



THE ENTERPRISE

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Vol. 147 No. 52 Website: www.theenterprise.net STUART, VIRGINIA WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2023 USPS 523-500 \$1.00

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

Fundraising campaign launched to help PCHS student

A GoFundMe campaign is underway to help with the medical expenses of Lauren Worley, a Patrick County High School student severely injured in a December 16 crash.

Information online, posted with permission from Lauren's mother, Mandy Trent Worley, Lauren was riding home around 9:35 p.m., with her boyfriend Micah Underwood when their vehicle was "struck head on by what now appears to be a drunk driver," the website stated.

The Virginia State Police, which investigates traffic accidents, have not issued any information about the crash.

However, "our lives are forever changed. Both were airlifted to Roanoke Memorial" hospital, the information stated. "Lauren's side of the car was so mangled the jaws of life had to remove her."

Her parents were "on the horrific scene because of Life 360," a family locator and safety app, according to online information.

"The first responders from Patrick County were incredible," the online information stated. They

"got her out, stabilized her and got her on the helicopter to Roanoke trauma center."

Since then, Lauren has undergone numerous procedures, including a 5 hour surgery, and her parents were told it would be a "the long road ahead," the online information states.

"Lauren is still critical and will be here for many weeks, possibly months of hospital stay," the information stated. "We have been overwhelmed by the prayers and support from our friends and family from the Floyd and Patrick communities and Facebook friends all over us."

Mail cards with words of encouragement or even your favorite Bible verse to Carilion Hospital, Lauren Worley, Room 1069, 1906 Belleview Ave., Roanoke, VA 24014.

To support the fundraiser, visit https://www.gofundme.com/f/lauren-worley-medical-expenses?utm_campaign=p_cp+share-sheet&utm_content=facebook_cta_variant&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.



Amber Pilson was selected Teacher of the Year by VFW Post 7800. She is pictured with veterans and Post Commander Donald Cockram (right).

Woolwine educator selected Teacher of the Year

Amber Pilson, of Woolwine Elementary School, was selected by the VFW Post 7800 as the Teacher of the Year. Donald Cockram, commander of the post, presented the awards that included a certificate, a \$250 Visa card, and a crystal apple. Woolwine school and staff thank the veterans who attended the ceremony and Cockram. (Contributed photos)

Pilson, a seasoned educator with 12 years of successful teaching in the Patrick County School system, has demonstrated outstanding leadership and innovation during

her time at Woolwine Elementary School. As the resource teacher, she has consistently showcased exceptional organizational skills, managing seven classrooms with over twenty students in grades PreK to seven.

Cockram shared a letter of heartfelt letter of support, commending Pilson's relentless dedication to her students and colleagues. He highlighted her instrumental role in creating Veterans Day flyers to honor community veterans, her work with seventh graders on the

(See Woolwine p. 3)



Pictured are P&HCC president Dr. Greg Hodges, Michael Morrison (instructor), Hunter Amos, Noah Brumfield, Camden Bryant, Cameron Hagwood, Dylan Thompson, Nathan Rorer, Tommy Jessup (instructor), and Danny Williams (instructor) celebrate the completion of P&HCC's initial Power Line Worker cohort. Not pictured: Power Line graduate Skyler Thomas.

First Cohort of Power Line Graduates Recognized

The first cohort of Patrick & Henry Community College's (P&HCC's) powerline students were recognized on Thursday, December 14 in Patrick County with a graduation ceremony. Graduates were joined by family, friends and employers from Elliott and the City of Martinsville to celebrate their completion of the three month course.

"We are very proud of these students who recently completed the inaugural cohort of the Power Line Worker training program in Patrick County. Through this innovative partnership with Wytheville Community College, P&HCC continues to expand training opportunities for career pathways that pay well and lead to economic mobility," said Rhonda Hodges, P&HCC vice president of workforce, economic and community development.

Instructor Michael Morrison encouraged graduates to remember that their work in the program has

been foundational for future cohorts as members of the class not only came to learn, but worked to help set up the pole yard that they and future students will use for training during the course.

Using curriculum from the National Center for Construction Education and Research, the Power Line Worker curriculum addresses the fundamental aspects of power line work to ensure workers maintain safety for both the public and electrical crews. Power line workers install, remove, maintain, and repair high voltage and low-voltage distribution lines and associated equipment and facilities. Training topics include truck driving, safety, electrical theory, climbing techniques, aerial framing, rigging, and operating utility service equipment.

P&HCC's second Power Line cohort will begin February 5. Those interested in participating in the program should call 276-656-0260.

Secret Santa winners announced



Stephanie Hagwood is employed by Clark Gas & Oil.



Cindy Penn employed by Narrowflex.

The winners for the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce's Secret Santa Christmas Bonus were randomly selected from 350 entries that represented all industry sectors across the county.

The winners were the following: Stephanie Hagwood employed by Clark Gas & Oil, Cindy Penn employed at Narrowflex, Amber Wagoner employed by Step Inc, Terri Mills employed by Piedmont Community Services and our firefighter selected due to her assistance with the Tug-

gle Gap Fire, and Cathy Boyd employed by Hutchens Petroleum.

On behalf of the Chamber of Commerce and our winners, we would like to sincerely thank our anonymous donor for sponsoring this program that brings a lot of Holiday Cheer to Patrick County. We wish everyone happy holidays and a prosperous new year!

The chamber office is taking a break for the holidays, and will be closed through January 8.

(See Secret Santa p. 3)

Year in Review: A look back at 2023

We put together a 'Year in Review' annually to both showcase some of the happenings of the previous 12 months and as a way to say, "thank you" to you - the reason for it all.

We appreciate your kindness and courtesies, willingness to share the stories of your life and participate in the communities in which we live. This paper is about community, and it would not be possible without you.

In preparation for 2024, and to give our staff some downtime, the office will be closed until Tuesday, January 2. We look forward to seeing you

then, and will periodically check emails while the office is closed.

To submit stories, photos, story ideas, letters, calendar items, etc., email Debbie at dhall@theenterprise.net or Taylor at entreport@theenterprise.net.

For classifieds, obituaries, and general office questions, email Pat at submissions@theenterprise.net.

We hope you enjoy the review of the past year, and eagerly look forward to 2024.

(See Year in Review p. 3)

January

Former HanesBrands facility acquired by new company



Apex Mills, a specialty supplier and manufacturer of warp knit fabrics geared towards industrial and technical applications, will invest \$3.1 million to expand its East Coast presence by acquiring the former HanesBrands facility and its equipment in Patrick County, according to a release from Gov. Glenn Youngkin.

Prodigy 'living the dream' of playing golf



Most golfers dream about putting on the 18th green at Augusta National. Twelve-year-old Riley Adkins lived the dream, and hopes to make a return trip to the home of the Masters in 2024.

Adkins, of Patrick Springs, qualified for the national finals of the Drive, Chip and Putt competition in 2019, but because of COVID had to wait a year to get to Augusta. The weekend before the 2021 Masters, she got her chance. Riley reached the national finals by advancing through qualifiers in Winston-Salem and Greensboro, N.C.

Chamber Chat

By Rebecca Adcock

What a month, what a year! So much happened to help us rethink Patrick County.

While it is true, the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce does not function like most other chambers; I always say we are more like a community organization than chamber, but we play an important role in our community by bridging the gap between the public, businesses and government.

We had 10 ribbon cuttings this year for new businesses or businesses who expanded their services. By partnering with One Family Productions, Rotary Club of Stuart, and Step, Inc., we were able to launch the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. To date, we have 264 kids enrolled in the program and receiving a book every month.

The chamber hosted four lunch and learn programs during the year that ranged from social media and Canva design to food truck regulations. The chamber was active and attended many workshops throughout the year from the Patrick County Tourism Summit to the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation initiative meetings, Department of Housing and Community Development meeting in Wytheville, and other regional project meetings.

Promotion of all the community events is in and of itself a full time job. From fundraiser meals, holiday celebrations, promotions of Small Business Saturday, Stuart Spooktacular and Hometown Christmas, Patrick County loves to fellowship and have fun.

Our partnership with Patrick County Tourism has produced our Patrick County Magazine. This bi-annual magazine won the Southwest Virginia Tourism Award this year for "Best Magazine Guide."

Hosting the Lunch with Community Leaders, a partnership with Reynolds Homestead, was once again well attended and successful in facilitating information about all the projects happening in Pat-



rick County in a short amount of time. We are grateful to the Patrick County High School Hospitality class for their assistance in planning, preparing and serving the meal, along with room decorations.

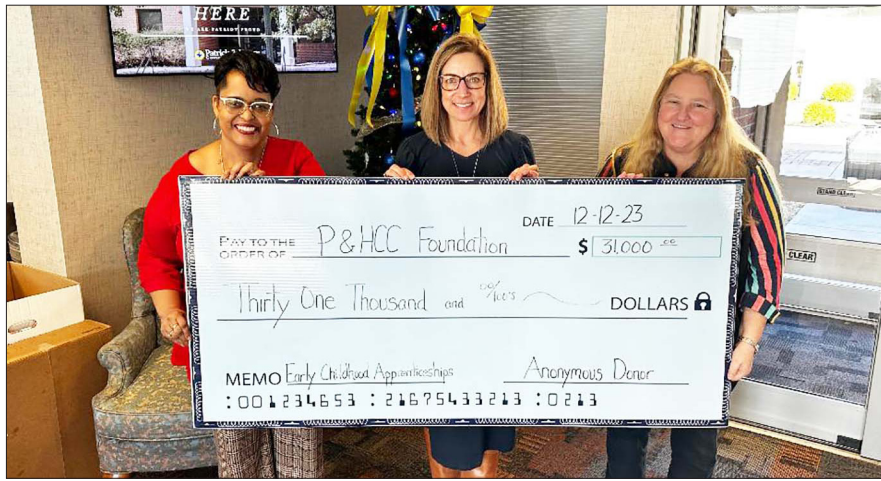
As we close out 2023, we are already planning for 2024. We will kick off January with our annual membership drive as well as ad sales for the Spring 2024 Patrick County Magazine. These revenue sources are two of the three biggest contributions that keep the chamber going. Thank you to all those who have been members or purchased ads in the past, we hope with your continued support, we can work to make Patrick County the best place to live and work, and visit in Virginia and beyond.

One other project we are busy preparing will be our Economic Summit that we will co-host with Reynolds Homestead, Patrick County EDA and Tourism and the Town of Stuart. We are hoping this event will bring together our local businesses for an interactive informative session on how we can help support our businesses with necessary resources. More information and the date will be announced at the beginning of the year.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and a prosperous 2024.

(Adcock is the executive director of the Patrick County Chamber of Commerce.)

Patrick & Henry to Pilot Childcare Apprenticeship Program



Pictured are P&HCC Foundation executive director Tiffani Underwood (center) presenting grant funding to Rachel Hodge, transfer navigator, and Jan Harrison, faculty member.

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) has been awarded \$31,000 from an anonymous donor to support piloting a model for Early Childhood Education apprenticeships with local childcare providers. The grant will supplement employer salaries to reach a \$15/hr salary for all apprenticeships. With this generous funding, P&HCC will build a comprehensive career model that benefits students as well as youth, employees, and employers, all while Early Childhood Development students are also earning their associate degree.

In the pilot program, 8 students will commit to a 5 month apprenticeship of 340 working hours while also completing their associate degree in early childhood development. P&HCC plans to use this model to create a federally registered apprenticeship program for Early Childhood Development students, who would all commit to working 2,000 hours over two years with local childcare providers, coinciding with the length of time needed to complete the Early Childhood Development program.

P&HCC's long-term vision is that the program will grow in future years to include more cohorts of P&HCC students participating in the apprenticeship model, with the potential to expand to other colleges. If successful, P&HCC's Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program could be replicated throughout the state to address early childhood center staff shortages. This model will provide a valuable,

hands-on learning experience for students while supporting economic development through addressing the childcare needs of regional employers whose employees depend on reliable, quality childcare.

"We believe that opportunities should be available to employees to upskill and earn family-sustaining annual salaries in order to retain and sustain top-tier educational opportunities for the children in our community," said P&HCC president Dr. Greg Hodges, adding, "We are so grateful to the donors who are supporting our pilot program so that we can work to make this a reality for our region's childcare facilities."

Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) offers an Early Childhood Education Certificate and the Early Childhood Development Associate of Applied Science degree. The certificate program is a 31-credit program designed to improve the quality of education provided in early childhood programs. The Early Childhood Development Associate Degree program is designed to prepare early childhood professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to successfully manage a classroom and teach students from diverse backgrounds with varied academic and developmental needs. Graduates are prepared to work with students in a variety of educational environments including childcare centers, family day homes, Head Start, and public or private schools.

AI For Good AND Bad

The holidays are a time when friends and family of all ages gather together, share updates on their lives and recount cherished memories. One thing to add to that list this year: a conversation on how to stay safe from fraud.

We know that scammers target people of all ages. Last year 40% of all scams reported to the Federal Trade Commission were from people under the age of 40, and victims over the age of 60 lose the most money to scams on average. So we are all vulnerable to these criminals, and we could all use a little help and guidance. Here are two fraud topics to talk about with your family this holiday season.

What is a question, story or phrase that no one other than your close family would know? Scams targeting parents and grandparents are only becoming more believable with the adoption of Artificial Intelligence, but no matter how realistic a voice may sound it won't know this private memory

or password. Passwords are another critical topic. We all have so many passwords that it's hard to keep straight. This leads many to choose simple passwords or use the same one repeatedly. A quick chat about how you choose and protect your passwords could save someone you love a lot of money.

Lastly, be willing to share. Too many victims of fraud suffer in silence because they are ashamed to admit what happened to them. The truth is that scammers are sophisticated criminals and for victims sharing their story is the best way to protect others and get the support they need.

Visit the AARP Fraud Watch Network at aarp.org/fraudwatch-network or call the AARP Fraud Watch Helpline at 1-877-908-3360.

To learn more about AARP Virginia, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/aarpvirginia and follow @AARPVa on Twitter at www.twitter.com/aarpva.

Green and white mile marker signs help in emergencies

When you need to summon help along Virginia's interstates, travelers can count on mile marker signs to identify their location along the highway.

As more people embark on year-end holiday trips in December and January, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is sharing a "Mile Marker 101" video that advises travelers on how to find and use mile marker signs on interstates.

Look for these green-and-white rectangular signs at the edge of the interstate shoulder. Interstate mile marker signs are usually placed at every mile and may also be posted every 0.1 or 0.2 miles. The signs help emergency responders map their route to reach a person requesting assistance.

"Time is precious in an emergency," said VDOT Chief of Maintenance and Operations Kevin Gregg. "Mile marker signs help travelers report their location as precisely as possible when calling for assistance."

"Knowing where you are may help emergency responders reach you faster. After logging many miles on

a road trip, motorists experiencing an emergency may not remember the most recent interstate exit they passed, especially if they are traveling in an unfamiliar area. Mile markers signs provide accurate information to travelers that is not reliant on technology or wireless connectivity," said Gregg.

Messages about incidents, congestion and road work are also communicated on changeable message signs using mile markers as locations.

Travelers spotting debris or other road hazards on the interstate are encouraged to use mile marker signs to include the location in work order reports. Contact VDOT's Customer Service Center 24 hours a day online at my.vdot.virginia.gov or by phone at 800-FOR-ROAD (367-7623) or to submit a request, report a hazard, or ask a question.

If you are planning a trip along a Virginia interstate, visit vdot.virginia.gov to explore a list of exit numbers along each interstate before you go, along with other travel resources, such as the locations and mile markers for 41 Virginia Safety Rest Areas.

Four correctional facilities in Virginia to close in July

The director of the Virginia Department of Corrections announced several actions that are designed to enhance public safety and increase operational efficiency within the department's facilities.

Chad Dotson, VADOC director, said the Augusta Correctional Center, Sussex II State Prison, Haynesville Correctional Unit #17 and Stafford Community Corrections Alternative Program (CCAP) will close, effective July 1, 2024.

These decisions were made to enhance employee, inmate, and probationer safety, to address longstanding staffing challenges, and in consideration of significant ongoing maintenance costs.

The VADOC has already started the process of working with staff to identify job placement opportunities within the agency to ensure the opportunity for continuous employment and career advancement. The department will work diligently to ensure that all employees who wish to remain employed with VADOC will be able to stay with the agency.

Employees from Sussex II State Prison and Haynesville Correctional Unit #17 have already been temporarily reassigned, primarily to the neighboring Sussex I State Prison and Haynesville Correctional Center.

The VADOC will also assume control of Lawrenceville Correctional Center, the only privately operated prison in Virginia, at the end of the current contract term, August 1, 2024.

The department has been notified that Gov. Glenn Youngkin plans to introduce a budget with

additional funding needed for the agency to safely assume control of that facility next year.

The VADOC intends to work with the GEO Group at Lawrenceville Correctional Center to ensure that current employees are afforded the opportunity to apply for state employment.

"Governor Youngkin's budget enhances public safety and increases efficiency inside Virginia's prisons for staff members, inmates and everyone who lives and works in Virginia," said Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Terrance "Terry" Cole. "I believe these steps will help the VADOC further its mission of public safety and operational excellence."

"I am deeply appreciative of Governor Youngkin's support to help the Department gain additional efficiency and promote the security and safety of the employees and inmates at the VADOC, especially our security staff," said Dotson.

"I am committed to ensuring that those individuals impacted by facility closures will be able to maintain continuous employment within VADOC if they choose to do so," Dotson added. "Members of the department's leadership and I met with affected staff at their facilities today and will continue to meet with them in the coming days. Our dedicated employees work every day to create long-term public safety in the Commonwealth of Virginia. I value them, and our leadership and human resources staff are here to answer their questions and hear their feedback as we support them during this transition."

Woolwine

(cont. from page 1)

Patriot Pen essay, and her commitment to broadening students' horizons through educational trips to historical sites.

Pilson's passion for education extends beyond the classroom as she prepares to travel with sixth and seventh graders to Washington

D.C. in April, following previous trips to Monticello, Richmond, and Williamsburg. Her efforts to foster a love of learning and ensure the success of all students have earned her the admiration of peers, parents, and community members.

Notably, Pilson serves as the spe-

cial education resource teacher for grades PreK to seven, where she handles students with fairness, responsiveness, and genuine concern. Her commitment to continuous improvement in both students and the school community sets her apart as an all-around hardwork-

ing and deserving individual.

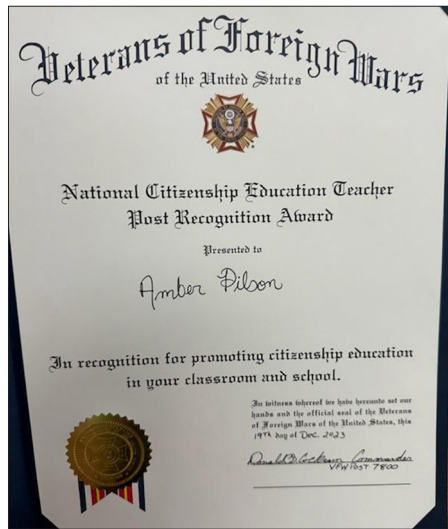
Woolwine Elementary School expresses its gratitude to Cockram and VFW Post 7800 for recognizing Pilson's outstanding contributions to education. The school community celebrated this achievement on December 19.



Amber Pilson and Donald Cockram. (Contributed photos)



A plaque and crystal apple were among the awards.



A certificate was presented to Amber Pilson for her selection as Teacher of the Year.



Amber Pilson is pictured with her family.

Secret Santa

(cont. from page 1)



Amber Wagoner is employed by Step, Inc.



Terri Mills is employed by Piedmont Community Services and also the chamber's designated Firefighter for her assistance with the Tuggle Gap Fire.



Cathy Boyd is employed by Hutchens Petroleum.

Year in Review

(cont. from page 1)

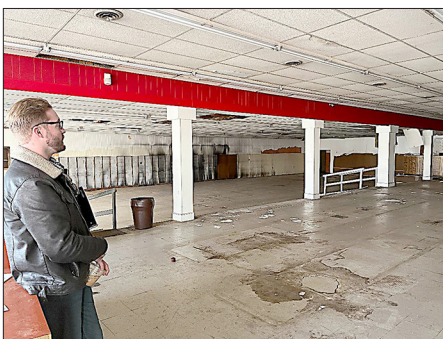
Goat fondly recalls tenure on council after retirement



After serving the community for 12 years, Dean Goats stepped down from the Stuart Town Council at the end of last year, after seeking a post at the suggestion of former schoolmate and then mayor, Jimmy McHone. "I hadn't been retired all that long. It was just something to do because I was always involved in something at work," he said.

February

Business Development Center projects expected to be put out for bidding by late spring



Construction on the upstairs portion of the Business Development Center (BDC) is set to go out to bid by late spring, after the asbestos is removed from the first-floor section of the building. The first phase is the first floor and an HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system for the whole building.

Historic Star Theatre reopens for a release party, video premiere



The Historic Star Theatre in Stuart will reopen on March 3 for a special event, The Friday Night Backroads Show. The show is a release party for Michael Ray Fain's newest album, "Rye's N' Shine," and a video premiere of "America, I love," one of the songs featured on the new album.

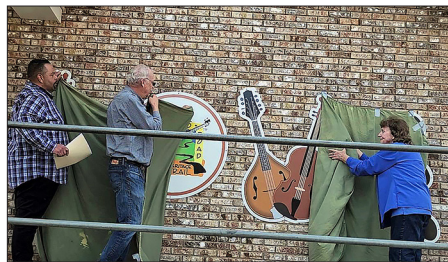
Council hears update on downtown revitalization



The Stuart Town Council heard an update on the Downtown Revitalization Project from Hill Studio at its Feb. 15 meeting. David Hill, the owner of the firm, said the plan includes several capital projects to make downtown better. "The first piece of this is the Farmers' Market bandshell, a potential playground, and better handicapped accessible parking," he said, adding the stage could be improved.

March

Willis Gap celebrates new LOVE sign



A new LOVE sign was unveiled at the Willis Gap Community Center on Feb. 23. Mary Dellenback Hill, Secretary for the Willis Gap Community Center, said the idea started in Jan. 2022 when Sandra Belcher, then director of tourism, contacted her with a proposal of creating a love sign using the Crooked Road logo.

Honey Pot opens on Main Street



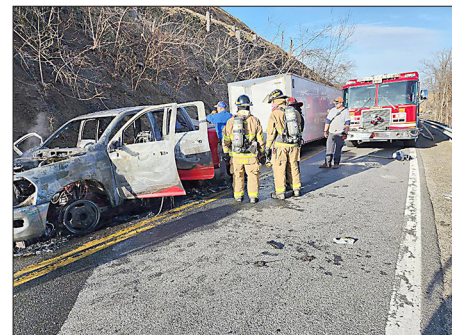
The Honey Pot on Main, located in the former Blue Ridge Furniture building, is Stuart's newest business. The new business features a variety of items, including Christian books. Sheree Nickelston, the owner, said opening a Christian bookstore is something she's always wanted to do.

Solar contract predates county ordinance, officials learn



The Patrick County Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on a proposed amendment to the county's Comprehensive Plan to address a recent issue regarding solar and/or renewable energy. The hearing is set for March 21 at 6 p.m. in the Community Room, Patrick & Henry Community College (P&HCC) - Stuart site.

Vehicle catches fire near woodworking business



The Meadows of Dan (MOD) Volunteer Fire Department and Stuart Volunteer Fire Department responded to a truck fire on March 9 in an area just below Kreater Wood Working, in Meadows of Dan. Ronald Terry, captain of the Meadows of Dan crew, said the vehicle was a dually Dodge Ram.

(See Year in Review p. 7)

Applications now being accepted for the 1890 National Scholars Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is accepting applications for the USDA 1890 National Scholars Program, which aims to encourage students at 1890 land-grant universities to pursue food and agriculture career paths. The application deadline is March 1, 2024.

Young people around the country are invited to complete and submit their applications online through an e-application. Administered through USDA's Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE), the USDA 1890 National Scholars Program is available to eligible high school seniors entering their freshman year of college as well as rising college sophomores and juniors.

"The USDA 1890 National Scholars Program helps to create a pipeline of skilled employees for USDA and the United States agriculture sector," said Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement Director Lisa Ramirez. "By introducing young people to the array of needs and priorities in food, agriculture and natural resources, the program supports USDA's efforts to provide career opportunities for

the next generation of leaders in food and agriculture."

The USDA 1890 National Scholars Program is a partnership between USDA and the 19 historically Black land-grant universities that were established in the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1890. USDA partners with these 1890 universities to provide scholarship recipients with full tuition, fees, books, and room and board. Scholarship recipients attend one of the 1890 universities and pursue degrees in agriculture, food, natural resource sciences, or related academic disciplines. The scholarship also includes work experience at USDA through summer internships. Scholars accepted into the program are eligible for noncompetitive conversion to a permanent appointment with USDA upon successful completion of their degree requirements by the end of the agreement period. The USDA 1890 National Scholars Program awarded 100 scholarships in the 2023 cohort of 1890 Scholars.

Learn more and apply online at USDA 1890 National Scholars Program. For more information, contact partnerships@usda.gov.

Ararat club hosts blood drive



The Ararat Ruritan Club held a Blood Drive on Dec. 14, with several volunteers and donors giving of their time and donating blood, a special Christmas gift to others!! Pictured at the table on the left are Taylor Smith Pruitt, middle table Shirley Clement Horton, and in the interview, Rodney Boyd. (By Mary Dellenback Hill)

DAR Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship Accepting Applications Through Jan. 31

Undergraduate and graduate students studying music with ambitions for future careers can take time over the holiday break to apply for the DAR Marian Anderson Legacy Scholarship. Sponsored by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), the scholarship provides a one-time \$5,000 award to one student annually who is pursuing undergraduate or graduate study in music.

Marian Anderson (1897-1993) was a groundbreaking African American contralto and an inspiration for civil rights.

"This scholarship pays tribute to Marian Anderson's life, and the Daughters of the American Revolution seeks to honor her legacy through today's aspiring musicians. Her legacy lives on in others who aim for excellence in musical studies, are committed to their communities, and willing to stand up for what is right," said Pamela Wright, DAR President General.

Applicants should be accepted or currently enrolled in an accredited university or college in the United States and have a concentration in music in their course of study. Music performance, composition, theory, or education are all areas that students may be specialized in to qualify for the scholarship. They should have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent GPA on the scale used by the institution is required.

In honor of Ms. Anderson's commitment to the community throughout her life and her will-

ingness to share her incredible talent with the world, applicants are asked to write a personal statement describing their humanitarian or volunteer contributions on behalf of their community and/or country.

To recognize the city Marian Anderson called home, preference will be given to students from the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania metropolitan area, even if they are not pursuing music studies in the Philadelphia area. This scholarship is not automatically renewed. However, recipients may reapply for consideration each year for up to four consecutive years.

The scholarship is supported by the Daughters of the American Revolution's Marian Anderson Legacy Fund. Learn more about the relationship between Marian Anderson and the DAR, and the organization's on-going efforts to honor her memory at www.dar.org/MarianAnderson.

About the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)

One of the largest patriotic women's service organizations in the world, DAR has 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters across the country and several foreign countries. DAR members promote historic preservation, education and patriotism via commemorative events, scholarships and educational initiatives, citizenship programs, service to veterans, meaningful community service and more. For additional information about DAR and its relevant mission, visit www.dar.org.

6 Reasons Why You Should Take Your Mental Health Seriously

By Stan Popovich

Many people underestimate the impact that mental illness can have on an individual or family. It can be difficult to admit that you have a mental health problem in your life. Secondly, it can be just as difficult in getting the people you know to understand your situation without making any kinds of judgments.

As a result, here are six reasons why you should make your mental health an important priority in your life.

1. Your situation will improve if you get help: Your anxieties and fears can be challenging to manage and more than likely you will need some help. Just as you talk to your doctor about your regular health, you should not be hesitant in seeking help for your mental health. If left untreated, your anxieties and fears may not go away.

2. Drugs and alcohol are not the answer: Drugs and alcohol can make your problems more complicated. Many people have said that drugs and alcohol will only add more problems to your situation. Be smart and learn how to cope with your mental health issues by talking to a qualified professional. There are many health professionals in your area that can give you some ideas on where you can go for assistance.

3. You will save time and money: Eventually, you will have to confront your fears and mental health issues. Save yourself the time and heartache and confront your problems now rather than later. You will save months of struggling by getting help right away. The sooner you get assistance the faster you will start getting some relief.

4. You are not alone: Everyone deals with fear, stress, and anxiety in one's life whether your friends and others care to admit it. In addition, do not be embarrassed that you are getting help. We all learn new things from others on a daily basis and learning how to manage your anxieties is no different. In addition, your goal is to get your life back on track and not to get everyone's approval. If people start asking you questions, just say you are dealing with stress. Most people can relate to dealing with stress and anxiety!

5. Do not make the mistake of doing nothing: There are many people who struggled with anxiety and other mental health related issues, and they tried to ignore their problems. As a result, some of these people struggled on a daily basis and eventually things became more difficult. It can be scary asking for assistance, but the key is to take things one day at a time.

6. You have a variety of options: There are many mental health support groups, organizations, and counselors in your area that can help get your life back on track. Talk to your doctor to get more details on where you can go for some assistance. Help is available but you must be willing to make the choice of getting better. Remember that every problem has a solution. You just have to make the effort to find the answers.

Stan is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear" which covers a variety of techniques that can drastically improve your mental health. For more information, please visit Stan's website at <http://www.managingfear.com>.

Breakfast benefits from community support



The Ararat Ruritan Club held a successful Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, Dec. 16. Members send a "big thank you to all who came out to eat and fellowship, and to all the volunteers who helped with the breakfast." Pictured is some of the kitchen help, (left to right), Kathleen Loveland, Mr. Sechrist, Diane Dawson, in the back Claude Smith, Kathy Clement, Kevin Smith, Tom Perillo. (By Mary Dellenback Hill)

Officers, dispatchers further training



Earlier this year, several officers and dispatchers from Patrick County attended the Piedmont Regional Criminal Justice Training Academy's General Instructor School in Martinsville. Those receiving certificates for completion included Roger Campbell (Jail), Emily Vernon (SRO), Shannon Anderson (Dispatch), Susan Elliott (Dispatch) & Christina Frick (Jail & Dispatch).

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.

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 – Are Spousal Benefits Always a Factor?

Dear Rusty: Both my wife and I have worked our entire lives. When we retire, will we both be entitled to full benefit amount each, or will there always be a spousal factor in there? Also, how are those benefits calculated - based on your highest salaries throughout your career, or your ending salaries when you retire? Signed: Looking Ahead

Dear Looking: Prior to retiring from work is a smart time to investigate how Social Security will fit into your golden years. To answer your second question first, each person's personal SS retirement benefit is based on the highest earning 35 years over their entire lifetime, with earlier years adjusted for inflation. The person's Average Indexed Monthly Earnings (AIME) - essentially the person's

lifetime average inflation-adjusted monthly earnings amount - is first determined. Using AIME, the person's Primary Insurance Amount (PIA) is calculated using a special benefit formula which will yield a PIA of about 40% or less of the person's AIME. The PIA is the amount received if benefits start in the month full retirement age or "FRA" is attained (as you can see, Social Security likes acronyms).

Since you and your wife were both born after 1959, FRA for both of you is 67. The age when you claim benefits, relative to your FRA, determines how much you'll get. Claim before FRA and your benefit is reduced; claim after your FRA and your SS retirement benefit will be more (up to age 70 when maximum is reached); claim at your FRA and your benefit will equal your PIA - the full (100%) amount you've earned from a lifetime of working.

Spouse benefits only come into play if the PIA for one of you is less than 50% of the other's PIA.

In that case, the spouse with the lower PIA gets a "spousal boost" to their own SS retirement benefit when claimed. The amount of the "spousal boost" will be the difference between the lower PIA and half of the higher PIA, but the amount of the "spousal boost" (as well as the person's own SS retirement amount) will be reduced if benefits are claimed before full retirement age. Any time SS benefits are claimed before full retirement age, those benefits are permanently reduced.

If one spouse is entitled to a "spousal boost" from the other, the spousal amount will reach maximum at the recipient's full retirement age. Thus, if the lower earning partner's highest benefit will be as a spouse, then that spouse should not wait beyond their FRA to claim. If, instead, the lower earning partner's own SS benefit at age 70 is more than their spousal amount, waiting longer than FRA to claim could be prudent, depending on life expectancy.

So, as you can see, deciding when to claim Social Security benefits should consider many things, including financial need, work status if claiming before FRA, marital status, and life expectancy. But it is your lifetime earnings which determines your SS retirement benefit amount, and it is how your FRA entitlements compare to each other that determines whether spousal benefits will be paid.

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) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

Physical Touch Matters

It is unmistakable and scientifically proven that human beings are the most complex organisms on earth. The human body is a single structure that consists of billions of microscopic units, each with its own purpose, working together in an organized manner for the benefit of the whole being. Although the human body has several key systems (for example the endocrine, circulatory, digestive, immune, to name a few) the integumentary system encompasses our skin which is the only structure that is visible to the human eye without use of advance technology. The skin is the largest organ of the body covering bone and tissue. This complex structure can repair itself due to injuries, act as a huge sensory receptor with sensitivity to the heat, cold, pain, pressure, and touch.

The moment a child is born it is embraced with a touch. It is our innate response and by nature to socialize, communicate and interact

with one another. Having a sense or experiencing physical touch represents the most direct and intimate channel of connection between the self and to others.

The memory pattern of the skin is now craving the human touch, something that without even a thought, is freely given and received in the pre-pandemic world. Warm hugs, handshakes, cheek to cheek kisses and high-fives have all been placed on the backburner. Somehow, we are all suddenly superconscious and skeptical about touching others outside of our safe bubble, it feels quite alien due to the long-extended periods of safety protocols. My two-year son stretches out a fist instead of an open hand to greet others, and I can't help but wonder, what will his generation be like in the next 10 years?

I can give an account to the need of human networking and connection. During the first two weeks of 2022, I was in quarantine due to exposure to COVID-19. After a

while in complete isolation, I started to feel disconnected, and the 'self' needed to interact with people, whether it was at home, work, grocery store, church, gas station, or even to just simply be stuck in traffic. Yet I was not truly disconnected. In our digital, social distancing age, the development and advancement of internet-based technologies and virtual environments offer new opportunities of communication without the need for physical closeness.

Because of the physical distancing that has been created due to the pandemic, the lack of physical touching that has happened as a result could be contributing to a condition that health experts have coined as "touch starvation"—like how our body craves a particular treat of cheat food during a diet fitness regimen.

For some, physical touch is everything, it regulates mood, relieves stress, builds confidence, and increases a sense of bonding

and belonging. The avoidance of physical touch due to the pandemic will in time hopefully fade and things will return to normal... handshakes instead of fist bumps, hugs to go along with smiles. In the meantime, any kind of communication with others can help reduce loneliness and stave off the negative effects that comes from lack of social and physical interaction. Stay connected digitally to prevent loneliness, engage in group physical workouts, talk on the phone or zoom with friends, pick up outdoor hobbies like gardening with friends and use this time to call up old friends and distant family. Do whatever you can to stay engaged during these challenging times. Constant communication is the key.

(Submitted by Betty Dean. Written by Schkara Green. Used by permission from www.lifeandhealth.org Courtesy of LifeSpring - Resources for Hope and Healing Stuart, VA)

Upcoming state budget includes funds to combat antisemitism

Gov. Glenn Youngkin last week proposed \$375,000 of renewed funding for the Virginia Holocaust Museum and \$2 million for security grant funds increasing the total fund to \$5 million. This fund allows Jewish community institutions to apply for enhanced security measures.

The Virginia Holocaust Museum investment will support the Alexander Lebenstein Teacher Education Institute program, which organizes high-quality learning experiences, educational content, and exhibitions for students to learn about the Holocaust and other genocides. Additionally, the allocated budget funds will support outreach and community-based programming such as the "Speaker's Bureau," which provides students with the opportunity to hear firsthand accounts from Holocaust survivors.

The Governor's budget also revises and increases funding for the

Department of Criminal Justice Services' hate crime security grant program and makes changes to allow at-risk community non-profits to apply for the funds directly. This new initiative will improve security at community centers and over the biennium, will invest \$5 million to combat hate crimes.

"At a time of rising antisemitism and disturbing displays on our college campuses, it is more important than ever to support community outreach initiatives, provide learning opportunities for our students about the horrors of antisemitism, and enable security enhancement opportunities for our Jewish communities," said Youngkin. "I'm pleased to pledge an additional \$2.3 million dollars in Virginia's budget to combat antisemitism and reiterate my commitment to stand against antireligious bigotry."

"Virginia Holocaust Museum is grateful for this timely investment in education and community build-

ing by Governor Youngkin," said Samuel Asher, executive director of Virginia Holocaust Museum. "Commitments to Holocaust education respond to the challenging times our communities face statewide. Support like this ensures the Virginia Holocaust Museum can continue to deliver our mission to educate and inspire generations of Virginians to fight prejudice and indifference."

"My community is deeply grateful for Governor Youngkin's common-sense approach to safety and security," said Rabbi Dovid Asher of Keneseth Beth Israel. "When Jews represent just 2% of the population, yet more than 60% of faith-based hate crimes, moral leadership requires exactly this type of major investment. These wise investments will positively impact our state for generations to come."

Given increased reports of anti-religious bigotry across the country following the October 7th

Hamas terrorist attack on Israel, Youngkin issued Executive Directive Six in October, which created an actionable plan to coordinate with educational institutions and law enforcement entities to combat threats of violence against Jewish people and other religious communities. On his first day in office, Youngkin signed Executive Order Number 8 establishing the Commission to Combat Antisemitism, which released a report on December 5, 2022.

In May 2023, Youngkin signed legislation patroned by Delegate Anne Ferrell Tata and Senator Siobhan Dunnivant, which formally adopts the Working Definition of Antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) on May 26, 2016. This bill was a critical first step toward identifying and combating cases of antisemitism in education, on college campuses, and across the Commonwealth.

Initial unemployment claims trend downward

The number of initial unemployment insurance claims decreased in the latest filing week to 1,669 but remained slightly below typical pre-pandemic volumes experienced in 2019, according to the Virginia Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA).

For the filing week ending December 9, the figure for seasonally unadjusted initial claims for unemployment insurance in Virginia was 1,669, which was a decrease of 276 claimants from the previous week. Continued weeks claimed totaled 12,007, which was lit-

tle changed from the previous week but an increase of 39% from the 8,620 continued claims from the comparable week last year. An industry was reported for ninety-three percent of continued claims. Of those, over half (51 percent) of continued claims were from professional, scientific, and technical services (1,759), administrative and support and waste management (1,701), manufacturing (1,172), and health care and social assistance (1,071). 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 9, the advance U.S. figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims was 202,000, a decrease of 19,000 from the previous week's revised level. The previous week's level was revised up by 1,000 from 220,000 to 221,000. The advance number of actual initial claims under state programs, unadjusted, totaled 248,299 in the week ending December 9, a decrease of 46,316 (or -15.7 per-

cent) from the previous week. There were 250,038 initial claims in the comparable week in 2022. Looking at preliminary data, most U.S. states reported decreases on a seasonally unadjusted basis. New York's preliminary weekly change (-6,581) was the largest decrease. Pennsylvania's preliminary weekly change (-4,362) was the second largest decrease. Texas's preliminary weekly change (-4,333) was the third largest decrease. Oregon's preliminary weekly change (-3,750) was the fourth largest decrease. Virginia had the 18th largest decrease (-527).

Cougars fall on the road to Bassett

By Pat Delaney
The Patrick County High Lady Cougars dropped a hard fought game, 65-51, at Bassett on December 20. Coming into the game at 6-3, the Lady Cougars were looking to sweep the season series with Bassett, having defeated them at home on December 4.

The game opened with solid defense on both sides, with both teams managing only six points nearly halfway through the quarter. The Lady Cougars turning great plays on the defensive side into points on the other end, highlighted the back-and-forth play. Patrick County closed out the quarter leading by two, 14-12.

Offensively, Patrick County went cold in the first half of the second quarter, falling behind the Bengals 21-16 with 4:20 to go. The Lady

Cougar defense tightened, and along with outstanding rebounding, tied the game at 23 with 2:57 to go. Near the end of the half, Kendra Worley drove to the basket, hitting the shot while getting fouled. After hitting the 'and one' free throw, the Lady Cougars went into halftime with a three point lead, 28-25.

The Cougars increased their lead to five early in the third quarter, but once again went cold offensively. The Bengals went on a 9-0 run to take a 36-32 lead with three minutes to go in the quarter. Bassett would outscore Patrick County 20-7 in the third, extending their lead to eight, 45-37.

In the fourth quarter, the Lady Cougars were great defensively, pressuring Bassett into bad shots and causing turnovers, while climbing back to just two points down

with just over three minutes to go in the game. Bassett went on a 9-0 run, hitting two three pointers to extend their lead to eleven, 59-48. The game would end with Bassett taking the win, 65-51.

In stretches, it was a frustrating night offensively for the Lady Cougars. During one stretch in the third quarter, they got off many good shots, only to watch the ball rattle around the rim but not fall in.

"That's been our issue all year. We get some good looks, and we miss them, and not knocking our free throws down," said Head Coach Tony Mosley. "If we can make those corrections, we're going to be a pretty good basketball team."

For the Lady Cougars, it was their second game in two nights. "I think we got a little tired. We

played North Stokes last night, and I think we kind of ran out of gas," said Coach Mosley. "That's why I was doing the frequent rotation with the girls to get them in and out so they could stay fresh, but I think at the end, we just ran out of gas."

Tired or not, the Lady Cougars showed tremendous hustle on defense the entire game. Several times, Bassett broke through the smothering Patrick County full court press, only to find the Lady Cougars hustling back to turn what should have been an easy Bengal layup into a turnover or missed shot. "I'm proud of the effort from our girls tonight," said Coach Mosley.

Next up for the Lady Cougars will be Glenvar at home on January 3 at 7p.m.



The opening tipoff.



Allanah Mitchell pushes the ball down court.



Kimora Wimrush (#32) and Journey Moore (#12) playing tough defense against Bassett.



The Bassett Bengals show their support for Kendra Worley's sister, Lauren Worley, who was injured in a recent crash.



Aniya Penn fires a three-point shot.



Defensive pressure by Kendra Worley (#12) and Kimora Wimrush (#32) causes a Bassett turnover.



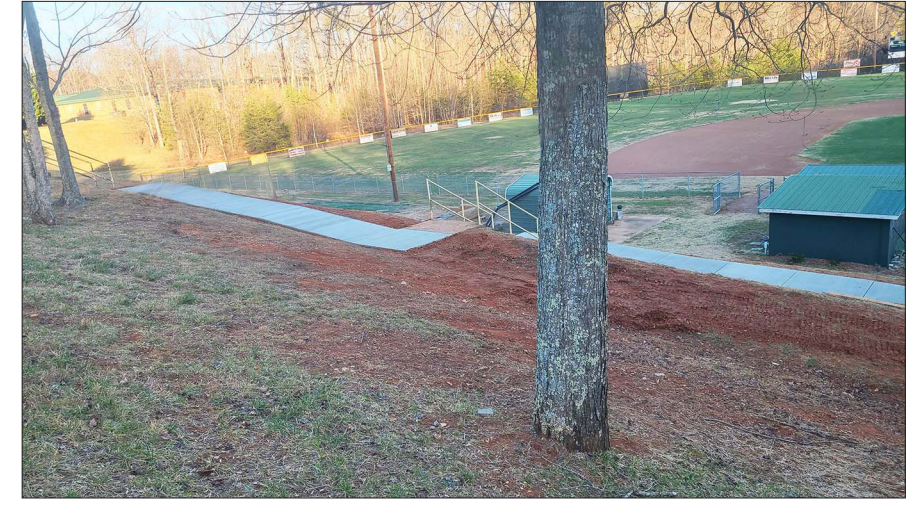
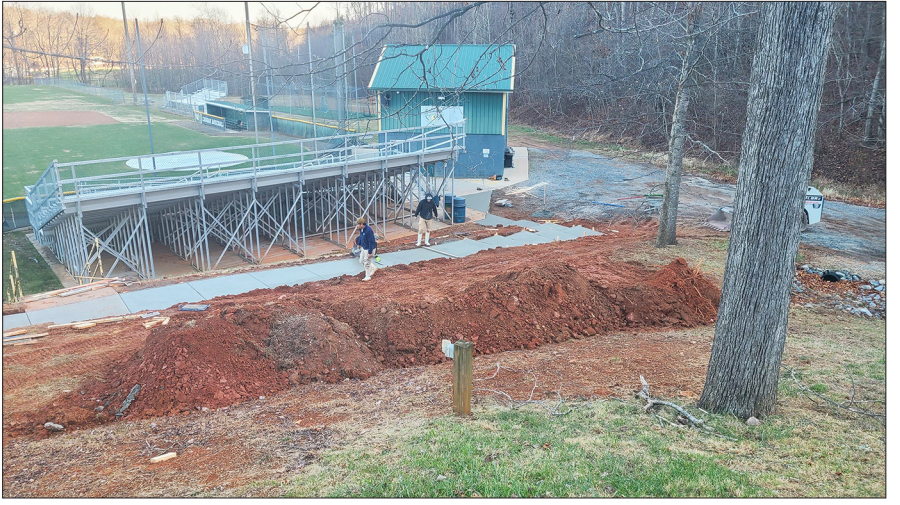
Kendra Worley puts up the go ahead shot late in the first half.

Updates to baseball field near completion

Off-season upgrades to the Patrick County Cougars Baseball Field are almost done. The team is looking forward to the batter's eye and the new sidewalk will be huge improvements.

PCHS Sports Schedule

Patrick County High School Cougars Sports Schedule for the week of Dec. 29- Jan. 4:
12/3 7pm Girls Basketball vs Glenvar
12/4 7pm Boys Basketball at Redford



Year in Review

(cont. from page 1)

Spring planting is underway in Stuart



The Patrick County Master Gardeners were hard at work on March 16, beautifying Main Street with flowers and plants as spring time approaches. Pictured are Tom DeBusk, Sherry Easterbrooks and Dee Nolan.

Honor Guard awarded resolution



The Patrick County Veteran's Memorial Honor Guard was awarded a resolution for its service by the Board of Supervisors. Clayton Kendrick, board chairman, said the resolution presented at a special dinner on March 25 was for the guard's service in honoring fallen soldiers.

Crissman to retire at end of the month



After 51 years of service to the county he loves, Patrick County's Recreation Director Clyde Crissman will retire on March 31. "It's time. I'm 75, so it's time to move on to another adventure," he said.

April

Hall to serve as interim county administrator, county sets tax rate



The Patrick County Board of Supervisors authorized Tim Hall, an executive manager with The Berkley Group, to act as interim county administrator. Hall will replace former county administrator Geri Hazelwood when he begins the new position on April 6. Hazelwood resigned in March. Hall, with a background that includes education and journalism, retired as the Henry County Administrator and General Manager of the Henry County Public Service Authority in July.

Murphy takes on new challenge as head of Parks and Recreation



Patrick County's new Parks and Recreation Director Travis Murphy hopes to live up to the standard set by his predecessor Clyde Crissman, who retired on March 31. Since beginning his new role on March 20, Murphy said Crissman showed him around the different parks and introduced him to people in the community.

Patrick County's long lost baseball team



In the 1930s, baseball was truly America's pastime and Patrick County was no exception. During those years, a local team made the front page of The Enterprise - every game, every week. It started locally in 1931 when area leaders met at the Courthouse in Stuart to form a baseball club that would represent all of Patrick County. Previously, towns in Patrick County had teams that would play each other, but this new team would join the Bi-State League, made up of teams from both sides of the Virginia-North Carolina border. Stuart would join Fieldale, Martinsville, and Danville on the Virginia side, along with Reidsville and Leaksville from North Carolina.

Signs of Spring



From the trees in bloom to activity on the baseball field, nearly any view of DeHart Park in Stuart these days shows signs of spring.

Montgomery is still 'growing' strong



Geraldine "Jinky" Montgomery is redefining retirement to suit her tastes and lifestyle. She devotes several hours each day to cultivating her green thumb at Montgomery Greenhouse, usually arriving at a greenhouse between 8:30 and 9 a.m., and staying until about 5 p.m. "I like my house, I love my home, but still I like to get out down here and play in the dirt too," said Montgomery, who is now 86.

Elusive fairies have new homes, gardens



Youngsters participating in a recent Youth Art Program at the Patrick County Branch Library built homes and gardens for mysterious fairies - and perhaps a few gnomes. The new digs are made of pine cones, moss, leaves, and other natural materials, as well as recycled goods such as plastic and tin. Members of the Patrick County Master Gardeners, library staff, and others helped with the construction project.

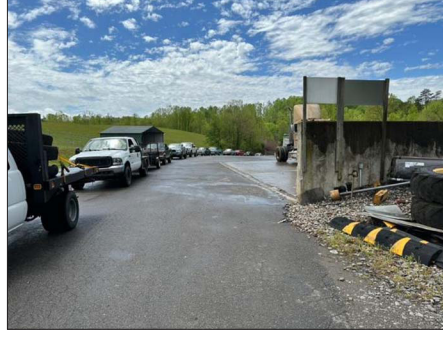


Swails Pitches First Perfect Game in School History



Tucker Swails became the first Cougar varsity pitcher to ever throw a perfect game at Patrick County High School (PCHS) during a 6-0 win over the Bassett High School Bengals Varsity Boys Baseball team on Friday, April 21. "I knew I had a perfect game going into the last couple of innings, but I was trying my best not to think about it because I didn't want to ruin it," Swails said.

Pick Up Patrick events met with success



The Patrick County Chamber of Commerce issued a 'thank you' to all those participating in the 'Shreds, Meds and Treds' events on Saturday April 22. The day that began with thunderstorms included document shredding and medication take back. Nearly 6,000 pounds of documents were shredded during the shredding event that was co-sponsored by Carter Bank and Trust.

May

Rich Creek parcel deemed a Tier 5 site



A parcel of land in Patrick County's Rich Creek Corporate Park has been deemed a Tier 5 site by the state, according to county officials, who learned about the distinction shortly before the end of April. The new designation moves the site to the top of the list for potential companies looking to relocate. The nearly 30-acre graded site could hold up to two buildings, with more than 300,000 square feet.

Enhanced trail includes mountain bike routes, other amenities



Four mountain bike routes and other amenities were highlighted during an April 28 ribbon cutting to celebrate the newly enhanced trail system at the Woolwine IC DeHart Memorial Park. Patrick County Director of Tourism and Marketing James Houchins told the nearly 50 people attending that the trails were constructed by volunteers.

Green thumbs picked new plants at annual sale



The Patrick County Master Gardeners' annual plant sale Saturday attracted more than 250 gardeners making new purchases. Some plants were packaged in boxes, others were carefully carried one or two at a time, and still others were 'hugged' to waiting vehicles and the trip home.

Progress update offered on reopening the county's hospital



An official with Foresight Hospital and Health Systems gave an update on the company's progress to reopen the former Pioneer Community Hospital of Patrick County. Foresight COO and General Counsel Joe Hylak-Reinholtz said the project has gone much slower than anticipated, largely because of the architect and design/build firm.

Corn Squeezins details the area's moonshining history



Danny Martin, a former math teacher, engineer, law enforcement officer, and park ranger, recently added the title of author to his resume with the release of his book "Corn Squeezins." The book details the history of moonshining in Patrick County from the time of the Scotch-Irish settlers through the prohibition era and into more contemporary times.

Judge, prosecutor appointed as Hazlewood prepares to step down



Patrick County Circuit Court Clerk Sherri Hazlewood submitted her resignation as a petition seeking her removal from office moved forward with a judge and a special prosecutor appointed to the case. According to Hazelwood's criminal defense attorney Ward Armstrong, of the Armstrong Law Firm in Martinsville, Hazlewood submitted her letter of resignation. It is effective July 1. The retirement stalled a petition to remove her from office, said Pulaski County Commonwealth's Attorney Justin Griffith, who was named special prosecutor in the removal process.

(See Year in Review p. 11)

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Open Jam attracts new visitors



Martha and Ron McCarver are pictured at the LOVE sign, located at the Willis Gap Community Center during the Open Jam on December 15. The McCarvers were invited to the event by Ceci and Ed Dalton, of Fancy Gap, VA. The couples became neighbors after the McCarvers moved to Fancy Gap from Estes Park, Trail Ridge Road, Colorado, which has the highest continuously paved road in the United States. "We love the Jam, and "we love, Fancy Gap, and the Blue Ridge Mountains," they said. (By Mary Dellenback Hill)

Red Bank club holds final meeting of 2023



The Red Bank Ruritans held their December meeting/Christmas party on December 16 with 52 members and guests in attendance. Jerry Atkins, past National Director, did the ceremony. Pictured below, (l-r), Jerry Atkins, Connie Bishop, club treasurer; Tom Bishop, club board member; Charlie Bowman, secretary; Rachel White, vice president; Lottie Gammons, 2023 president, and 2024 Club president.



The Red Bank Ruritans honored member/secretary Charlie Bowman with a Ruritan Forever award. Pictured (left to right) are Jerry Atkins, Merlin Scales, a National Director in Ruritan, Charlie Bowman, and Roger Gammons, 2024 club president and past National Director.

THANK YOU FOR READING THE ENTERPRISE

Roger Alan Dudik

Roger Alan Dudik, 78, of Stuart, VA passed away peacefully on Friday, November 17, 2023 at his home. Roger was a life-long learner and scholar who enjoyed nothing more than sitting down with an interesting book and circling all the grammatical errors and inconsistencies he found. An entrepreneur and self-starter, Roger had several business ventures, most recently as a freelance editor for doctor- al candidates. Upon retirement, he moved to Stuart from central Pennsylvania to enjoy the warmth, beauty, and peacefulness of the Blue Ridge Mountains. He achieved his dream to once again raise Scottish Blackface sheep and provide ample space for his dog, Sanduhr, to roam. He enjoyed many hobbies like tinkering in his workshop, collecting first edition books, photography, and being an active member of the community. He befriended many of his neighbors and local craftsmen who he admired for their impressive skill, kindness, wealth of knowledge, and humor. Roger is survived by his six children, Jon, 54, Gene, 52, Rachel, 43, Eliot, 40, Allison, 38, and Blair, 35. Those who might like to express their love, please feel free to make a donation to the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Cancer Center in Roger's name.

Producers may qualify for Agricultural Tax Credit

The Virginia Agricultural BMP Tax Credit Program began in 1998, providing financial incentives for the voluntary installation of BMPs that support Virginia's nonpoint source pollution water quality objectives. In 2021, the General Assembly and the Governor significantly increased agricultural BMP tax credits in Virginia. Producers may take a credit against state income tax for actual out-of-pocket expenses for agricultural BMPs. The total amount of tax credit may not exceed \$75,000. If the amount of tax credit exceeds the taxpayer's liability in a taxable year, the excess shall be refunded to the taxpayer by the Virginia Department of Taxation. Agricultural operators' BMPs, if approved, will be inspected by the SWCD after they are installed. Soon after this certification, operators will receive cost-share payments or a tax credit certification letter from their local SWCD. Contact Patrick SWCD at 276-694-2911 for more details. Taxpayers must apply with the Virginia Department of Taxation to claim this credit. Applicants must submit Form ABM by December 31, the year following the credit year being applied. For example, if you are applying for a 2023 credit, the application must be submitted by December 31, 2024. The total credit granted to all taxpayers is limited to \$2 million for each fiscal year and will be issued on a first-come, first-serve basis. Once \$2 million in credit approvals has been reached for that credit year, there will not be any additional credit issued for that year. Notification of the authorized credit amount must be received before the credit can be claimed on the taxpayer's tax return. (Submitted by Patrick Soil & Water Conservation District)

VDACS Launches Centralized New and Beginning Farmer Resources' Webpage

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) has curated a centralized list of valuable Resources for New and Beginning Farmers. This new website is designed to provide new and beginning agricultural producers with a list of available public resources to assist them in planning and starting their operations. The list of resources includes financial information, farm planning, training programs, technical assistance, conservation information, farm safety, and farm stress. The site also contains links to videos from a recent seminar, hosted by the Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry and Virginia State University. These seminar videos allow viewers to hear directly from subject matter experts, gain insight into public and private financing options, and hear questions asked by other prospective farmers. "After speaking with numerous beginning and prospective farmers, financing is their number one challenge," said Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Matthew Lohr. "Being able to centralize content from our partners and video recordings of our recent seminar is extremely valuable to those just starting down this road. We hope those that couldn't make it to the seminar will watch the videos and take away important information to help their venture thrive." "Anyone who is in agriculture or starting a new business knows, time is valuable and having these resources in one place is essential," said VDACS Commissioner Joseph Guthrie. "I encourage new and beginning farmers to check this new resource website often, as it will be updated with new information as it becomes available." To learn about upcoming financial seminars in other areas of the state, follow VDACS on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter).

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OBITUARY SUBMISSION DEADLINE MONDAY AT NOON

PATRICK PULPITS

Seeking the King

By Thomas Shepherd,
Stuart Church of Living Water
Matthew 2:1-12

The Christian festival (celebration) marking the visit of the magi following Christ's birth is known as Epiphany and is observed on the 6th of January. The story of the magi's visit to the Christ child is found in Matthew chapter 2. It has some important lessons for us to learn as these men set out on a long trip because they saw a peculiar star lighting up the sky. Apparently, they knew something of writings of the Jewish prophets and attributed this star as a sign to the birth of the king of the Jews. So, they set out to find this newborn king. No one knows how long they traveled, and commentators vary from several months to a couple of years, but certainly they traveled at least several months. Let's look and see what the visit of the magi teaches us?

God used a star to get the attention of these magi to bring them to Christ. These magi were likely Gentiles who had come seeking the king of the Jews. It was the Jewish people who were looking for a messiah as their savior, yet it is these magi who saw the sign and interpreted it as God calling them to come and see. The magi were a combination of astronomy and astrology scholars for they studied both science and magic. They were the academics of their time, but they were involved in practices God had specifically forbidden for Israel. This should tell us something. God never abandons us. God is still working on people who we may think are too far gone, but God never gives up. In this case God used something they understood to bring the Magi to Christ. God wants every person wherever they are to come to Christ.

We must remember that not everyone is raised in the Christian faith. They magi didn't know they were to seek God, and so God comes to them in ways they can understand. That is why God came in the flesh, so that he could be like us and talk to us in our own language and experience our life and tell us

of our need for him. God expects us to do the same. God doesn't want us to compromise our faith or His Word, but he expects us to be like him and use whatever means we can to reach people in a language they understand in order to bring them to Christ. Think of a person you think is too far gone; someone you think will never come to Christ. God loves them and is still working on them and wants them to come to Christ. He wants us to help by pointing them to Christ. God wants every person wherever they are to come to Christ.

God wants us to diligently seek him. We need more than knowledge about Christ. We need to seek out and know Christ. We must seek a relationship with God through Christ. A very real danger that many fall into is thinking that knowing about Jesus is enough. The truth is, we can know all about the Bible and Christ and still miss what the Christian faith is all about, a relationship with Christ. These magi with only a little understanding and information about the Jewish Messiah, set off on a journey of faith to find the Christ. A journey that cost them time and money. Yet, they made a diligent effort to seek out Christ. God wants us to diligently seek him.

The religious leaders who supposedly understood the scriptures, the prophecies, and God, did not notice the star or interpret its meaning. They had no clue, and it took these Gentiles from another country to tell them the messiah had been born. This teaches us that we can have knowledge of the Bible and even have strong religious convictions and still miss the savior. Jesus once said, "Seek and you shall find, knock and the door shall be opened" (Matt. 7:7). When we find God through a relationship with Christ, everything begins to fall into place. The magi were rewarded for their journey of faith and were able to meet Christ. Are You diligently seeking the Christ? Have you been rewarded by finding Christ? My prayer is that you will seek out Jesus, the Christ and find him.

VFW honors students with awards

Veterans of Foreign Affairs (VFW) Post 7800 Commander Donald Cockram presented certificates

and monetary awards to students who participated in the VFW scholarship essay writing contest.



Patriot's Pen essay contest winner Hannah Phillips, a 7th grader at Meadows of Dan Elementary School (left) with Donald Cockram.



Patriot's Pen essay contest winner Kayleigh Smiht, a 7th grader at Blue Ridge Elementary School (left) with Donald Cockram.



Voice of Democracy essay contest winner Maria Turner, a senior at Patrick County High School (left) with Donald Cockram.



More than 40 VFW members and family members attended the event.

BIBLE TRIVIA

BY WILSON CASEY

- The main Christmas story is paraphrased from what two New Testament books (KJV)? Mark/John, Acts/Romans, Matthew/Luke, Jude/Revelation
- Who visited Jesus on the night of His birth and found Mary, Joseph and the babe lying in a manger? Innkeeper, Shepherds, Herod, Magi
- Where was the young child when the Magi came to visit Him to present gifts? Manger, Under the stars, House, Temple
- How many times does the word "Christmas" appear in the Bible (KJV)? Zero, 1, 2, 7

5. Who was King of Judaea at the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem? Solomon, Herod, Balak, Belshazzar

6. What animals were present at Jesus' birth? Lions and bears, Sheep and goats, Cows and donkeys, No mention of animals

ANSWERS: 1) Matthew/Luke, 2) Shepherds, 3) House, 4) Zero, 5) Herod, 6) No mention of animals (in Bible)

"Test Your Bible Knowledge," a book with 1,206 multiple-choice questions by columnist Wilson Casey, is available in stores and online.

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Skyline Pentecostal Holiness Church
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Meadows of Dan, Virginia
Rev. Tommy Gosnell
CHURCH SERVICES
Sunday School 10 am
Worship Services 11 am

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Wednesdays
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276-694-3440 11:00 Worship Service
www.stuartbaptist.org office@stuartbaptist.org

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59 Mountain View Loop
Stuart
(actually in Patrick Springs)
276.236.7814
Office Hours (Tue-Thu 8 am-3 pm)
Mass Schedule
Sundays at 8:30 a.m.
Reconciliation
Sundays 7:45 - 8:15 a.m.

Stuart Seventh-Day Adventist Church
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Sabbath School - 9:20; Worship 11:00 a.m.
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Super Crossword

FORGET THE WHOLE THING

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 49 "wester (certain storm)" | 100 Chimney grime | 8 Wine merchants | 49 Brother of Moe and Curly | 78 "ToK" (#1 hit for Keshia) |
| 1 Warning about a racy web pic | 50 "Oh, God!" actress Garr | 101 Great serves | 9 Unlock, in poems | 51 Deep black, in poems | 80 On the nose |
| 5 "West Side Story" knife | 54 Cousins of aves. | 102 HEER | 10 Resting place for a napkin | 52 Break in friendship | 81 Viking letter |
| 9 Seasoned vet | 55 Name of some newspapers | 105 2000-15 CBS series | 11 Drinker's hwy. offense | 53 Hairy TV cousin | 82 Rescue crew VIPs |
| 15 Bro | 57 GHTE | 106 Writer Rand | 12 Implores | 54 Friend with a wide range | 86 Occupant |
| 19 French for "yours" | 62 Actors | 107 Blood type, in brief | 13 Christina of "Bel Ami" | 55 "Science Friday" ainer | 87 Represented |
| 20 Treat for feet, for short | 63 Flying top | 108 Total | 14 Put too high a price on | 56 Person tying shoes | 89 Peruvian singer with a wide range |
| 21 Pope after Marcellus II | 66 Vary response to "Who wants ice cream?" | 109 Wakes up | 15 Papa | 57 Onetime transportation agcy. | 91 Notorious emperor |
| 22 Scads | 67 TRONI | 112 Writer Uris | 16 Perfect world | 58 Foods created by biotech | 92 OR workers |
| 23 RFORM | 72 Cast out of the country | 114 NTEEN | 17 Be charitable | 59 Flood-prevention sack | 93 Rust may be a sign of it |
| 26 Rapper Snoop — | 73 Official helper | 119 Peel, as fruit | 18 Gas guzzler | 60 One sharing your blood | 94 DVR remote abbr. |
| 27 Variety show hosts, e.g. | 74 Pays out | 120 Excited | 24 Multivolume U.K. lexicon | 61 Flood-prevention sack | 95 Cain, to Eve |
| 28 ACLU interests: Abbr. | 75 EAKI | 121 Cozy corner | 25 Chicago winter hrs. | 62 One sharing your blood | 96 Hair-raising sites? |
| 29 Farming unit | 79 Diner check | 122 Pierce player | 30 Blarney Stone's land | 63 Songwriter Carmichael | 97 "Is that so?" |
| 31 Pasty luau food | 80 Start for existing | 123 Cast off hair | 31 Mushroom feature | 64 Salon noise | 98 Poe's "radiant maiden" |
| 32 Flight takeoff abbr. newspapers | 83 Name of some newspapers | 124 Swan constellation | 32 King, in Lyon | 65 Large-scale public show | 99 Yuletide quaff |
| 33 NTR | 84 Vetoer's vote | 125 Forest sight | 33 Hubbub | 66 Untrue tales | 103 Destitute |
| 38 "Peek- —" | 85 U.S. tax org. | 126 Saclike growth | 34 Novelist Deighton | 67 Neighbor of Mont. | 104 Tic- — -toe |
| 40 Classic comic Martha | 88 Aromatic aftershave liquid | DOWN | 35 Runs futively with short, quick steps | 68 Neighbor of Mont. | 105 Gear tooth |
| 41 Uplifting poems | 90 QBs' blunders: Abbr. | 1 Neck back | 36 Regatta entry | 69 How money may be lost | 109 Yard tool |
| 42 Place full of video games | 92 RKE | 2 Mushroom feature | 37 Untruly with short, quick steps | 70 Caress | 110 Outer limits |
| 43 UBL | 96 Person doing a crossword puzzle, e.g. | 3 Some plays on ground balls | 38 Heads of fleets: Abbr. | 71 How money may be lost | 111 Sports datum |
| 46 Chicken cordon — | 99 Outer limit | 4 Fiancee | 39 Regatta entry | 72 Sci-fi gift naturally | 113 TV neighbor of Homer |
| 47 British chums | | 5 Colo. — (city S. of Denver) | 40 Upshot | 73 Untruly with short, quick steps | 115 Pewter, mostly |
| 48 Stars and Stripes' nation | | 6 Skirt line | 41 Evan of figure skating | 74 How money may be lost | 116 Univ. website suffix |
| | | 7 "Just go ahead and try!" | 42 Web automaton | 75 Sci-fi gift naturally | 117 Vetoers' votes |
| | | | | 76 "One Mic" rapper | 118 Rival of Wade |

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CLASSIFIED

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

All real estate advertised in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitations or discrimination based on race, color, sex or national origin," or an intention to make any such preferences, limitation or discrimination. Our readers are informed that all dwellings advertised in this paper are available on an equal opportunity basis. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate or employment which is in violation of the law.

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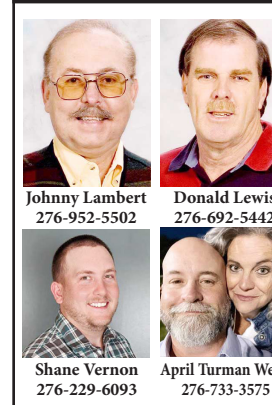
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Year in Review

(cont. from page 1)

Class of 2023 celebrates the start of a new chapter



The 163 graduates participating in the 53rd Patrick County High School (PCHS) Commencement Exercise on Friday, May 19, were directed to "be kind to ourselves and others" as they bid farewell to their high school career.

Cafeteria workers earn Region 6 No Kid Hungry Virginia School Lunch Hero award



Patrick County High School (PCHS) was selected as the winner of the 2023 Region 6 No Kid Hungry Virginia School Lunch Hero award on May 5, National School Lunch Hero Day. PCHS is now in the School Lunch Hero Hall of Fame for Virginia.

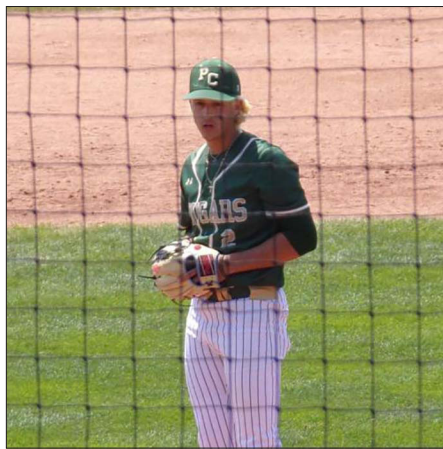
June

Book details the Culler family struggles



A book set in rural Patrick County details the life of one family during the first half of the 20th century. Nerina Culler said her book, "Rich? Or Poor? Which Are You?" is set at her family's homestead, at the tip corner of Patrick County surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains.

More history made by Cougar Baseball Team



It's been quite a week for Patrick County Cougars baseball. After winning the school's first state championship on June 10, Tucker Swails was named VHSL Class 2 Player of the Year on June 15, the first such award in school history. Also receiving VHSL Class 2 state-wide honors were head coach Tal Swails, named Coach of the Year, and Jai Penn, named to the All-State Team as an outfielder.

Council approves Star Theater purchase



The Stuart Town Council on June 21 authorized Town Manager Bryce Simmons and Town Attorney Chris Corbett to execute the contract to purchase the Star Theater for no more than \$375,000. Simmons said the town has discussed purchasing the theater for about a year. Tax dollars will not be used to buy the theater.

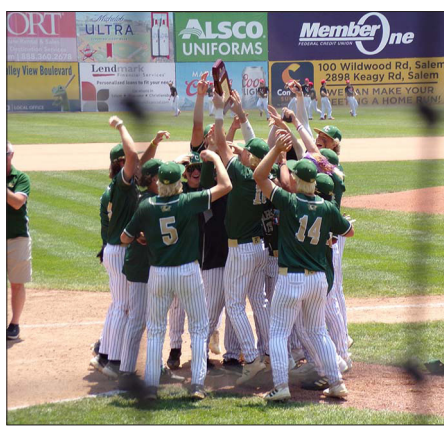
July

An off-duty deputy from Patrick County saves a child from drowning while vacationing in Ky.



An off-duty Patrick County Sheriff's deputy vacationing in Williamstown, Ky., with his family, helped save a child's life, according to Sheriff Dan Smith. Deputy Jesse Pickeral was recently in a hotel pool with his family when he noticed a motionless child at the bottom of the pool.

Cougars win first state championship



"It's just a great day. It's a great day to be a Cougar," Patrick County High School head baseball coach, Tal Swails said after the Cougars 7-3 state championship game win over the Poquoson High Islanders. The 2022-2023 Class 2 State Baseball Championship, played at Salem Memorial Ballpark, was the culmination of a 23-5 season for the Cougars.

Community support behind volunteer fire department's 50 years



The Woolwine Volunteer Fire Department will celebrate 50 years of serving the community on Saturday, June 24. The celebration which includes an Open House, parade, and other activities, is being held in conjunction with the Patrick County Patriots' benefit for one of its members. "We've been in the business now for 50 years," Fire Chief Bennett Shuff said and noted that community support is responsible for the department's longevity. "We really have a good community. It supports us really well," he said.

Huge crowd attends park, fireworks show



Those attending the July 4th festivities at DeHart Park in Stuart were treated to a nearly 35-minute fireworks display on Independence Day. Loud cheers from the huge crowd could be heard from all parts of the park when the last firework burst, ending a fantastic show. Before the fireworks display, many people beat the heat in DeHart Park's pool.

(See Year in Review p. 12)

LEGAL

Request for Qualifications Web Design Services for STEP, Inc.

STEP, Inc. is seeking a qualified Web Development Consultant to work collaboratively with organization board, staff, and stakeholders to redesign and refresh the STEP, Inc. website. For the full scope of services and proposal instructions, please visit www.stepincva.com.

Deadline for submittal of proposals is on or before 4:30 p.m. on January 12, 2024.

Minority- and/or female-owned businesses and local Franklin and Patrick County businesses are encouraged to apply. STEP, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

LEGAL

ORDER OF PUBLICATION Case No. JJ004870-07-00

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

VA. CODE §8.01-316

PATRICK J & DR - JUVENILE

Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

Commonwealth of Virginia, *in re* CUNNINGHAM-FIELDS, ISAAC C

The object of this suit is to:

TERMINATE THE RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS OF BENJAMIN FIELDS, JR. "RESIDUAL PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES" MEAN ALL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES REMAINING WITH THE PARENT AFTER THE TRANSFER OF LEGAL CUSTODY OR GUARDIANSHIP OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE RIGHT OF VISITATION, CONSENT TO ADOPTION, THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPPORT.

It is ORDERED that BENJAMIN FIELDS, JR. appear at the above-named court and protect his or her interests on or before 01/25/2024 at 2:30 p.m.

12/20/2023

[Signature]
CLERK [] JUDGE

NOTICE

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

LEGAL

NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE SALE

60 Yahweh Lane, Patrick Springs, VA 24133

By virtue of the power and authority contained in a Deed of Trust dated February 6, 2009 and recorded in Instrument Number 090000364 in the Clerk's Office for the Patrick County Virginia Circuit Court, Virginia, securing a loan which was originally \$78,876.00. The appointed SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE, Commonwealth Trustees, LLC will offer for sale at public auction at the front steps of the Circuit Court for Patrick County located at 101 W Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, VA 24171.

February 27, 2024 at 11 AM

improved real property, with an abbreviated legal description of the following described property, to wit: LAND REFERRED TO IN THIS COMMITMENT IS DESCRIBED AS ALL THAT CERTAIN PROPERTY SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF PATRICK, AND STATE OF VIRGINIA AND BEING DESCRIBED IN A DEED DATED 05/30/1996 AND RECORDED 05/30/1996 IN BOOK 314 PAGE 110 AMONG THE LAND RECORDS OF THE COUNTY AND STATE SET FORTH ABOVE, AND REFERENCED AS FOLLOWS:

ALL THOSE TWO (2) CERTAIN LOTS OR PARCELS OF LAND SITUATED ON THE SOUTH-EAST MARGIN OF ACCESS ROADWAY OFF STATE ROAD 721, MAYO RIVER DISTRICT, PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, BEING KNOWN AND DESIGNATED AS PARCEL "B", CONTAINING 1.0805 ACRES, AND PARCEL "B-1", CONTAINING 0.6918 ACRE, AS SHOWN ON PLAT OF SURVEY FOR PAUL J. DONLEY AND RUTH M. DONLEY, BY LARRY RAKES, LLS, DATED FEBRUARY 18, 1991, REVISED MAY 24, 1996, SAID PLAT TO BE RECORDED HERewith AND PARCEL "B" BEING THE SAME LAND CONVEYED GRANTORS, BY JAMES RICHARD REYNOLDS, ET ALS, BY DEED BEARING EVEN DATE AND TO BE RECORDED CONTEMPORANEOUSLY HERewith AND PARCEL "B-1", BEING THE SAME LAND CONVEYED GRANTORS, BY JANICE MARIE R. WALLER, BY DEED BEARING EVEN DATE AND TO BE RECORDED CONTEMPORANEOUSLY HERewith REFERENCE TO SAID MAP AND DEEDS IS HERE MADE FOR A MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THE LAND HEREBY CONVEYED.

AND as more fully described in the aforesaid Deed of Trust.

TERMS OF SALE: The property will be sold "AS IS," WITHOUT REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTY OF ANY KIND AND SUBJECT TO conditions, restrictions, reservations, easements, rights of way, and all other matters of record taking priority over the Deed of Trust to be announced at the time of sale. A deposit of \$20,000 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required at the time of sale, in the form of certified check, cashier's check or money order by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price, with interest at the rate contained in the Deed of Trust Note from the date of sale to the date said funds are received in the office of the SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE, will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale. In the event of default by the successful bidder, the entire deposit shall be forfeited and applied to the costs and expenses of sale and Substitute Trustee's fee. All other public charges or assessments, including water/sewer charges, whether incurred prior to or after the sale, and all other costs incident to settlement to be paid by the purchaser. In the event taxes, any other public charges have been advanced, a credit will be due to the seller, to be adjusted from the date of sale at the time of settlement. Purchaser agrees to pay the seller's attorneys at settlement, a fee of \$470.00 for review of the settlement documents.

Additional terms will be announced at the time of sale and the successful bidder will be required to execute and deliver to the Substitute Trustees a memorandum or contract of the sale at the conclusion of bidding.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT

Rosenberg & Associates, LLC
(Attorney for the Secured Party)
4340 East West Highway, Suite 600
Bethesda, MD 20814
301-907-8000
www.rosenberg-assoc.com

LEGAL

BWW# VA-367533-1

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 41 NEW HOPE ROAD, STUART, VA 24171. In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated June 9, 2016, in the original principal amount of \$149,737.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Patrick County, Virginia as Instrument No. 160000875. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for Patrick County, 101 West Blue Ridge Street, Stuart, Virginia, or any such temporary alternative Circuit County location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on February 12, 2024, at 12:00 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL THAT CERTAIN TRACT OR PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN THE SMITH RIVER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS, TO-WIT: CONTAINING 5.9529 ACRES, AS SHOWN ON PLAT OF SURVEY ENTITLED "WAYNE SCOTT AND ANITA SCOTT," PREPARED BY JENNINGS L. BOLT, LS, DATED AUGUST 26, 1996, AND RECORDED IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF PATRICK COUNTY, VIRGINIA, IN PLAT CABINET 1, SLIDE 122 C. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit often percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.bwwsales.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. For more information contact: BWW Law Group, LLC, attorneys for Equity Trustees, LLC, 6003 Executive Blvd, Suite 101, Rockville, MD 20852, 301-961-6555, website: www.bwwsales.com. VA-367533-1.

THANK YOU FOR READING
THE ENTERPRISE

Meetings

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

Monday, Jan. 1
Fairy Stone State Park Mayo River Trails, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Join us at the Mayo River Trails to explore the future Mayo River State Park.

Fairy Stone State Park at the Amphitheater Trailhead, 12 - 2 p.m., Hike along the shoreline of Fairy Stone Lake and discover how the Civilian Conservation Corps created the lake and other park features as they helped to bring our country out of the Great Depression.

Thursday, January 11
The Patrick County Recreation Department is offering a free Tai Chi Flow for Seniors program on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3-4 p.m. in the Hooker Building, Rotary Field, Stuart. No

experience needed, just wear comfortable clothing and sneakers to try this gentle, standing exercise for twelve weeks to improve your balance, coordination, and core strength. There is no registration for the program. Classes start on Thursday, January 11. Call the Park Office at (276) 694-3917 for more information.

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.

Year in Review

(cont. from page 1)

Quilts embrace patriotic theme



Many of the quilts displayed in the annual Independence Day quilt show in Vesta included a patriotic theme, and the Freedom Quilty Ladies presented 24 Quilts of Valor (QOV) to area veterans who served during times of conflict and war.

Cooper named new Economic Development Director



The Patrick County Board of Supervisors and the Patrick County Economic Development Authority have a new Economic Development Director. Patrick Cooper will start in that position on August 7, and will be the point of contact for all economic development efforts in Patrick County, in cooperation with the Board of Supervisors and the EDA.

County seeks help in a letter to legislators



Patrick County formally requested state legislators' involvement and help to address issues with telephone service. Interim County Administrator Tim Hall wrote the letter to Sen. Bill Stanley, R-Moneta, and Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, on behalf of the Board of Supervisors. At its July 10 meeting, a resident recounted ongoing issues she is having with the service provider and "the company's apparent lack of interest in adequately serving the people of Patrick County," Hall wrote. Brightspeed is the service provider.

August

Firefighters treated for heat exhaustion



Several firefighters responding to an afternoon fire call were treated for heat exhaustion Thursday, according to a report from the scene. Dispatchers received the call reporting a structure fire at 150 Riverside Drive in Stuart around 2:55 p.m. Fire crews arriving at the scene found a single brick home with smoke coming from both ends of the attic. Firefighters gained access to the attic and extinguished the fire. The home received heavy damage to the kitchen area as well as the wall behind the cook stove and ceiling.

Clark to step down from EDA



After serving more than 20 years on the Patrick County Economic Development Authority (EDA) Board, Bill Clark, its chairman, will not seek reappointment when his current term expires in August. "My kids are grown, Mary's (his wife's) kids are grown, our parents are both gone, and we have this golden window of opportunity where we both still have our health, we love to travel," Clark said.

Drake to serve as shared grant writer



Charles Drake is ready to make a difference and help the county in any way he can after starting his new role as a grant writer on July 10. The position will be shared by the county and school division. Schools Superintendent Jason Wood said the school division is paying the salary and benefits for the position, and deducting half of that amount from the quarterly School Resources Officer (SRO) payment it sends to the county.

County wins multiple awards for tourism efforts



The Patrick County Office of Tourism won multiple awards Tuesday at Friends of Southwest Virginia's fourth annual Celebrate Tourism Summit. The Office of Tourism, under the leadership of James Houchins, competed with 19 counties and four independent cities in the Southwest Virginia area.

Company responds to service concerns



After hearing criticisms about connectivity and communications services in the area, a representative from Brightspeed discussed the company's goals at an August 14 Board of Supervisors meeting. Scott Strader, Supervisor of Region Operations (SRO), said his territory includes Martinsville, Henry, and Patrick counties.

Skyline Bank celebrates opening with ribbon cutting



As some banks close brick and mortar locations in lieu of electronic service, Skyline National Bank celebrated the opening of its Meadows of Dan branch with a ribbon cutting. The new bank is located in the former Truist Bank building.

Warner visits local areas on a swing through Southside



During his four-day swing through Southside and Southwest Virginia, Sen. Mark Warner, D-Alexandria, stopped by Mabry Mill and the Martinsville Speedway to meet residents and community leaders.

At his stop at Mabry Mill, Warner offered an update on the implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act and its impact on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Patrick Springs athlete competes in China



Ayla Gordon, a local martial artist, has traveled to Emeishan, China to compete in the 9th World Kung Fu Championships, August 23-28. A member of Team USA, Gordon will put nearly a lifetime of hard work and training up against the best in the world. Gordon, now 20, is a Patrick Springs resident who works and trains in Martinsville.

PCHS senior one of four high school winners in writing contest



Maria Turner, a senior at Patrick County High School, was recognized as the western region winner of the 2023 Student Creative Expressions Contest, sponsored by Dominion Energy and the Library of Virginia as part of their Strong Men & Women in Virginia History program.

September

High school student awarded Carnegie Medal



Rayna Michelle Montgomery, of Stuart, took little thought for her own safety when she risked her life to help save two sisters from drowning in 2021, but on September 6, she was recognized for her heroism with a Carnegie Medal.

Ninth District U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Salem, presented the medal from the Carnegie Hero Fund, which was established by Andrew Carnegie in 1904 to recognize acts of selfless acts of heroism, bravery, and courage performed in the United States or Canada.

(See Year in Review p. 14)

New health campaign aims to provide education about health care law reforms

State and federal policymakers, with support from the hospital community, have passed a series of laws protecting patients and families from surprise medical bills, promoting health insurance and hospital price transparency, and enabling people to get good faith price estimates prior to scheduled hospital procedures.

Yet the vast majority of Virginians don't know these consumer-friendly reforms exist to benefit them, according to statewide polling and focus group research conducted this year by the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA). To address that information gap, VHHA is launching the "Control Your Care" public awareness campaign to ensure patients and families know their rights to help them make informed medical decisions.

"Patients are at the center of everything we do at hospitals. Their well-being is our utmost priority," said Eric Deaton, Ballad Health Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, who serves as Chair of the VHHA Board of Directors. "We strive to make patients active participants in their care through open dialogue and sharing information. The 'Control Your Care' campaign is a natural extension of that approach and an investment in helping equip Virginians with information they can use in personal health care decision making."

"The commitment Virginia hospitals make to patients extends beyond providing high quality care, improving public health, and saving lives. It also involves helping people better understand the health care delivery system," added VHHA President and CEO Sean T. Connaughton. "Just as hospitals have taken a leading role in

expanding access to care through funding Medicaid expansion and protecting community health during emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, we are now investing resources to inform Virginians about health care reform laws that benefit patients by launching the 'Control Your Care' campaign."

The campaign includes a website, ControlYourCare.com, with easy-to-understand information about consumer-focused health care reforms, links to state and federal laws and descriptions of what the laws do, and other tools to serve the public. This campaign will be supported with statewide digital and broadcast advertising to help raise public awareness about the availability of these resources.

In recent years, the Virginia General Assembly and the U.S. Congress have enacted several patient-focused health care reforms including:

A law passed in 2016 requiring hospitals to provide a good faith price estimate to patients undergoing an elective procedure or test at a hospital upon request at least three days prior to the service.

A law passed in 2020 that protects patients from surprise medical bills when they get care from an out-of-network doctor at an in-network facility during emergencies and some non-emergencies. The law established a process between health care providers and health insurers to resolve the billing issue, removing patients from the dispute.

A federal regulation finalized in 2021 that requires group health plans and health insurance issuers to disclose cost-sharing information to members and to post files online containing all negotiated payment rates.

A law from 2022 that requires hospitals to post price information about medical items and services online for the public to see and comparison shop if they choose. To serve the public, VHHA has created a searchable listing of links to this price information for hospitals across Virginia.

A 2002 law that requires hospitals to post information about charity care policies, advise uninsured patients about financial assistance policies and payment plan options, report annually on the amount of charity care and financial assistance provided, and places limits on hospitals' ability to aggressively collect medical debts.

Although these laws and regulations are on the books, statewide polling of Virginia voters shows the vast majority of people don't know about

quires hospitals to publicly post price information online about standard charges for medical care.

61 percent of people say they have not heard about a law enabling patients to receive a good faith price estimate from hospitals upon request at least three days in advance of a scheduled elective procedure or test.

Despite the existence of these laws and the availability of related consumer resources, polling also shows that 86 percent of Virginia households have not used health care pricing tools such as an online list of prices or an estimator in making health care decisions, 85 percent of Virginians indicate they have not price shopped or compared prices prior to seeking hospital care, 77 percent have not compared prices for doctors or other health care providers prior to seeking care, and 64 percent have not asked for a health care cost estimate from a health insurer or provider prior to receiving medical care.

Participant feedback from focus groups aligns with results from the poll of 800 registered Virginia voters conducted August 16-20, 2023 by Public Opinion Strategies. Additional research conducted in a series of focus groups held in Richmond, Roanoke, and Virginia Beach also showed low awareness of consumer-focused health care reform laws. The majority of focus group participants expressed a desire for more public education on existing laws and said that education, rather than new laws, is what is needed at this time.

While views vary about who among health insurance companies, the government, and health care providers bears responsibility for performing this education, a plurality of voters (47 percent) believe health insurers should be most responsible for helping people better understand their health care costs. Under federal rules, insurers are required to provide cost information to the public. Even so, VHHA and the hospital community are stepping up to invest in this public education effort as a service to Virginia patients and families.

In other poll findings, a plurality of Virginia voters (41 percent) identified out-of-pocket costs like co-pays and deductibles not paid by health insurance as their top concern about health care costs, followed by monthly premium costs (19 percent). A plurality (33 percent) also believes health insurance companies are most responsible for rising health care costs.

Data shows that what Virginians perceive about the role of insurance in increasing health care costs is accurate: A study by the non-partisan Altarum Institute found that from 2008-2021 "single annual premiums have increased 74.3%, and family premiums have increased 78.9%" and the "combined totals of average premiums and deductibles have risen even faster, 89.1% for single coverage and 91.3% for family coverage" in Virginia.

The "Control Your Care" campaign is a continuation of efforts by VHHA and the hospital community to educate and inform the public about the health care delivery system and its role in community health and the economy.

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them. For instance, poll results show that:

80 percent of people are not aware that Virginia passed a law protecting patients from surprise medical bills for out-of-network emergency care and some non-emergency care.

73 percent of people are not aware that federal and state law re-

Super Crossword

Answers

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Year in Review

(cont. from page 1)

Unique moving day celebration capped Labor Day festivities



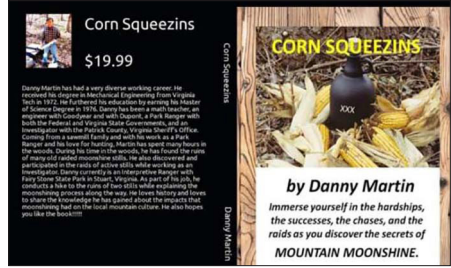
Labor Day 2023 was a momentous occasion for many who gathered at the corner of JEB Stuart Highway and Central Academy Road to watch the moving of the Hopkins/Carter house. Much like a tailgate party, there were coolers and chairs, summer hats, and homemade cake. The grandchildren of J.D. "Jim" Hopkins, who built the large, two-story farmhouse, and the present owners, the children of A.C. and Lillian Carter, who were the second owners of the home, were especially pleased to see the house spared from new road construction by being moved several yards to the east.

Franklin County's economic development director tapped to serve as new county administrator



Franklin County's current director of Economic Development was named the new Patrick County Administrator at the September 11 Board of Supervisors meeting. Beth Simms, 36, will officially start in her new role on October 12. She will receive a salary of \$120,000 per year.

History Program To Support Perry Family Scholarship



Historian Tom Perry and Danny Martin, author, will talk about the history of moonshine in Patrick County. Focusing on Ararat's own Jimmie Rorrer, an ABC officer for years, this program is for everyone who is encouraged to come tell their moonshine stories. This is a fundraiser for the Perry Family Scholarship. It will be held on Saturday, September 23, at 10 a.m. at the Ararat Virginia Ruritan Club, 4711 Ararat Hwy, Ararat.

October

Battle smoke ring



A reenactment during the annual Civil War Encampment & Living History Weekend left a smoke ring at the battlefield. The event was held October 7-8 at Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's birthplace, Laurel Hill, located in Ararat.

Walmart unveils new services in grand reopening



Walmart held a grand reopening on Friday, October 6 to celebrate the updates to the store, welcoming customers inside the newly transformed Supercenter to mark the end of the much-anticipated remodel. Walmart associates marked the occasion with a ribbon cutting ceremony, community celebration, and a community inspired mural unveiling by local artist, Bob C. The local VFW chapter provided the presentation of colors.

November

Master Gardener's program welcomes young and old



A guest at the Master Gardener's bat program last week dressed for the occasion in a cute onesie that featured spiders, spider webs, and bats. The gardening group celebrated 'The Misunderstood Bat' in programs at the Landmark Center and the Patrick County Library.

Blue Ridge Folklife Festival Celebrates 50 Years



This past Saturday, the Blue Ridge Institute hosted the 50th annual Blue Ridge Folklife Festival. Spread across the beautiful Ferrum College campus, the festival hosted a number of activities. Vendors crossed county and state lines to showcase classic cars, antique engines, and traditional handicrafts for thousands of visitors. Across the street, the Blue Ridge Farm Museum hosted livestock demonstrations and competitions in the midst of a recreated nineteenth century farmstead. The festival began at 10 and was scheduled to end at 5, but that did not seem long enough for visitors to see everything available. After walking through the Farm entrance, bluegrass music was heard over passing cars, drawing just as many people as the nearby BBQ vendor.

Wildfire in Woolwine area expands to 500 acres



A week after fire crews worked to contain and fight a brush fire that involved 20 to 30 acres, the blaze grew to a wildfire, with 500 acres involved and about 10 percent contained. Emergency crews are on the scene of the wildfire in the Ravens Den, Tuggles Gap, and Blue Ridge Parkway area of Woolwine, Patrick County Emergency Management said in a release. The county-wide burn ban remains in effect and will remain in effect until further notice.

Opening of new school board office now official



The Patrick County School Board celebrated the opening of its new school board office with an official ribbon cutting to coincide with its November 9 meeting. Schools Superintendent Jason Wood said the school system is very blessed to have a building that allows for staff development, situating many of its departments under one roof, and training for staff.

Goad selected as Grand Marshal of the Meadows of Dan Christmas Parade



Trinity Goad, a long-time community servant, was selected to be the Grand Marshal of this year's Meadows of Dan Christmas Parade, held annually on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.



Donations from walking tours fund scholarship



Another Patrick County student will receive help with their education from the Perry Family Scholarship thanks to donations received at recent walking tours at the Laurel Hill Farm in Ararat. Thomas D. "Tom" Perry hosted two free tours of the J. E. B. Stuart Birthplace on November 4. The date also marked Perry's birthday.

December

Reward offered for Thomas Stuart's return



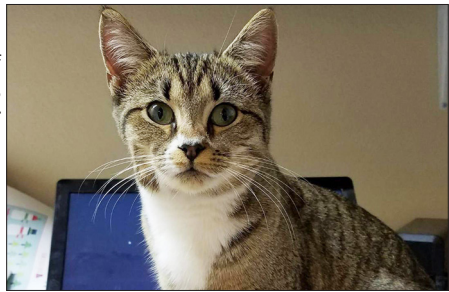
A reward offered for the return of Thomas Stuart, the town cat, started at \$500 on Monday, and was up to \$700 Tuesday.

Eatery celebrates 50 years of service



If walls could talk, those in the Coffee Break Café on Main Street in Stuart would have plenty to say, as the eatery celebrates 50 years in business. It also has the distinction of being the longest-running restaurant in the county's history, according to its owner, Denny Alley, who decided to rent the restaurant space in 1973.

Thomas Stuart returns, Marcy still missing



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. Marcy Boots (pictured) remained missing.

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Ruritan club invests in community

The Ararat Ruritan Club has been busy during the last quarter of this year. Many donations have been dispersed throughout the community. Community service projects and fundraisers are the basis of the club's existence and the support throughout 2023 is appreciated greatly.

During the club's December social, President Pamela Smith highlighted this year's volunteer hours and outreach. More than \$10,000 was given to help local organizations and folks in the community who needed a little 'extra' to help them through an illness or out of the ordinary circumstance.

Donations were presented to the local emergency responders, Pat-

rick County's backpack program, PARC Workshop, Shop with a Cop, and gifts were purchased for the Christmas Cheer program and Santa to a Senior program.

The Ararat Fire Department and Ararat and Blue Ridge Rescue Squads service the Ararat Community, and their respective representatives accepted donations. Pictured are Kirk George, Mike Fulk and Billy Aldrige with Club Vice President Tom Perriello.

Dustin Foley accepted a donation for the Shop with a Cop program with the Patrick County Sheriff's Office along with Ruritan mascot, "RUDY" bears for each patrol car to give out to help alleviate the stress of a traumatic

event call involving youngsters. Club treasurer Kevin Smith made the presentations recently at the Ararat Community Crime Watch meeting. The club hosts the CCW meetings quarterly.

Laura Layman Hausler accepted a donation from Smith during the PARC Workshop Christmas party.

Several members of the club went on a shopping spree for several area children to help make their Christmas by purchasing items and the toys brought in by Bingo players to help supplement Patrick County Christmas Cheer. The club hosts bingo monthly and they will be held on the third Saturdays of the month next year. Fundraisers, like Bingo, allow the

club to provide for these community service projects.

Recently, the club hosted a blood drive for the American Red Cross. One of the newest members, Claude Smith, who is stepping into a director role with the club, was a first time blood donor. "It won't be my last time" donating, he said.

The Ararat Ruritan Club meets on the first Thursday of each month, with a covered dish meal beginning at 7 p.m. Leading the 2024 club are President Micheal Noonkester, Vice-President Tom Perriello, Secretary Cathy Clement, Treasurer Kevin Smith, directors Claude Smith, Donna Fariss and Mary Slate and Past-President Pamela Smith.



Kirk George and Tom Perriello. (Contributed photos)



Billy Aldridge and Tom Perriello.



Mike Fulk and Tom Perriello.



Dustin Foley and Kevin Smith.



Christmas Cheer shoppers.



Donated toys.



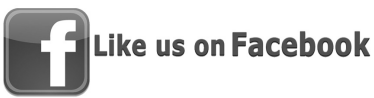
Director Donna Fariss, Secretary Cathi Clement, Director Mary Slate, Vice-President Tom Perriello Treasurer Kevin Smith, President Michael Noonkester, Director Claude Smith.



Kevin Smith and Laura Layman Hausler.



Claude Smith.



Arrests Reported

The Patrick County Sheriff's Office reported the following:

*Miranda Tate, 33, of Stuart, was charged Dec. 15 with contribute to the delinquency of a minor. Inv. Tennille E. Jessup was the arresting officer.

*Jason Jarman Younger, 39, of Stuart, was charged Dec. 19 with unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. Deputy C. L. Elgin made the arrest.

Shelor presented award for service



Ruritans Zone Governor Pamela Smith presented a well-deserved award for Outstanding Club Treasurer to Meadows of Dan Ruritan Treasurer Debra Shelor. The club is grateful for Shelor's hard work and proud of her most recent recognition.

The next meeting of the Meadows of Dan club will be held on January 4, at 7 p.m., in the Meadows of Dan Community Building.

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Haymarket Brothers Get 18 Years Total in Fentanyl Conspiracy

Brothers from Northern Virginia, who distributed or intended to distribute more than 10,000 pressed fentanyl pills in Culpeper, Virginia and surrounding counties, were sentenced last week to more than 18 years of total federal prison time.

Thomas Anthony Marshall, 25, and Jonathon Hayden Marshall, 20, both pleaded guilty in August 2023 to identical charges, that is, one count of conspiring to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute fentanyl and one count of distribution and possessing with the intent to distribute fentanyl. Last week, Thomas Marshall was sentenced to 10 years

in federal prison and Jonathon Marshall was sentenced to 8 years in federal prison.

According to court documents, on several occasions in September 2022 both Thomas and Jonathon Marshall sold pressed fentanyl pills to confidential informants working with the Blue Ridge Narcotics and Gang Task Force. Specifically, on September 1, 2022, Thomas Marshall sold 1,020 fentanyl pills and on September 6, 2022, Thomas and Jonathon Marshall sold 1,987 fentanyl pills. On September 14, 2022, Thomas Marshall sold 1,812 fentanyl pills.

On September 27, 2022, the Blue Ridge Nar-

cotics and Gang Task Force executed a search warrant at a residence shared by the Marshall brothers in Fauquier County, Virginia. During the course of the search, law enforcement recovered 6,549 pressed fentanyl pills, \$32,642 in cash, and numerous firearms and ammunition.

United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh announced the sentence.

The Drug Enforcement Administration and the Blue Ridge Narcotics and Gang Task Force investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Ronald M. Huber prosecuted the case.

Youth Mental Health Strategy unveiled on anniversary of initiative

Behavioral health leaders, community partners and families who have struggled with behavioral health challenges joined with Gov. Glenn Youngkin in Richmond last week to mark the accomplishments of the first year of the Right Help, Right Now (RHRN) behavioral health transformation plan in Virginia, outline next steps and funding for RHRN, and announce his Youth Mental Health Strategy.

On the one-year anniversary of the Right Help, Right Now plan, the Governor announced \$500 million in new funding for the continued transformation of our behavioral health system, including the expansion of school-based mental health services. Additionally, the Governor outlined a Youth Mental Health Strategy and legislative package that would limit the addictive elements of social media platforms to protect children and empower parents with information and resources to best care for their children

“After a year of implementing critical changes in our mental and behavioral health system through my Right Help, Right Now plan, we are forging ahead with additional RHRN funding and a Youth Mental Health strategy to assist and support our next generation of Virginians,” said Youngkin. It’s clear that young Virginians face a myriad of challenges ranging from addictive social media platforms to an increasingly dangerous opioid epidemic to mental health challenges and we need to offer support. Our new Youth Mental Health Strategy will work to protect and support our young people from predatory practices online while also empowering families with new tools to support their children’s mental health.”

“The goal of Right Help, Right Now is to support Virginians before, during, and after a behavioral health crisis occurs. During the first year of this initiative, we have advanced key elements of the infrastructure needed to ensure that there is someone to call, someone to respond and somewhere to go in a mental health or substance use crisis,” said Secretary of Health and Human Resources John Littell. “Year two of this transformation aims to ensure that families have more information about threats to children’s mental health as well as tools to support their children.”

After a year of the Right Help, Right Now plan, some of the incredible progress includes: the continued growth of the 988 suicide and crisis lifeline system through a marketing campaign, the launch of a behavioral health reserve corps of volunteers, awarded funding to build emergency room alternatives, expanded waiver slots for individuals with developmental disabilities on the priority one waitlist, and additional compensation for targeted state hospital staff.

“This is just the start of the work we are doing to transform our behavioral health care system,” said Nelson Smith, Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. “We’ve seen tremendous progress over the last year as we have continued to build our crisis continuum of care, expand community-based services, strengthen our workforce, and modernize our systems. This was the result of a lot of hard work and creative and collaborative thinking by staff from across our system and state government.”

Youth Mental Health Strategy

To better equip parents and support our young people, Governor Youngkin is taking immediate action in year two of Right Help, Right Now. In 2023, according to Mental Health America, Virginia ranked 48th in the nation for youth mental health, which demands a collective and comprehensive approach to prioritize the health of the Commonwealth’s youngest and most vulnerable citizens. Children spend on average nearly five hours daily on social media; recent studies have suggested that children who spend more than a few hours per day on social media have double the risk of poor mental health. Through budget proposals, legislation and executive action the youth mental health strategy will address critical components and harmful aspects of social media on our youth.

To address addictive and harmful aspects of social media on youth:

*We will protect minors from TikTok’s predatory influence in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

*We will protect the privacy of all children under 18 years of age from social media companies by banning targeted advertising to children, selling children’s data, or creating a marketing profile of a child without parental consent.

*We will prohibit social media companies from using addictive practices, designs, or features, such as auto-playing videos, gamification, and virtual gifts, on children.

*We will give parents the ability to implement guardrails on minor’s social media use and limit social media companies from disrupting teens’ sleep by knowingly or intentionally keeping children on their phones.

Inside our schools:

*We will expand eligibility for school-based mental health services to students across Virginia using a waiver and provide technical assistance and support to localities that provide matching funds and wish to utilize these services.

*We will require school divisions who monitor student Internet use to disclose what activ-

ity is tracked and monitored, obtain parental consent, and notify parents when a safety alert is issued.

*We will expand the behavioral health workforce in schools and other community settings.

*We will increase access to care by providing funds for tele-behavioral health for children in grades 6-12, with their parents’ permission, as well as in our public colleges.

In behavioral health care settings:

*We will ensure that Virginia families have the right to be in close physical proximity to a relative during a medical, mental health or substance use emergency and provide the relative with previously prescribed medications.

*We will empower parents with the right to consent for their child to receive inpatient psychiatric care and choose where their child receives inpatient psychiatric care, and exclude minors from code-mandated state psychiatric treatment.

Year 2 Right Help, Right Now Budget Priorities

Youngkin proposed \$500 million in new funding for his biennium budget. This is a giant step forward when combined with the funding appropriated in the last budget—bringing the commitment to nearly \$1.4 billion, including:

*\$307 million to provide 3,440 waiver slots, a slot per person on the Priority 1 Waitlist

*\$23 million to expand access to school-based mental health services for children, including telehealth

*\$46 million to meet the three-year target of emergency room alternatives, such as crisis receiving centers and crisis stabilization units, and publicly funded mobile crisis response teams to ensure that people have someone to respond and somewhere to go in a crisis

*\$10 million for partnerships with hospitals to build specialized emergency rooms for psychiatric patients called comprehensive psychiatric emergency programs

*\$23 million to ease law enforcement burden, including expanding alternative transportation

*\$58 million for building a best-in-class behavioral health workforce through salary increases in state hospitals, behavioral health loan repayment, and more clinical training sites and residency slots

*\$28 million in opioid abatement and response initiatives including a campaign to reduce youth fentanyl poisoning, wastewater monitoring, naloxone availability, and services for those with substance use disorder

The Youngkin administration is committed to doing its part to make Virginia an even better place to live, work and raise a healthy family.

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦

- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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Virtual Visitation Capabilities Expanding at Two VADOC Facilities

The Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) and partners Viapath and Assisting Families of Inmates (AFOI) are expanding virtual visitation at two Department facilities.

Green Rock Correctional Center and River North Correctional Center's virtual visitation officially expanded at 9 a.m. Wednesday, December 13.

Every living area at the two facilities will be equipped with virtual visitation equipment, allowing inmates to conduct visits from their own living areas.

To accommodate the expansion of services,

new operating hours for virtual visits will be in place. Hours of operation for the general population will be 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and 7 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on weekends. Any previously scheduled visit outside of those hours will need to be rescheduled once the new hours are in effect.

Additionally, if two inmates in the same living area are scheduled for a visit at the same date and time, one visit will remain in the schedule and the other will be canceled at random. For the canceled visit, the visitor can reschedule using the Visitation Scheduler.

Video visitation will not be operational when the facilities are operating on a lockdown status.

"This is a very exciting development for both Green Rock and River North," said VADOC Director Chad Dotson. "Visitation is a very important piece of the re-entry process and adding more virtual visitation capabilities for these facilities is a great step for the inmates at these facilities, their loved ones, and the VADOC as a whole."

Additional information about visitation is available on the Visiting an Inmate section of the VADOC website.

CHILL and Drug Free PC display an eight foot homemade wreath



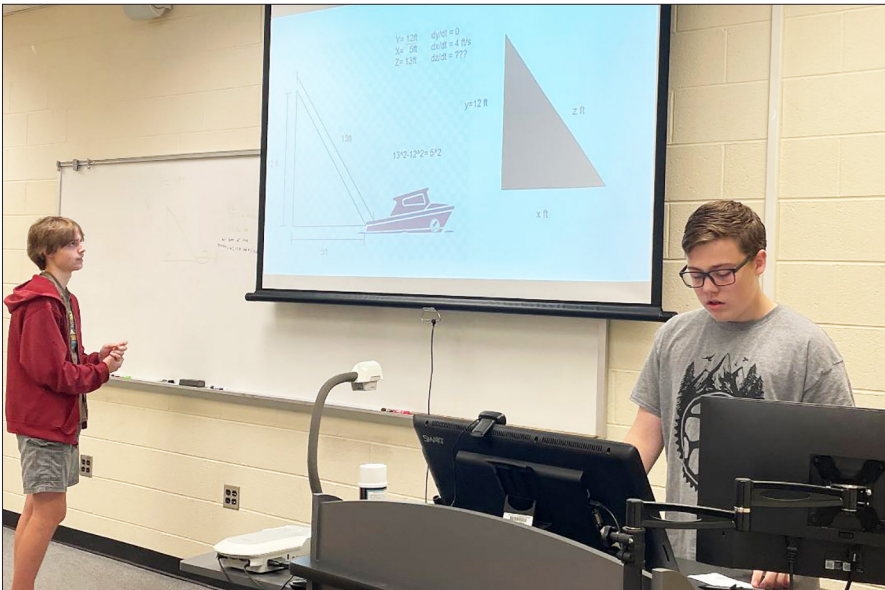
CHILL and Drug Free PC Coalition included an 8-foot homemade wreath in the Festival of Lights Display at Dehart Park.

Seasonal light display at dusk



The Festival of Lights at DeHart Park in Stuart turned on at dusk each night it was open, bringing delight to the young and young at heart. The festival has ended this year, but many are already planning for the annual event next year. (By Pat Delaney)

Every Day in the Garden is a Holiday



Gabriel Wheeler of Pinnacle (left) and Wyatt Bowman of King (right) explain the solution of a Calculus I assignment to their class.

The Patrick County Master Gardener's 'Every Day in the Garden is a Holiday' display grew this year to include a turtle munching on the wild violets. It was featured at Dehart Parks Festival of Lights.

SCC Students Solve 'Real World' Problems in University Transfer Classes: Calculus I, II & III

Imagine you are towing your boat to a dock using a winch mounted twelve feet above the boat, which pulls the tow rope at a speed of four feet per second. When there are thirteen feet of rope pulled out, how fast is the boat going towards the dock? Does that sound complicated? It's not if you're in Dr. Susan Worth's Calculus I class at Surry Community College.

Recently, Worth, who is the Mathematics Division Chair for SCC, assigned students real world problems to solve and then present to the class, teaching others how they arrived at their solution. Wyatt Bowman of King and Gabriel Wheeler of Pinnacle were assigned the boating problem, along with some other real-life type challenges, all of which were about determining rate of change, which is an import-

ant skill in many professions.

As the students presented their solutions to the class, Worth beamed with pride at how well the students accomplished their task.

"Research says students who attend community college graduate at higher rates and regularly out-perform students who attend a four-year college or university right out of high school," she noted.

Bowman and Wheeler will have no difficulties in high level mathematics wherever they go, evidenced by their confident and thorough explanation of the problems at hand.

Worth notes that SCC offers Calculus I, Calculus II, and Calculus III classes, all of which transfer to any institution in The University of North Carolina Sys-

tem. Alumni students often report a high satisfaction level with taking classes, especially difficult ones, such as Calculus, at SCC since class sizes are smaller and instructors are much more accessible than at four-year institutions.

Dr. Ashley Morrison, SCC Vice President of Instruction, says, "The college transfer program offers a quality education at an affordable price, giving students not only a chance to explore different classes before committing to a major but also a head start on a bachelor's degree before attending a four-year college or university."

SCC offers eleven college transfer programs. Visit the College Transfer page on surry.edu to learn more about these programs and to explore transfer guides to The University of North Carolina System.

Early college high school and home school juniors and seniors may also take these classes through the Career and College Promise Program.

Gabriel Wheeler and Wyatt Bowman still have time to decide exactly what they will do in life and to which college or university they might transfer. As for now, however, they have a strong enough grasp on Calculus I concepts that they can share solutions with others. The sky is truly the limit with their potential.

To learn more about college transfer programs at SCC, contact Student Services at (336) 386-3264 or studentservices@surry.edu. If you'd like to learn more about mathematics at SCC, contact Dr. Susan Worth, Mathematics Division Chair, at (336) 386-3357 or worths@surry.edu.



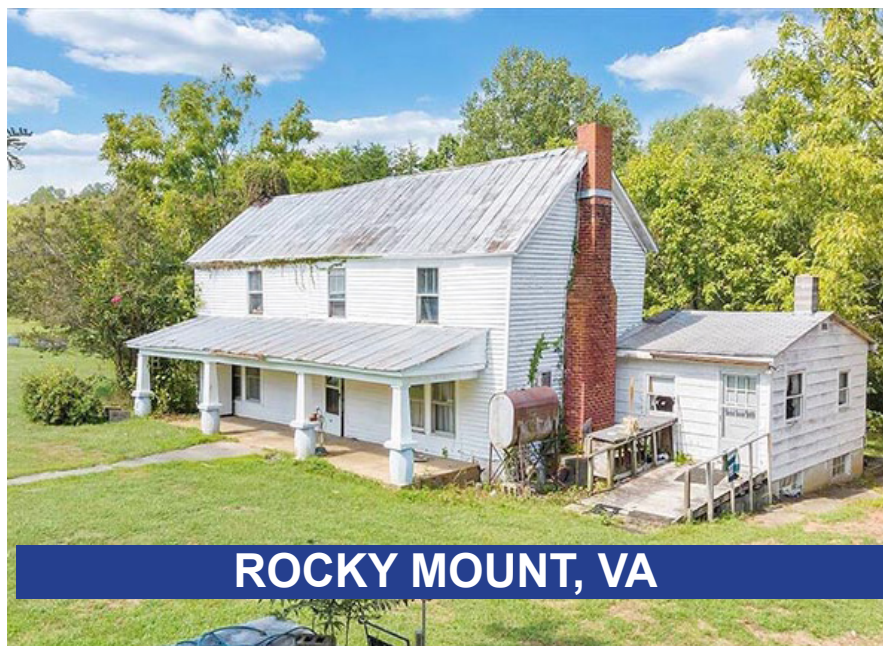
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ROCKY MOUNT, VA

Old farmhouse on 6.11 acres of land in the brand new subdivision called Harvest Ridge. Home could be remodeled into a charming home! **\$99,900**



UNION HALL, VA

Are you ready to live the lake life? Don't miss your chance with this +/- 1 acre lot in the Kennedy Shores Subdivision off Smith Mountain Lake! The property offers lake views, privacy, and seclusion. **\$39,000**



WILLIS, VA

Great 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath brick ranch home with 1,080 sq ft of living space. Home sits on .52 acres of land. **\$192,500**



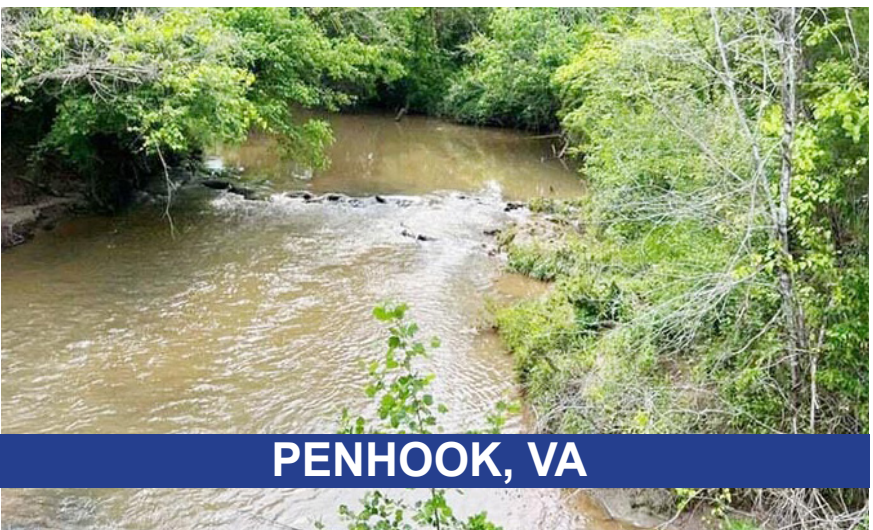
STUART, VA

Well maintained 3 bedroom, 2 bath home on 3.4 acres of land. Home has 1,344 sq ft of living space. **\$190,000**



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**



PENHOOK, VA

This 4.92 acre property has approximately 600 ft. of river frontage and over 300 ft. of road frontage. There are multiple potential building sites, and you are convenient to Rocky Mount, Smith Mountain Lake and Roanoke. **\$28,497**



BASSETT, VA

Don't miss your chance on this 4.34 acre buildable lot! Lot is level and would be ideal for a new home site. It's only 4 minutes from Philpott Lake Marina. **\$15,000**



MEADOWS OF DAN, VA

Check out this beautiful 32 acre tract of wooded recreational land located on the border of Floyd and Carroll Counties. Property has multiple building sites or would make a great hunting retreat! **\$125,000**

We wish you a joyful New Year, and we look forward to serving you in 2024 with all of your real estate needs!



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