Caroline

Mabe) was a really good ball-player, and she showed that tonight. She really broke us down, so we've got to make that adjustment," said Coach Mosley. The Lady Cougars offense went cold in the fourth quarter. With both teams struggling against the solid defense being played, and emotions running high in the large crowd in attendance, the difference in the game came down to North Stokes hitting timely shots, while the Lady Cougars watched as many shots rattled around the rim, but not fall in. The fourth saw each team score a game low for a quarter, with the two teams combining for just 17 points because of the defensive

play on both sides. "We missed too many layups and missed too many free throws," said Coach Mosley. "If we had made two more layups, it would have been a different game." When the final buzzer sounded, the Lady Cougars had fallen, 53-45. Leading the way for the Lady Cougars was Aniya Penn with 9 points and 3 assists. Allanah Mitchell had 8 points on the night with Kendra Worley adding 7 points and 3 assists. Even in their first loss of the season, Coach Mosley liked the effort his team gave. "We fought. We played pretty good and I'm looking forward to the next game."



The Lady Cougars played tough defense throughout the game.



Aniya Penn (#22) looks to drive to the basket as Lilly Hazelwood (25) set a pick.



Eliza Clifton drives past the North Stokes defender.



Kimora Wimbush goes up for a layup basket.



Kendra Worley pressures the Lady Viking point guard.



PCHS coach Tony Mosley watches his team on offense.

# Festival of Lights

(cont. from page 1)



The festival of lights will feature different caroling groups every night except Wednesday, December 20.



## Live Music Line Up

- Dec 15th PCHS Concert Band
- Dec 16th Abiding Grace Church & Harvest Worship Center
- Dec 17th Patrick County 3rd Grade Choir
- Dec 18th SES Jr. Beta
- Dec 19th PCHS Praise & Worship Team
- Dec 20th Festive Children's Activities
- Dec 21th Lady Cougar Softball 10U Team
- Dec 22th Middle Cross Church & SES Cheerleaders
- Dec 23th Mayo Mountain Church

The tentative schedule of Christmas carolers performing during the Festival of Lights.

up loose ends from that project.”

The organization started raising funds to make the bathrooms ADA-compliant last year. The estimated cost is about \$75,000.

Corns said the festival features 54 displays from local businesses, churches, civic organizations, and individuals registered for the event.

The festival is a drive-thru event and costs \$10 per passenger vehicle.

“You can circle through the event as many times as you would like,” she said.

Last year, Corns said the nine-night event averaged about 100 cars per night, with anywhere from one to six people per car.

“It’s quite a bit of people coming through. We are so excited, we met people from neighboring counties” at the event last year, she added.

Corns believes the hometown touch sets the festival apart from others.

“These are not commercialized, bought displays,” Corns said. “These are creative, crafted displays that people in the community have come

together to put together, and their theme may be just a Christmas theme, or it may be a theme that represents their group or organization, which is wonderful.

So, the people want to come in and they want to see the other displays and what people have put together,” she said.

An award is available for the most popular display, and the community will be able to vote on the winner, Corns said.

“I think the community enjoys coming out and showing support to their favorite business, or their favorite organization,” she said.

All the elementary schools are also participating in a contest to see which school has the best display. Corns said the winning school will receive a free pool party for its students.

To get everyone in the holiday spirit, Corns said the park contracts with the local radio station to play Christmas music each night during the event. Hayrides will be available on select at a \$30 cost. That fee includes the cost of admission and

access to the hayride.

Hayrides are available on December 15, December 17, and December 21. The Patrick County High School (PCHS) hospitality group will be selling hot chocolate and cider on the first night of the hayride.

“We have live music set up every night” except for Wednesday, December 20. “We are so excited, groups coming in for old-fashioned caroling. We’ve encouraged them to wear their festive Christmas gear and just come together and sing and wave to the patrons passing by,” she said.

The carolers will be set up under the awning at Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC). Caroling groups include the PCHS concert band, PCHS Praise & Worship Team, May Mountain Church, Abiding Grace Church & Harvest Worship Center, and others.

Corns said Santa and Mrs. Claus will be on the route each night, except for December 20.

“This is the one night where Santa will be available for the kids to talk to in the college. They will be

able to park and go into the college.

We have a group coming from the college, the JV cheerleaders, and they are going to have a reindeer making food station for children” and a bake sale, she said.

For \$5, children will be able to see Santa and parents can take pictures of the visit.

“It has a theme to it. It’s Christmas pajama night, so we’re really excited,” Corns said.

P&HCC’s fabrication laboratory will also be open, and the first 75 that come into the college that night will receive a free Christmas ornament.

Ornaments for purchase will also be available.

“They can engrave them with their name or the year. We’re going to engrave the free ones we’re giving away with Patrick County, Virginia on them,” she said.

Decked Out Donuts will also be set up at the park on December 16, December 22, and December 23.

For more information, visit [Facebook.com/DehartPark-Stuart-Parks&RecreationAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/DehartPark-Stuart-Parks&RecreationAssociation).

# Increases in respiratory viruses prompt temporary visitor restrictions

Due to a steady increase in respiratory virus cases in our communities, Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist is implementing temporary visitor restrictions for children ages 12 and younger, beginning Thursday, Dec. 7, at all Wake Forest Baptist hospitals:

- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Brenner Children’s Hospital
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Davie Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest

- Baptist High Point Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Lexington Medical Center
- Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Wilkes Medical Center

Children ages 12 and under may be permitted to visit hospitalized patients in special circumstances, as determined by the treating physician and nursing unit leadership.

In addition, patients and visitors are strongly encouraged to wear masks while in certain high-risk settings and in all inpatient rooms. Visitors ages 13 and older should not have any symptoms of respira-

tory viral illness or a confirmed case of COVID-19, flu or RSV.

It is important to note that some areas may have additional restrictions. Patients and visitors are asked to follow directions provided by staff.

Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist urges people to continue to take measures that are known to limit the spread of respiratory viruses. These include staying home when sick, washing hands, covering the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and staying up to date on vaccines.

Patients are asked to only visit emergency departments if they are experiencing a serious or life-threatening illness or injury. Those who need medical attention for more routine symptoms such as cough, fever, fatigue and other flu-like symptoms should contact their primary care provider. Other options include urgent care centers and immediate virtual care.

Current visitation guidelines can be found at [www.wakehealth.edu/patient-and-family-resources/preparing-for-your-visit/visitor-guidelines](https://www.wakehealth.edu/patient-and-family-resources/preparing-for-your-visit/visitor-guidelines).

## Sports Briefs

**By Ashlee Mullis**  
**Lady Cougars Record Two Wins**

The Varsity Lady Cougars hosted Bassett on Monday, December 4, beating the Lady Bengals 54-43. Kendra Worley had 11 points, 4 rebounds, 4 steals, and 1 block in the win. Allannah Mitchell had 9 points, 3 rebounds, 1 assist, and 3 steals. Aniya Penn had 8 points, 6 rebounds, 3 assists, and 1 block.

The Lady Cougars went on to beat Lady Cavaliers of Chatham 41-23, Wednesday, December 6. Penn led the Lady Cougars with 8 points, 5 rebounds, 1 assist, 3 steals, and 1 block. Mitchell had 7 points, 1 rebound, 2 assists, and 3 steals. Lilly Hazelwood had 7 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 steals, and 1 block. Kimora Wim-bush had 11 rebounds, 2 points, 2 steals, and 2 blocks.

**JV Girls Get Win Over Bassett**

The JV Patrick County Lady Cougars got a 37-30 win at home when they hosted the Lady Bengals of Bassett on Monday, December 4.

“The ladies worked hard and played great

defense. Bassett had a very tall team,” said Coach Grace Helms. “Chloe Hubbard made 4 points with some nice left-handed layups, 5 steals, and 7 rebounds. Aubreigh Large played excellent defense and put up 4 points.”

Leading the Lady Cougars was Lauren Hazelwood with 14 points 3 rebounds, and 2 steals. Gracen Conner had 6 assists, 4 steals, and 10 points Martina Hubbard had 3 points while Skye Ayers added 2 points.

**JV Lady Cougars Crush Chatham**

The Lady Cougar JV team hosted Chatham on Wednesday, December 6, taking an easy 30-4 win.

Chloe Hubbard led the team with 4 steals, 6 rebounds, and 2 points. Bristol Goad had 7 rebounds in her first appearance this season due to an injury. Aubreigh Large had 4 rebounds and a steal. Gracen Conner had 3 steals, 6 rebounds, and 8 points. Lauren Hazelwood had 8 points and 2 steals. Martina Hubbard had 5 points, Meredith Wood had 4 points, and Jazmyne Reynolds had 1 point.

“Lacey Sutphin and

Skye Ayers both added a steal to the defense of the night. I am proud of their hard work, and they continue to grow every week,” said Coach Grace Helms.

**JV Cougar Girls Get Third Win of the Week**

The Lady Cougars got a big 32-17 win over North Stokes on Friday, December 8.

Gracen Conner led the Cougars with 4 rebounds, 4 steals, 4 assists, and 12 points. Martina Hubbard had 5 steals and 5 points. Meredith Wood had 4 rebounds, 2 steals, and 5 points. Chloe Hubbard had 3 steals, 3 rebounds, and 5 points. Jazmyne Reynolds scored 1 point. Lauren Hazelwood had 4 steals.

Coach Grace Helms said, “Aubreigh Large and Novella Nester each had 2 points and worked hard inside-both playing great defense. Skye Ayers and Bristol Goad worked hard on defense tonight and pushed the ball up the court. I am proud of my ladies and their effort. I love watching them grow every practice. It’s amazing watching them become more confident in each other and in themselves.”

## PCHS Sports Schedule

Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of Dec. 14-20:

- 12/14 7pm Boys Basketball at Dan River
- 7pm Girls Basketball vs Dan River
- 12/16 TBA Wrestling Tournament at PCHS
- 12/19 6pm Wrestling Quad Meet at PCHS
- 7pm Girls Basketball at North Stokes
- 8:30p Boys Basketball at North Stokes
- 12/20 7pm Girls Basketball at Bassett

## Annual “Christmas at the Farm” Event to be held in Ferrum

Join the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum (BRIM) at the 1800 farm museum for the annual traditional Christmas in the Blue Ridge on Friday, December 15 from 5 to 8 p.m., at the Blue Ridge Institute & Museum, 10530 Franklin St. in Ferrum.

The event includes cookies and cider and a variety of vendors selling Christmas gifts at the pavilion.

The house will be open, and the farm will be lit with lanterns.

Costumed interpreters will be spinning wool, making crafts with children, and have the fires burning.

This annual event is free and open to the public.



For more information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/335759362437173>.

**James Edwin Atkin**

Mr. James Edwin Atkins, age 94 of Ridge-way, Virginia passed away peacefully at his home. He was born in Patrick County on October 30, 1929 to the late Ruben E. Atkins and Ollie Baliles Atkins. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by one son, Michael Kent Atkins. Mr. Atkins faithfully served in the United States Air Force during the Korean War acquiring the rank of Staff Sergeant. He retired from Coca-Cola Bottling Company with over forty years of experience. He was a devoted member of Smith River Church of the Brethren, where he served as a deacon and board member. He loved hunting, fishing, working on the farm, and raising cattle.

Mr. Atkins is survived by his loving wife of 73 years, Edna Mae Wood Atkins of the home; one son, Gary Edwin Atkins and special friend, Becky Roberts of Horsepasture; four grandchildren, Misti Atkins of



Portsmouth, Chris Atkins and wife, Susan of Spencer, Andy Atkins and wife, Casey of Spencer, and Hunter Atkins and wife, Sarah of Wilmington, North Carolina; eight great-grandchildren, Kenneth, Harlee, Aaron, Cam, McKenzie, Hailey, Easton, and Dallas; three sisters, Louise Simmons of Stuart, VA, Frances Sheppard of Mineral Springs, NC, and Donella Inman and husband, Thomas of Colfax, North Carolina; and several nieces and nephews.

The funeral service for Mr. Atkins will be held on Wednesday,

December 13, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. at Smith River Church of the Brethren with Pastor Danny Gilley officiating. Burial will follow in Woolwine Cemetery. The Patrick County Veterans Memorial Honor Guard will provide military rites. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the church. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Smith River Church of the Brethren, 2282 Bob White Road, Stuart, VA 24171 or to a charity of the donor's choice. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart has been entrusted with the arrangements and online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

The family of James Edwin Atkins would like to express their gratitude to Amedisys Hospice, Care Advantage In Home Healthcare, Sodonnia Willis, and Bonnie Freeman for all their acts of kindness and loving care.

**Reba Joyce Hubbard**

Reba Joyce Hubbard, 81, of Martinsville, VA (formerly of Meadows of Dan, VA) passed away peacefully on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at SECU Hospice Home in Yadkinville, NC. She was born on June 9, 1942 in Patrick County to the late Lillie Edwards Hylton and Joseph Paul Hylton. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by one sister, Alene Craig Hall.

She was a loving wife, mother and grandmother. She worked at United Elastic for thirty years and as a beautician at home. She was an avid reader, loved working



word puzzles and a Blue Bloods enthusiast.

Surviving are her husband, Fred Hubbard of sixty years, daughter, Sandi Teague (Gene) of Martinsville, one son, Kevin Hubbard (Mary) of Meadows of Dan, VA, Two brothers,

**Roy Junior Rucker**

Elder Roy Junior Rucker, age 73 of Stuart, Virginia went to be with the Lord at his home on the morning of December 6, 2023. He was born in Patrick County on May 2, 1950. He was preceded in death by his mother, Ida Virginia Rucker; and one sister, Margaret Pauline Rucker.

"No eulogy necessary! Glory be to God! I have preached my own service by the life I lived!" ~Roy Junior Rucker



Left to cherish the memories of Roy Junior Rucker are his loving wife of 51 years, Judy P. Rucker; three children, Tina Reynolds (Junebug), Renee Rucker, and John Rucker (Andrea);

Jay Hylton (Diane) of Salem, VA, Lendell Craig (Elree) of Meadows of Dan, VA and one granddaughter Sara Teague of Charlottesville, VA.

A private graveside service will be held at Slate Mountain Presbyterian Church Cemetery in Meadows of Dan, VA with Reverend Stewart Childress officiating.

Memorials may be made to SECU 243 N Lee St Yadkinville, NC 27055 or [www.mtnvalleyhospice.org](http://www.mtnvalleyhospice.org).

Norris Funeral Services of Stuart is serving the Hubbard family

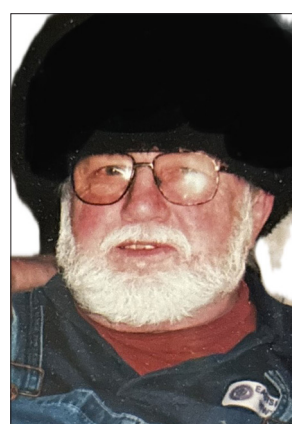
Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

five grandchildren, DeVante, Damien, Dominique, Jazmyne, and Annabell; and a great host of nieces and nephews.

A brief celebration of life service for Elder Rucker will be held at his home on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. SHARP! Moody Funeral Home in Stuart has been entrusted with the services and online condolences can be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

**Leslie Reed McGrady**

Mr. Leslie Reed McGrady, age 81, passed away at his home in Woolwine, Virginia, in November 2023. Known as Les to his friends and Brother to his family, Leslie was born in Patrick County on September 24, 1942 to the late Courtney McGrady, Sr. and Lola Mae Bowman McGrady. Leslie was a gifted master craftsman who could build and fix almost anything. He spent his life using those skills to help others. He cared for a large group of older family members and countless friends, often simply giving his services freely. In addition, Les cared diligently for his mother until the day she died. He was a great comfort and a great joy to her. He was a generous person who also contributed throughout his life to local causes. Leslie loved the Blue Ridge Mountains and



mountain culture. He could often be found riding the parkway or parked at a scenic overlook listening to old bluegrass. He carried the family love of storytelling and local history and once in his orbit, it was often hard to leave. He met friends everywhere. Yet Les was also a very independent and often private person. His last wish was to die at home, and he did so, surrounded by the mountains he cherished. While he will be missed, we are grateful he is reunited

with his beloved and much-missed wife, Gaynell Belcher McGrady.

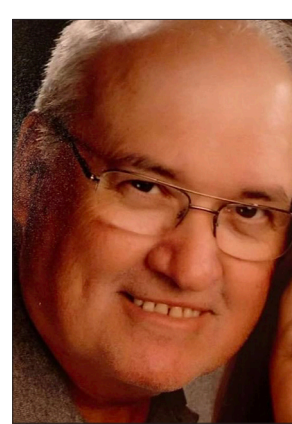
Les is survived by his niece, Dr. Victoria McGrady; nephew, Courtney Scott McGrady; and several cousins.

All services will be private. A register book will be available at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart for one week beginning Monday, December 11, 2023. Memorial donations may be made to Smith River Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 122, Woolwine, VA 24185. Moody Funeral Home in Stuart has been entrusted with the arrangements and online condolences may be sent by visiting [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

The family of Les McGrady would like to express their gratitude to Smith River Rescue Squad for everything they did for Uncle Les.

**Gary Lee Roberson**

Mr. Gary Lee Roberson, age 67 of Stuart, Virginia passed away at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center in Winston Salem, North Carolina on Friday, December 8, 2023. He was born in Patrick County, Virginia on June 11, 1956, to the late Charles Lee Roberson and Florence Setliff Roberson. Gary was a devoted member of New Hope Church of the Brethren, where he enjoyed working at the church, helped build the fellowship hall, and took a mission trip to Haiti. He loved to travel and believed in working hard and playing hard. His greatest treasure after his salvation was his family, he dearly loved his family and being



Pop to his grandchildren.

Left to cherish the memories of Gary Roberson are his loving wife, Linda Puckett Roberson; three children, Brendon Roberson, Charlie Roberson and Heather, and Chad Francis and Amyjoe; five grandchildren, Dylan Roberson, Jordan Roberson, Haven Roberson, Adley Fran-

cis, and Braxton Francis; one brother, Wade Spencer; one sister, Mary Ellen Nolan and Carl; nieces, nephews, and two beloved dogs, Coco and Scrapy.

The funeral service of Mr. Roberson will be held on Saturday, December 16, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. at New Hope Church of the Brethren with Pastors Rick Randall and Mike Varner officiating. Burial will follow in the Puckett Family Cemetery. The family will receive friends two hours prior to the service at the church on Saturday. 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).

**Carroll Joseph Greer**

Mr. Carroll Joseph Greer, age 78 of Bassett, Virginia, passed away Monday, December 4, 2023, at Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital in Rocky Mount.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Raena Foley Greer; two sons, David and Andy; two grandchildren, Ethan and Abigail; a brother, Perry; Buford's wife, Cammie; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Clarence and Lillie Greer; parents-in-law, Eugene and Alene Foley; a brother Buford; Perry's wife,



Nancy; and an infant sister, Joyce.


Mr. Greer worked at Fieldcrest Mills for 36 years until it closed. He then worked for 15 years at a warehouse before retiring. He loved to fix anything that was broken and

playing the guitar. He enjoyed traveling with the kids, grandkids, and the many foster children in the home.

Funeral services will be held Thursday, December 7, 2023, at 3:00 PM at Moody Funeral Home in Stuart with Pastor Greg Martin officiating. Burial will be private at a later date. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at the funeral home. Flowers will be accepted, and online condolences may be sent to [www.moodyfuneralservices.com](http://www.moodyfuneralservices.com).

(See Obituaries Cont. p. 9)

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

**OBITUARY SUBMISSION DEADLINE MONDAY AT NOON**



# PATRICK PULPITS

## Does God Have Your Attention Yet?

By Van Yandell

Mark 13: 32 "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

Various conditions and actions by men and God have happened since 1940 that had not happened before in history. It would be difficult to determine when the beginning of the end actually started. Perhaps it was the Holocaust in which six-million Jews were killed.

The development of the atomic bomb (Zechariah 14: 12) was certainly a step toward the ending of the earth.

Possibly the most convincing of scriptural reality was the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 (2 Timothy 3: 16) proving conclusively the authenticity and the very old age of the Holy Bible.

Israel became a nation May 14th, 1948 (Ezekiel 36: 24). Then in the six Day War, June 5th-10th, 1967, Jerusalem was re-established as the capital of Israel (Zechariah 2: 12).

The Korean War (1950-1953) divided the world into free and communist (Matthew 24: 6). This set the stage for a worldwide political and military division that has lasted over seven decades.

That war has also set the positive for a fulfillment of prophesy in Revelation 13. In order for a one-world government and a one world currency to become a reality, this division had to exist for the divisions between the political left and right. The world has to experience freedom before it can be taken away.

Those desiring communism in currently free, democratic republics are demanding socialism (which in the end result, is a sacrifice of freedom). Once freedom (as we in America know it) is lost, the way is paved for the appearance of the Antichrist (Revelation 13: 8).

The Vietnam War, although undeclared (1955-1975), further delineated communist and democratic government types. With America's loss of that conflict, a boldness was established for those further seeking world-wide turmoil (2 Chronicles 15:6).

The Cold War was a rivalry between the United States and Russia that lasted from the late 1940's until 1991(fall of the USSR), without direct military confrontation. While bloodshed was limited, there existed tenseness and a perpetual fear of a nuclear exchange between the two nations.

The attack of America into the Middle East to expel Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard from Kuwait brought the entire Arab world into the picture (Genesis 16: 12).

We have also seen the appearing of more false prophets and teachers in the last fifty years than ever before. Jesus told His disciples in the Olivet Discourse at least three times to be aware of the false prophets (Matthew 24: 4, 11, and 24).

Matthew 7: 15 "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." False prophets do not have to originate in a jungle in Africa, Asia or Central America. There are many calling themselves Christian teaching false (non-biblical) doctrine.

One cannot promote their own notions and opinions of what the belief

should be (Revelation 22: 18-19). Eternal salvation is only by a faith based belief in Christ Jesus crucified for the remission of sin and resurrected (John 3: 16).

Luke 21: 17 "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." We are seeing a level of hatred toward Christians as not seen since the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917.

An official report stated 12,000 Russian clergy were murdered by Vladimir Lenin and his followers (a Russian revolutionary, politician, and political theorist). An unofficial report maintains 43,800 were murdered. Could this happen again?

Hatred exists in the world today among people groups for many reasons. With a world population of around eight billion and people being more mobile than ever (Daniel 12: 4), population density evolves into cultural wars, rioting and fighting/murder as the world has not seen since the dark ages (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

Isaiah 5: 20 "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil" Variant lifestyles unacceptable in scripture are creating a disdain for Christianity. Once again, people cannot make their own rules to justify lifestyles (Proverbs 12: 15).

Disasters in 2023 include numerous earthquakes (Mark 13: 8), hurricanes and cyclones (Luke 21: 25), floods, pestilences (Luke 21: 11), forest fires and manmade disasters such as terrorist attacks.

Numerous times the world has seen the fulfillment of Jesus' prophesy of "wars and rumors of wars" fulfilled in the last eighty years (Mark 13: 7).

Less than two years ago we saw Russia invade Ukraine. The purpose was never definitively revealed but beyond an imperialistic motivation, the possibility exists of opening a route from Russia to the Middle East.

The War of Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38 and 39) could be shaping up to take place. If the scripture holds true (and it always has), those armies invading Israel will be crushed and their homelands will be destroyed by fire and brimstone as was Sodom and Gomorrah (Ezekiel 39: 6).

Military strategists are now claiming the two million man army (Revelation 9: 16) is possible from Turkey and a few of the countries surrounding Israel.

By the protests and demonstrations around the world concerning the Israel and Hamas war, it certainly appears the world is choosing sides.

Yes, the evidence is in and the verdict has already been rendered. The sentence upon the world has been handed down (Joel 2: 28-32).

Luke 21: 25-26 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken."

(Yandell is a retired Industrial Arts teacher, an ordained gospel evangelist and commissioned missionary, from Fredonia, Kentucky. A part of the Bible Connection series. His email: vmy2121@outlook.com)

## BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

1. Is the book of Bethlehem (KJV) in the Old or New Testament or neither?
2. Where did the angel Gabriel appear to Mary saying, "Blessed art thou among women"? Nazareth, Tyre, Ninevah, Gazi
3. With perhaps two different biblical answers, who was the father of Joseph? Jacob/Heli, Gideon/Ishmael, Solomon/Nahum, Samuel/Pilate
4. Which Old Testament prophet predicted Jesus would be born in

Bethlehem? Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum

5. For the journey to Bethlehem, how did Mary and Joseph travel? Bible not specific, Cart, Rode donkey, Small raft

6. Which of these wasn't a gift from the wise men (Magi)? Silver, Myrrh, Gold, Frankincense

ANSWERS: 1) Neither, 2) Nazareth, 3) Jacob/Heli (Matthew 1:16, Luke 3:23), 4) Micah, 5) Bible not specific, 6) Silver

Comments? More Trivia? Gift ideas? Visit [www.TriviaGuy.com](http://www.TriviaGuy.com).  
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## Super Crossword LOVE OF SOLVING

**ACROSS**

- 1 Picked instrument
- 6 Type of small grocery store
- 12 Bloomy light source
- 20 Viva voce
- 21 Spoil, as "my parade"
- 22 Roast joke
- 23 Like baggy clothes
- 25 Winter wreath ornament
- 26 Gave away temporarily
- 27 Money, informally
- 29 Jagger of the Stones
- 30 "Raggedy" doll
- 31 Monty Python tune about a logger
- 37 Addams who created Morticia
- 40 Quick attack
- 41 Cover girl Macpherson
- 42 "— gratia" ("by the grace of God")
- 43 Dwell in the company of
- 46 Outer. Prefix
- 47 "— the Night" (2007 Joaquin Phoenix film)
- 49 Had to admit a goof-up
- 50 "Behold!," to Caesar
- 53 Totally bummed out
- 55 Stuff in a sty
- 56 Avian hooters
- 58 Texas banner
- 61 Big twitch
- 63 Safari sight
- 65 Envoy's asset
- 66 "There — comparison"
- 67 Chinese black tea with a smoky flavor
- 72 Anita of jazz
- 75 Env. notice
- 76 Estrada of TV
- 77 Ones staring
- 81 Best Actress winner for "The Farmer's Daughter"
- 84 Grammy winner
- 87 "And how!"
- 88 German city on the Elbe
- 89 With 115-Down, "Piece of cake!"
- 91 Web page
- 93 Slacks
- 94 Extra charge
- 96 Pea-souper in England
- 98 Anticavity gp.
- 99 Supreme Norse god
- 101 "I love you," to Luisa
- 103 Jane in an 1847 novel
- 104 Go bankrupt, say
- 108 Del.-to-Vt. direction
- 110 Bakery treats
- 111 Snootiness
- 112 Noisy tigers
- 116 Cite famous people as friends
- 120 Method for calculating a quotient ... or what occurs eight times in this puzzle?
- 123 Accepted, as conditions
- 124 Made flush
- 125 Maggot, e.g.
- 126 Sailor's dining place
- 127 Shows as an "encore"
- 128 Clifflike
- 6 Liverpool or Leeds native
- 7 Horse bit
- 8 Morse bit
- 9 Conundrum
- 10 Of yore
- 11 Trig measure
- 12 Slice (off)
- 13 Zoo attraction
- 14 Gondola city
- 15 Smart — (cocky sort)
- 16 Guitar riffs
- 17 Year, in Brazil
- 18 Roughly half of all adults
- 19 Beginning to mature?
- 24 Amusement
- 28 Frightful dino
- 31 Chilling Chaney
- 32 Strong desire
- 33 "Selena," actress, to her fans
- 34 Nonalcoholic beer brand
- 35 Georgia city near Atlanta
- 36 Ornamental street tree
- 37 Bivalve mollusks
- 38 Ask for moola
- 39 Brand of skin care and cosmetics
- 40 Turkey, e.g.
- 44 Pleasant odor
- 45 Do some yard maintenance
- 46 Poet's twilight
- 47 Major battle
- 48 Crude model of a despised person
- 51 Choke up
- 52 Give the OK
- 53 Strong desire
- 54 Big mil. alliance
- 57 Dull, dark bluish-gray
- 59 Decorative sewing case
- 60 Burlap bags
- 62 Most cunning
- 64 — uncertain terms
- 68 Pricy liver spread
- 69 Superhero creator Lee
- 70 Agcys., e.g.
- 71 "Nifty!"
- 72 Chum from way back
- 73 El — (treasure city)
- 74 Vying venues
- 78 Uplift
- 79 Whirlybird blade
- 80 Drawn-out battle
- 82 Six-pt. scores
- 83 Driver's 180
- 85 Year, to Caesar
- 86 Garnet, e.g.
- 90 Ladd of "Shane"
- 92 Shows lip-curling contempt
- 94 Holiday tree
- 95 "Orinoco Flow" vocalist
- 97 Texter's "I'm shocked!"
- 99 Carry to excess
- 100 Spanish explorer
- 101 Grew vigorously, old-style
- 102 Former Disney exec
- 105 Sword types
- 106 Duck type
- 107 Mosaic maker
- 108 Autumn mo.
- 109 Manicurists file them
- 112 Divests (of)
- 113 Ireland, in Ireland
- 114 Be a drifter
- 115 See 89-Across
- 116 "Rambo" setting, briefly
- 117 Era or eon
- 118 "— Doubtfire"
- 119 Fluffy lap dog, for short
- 121 Safari sight
- 122 Safari sight

## OBITUARIES

### Henry W. Mathieu, Jr.

Henry W. Mathieu, Jr. age 94, passed away Friday, December 8, 2023, in Mt. Airy, NC.

Born December 14, 1928, in Norristown, PA, he was the son of Henry W. Mathieu, Sr. and Gladys Shoemaker Mathieu.

Henry lived most of his life in Pennsylvania with his wife of 72 years Marie Hendricks Mathieu. During that time, he worked as a farmer, a Farm Credit manager, and a custom carpenter. He continued using these skills throughout his life in his retirement hobbies of gardening and woodworking and through serving as treasurer of Mayberry Presbyterian Church.

he and Marie moved to Meadows of Dan, VA, where they lived for 30 years before moving to RidgeCrest Lane in Mt. Airy in August 2022. While living in Meadows of Dan, Henry was deeply involved in church activities, served on the Board of Directors of the Tri-Area Medical Clinic, and kept busy creating beautiful woodworking projects which he generously gifted to many individuals.

Along with his wife, Marie, he is survived by his daughters: Lou Ann Martin (William) of Anderson, SC; Susan Olsen (Eric) of Elk, WA; and Jeanne Woods (Rob) of Willis, VA; grandchildren: Anne Marie Martin of Salisbury, NC; and Will Martin

(Emily) of Pendleton, SC; great-grandchildren: Lucy and Amelia Martin; and his brother, Edward S. Mathieu of Casselbury, FL.

A graveside service will be held Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 2:00 pm at Bluemont Presbyterian Church, Hillsville, VA with a memorial service to follow in the coming weeks.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be sent to the Mayberry Presbyterian Church Memorial Fund, PO Box 624, Meadows of Dan, VA 24120.

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).

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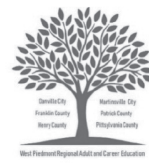
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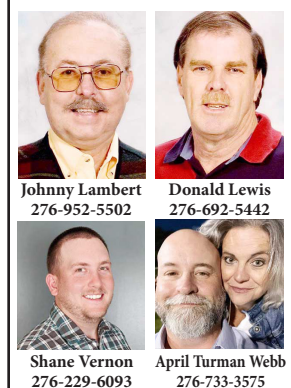
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# Conference Center Leader to Retire

After 20 years of exceptional service to the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR), Leslie Dobbins has announced her retirement from her position as Vice President of the Institute Conference Center, effective Jan. 31.

Dobbins' commitment to excellence has helped elevate the Institute Conference Center (ICC) to one of Southern Virginia's most prestigious meeting and event destinations.

"For over 20 years it has never felt like work because I absolutely love what I do every day. I believe in the mission, and I am beyond grateful to have had this incredible opportunity to work with so many capable and dedicated individuals," said Dobbins.

Dobbins joined the ICC team in 2003 as Sales and Event Planner before being promoted to General Manager and then Director; she was named Vice President in May 2022. Her hospitality career spans 40 years and includes previous positions as Membership Development Director and Social Director for well-known hospitality organizations in Milwaukee and Louisville. Locally, she has served on the boards of the Danville Science Center, Smart Beginnings, Danville Concert Associ-

ation and the Garden Club of Danville. Dobbins attended Sweet Briar College and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin.

IALR is indebted to Dobbins for numerous accomplishments, some of which include:

- Leadership and development of an experienced ICC staff who worked by her side for most of her tenure

- Cultivation of a high-quality food service provider

- Opening IALR's on-site café, Megabytes

- Implementation of a dedicated "on-call" staff who embrace IALR's mission of economic transformation

- Leading the ICC team's creation of a meaningful holiday community service project for 14 years (Decorating the Trees for a Cause, followed by Wreaths for a Cause, raising a total of \$157,333 for area non-profits)

- Managing the \$2.8 million renovations of the ICC which began simultaneously with the pandemic

- Overseeing upgrades to the Charles Hawkins Building high bays

- Collaborating with Facilities to oversee the construction of the

Rapid Launch Facility

"Leslie's dedication, attention to detail and commitment to excellence are pertinent factors in the success of the ICC. Her team members continuously strive to support the Conference Center's function in the same way. During my brief tenure with IALR, I have grown to sincerely appreciate Leslie's love for the organization, our mission and the community. She will be missed by all, and I wish her the best in future endeavors," said Dr. John H. Hughes IV, Executive Vice President of Operations at IALR.

Dobbins' team also say they will miss their longtime leader.

"Leslie is a hard-working and fair supervisor. She has held this team together like glue, and we are going to miss her terribly," Diana Parrish, Event Planner and Service Operations Coordinator at IALR.

"Leslie is a great person to work for, or as she would always say, 'we work together.' I could not work for a better person; she is honest, has integrity and you always know she has your back and is very appreciative of the job you do," said Ellen Bass, Sales and Marketing Manager at IALR.

"I give credit and thanks to the ICC team who have been integral



Leslie Dobbins

in the growth and success of our department," said Dobbins. "Professionally and personally, I am indebted to Diana, Ellen and Theresa (Lewis, Information Desk Specialist) for their unwavering dedication and support every step of the way."

Dobbins' position, Vice President of the Institute Conference Center, will be posted on the employment section of the IALR website in the coming days.

## Food bank receives donation in Owens memory



The Patrick County Food Bank received a donation in memory of Douglas Lee Owens. Douglas was killed earlier this year in a motorcycle accident. He was very proud of his community. His family held a fundraiser, with the support of Rosa, her family, and the team at Tony's Pizza. The donations from this fundraiser were split between the Food Bank and Patrick County Schools' Welding Program.

Rhonda Pruitt, director of the Food Bank, is pictured receiving the donation from Douglas' brother Christian Owens. Also pictured are Jessica Owens, Douglas' mother, Hanna Owens, Douglas' sister, Hannah Howard and Rosaria Palumbo from Tony's.

Pruitt said the Food Bank is sincerely thankful for the donation. She added, "Douglas was a fine young man, and he will be missed."



## Gardeners donate to Patrick County Christmas Cheer

Patrick County Master Gardeners Sherry Easterbrooks, Robin Reichelt, Ginie Conaway, Sylvia Cummings and Dee Nolan, donated all of the proceeds from the Mistletoe

Market to Patrick County Christmas Cheer. Tamika Reynolds, chairman of the program, accepts a check for \$1,071 to help fellow Patrick countians enjoy a merrier Christmas.

## Local cattlemen group meets

Submitted by Patrick County Cattlemen's Association

The Patrick County Cattlemen's Association met at the Patrick and Henry Community College Stuart Site in the Community Room on Thursday, December 7. Approximately 35 people attended and Terry Amos, PCCA President welcomed everyone. Christian Taylor, Patrick County Extension Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, discussed various programs.

The guest speaker for the evening was Kevin Spurlin, Grayson County Senior Extension Agent and Unit Coordinator, Agriculture and Natural Resources. Mr. Spurlin gave a great presentation on winter feeding of beef cattle on a primarily hay based diet. Mr. Spurlin discussed hay test results from Patrick County to show nutrient requirements for different production stages to help determine when supplementation is needed.

Travis Bunn, executive director of the Patrick County Farm Service Agency, discussed the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and other FSA

programs.

Sandra Heath, manager of the Patrick SWCD District, informed attendees of the upcoming 2024 Virginia Forage and Grassland's Council winter forage conference in January. This year's winter forage conference will be held at various locations and focus on optimizing animal performance in forage-based production systems. Speakers and topics will include understanding the specific nutritional requirement for cow-calf, heifer-development, forage-finishing, dairy, and stocker operations; how to identify and address the nutritional gaps in your forage supply; developing supplementation programs that dovetail with your forage system and guiding herd genetics to match nutritional supply.

Membership dues were collected by Heath and Kristy Hughes for the 2024 year, and a great meal was enjoyed by everyone.

For any questions, to become a member or to be added to the mailing list, contact Amos or Taylor at the Patrick County Extension Office, (276) 694-3341.

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**Meetings**

**Thursday, Dec. 14**  
The Patrick County School Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. in the School Board Office.

**Wednesday, Dec. 20**  
The Stuart Town Council will meet at 7 p.m. in the Town Office.

**Wednesday, Jan. 24**  
The Patrick County Economic Development Authority (EDA) will meet at 6 p.m. in the second-floor conference room of the Patrick County Administration Building.

**Events**

**Wednesday, Dec. 13**  
The Patrick County Community Food Bank will hold a food distribution day at the Stuart site from 8:30-11 a.m. and from 5-6:30 p.m. There will be a morning distribution in Ararat from 8:30-11 a.m., and an evening distribution in Meadows of Dan from 5-6:30 p.m.

**Thursday, Dec. 14**  
The Patrick County Senior Citizens Group will hold its December meeting at 11 a.m. in the Hooker Building at Rotary Field in Stuart. Entertainment, a Christmas group sing-a-long, will be led by Phyllis Eastridge and Paula Drady.

Grilled chicken breasts and beverages will be provided for the meal. Attendees are requested to bring vegetables and desserts to share with the group.

**Friday, Dec. 15**  
The Community Mobile Food Pantry will be at the Fairystone VFD from 3-4 p.m.

**Sunday, Dec. 17**  
High Point Baptist Church, 2381 Big A School Road, Stuart, will hold its Outdoor Christmas Drama with the shows starting at 6 and 7 p.m. For more information, contact Pastor Wayne Moore at (336) 793-7991.

**Sunday, Dec. 24**  
Woolwine Methodist Church will hold a Christmas Eve service starting at 11 p.m.

**Ongoing**

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 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.

Introduction to Zen Meditation and Zen Buddhism at the Blue Ridge Regional Library Stuart site, 1:30-2:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesdays.

Messianic Bible Study, Fridays from 6-7:30 p.m. 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.

# Local Eagles chapter boosts Shop With A Cop program



The local Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 4007 donated a \$1,000 check to the Patrick County Sheriff's Office Shop With A Cop program. Pictured left to right are Steve Austin, Jeff Amos, Jackie Bird, Charles Hamm, and John Rakes.



## Several graduate Criminal Justice program

The Piedmont Regional Criminal Justice Training Academy's graduation was held at NCI on Friday, December 1, with several to graduate from the program, including: First, row left to right, Abbigay Astin, Martinsville Sheriff's Office (Class President); Kristy Torres, Martinsville Sheriff's Office; Shannon Horn, Patrick County Sheriff's Office; Dyson Spence, Patrick County Sheriff's Office; LaTorya Banks, Danville Adult Detention Center; Randy Guy, Pittsylvania County Sheriff's Office. Second, row left to right, Chance McClaine, Henry County Sheriff's Office; Matthew Huxley, Henry County Sheriff's Office; Timothy Moore, Henry County Sheriff's Office; Ryan O'Hara, Henry County Sheriff's Office; Jaheim Hairston, Henry County Sheriff's Office. Third row, left to right, Jesse Harding, Henry County Sheriff's Office; Byron Lippencott, Henry County Sheriff's Office; Jason Riggsby, Danville Sheriff's Office; Tavion Gravely, Henry County Sheriff's Office; Joshua Sheldon, Pittsylvania County Sheriff's Office.

# 10 Tips to Help Children with Special Needs Enjoy the Holidays

The holidays are upon us, and while there's loads of merrymaking and fun to be had – the changes and sensations of the season can add stress to the lives of children with special needs and their families. The Episcopal Center for Children (ECC), a nonprofit organization serving children with special needs ages 5-14 in the greater Washington, DC area, offers the following tips to help.

“Children with special needs enjoy the holidays but they are especially sensitive to the changes in routines that the holidays bring,” said Stephanie Nash, LICSW, president and CEO of ECC. “Making a plan, thinking about your child's needs, and adjusting your expectations can help you create a positive holiday experience for the entire family.”

**Tip #1 – Make a plan for the holidays and share it with your family.** Create a schedule for your family's holiday activities and post it for your child to see. You may find it helpful to use pictures to help a young child. Talk about the schedule with your child, so he or she can anticipate what will happen.

**Tip #2 – Remind your family about holiday plans.** Review the schedule with others in your home, so they understand what is going on and how they can best support your child with special needs (and ev-

eryone else in the family), so everyone can have a fun holiday.

**Tip #3 – For holiday gatherings, give your child a job and a plan.** Ask your child to help collect coats, give out treats, or greet arrivals. Rehearse the plan. Give your child a schedule or plan for a festive occasion so he or she knows what to anticipate and when things will happen.

**Tip #4 – Maintain routines as much as possible.** There may be special activities for the holidays, but try to keep your child's schedule as close to “normal” as possible. Routines are key for helping children coping with special needs, and it's especially important for children to stick to regular medication and sleep schedules as much as possible.

**Tip #5 - If your child is sensitive to unfamiliar smells, help manage them.** Cinnamon is a common holiday fragrance. One way to help a child experience this smell minimally (and gauge reaction to it), is to add cinnamon to play compound before an event. Ask guests visiting your home to not wear heavy perfumes if your child is sensitive to them and think about other smells like evergreens.

**Tip #6 – Eat healthy foods and consider how new or special foods impact your child.** During the holidays there are all sorts of fun foods and treats to enjoy. Some children are more affected

than others by dietary changes. Pay attention to your child's moods and how diet and situational changes may be impacting him or her. If you are at an event, bring along food that is familiar to your child if you think it may be needed.

**Tip #7 – Take breaks when needed.** Sometimes children need a break from the hubbub of holiday activities and busyness. Fill a bag or backpack with a few favorite toys, games or activities. If you see your child is getting stressed, get out the bag and find a quiet spot to play.

**Tip #8 – Do not allow presents to be a hindrance to enjoyment.** Toy packaging today can frustrate children and parents alike. Children who have trouble with fine motor skills may find unwrapping some gifts frustrating. You can adjust packages to their comfort level by loosening ribbons and paper, or pre-cutting fasteners. Ask others who give your child gifts to be aware of his or her needs when it comes to wrapping presents. Some children find it disorienting to unwrap things that are new and unfamiliar to them. If that is the case for your child, wrap a few favorite

toys for your child to unwrap.

**Tip #9 – Get your child into the spirit of the season through gift giving.** Gift giving provides an opportunity to practice social skills. Help your child make a gift for someone else, and practice how to give the gift to that person. Let your child experience the joy of giving.

**Tip #10 – Give your child the gift of your attention.** Holidays can be busy for grown-ups and children. Make sure you spend a few minutes of quality time with your child every day. Give your full attention. Practice active listening, where you listen to what your child is saying and then repeat it back to them to demonstrate that you are listening. Focus on offering connection and support.

## Marriage Licenses issued in November

According to records in the Patrick County Circuit Court Clerk's Office, the following marriage licenses were issued in November:

- Alexander Quesenberry – Brandy Young.
- Drew Jackson – Kandace Rakes.
- Gregory Henry – Britney Thomas.
- Roy Zeisloft – Danielle Brumbaugh.
- Jacob Booker – Jessica DeHart.

# Administrative, support and waste management top initial claims

Initial unemployment insurance claims increased in the latest filing week to 1,945 but remained slightly below typical pre-pandemic volumes experienced in 2019, according to data from the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA).

For the filing week ending December 2, the figure for seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia was 1,945, which was an increase of 841 claimants from the previous week. Falling after a holiday week likely played a part in the large increase. Continued weeks claimed totaled

11,984, which was an increase from the previous week and an increase of 52% from the 7,899 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of continued claims. Of those, over half (52 percent) of continued claims were from professional, scientific, and technical services (1,729), administrative and support and waste management (1,708), manufacturing (1,307), and health care and social assistance (1,068). 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.

In the week ending December 2, the advance U.S. figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 220,000, an increase of 1,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 1,000 from 218,000 to 219,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 293,511 in the week ending December 2, an increase of 93,761 (or 46.9 percent) from the previous week. There were

287,976 initial claims in the comparable week in 2022.

Looking at preliminary data for the week after Thanksgiving week, most U.S. states reported large increases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. California's preliminary weekly change (+14,057) was the largest increase. New York's preliminary weekly change (+9,343) was the second largest increase. Texas's preliminary weekly change (+7,698) was the third largest increase. Georgia's preliminary weekly change (+6,481) was the fourth largest increase. Virginia had the 26th largest increase (+739).

# Bipartisan proposal would enforce sanctions on terrorist organizations

U.S. Sens. Mark R. Warner, D-VA, and Jack Reed, D-RI, joined by Mike Rounds, R-SD, and Mitt Romney, R-UT, to introduce bipartisan legislation to crack down on terrorist organizations like Hamas by applying sanctions to foreign parties that facilitate financial transactions with terrorists.

Currently, these sanctions are imposed only in limited circumstances, primarily on the terrorist group Hezbollah following passage of the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act in 2015. The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act introduced today will expand this type of sanctions to cover all U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs), including

FTOs.

"The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act will make sure that the Treasury Department has the tools necessary to enforce our sanctions against Hamas and other terror groups," said Warner. "I'm pleased to join Senators Rounds, Reed, and Romney in introducing this bipartisan legislation to improve our national security."

Under the terms of the Terrorism Financing Prevention Act, the U.S. Department of the Treasury is required to identify any foreign bank or foreign digital asset transaction facilitator that knowingly facilitates transactions with an FTO or related party. Once these actors are identified, the bill requires imposition of sanctions on them, restricting either their use of U.S. correspondent bank accounts (in the case of a bank), or barring their digital asset or other transactions with U.S. persons (in the case of a digital asset transaction facilitator).

FinCEN with appropriate tools to address threats involving digital assets and non-traditional finance networks, just as they currently can where correspondent accounts are involved.

"It is critical that the Department of the Treasury has the necessary counter-terrorism tools to combat modern threats," Rounds said. "The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act takes commonsense steps toward rooting out terrorism by sanctioning foreign financial institutions and foreign digital asset companies that assist them in committing these heinous acts. Cutting off funding for terrorist organizations at the source will save lives. I am pleased to co-lead this bipartisan legislation that takes decisive action to disrupt terrorist finance networks."

"The October 7 attacks on Israel perpetrated by Hamas have made it more urgent and necessary for the U.S. to counter the role that cryptocurrency plays in the financing of terrorism. Our legislation would expand financial sanctions to cover all terrorist organizations—including Hamas—and it would equip the Treasury Department with additional resources to counter terrorism and address emerging threats involving digital assets," said Romney.

The Terrorism Financing Prevention Act also authorizes the resources the Treasury Department needs to carry out these programs.

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

**Super Crossword**

**Answers**

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# New methane safeguards protect VA communities

Edwin J. Viera

Virginia News Connection

New methane safeguards can protect communities in Virginia and the U.S.

A new rule targets leaks from wells and pipelines, which can emit at least 2.6 million tons of methane per year. Lowering emissions can provide numerous economic and health benefits for state residents.

However, Virginia utility companies are only building up their gas infrastructure; a common trend in Southern states.

Greg Buppert, senior attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center, described why it is happening.

"It is a model that utility companies are very familiar with," Buppert explained. "They've, for years, operated coal-fired power plants. A gas fired power plant uses the same business model.



And so, in some sense utility companies like to do what they know how to do."

He added gas is no longer a bridge fuel to renewables, noting further climate change research revealed its harms. Virginia en-

acted legislation in 2020 requiring utilities to use 100% renewable electricity by 2050. Yet, work is underway by Dominion Energy to develop a gas-fired power plant near the James River.

A natural gas pipeline exten-

sion recently received federal approval to go through a Virginia city already affected by the fossil fuel industry. Residents and state environmentalists voiced their opposition. Buppert pointed out the new rules can help residents deal with the effects the pipeline will have.

"The rule will help protect communities from the worst impacts of some of that new infrastructure," Buppert noted. "The administration has in the works additional rules related specifically to power plants. And these are indeed important and critical steps."

Leaking methane can cause asthma, other respiratory problems and even cancer. Methane emissions have taken center stage at COP28, the international climate summit. Though more than 150 nations promised to reduce emissions by 30% by 2030, they're still uncertain how to attain this.

# Several people were named in last round of indictments

Grand jurors handed down more than 50 indictments on December 4, according to records in the Patrick County Court Clerk's Office.

An indictment is not an indication of guilt, but a grand jury's determination that enough evidence exists to warrant a trial.

Those named in the indictments are:

\*James Roger Dulaney, 49, of Woolwine, abduction, on or between March 12 through March 13.

\*William Ray Jurney, 33, of Claudville, attempt to malicious wounding, May 21.

\*Cody John Belcher, 31, of Woolwine, strangulation, October 3, 2022.

\*Anthony Chandler Bryant, 28, of Stuart, malicious wounding, June 1.

\*Aaron Jermone Cooper, 46, of Stuart, unauthorized use of vehicle, March 20.

\*Danielle Brooke Wade, 28, of Floyd, unauthorized use of vehicle, on or between June 20 - June 29.

\*Tanya Leahann Branch, 43, of Bassett, one count each grand larceny and obtain money by false pretense, July 11.

\*John Albert Nester, Sr., 52, of Martinsville, one count each grand larceny, obtain money by false pretense, and grand larceny with intent to sell, July 11.

\*Brandon Jude Riley, 42, of North Augusta, S.C., obtain money by false pretense, October 21, 2022.

\*Keondre Demone Holmes, 31, of Patrick Springs, strangulation, July 23.

\*Oscar Alfredo Roman, 40, of Stuart, 20 counts possess child pornography, between December 9 and December 21, 2022.

\*Roger Dale Turner, 38, of Patrick Springs, two counts strangulation, and one count each aggra-

vated malicious wounding, child endangerment, and child cruelty, on or between July 3 through August 4.

\*Ryan Travis Doss, possess sawed-off shotgun, August 30.

\*Karleigh Jean Rorrer, elude law enforcement, July 20.

\*Jonathan David Grandison, assault and batter on law enforcement officer, July 25.

\*Matthew Lamar Neace, malicious wounding, August 3.

\*Andrea M. Guerra, 35, of Stuart, one count each welfare perjury and welfare fraud, on or between October 1, 2021 and July 21, 2023.

\*Neolfis Dejesus-Martinez, 40, of Stuart, one count each welfare perjury and welfare fraud, on or between November 1, 2022 and July 1, 2023.

\*Dana Marie Snider, 28, of Claudville, distribution of Sch. I or II drugs, August 17.

\*Kenneth Dane Gray, 54, of Claudville, one count each conspiracy to distribute Sch. I or II drugs and distribution of Sch. I or II drug- 3rd or subsequent offense, August 10.

\*Christopher Krik Gray, 53, of Ararat, seven counts distribution of Sch. I or II drugs, two counts distribution of 28 grams or more of methamphetamine, and one count each distribution of 10g or more methamphetamine and conspiracy to distribute Sch. I/II 10g. or more, on or about August 4 through September 25.

\*Adam Lee Daniels, 39, of Stuart, possession of Sch. I or II drug, May 17.

\*Tony Lee Epperson, 51, of Mount Airy, N.C., possession of Sch. I or II drug, March 31.

\*Crystal Kathleen Luckado, 34, of Stuart, possession of Sch. I or II drug, March 11.

# A holiday fixture steeped in tradition grows in Virginia

Mistletoe lore dates back centuries—to the Celtic druids and Norse mythology—as a symbol of fertility, peace and love.

The plant's legends eventually made their way across continents when European settlers immigrated to North America and discovered a plant that closely resembled the mistletoe from their homeland.

"(European mistletoe) is actually a different species and different genus, but they look really similar," explained Jordan Metzgar, a biologist and curator for the Massey Herbarium at Virginia Tech. "When Europeans came to North America, there was this other mistletoe here, so they just transferred a lot of the mythology and traditions with it."

Metzgar explained that of the seven native mistletoe species in the U.S., only one grows in Virginia—Phoradendron leucarpum—commonly called American mistletoe or Eastern mistletoe. And while it's the plant of holiday romance, its true characteristics are a little more ominous.

"It's in the genus Phoradendron, which literally translates to 'tree thief,'" Metzgar said. "It grows on trees, taps into their vascular systems and steals nutrients and water from them."

Mistletoe's tiny white flowers form into clusters of snow-white berries during the

late fall and winter, and are a favorite among birds, which spread them from tree to tree. The seed's sticky coating adheres it to limbs and trunks where "it'll germinate and make a little seedling, and right away it bores into the tree it's growing on" using a special rootlike organ called a haustorium, Metzgar explained.

A hemiparasite, the woody shrub needs trees to survive, but it also photosynthesizes, allowing it to stay a festive green throughout the winter. But despite being closely associated with wintertime holidays, "it's really not cold-tolerant at all," Metzgar noted. "We're pretty close to the northern edge of its range here in the Eastern U.S."

Mistletoe thrives in the temperate climate of Virginia's coastal plains and swampy forests. Its bushy clumps can easily be spotted standing out against bare branches during the late fall, winter and early spring.

And though the large clusters can dam-

age trees and girdle limbs, mistletoe is a long-established native and a normal part of the forest ecosystem. It grows on a range of trees, particularly oaks, red maples and gum trees.

Some landowners harvest Virginia mistletoe on their own, but others can find sprigs for their holiday decorations at local florists, garden centers, nurseries and other holiday retailers. Many tree farms also sell it alongside their Christmas trees. Mistletoe may be favored for holiday décor, but it's best to keep away from children and pets. It contains a toxic protein called phoratoxin, which can cause nausea, vomiting, weakness and other issues when accidentally consumed.

See more in Cultivate magazine at bit.ly/3Gy0KHu.

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# Youngkin launches new initiative to help families with childcare, early learning

Virginia will make a significant investment in early learning and childcare via the Building Blocks for Virginia Families initiative to empower parents with childcare choice, reduce red tape, expand available childcare options for parents, and provide needed support for parents to continue in the workforce.

Last week, Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced Building Blocks for Virginia Families, which builds on Virginia's strong foundation and expands a marketplace to serve more families across the Commonwealth. Key attributes of the plan include:

- Ensures every low-income working family currently receiving public support continues to have access to high quality early childhood and after school programs with over \$448 million annually in total investment
- Strengthens parent choice—of home-providers, public school preschools, community co-ops, church programs, and private day centers
- Creates an innovative childcare payment system driven by parents that making it easier for employers, philanthropies, local governments, community partners and families to contribute and support the success of Virginia's early learners
- Cuts unnecessary red tape for providers so they can operate effectively, efficiently, and safely
- Eliminates childcare deserts by infusing \$25 million to refurbish excess space at our colleges

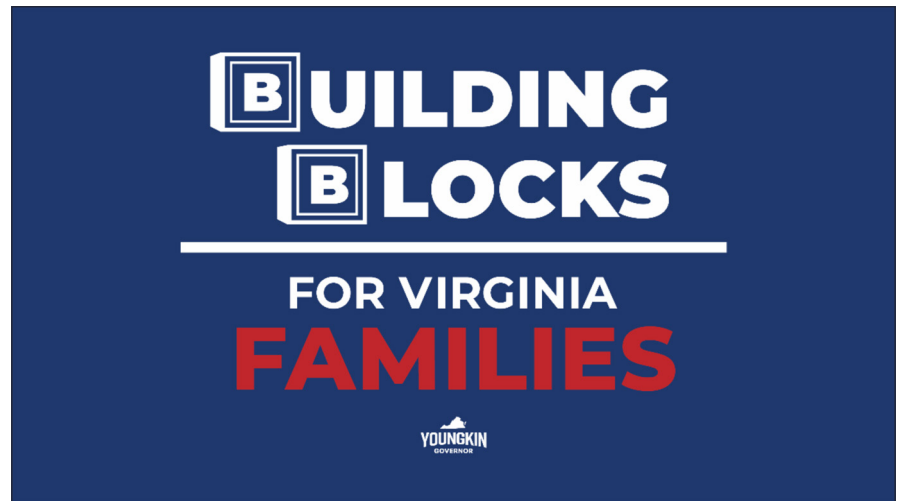
to launch new early learning hubs

- Reduces childcare educator shortages by maintaining \$1 million scholarship program to increase the skills of Virginia's early education workforce and \$10 million per year for direct-to-childcare educator incentives that have been shown to reduce teacher shortages and increase educator retention in childcare

"Building Blocks for Virginia Families will ensure families can choose the early option that best supports their children in their most formative years and enter school ready to learn," said Youngkin. "By prioritizing parent choice and cutting red tape for families and providers, we are delivering a best-in-class model for early learning and childcare."

Through the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act, Virginia used \$794 million to expand childcare and early education programs. Over the past two years, Governor Youngkin invested funds to support parents' post-COVID return to the workforce by increasing parent choice and fully implementing one of the nation's strongest early learning data quality measurement and continuous improvement systems.

The expiration of federal funding put 27,000 children at risk of losing access to quality care. Through Building Blocks for Virginia Families, every eligible child will be able to continue to access high quality options that meet their family's specific childcare needs and Virginia will remain the national leader



in innovative approaches to quality early education and childcare.

The Commission, staffed by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (ECF), created a series of guiding principles and recommendations which informed the development of the Building Blocks for Virginia Families approach. They also incorporated findings from a recent Vanderbilt University study that found a significant ROI on the learning investments from Virginia's early childhood programs.

"Today, we open the door to the next era of early care and education in the Commonwealth. Government cannot be the sole answer to every challenge including ensuring access to quality childcare," said Secretary of Education Aimee Guidera. "The Building Blocks for Virginia Families plan is about public and private stakeholders coming together. We will address childcare deserts, early childhood provider shortages and introduce innovation and partner-

ships into how we pay for childcare for a sustainable system."

"It's a great day for Virginia! Governor Youngkin has made a bold commitment to sustaining Virginia's best-in-class public-private parent choice system through seminal investment and innovative reforms," said President of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation Kathy Glazer. "The Youngkin Administration has clearly recognized the importance of keeping Virginia's families 'whole' with childcare services that support their children's school readiness, their own reliable workforce participation, and the productivity of businesses in communities across the Commonwealth. Alongside our Ready Regions and Mixed Delivery partners, we are proud to continue to work with and support the efforts of the Administration through steady access to high-quality early childhood care and education services for Virginia's families."

# Music icon Emmylou Harris tops Rooster Walk 14 band lineup

Emmylou Harris, a 2018 Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award winner and member of the Country Music Hall of Fame, will bring her band to headline the 14th annual Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival. Joining her at the top of the band lineup will be celebrated guitarist Cory Wong, an exploding star on the international music scene.

Harris has been estimated to have sold more than 15 million records worldwide. She has also earned 13 Grammy Awards and placed 27 singles into the top 10 US country chart. She will make her Rooster Walk debut with a Saturday evening set at the festival, which will take place May 23-26, at Pop's Farm in Martinsville.

Wong will also make his RW debut when his band performs a Friday night headlining set. A former member of Vulfpeck, Wong's live shows are lauded for their instrumental wizardry, incredible cohesiveness and their sheer, energetic fun.

The final batch of RW14 band additions will be announced by February 2024.

Tickets for Rooster Walk 14 are now on sale at

www.roosterwalk.com, which also features all the information needed to plan for an amazing experience.

The festival will take place Thursday-Sunday of Memorial Day weekend in the rolling foothills surrounding Martinsville. Rooster Walk is a 4-day festival celebrating music, art, and the great outdoors at the idyllic Pop's Farm venue. With 40+ bands performing on 6 different stages, an amazing roster of stellar music steers the Rooster Walk experience.

In addition to approximately 80 sets of live music, the family-friendly Rooster Walk will offer a wide variety of kids' programming, family fun, craft beer, great food, arts and numerous opportunities to enjoy Virginia's great outdoors with kayak river floats, pedal boats, bike rides, yoga, a disc golf course and beautiful on-site camping.

Rooster Walk has been named one of the Top 5 festivals in the state by the Richmond-Times Dis-

patch. It also was voted the region's Most Creative Charitable Event by readers of Virginia Living Magazine for three consecutive years. The festival was created in memory of late Martinsville natives Edwin "The Rooster" Penn and Walker Shank, who graduated from Martinsville High School in 2000.

A portion of proceeds from the festival will be donated to local and regional charities, including Rooster Walk's own Penn-Shank Memorial Endowment Scholarship Fund for students at Martinsville High School, and the Rooster Walk Music Instrument Program for public band programs in the local city and county school systems.

The festival is produced by Rooster Walk Inc., a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to promoting music, arts and education in its home of Martinsville-Henry County. Since 2009, Rooster Walk Inc. has donated more than \$320,000 to local and regional charities.

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# Banjorama celebrates county's musical heritage, tourism efforts

Sammy Shelor's Banjorama, held Saturday, Dec. 9 December, at Patrick County High School, also featured Nu-Blu. Several people were inter-

viewed by Nu-Blu Bluegrass Ridge TV Show to promote our county's tourism efforts before the Banjorama got underway.

All photos by Mary Dellenback Hill's phone video camera. Hill represents the Dan River District on the county's Tourism Advisory Council (TAC).



James Houchins, director of Patrick County Tourism, discussed the amenities available in the county while discussing the county's tagline, 'Come Get Lost and Find Yourself Here.'



Rebecca Adcock, executive director of the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce, discussed the recently released fourth edition of the Patrick County Magazine, and noted it features some of the musicians from the Willis Gap Community Center Open Jam. Inside, the magazine includes several stories about local musicians and music.



Denny Alley, organizer of the Patrick County Music Association, talked about the early days of the monthly PCMA events and other musical efforts.



Sammy Shelor, celebrated performer and widely known as 'Master of the Banjo,' hosted the Banjorama. Shelor discussed his type of banjo music and related how he began playing the instrument as a youngster.



Mary Dellenback Hill discussed the Willis Gap Community Center Open Jam, Appalachian Acoustic Music every Friday Night, (doors open 6 p.m., with music and dancing from 7 - 10 p.m.



Sammy Shelor and the Lonesome River Band warm up before performing at the Banjorama Saturday in Stuart.

## Master Gardener's celebrate 2023 programs, graduations and Milestone Awards

The Patrick County Master Gardeners celebrated a successful 2023. Multiple Educational Programs were presented at the Learning Garden, Blue Ridge Regional Library., Landmark, STEP, Farmers Market, WHEO, Streamside Trees in the Classroom. as well as schools in Patrick and Henry counties, educational articles were written for The Enterprise, and a seed library was maintained at the library.

Gardens were built and maintained on Main Street Stuart, Books. Blooms and Bugs Garden children's garden at the library, STEP garden Stuart, Landmark sensory garden.

Reynolds Homestead and Farmers Market herb gardens and gardens at Meadows of Dan Elementary School. Master Gardeners are also working on a Native Plant Trail in Fairy Stone State Park.

Two plant sales were held, and the group also participated in the Mistletoe Market, Monsters on Mainstreet and Festival of Lights.

More than \$5,000 was donated back to the community to a scholarship and community nonprofit organizations including the Blue Ridge Library, Dolly Pardon Imagination Library, Girl Scout Troop 342, PAWs, Special Olympics, PC Alz-

heimer's Group LLC, and Christmas Cheer.

The following Master Gardeners received lifetime volunteer milestone awards for 250 hours: Sylvia Cummings, Ed Coleman. Robin Reichert and Dee Nolan; Janice Woods was recognized for 500 hours, and Norma Bozenmayer for 1,000 hours.

The Master Gardener training course was completed by Carrie Ingals, Angie Dribben. Hannah Vinova and Kristine Adel.

Rita Browning and Kristine Adel completed all the requirements to become Master Gardeners and were awarded their green aprons

and badges.

If interested in becoming a Master gardener, or to get on our email list, email mgpcva@gmail.com.

Mark your calendar for the following dates next year:

January 27 and Feb 10 - educational programs will be presented at the library at 11 a.m. and the group's annual Gardening Symposium will be held at Patrick and Henry Community College Stuart on March 9.

The Master Gardeners would like to thank the community for your support of our programs and wish you a safe and happy 2024.



Milestone awards were presented to Robin Reichert, Dee Nolan, Sylvia Cummings, and Norma Bozenmayer. (Not pictured were Janice Woods and Ed Coleman.)



New interns include Hannah Vinova and Kristine Adel. (Angie Dribben and Carrie Ingals are not pictured.)



New Master Gardener Kristine Adel. (Not pictured Rita Browning.)

### Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging  
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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# Reynolds Homestead holds Christmas Open House

By Pat Delaney

Visitors from all over the area braved the wet weather on Sunday, December 10, to visit The Reynolds Homestead in Critz for its

Christmas Open House. Guests were greeted by guides in period dress, refreshments, Christmas music and even Santa and Mrs. Claus.

The Reynolds home was beautifully decorated for the holiday, as guides shared the history of the homestead, the Reynolds family and their times with guests, young and old.



A banjo player performed a rendition of the Charlie Brown Christmas song.



Period decorations adorn the Christmas tree, and one of many tables.



Santa and Mrs. Claus greeted guests at the Reynolds Homestead's Christmas Open House.



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### 14

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TWO NIGHTS OF DANIEL DONATO'S COSMIC COUNTRY  
TAUK MOORE + DOGS IN A PILE + COUCH

CAITLIN KRISKO & THE BROADCAST + YARN + ARKANSAUCE  
SNEEZY + MOUNTAIN GRASS UNIT + ISAAC HADDEN ORGAN TRIO  
SOL DRIVEN TRAIN + J & THE CAUSEWAYS + STICKS N THORNS  
TRAVIS BOOK & FRIENDS + COLBY T. HELMS & THE VIRGINIA CREEPERS  
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**STUART, VA**

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**PATRICK SPRINGS, VA**

Beautiful 33 acre tract of land with a great mix of wooded and pasturelands. There is a small stream and an abundance of wildlife. Property also has an existing well, septic and underground electric in place. **\$240,000**



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**BASSETT, VA**

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